

Blood donation and blood transfusions

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This survey was requested by the Directorate-General Health and Consumers and coordinated by the Directorate-General for Communication (“Research and Speechwriting” Unit).

This document does not represent the point of view of the European Commission. The interpretations and opinions contained in it are solely those of the authors.

Eurobarometer 72.3

Blood donation and blood transfusions

Conducted by TNS Opinion & Social at the request of
Directorate General Health and Consumers

Survey co-ordinated by
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INTRODUCTION

The objective of this special Eurobarometer survey on European attitudes on blood donation and transfusion is twofold. Firstly, it aims at answering whether respondents have given blood before, and secondly what their perceptions are of changes in the safety of blood transfusions over the past ten years. The following analysis shows results at the EU level, by country and by socio economic factors.

The report is based on a Eurobarometer survey of 26,788 European citizens carried out in October 2009 in the 27 European Union Member States¹.

The last survey on blood donation and transfusion was conducted in 2002, within the then 15 European Union Member States².

This Eurobarometer survey was commissioned by the European Commission's Directorate General SANCO. It was carried out by the TNS Opinion & Social network between 2 October and 19 October 2009. The methodology used is that of Special Eurobarometer surveys as carried out by Directorate General for Communication ("Research and Speechwriting" Unit)³. A technical note on the methodology for interviews conducted by the institutes within the TNS Opinion & Social network is annexed to this report. This note indicates the interview methods and the confidence intervals⁴.

The Eurobarometer web site can be consulted at the following address:

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

We would like to take the opportunity to thank all the respondents across the continent who have given their time to take part in this survey.

Without their active participation, this study would not have been possible.

¹ Further information on the methodology used can be found in the technical note which specifies the interview methods as well as the intervals of confidence.

² http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_183.4_fr.pdf

³ http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/index_en.htm

⁴ The results tables are included in the annex. It should be noted that the total of the percentages in the tables of this report may exceed 100% when the respondent can give several answers to the same question.

In this report, the countries are represented by their official abbreviations. The abbreviations used in this report correspond to:

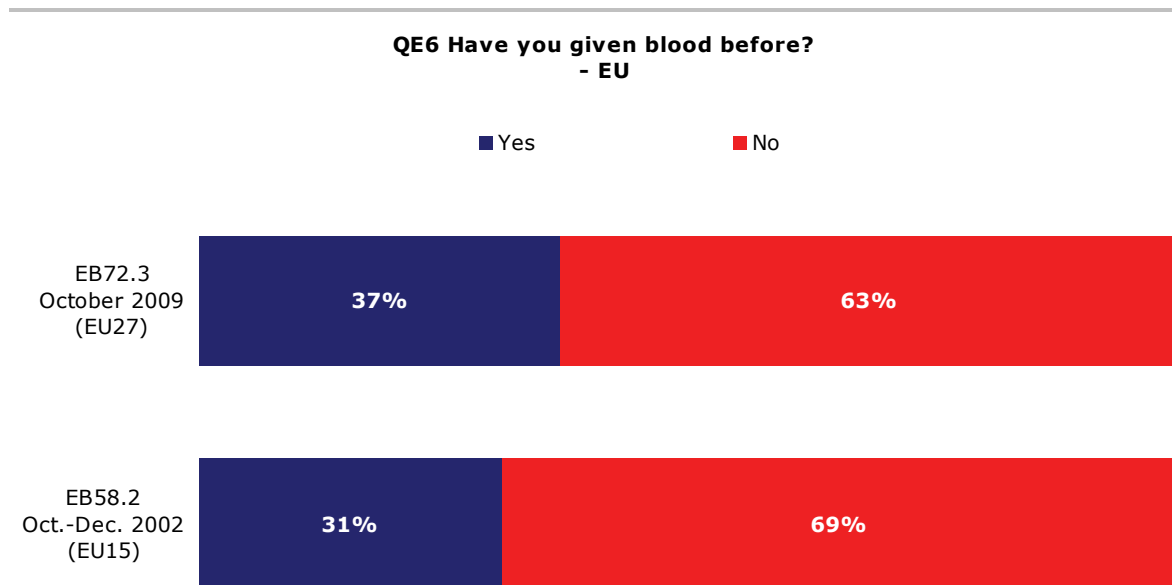
ABBREVIATIONS

EU27	European Union – 27 Member States
DK/NA	Don't know / No answer
BE	Belgium
BG	Bulgaria
CZ	Czech Republic
DK	Denmark
<i>D-E</i>	<i>East Germany</i>
DE	Germany
<i>D-W</i>	<i>West Germany</i>
EE	Estonia
EL	Greece
ES	Spain
FR	France
IE	Ireland
IT	Italy
CY	Republic of Cyprus
LT	Lithuania
LV	Latvia
LU	Luxembourg
HU	Hungary
MT	Malta
NL	The Netherlands
AT	Austria
PL	Poland
PT	Portugal
RO	Romania
SI	Slovenia
SK	Slovakia
FI	Finland
SE	Sweden
UK	The United Kingdom

