



PRESS RELEASE

**Public Opinion Research Centre
Sociological Institute of Academy of Sciences
of the Czech Republic**
V Holešovičkách 41, Praha 8
Tel./Fax: +420 286 840 129, 30
E-Mail: chludilo@soc.cas.cz

EVALUATION OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Technical Characteristics

<i>Research:</i>	<i>Our Society 2002</i>
<i>Questions:</i>	<i>PM.25 – PM.28</i>
<i>Field Research Time Schedule:</i>	<i>17. – 24. 10. 2002</i>
<i>Number of Informants:</i>	<i>1017</i>
<i>Cross Section:</i>	<i>Population of the Czech Republic at Age over 15 years</i>
<i>Informants Selection:</i>	<i>Quota Sample</i>
<i>Date of Publishing:</i>	<i>November 14, 2002</i>
<i>Press Information Code:</i>	<i>pm21114a</i>
<i>Researcher-in-Charge:</i>	<i>Ms. Iva Chludilová</i>

According to the October research, 26 % of interviewees assess European Union's activities as favourable, 11 % of informants have an opposite opinion. However, a strong group has separated, which included interviewees, who could not clearly identify EU activities as favourable or unfavourable – 41 %. These interviewees do not like to adopt any pronounced attitude also in other questions, including that one, which concerned their voting in a referendum on whether to access the EU – approximately fourth part of them do not know, whether they should vote aye or nay.¹

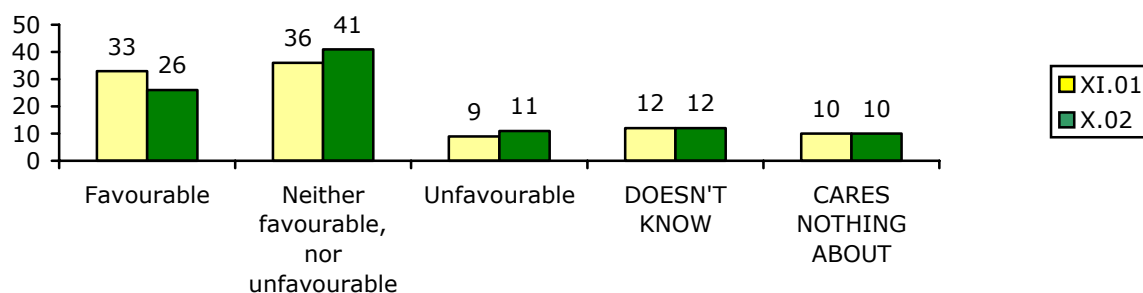
¹ "If a referendum on whether the Czech Republic should access the European Union shall be held tomorrow, should you vote aye or nay?"

Table 1: How do you assess European Union's activities? (in %)

Favourable	26
Neither favourable, nor unfavourable	41
Unfavourable	11
DO NOT KNOW	12
CARES NOTHING ABOUT	10
Total	100

Within the comparison of answers with attitudes identified one year ago² (see following Diagram No. 1), we see that the positive evaluation of EU's activities was reduced by 7 percentage points. Particularly, ambivalent attitudes were increasing in number, where people obviously assess certain activities as good, but with other ones, do not agree.

Diagram No. 1: Assessment of EU's activities in November 2001 and October 2002



In addition, we asked informants, whether some of following positive values are applied in the European Union.

Table 2: Do you think that, at the present time, following values are applied in the EU? (in %)

	Definitely yes	More likely yes	More likely no	Definitely no	Do not know
Democracy	21	52	12	2	13
Cooperation	17	55	14	3	11
Solidarity	14	49	17	5	15
Tolerance	10	41	23	6	20
Justice	7	38	25	8	22
Equality	8	33	33	11	15

Line percents

Interviewees appreciated promotion of democracy and cooperation – more than 70 % affirmative answers. According to 63 % of informants, solidarity is

² In 2001, this question was asked in slightly different form: "How do you assess European Union's targets and activities?"

applied in the EU. In the EU, equality is the least promoted value of shown values according to informants (44 % negative answers); their attitude was somewhat less critical in case of enforcement of justice (33 %) and tolerance (29 %). We put this question to informants also in November 2001. Although they consider democracy and cooperation as the most enforced value of the shown ones, the share of positive evaluations was reduced during the year (by 5 or 6 percentage points). By the way, interviewees see more negatively enforcement of all values except solidarity as compared with the previous year however, only minute changes are concerned). In case of tolerance, justice and democracy, people more frequently answered that they do not know.

This year, we did not conduct a poll to find out the general opinion of citizens about the correctness of the idea of European integration (in November 2001, 72 % citizens indicated this idea as good). However, we asked, whether citizens consider it as beneficial or detrimental in following areas: economy, politics, culture, defence, and ecology.

