# EUROBAROMETER 55.2
# Europeans, science and technology
# December 2001

Conducted in all the Member States of the European Union between 10 May and 15 June 2001

**Full report and background at:**
**http://europa.eu.int/comm/research/press/2001/pr0612en.html**

# Excerpts:

**_ When it comes to GMOs, the most frequent attitude is the demand for choice and for information: 94.6% of Europeans want to have the right to choose when it comes to genetically modified foodstuffs. There are no exceptions to this demand which is very high within all the various sub-groups making up the sample.**

**_ The second demand concerns information: 85.9% of respondents want "to know more about this kind of food before eating it".**

**_ 59.4% of Europeans believe that GMOs may have negative effects on the environment, while 28.7% have no opinion on this.**

**_70.3% of Europeans say "I do not want this type of food", while 16,9% disagree with this statement**

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**4. GMOs: AN IMPORTANT ISSUE**

**Table 24:**

**Would you say that you are more inclined to agree or disagree with each of the following propositions on genetically modified foods? (% EU 15)**

| | **Inclined to agree** | **Inclined not to agree** | **Do not know** |
|---|---|---|---|
| I want to have the right to choose | 94.6 | 2.5 | 2.8 |
| I want to know more about this kind of food before eating it | 85.9 | 9.3 | 4.8 |
| They should only be introduced if it is scientifically proven that they are harmless | 85.8 | 8,0 | 6,1 |
| I do not want this type of food | 70.9 | 16.9 | 12.2 |
| They could have negative effects on the environment | 59.4 | 11.9 | 28.7 |
| The dangers have been exaggerated by the media | 33.1 | 44.3 | 22.6 |
| This kind of food does not present any particular danger | 14.6 | 54.8 | 30.6 |

A series of questions on attitudes to genetically modified foods was put to the public. The most commonly encountered attitude is the demand to be able to choose and the demand for information: 94.6% of Europeans want to have the right to choose when it comes to genetically modified foods. There are no exceptions to this demand which consistently scores the highest within all the various subgroups making up the sample.

Secondly, people want information: 85.9% of those asked wanted "to know more about this type of food before eating it". Once again, this opinion is very widely held. The notion that there should be scientific proof that these foods are harmless before they may be eaten meets with the same level of support (85.8%). Outright rejection ("I do not want this kind of food") is the attitude of 70.9%.

**Table 25:**

**Answers to the question "GMOs could have negative effects on the environment", according to level of knowledge (%EU 15)**

| Level of knowledge | Inclined to agree | Inclined not to agree | Don't know |
|---|---|---|---|
| 0 to 4 | 47.7 | 9.4 | 43.0 |
| 5 to 6 | 57.1 | 11.9 | 31.0 |
| 7 to 8 | 60.3 | 11.6 | 28.1 |
| 9 to 10 | 61.1 | 13.2 | 25.6 |
| 11 to 13 | 66.0 | 11.9 | 22.1 |
| Total | 59.4 | 11.9 | 28.7 |

**59.4% of Europeans affirm that GMOs could have negative effects on the environment, but 28.7% have no opinion.** The higher the level of knowledge, the lower the number of "don't knows" and, at the same time, the more people believe there may be negative effects on the environment. Among those with a low level of knowledge (0 to 4 on our index), 43.0% are don't knows and 47.7% assume there could be harmful consequences, while for those with a high level of knowledge (11 to 13), the percentage of don't knows falls to 22.1%, and 66.0% subscribe to the statement.

The last two questions were formulated in a "positive" way with regard to GMOs. The first suggests that "the dangers have been exaggerated by the media". One third of Europeans (33.1%) endorse this statement while 44.3% disagree. These proportions hardly vary according to socio-demographic criteria with the exception, once again, of the youngest (37.6% among the 15-24 year olds). On the other hand, this opinion is more often supported by the Danes (41.8%), the British (43.9%) and the Greeks (51.8%). The second opinion: "this type of food does not present any particular danger" is rejected by 54.8% of respondents and approved by 14.6%. Respondents in the Netherlands and Portugal stand out with a slightly higher percentage of agreement (23.1% and 24.3% respectively).

________________________vergrößert von pt 7 auf pt10

Country Institute Number of interviews Fieldwork dates Population 15+ (x 000)
Belgium INRA Belgium 1058 10/05 – 15/06 8 326
Denmark GfK Danmark 1000 10/05 – 15/06 4 338
Germany (East) INRA Deutschland 1026 12/05 – 07/06 13 028
Germany (West) INRA Deutschland 1012 12/05 – 13/06 55 782
Greece MARKET ANALYSIS 1004 14/05 – 12/06 8 793
Spain INRA Espagne 1000 14/05 – 11/06 33 024
France CSA-TMO 1004 10/05 – 07/06 46 945
Ireland Lansdowne Market Research 1006 17/05 – 02/06 2 980
Italy INRA Demoskopea 995 18/05 – 10/06 49 017
Luxembourg ILRes 619 10/05 – 15/06 364

Netherlands INTOMART 1061 19/05 – 15/06 12 705
Austria Spectra 1019 16/05 – 11/06 6 668
Portugal Metris 1000 12/05 – 04/06 8 217
Finland MDC Marketing Research 1022 12/05 – 15/06 4 165
Sweden GfK Sverige 1000 10/05 – 15/06 7 183
Great Britain INRA UK 1000 10/05 – 14/06 46 077
Northern Ireland Ulster Marketing Surveys 304 18/05 – 02/06 1 273
TOTAL NUMBER OF INTERVIEWS 16029