1. BLOOD DONATION

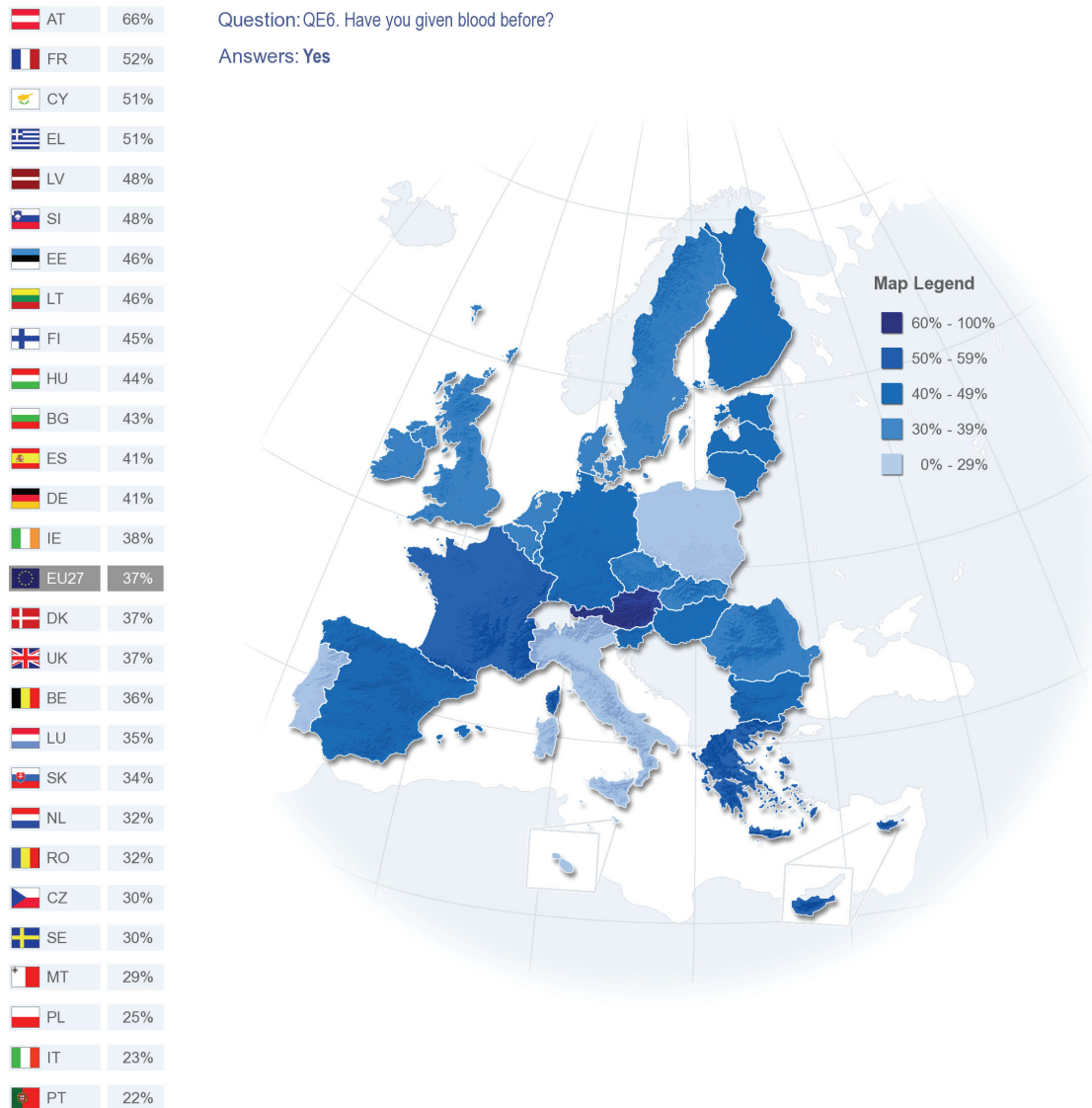
- Just under four in ten Europeans have given blood before -

Some 37% of European citizens have given blood. This is significantly higher than the percentage recorded for this question in the preceding Eurobarometer in 2002 (31%) when the European Union was composed of 15 Member States.