Table 3: According to you, is the European integration in following areas beneficial or detrimental: (in %)

	Definitely beneficial	More likely beneficial	More likely detrimental	Definitely detrimental	Do not know
Ecology	32	46	5	2	15
Defence	29	42	8	2	19
Culture	24	46	10	2	18
Politics	12	47	17	2	22
Economy	18	41	21	4	16

Line percents

Interviewees more likely incline to positive evaluation, however in case of individual areas shown in a different ratio. Integration shall bring the greatest benefit in the area of ecology – this opinion was expressed by 4/5 of informants. 70 % (or 71 %) interviewees see the integration as beneficial in the area of culture and defence. People have the most critical attitude to economic integration – the entire fourth part of them considers it as detrimental. They evaluate its contribution for politics as negative (19 % of negative answers), but here, people were not sure with their answers (22 % of them did not know). In comparison with November 2001, citizens see more negatively the contribution of integration for our economy. In eyes of informants, the “expedience” of European integration in the area of defence fell down, however, people more frequently “do not know”. Those interviewees are unambiguously convinced about enforcement of all shown values within the frame of the EU, who positively evaluate EU’s activities and those informants, who consider the European integration as beneficial.

Satisfaction with the rate of the European integration process was expressed by 26 % of people. Dissatisfaction was expressed by 36 %; 15 % see it as too

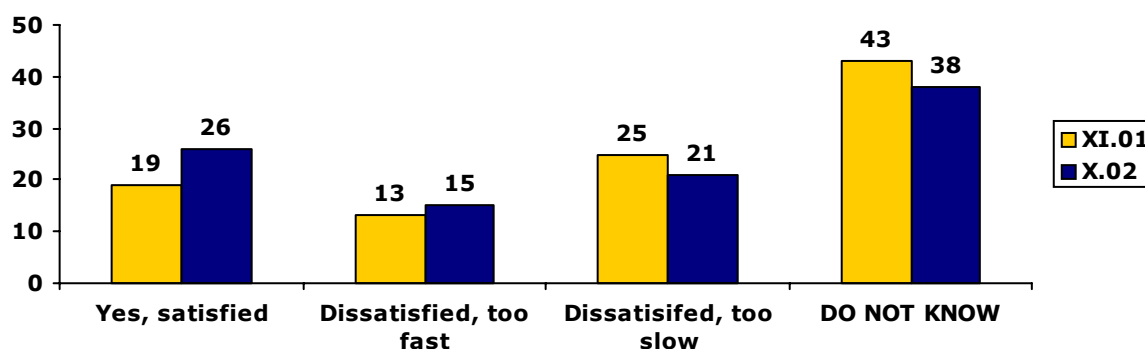
fast, and 21 % as too slow. Almost 40 % were not able to assess the rate of integration.

Table 4: Are you satisfied with the rate of integration? (in %)

Yes, satisfied	No, it is too fast	No, it is too slow	Don't know
26	15	21	38

In comparison with the research made one year ago, more citizens are satisfied with the rate of the integration process (from 19 % to 26 %). Less frequently, people have the opinion that the process is too slow, and the share of people, who could not assess the rate, was reduced as well. People considering the integration as too fast, they perceive the integration in individual areas more likely as detrimental. Interviewees, how who showed their satisfaction with the rate of integration, they assess EU activities as favourable in 55 %.

Diagram No. 2: Satisfaction with the integration rate



Answers to all questions reflected socio-demographic characteristics of informants, and some their political attitudes. Activities of the EU, enforcement of all shown values within the frame of the EU, and European integration as such are unambiguously positively assessed by the youngest interviewees (15-19 years of age), however, they are interested in EU's problems at least. On the contrary, sexagenarians and older see the EU and European integration as untrustworthy.

In some cases - for instance in the issue of enforcement of equality and cooperation, the greatest optimists are people at age from 30 to 44 years. They are also most satisfied with the rate of the integration process (35 %). The European political integration is most frequently seen as beneficial by citizens at age from 20 to 29 years.

The level of education of informants very importantly affects the differentiation of opinions. Citizens having secondary school education with „A“ Level of GCE

examination and particularly with university education take more positive attitudes. People with primary school education (and frequently people having secondary school education without "A" Level of GCE examination) have less information and are less interested in EU's problems (answers "I do not know", "I am not interested" are more frequent). People having university education separated markedly in case of the question relating to the rate of European integration – satisfaction was expressed by 47 % of them.

The lower standard of living of households, the lower interest and awareness of informants, which reflects in their answers also as their generally negative attitudes. For instance, satisfaction with the rate of integration was expressed only by 16 % of people with low standard of living, EU's activities was evaluated positively by 12 % of them only.

EU and European integration is generally better evaluated by right-wingers, i.e. potential electorship voting ODS and US-DEU (round 40 % of positively evaluated EU's activities and satisfaction with the rate of integration). Adherents to KSČM are unambiguously critical – only some 5 % of them evaluate EU's activities positively, their satisfaction with the rate of integration is similarly low.

Answers of informants very strongly reflect their attitude in the referendum on the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU. Adherents to this accession are responding unambiguously less critically, than opponents of this accession. Only 2 % of opponents evaluate EU's activities positively.