A analysis of blood donation at country level reveals some significant differences, but no particular geographical skew. The countries with the highest levels of blood donation are Austria (66%), France (52%), Greece and the Republic of Cyprus (51%). A number of the newer Member States, and Eastern European countries generally, recorded blood donation levels over 40% (higher than the EU27 average of 37%), including Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary and Slovenia.

In contrast, the lowest proportions of respondents who stated that they had already given blood are noted in Portugal (22%), Italy (23%), Poland (25%), Malta (29%) and Sweden (30%).








The most significant increases in blood donation levels between 2002 and 2009 are recorded in Austria (51% up to 66%), France (38% up to 52%), Greece (40% up to 51%), Spain (25% up to 41%), and Germany (31% up to 41%).

There are some significant differences in blood donation levels revealed by a **socio-demographic analysis**.

- ❖ Beginning with gender: males are significantly more likely than females to have donated blood before (44% compared to 31%).
- ❖ While willingness to donate organs skews to the 25-54 age group, blood donation has a broader age skew, 25 and over, with a significant skew to 40-54 year olds (46%).

- ❖ People who have studied to age 20 or longer are more likely to have donated blood than those who left school at 15 or younger (46% compared to 32%), as are people in managerial jobs (49%) compared to those who look after the home (25%), the unemployed (33%) or the retired (39%).

QE6 Have you given blood before?			
	Yes	No	DK
EU27	37%	63%	0%
Sex			
 Male	44%	56%	0%
 Female	31%	69%	0%
Age			
 15-24	21%	79%	0%
25-39	36%	64%	0%
40-54	46%	54%	0%
55 +	39%	60%	1%
Education (End of)			
 15-	32%	68%	0%
16-19	40%	60%	0%
20+	46%	54%	0%
Still studying	19%	81%	0%
Respondent occupation scale			
 Self-employed	44%	56%	0%
Managers	49%	51%	0%
Other white collars	39%	61%	0%
Manual workers	41%	59%	0%
House persons	25%	75%	0%
Unemployed	33%	67%	0%
Retired	39%	60%	1%
Students	19%	81%	0%

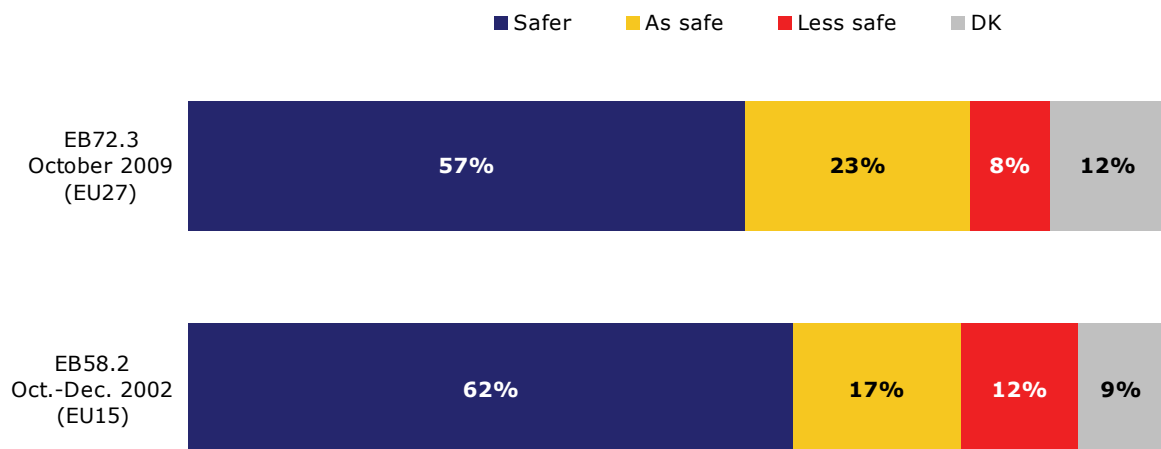
2. BLOOD TRANSFUSIONS

- The majority of Europeans think that blood transfusions are safer than they were around ten years ago -

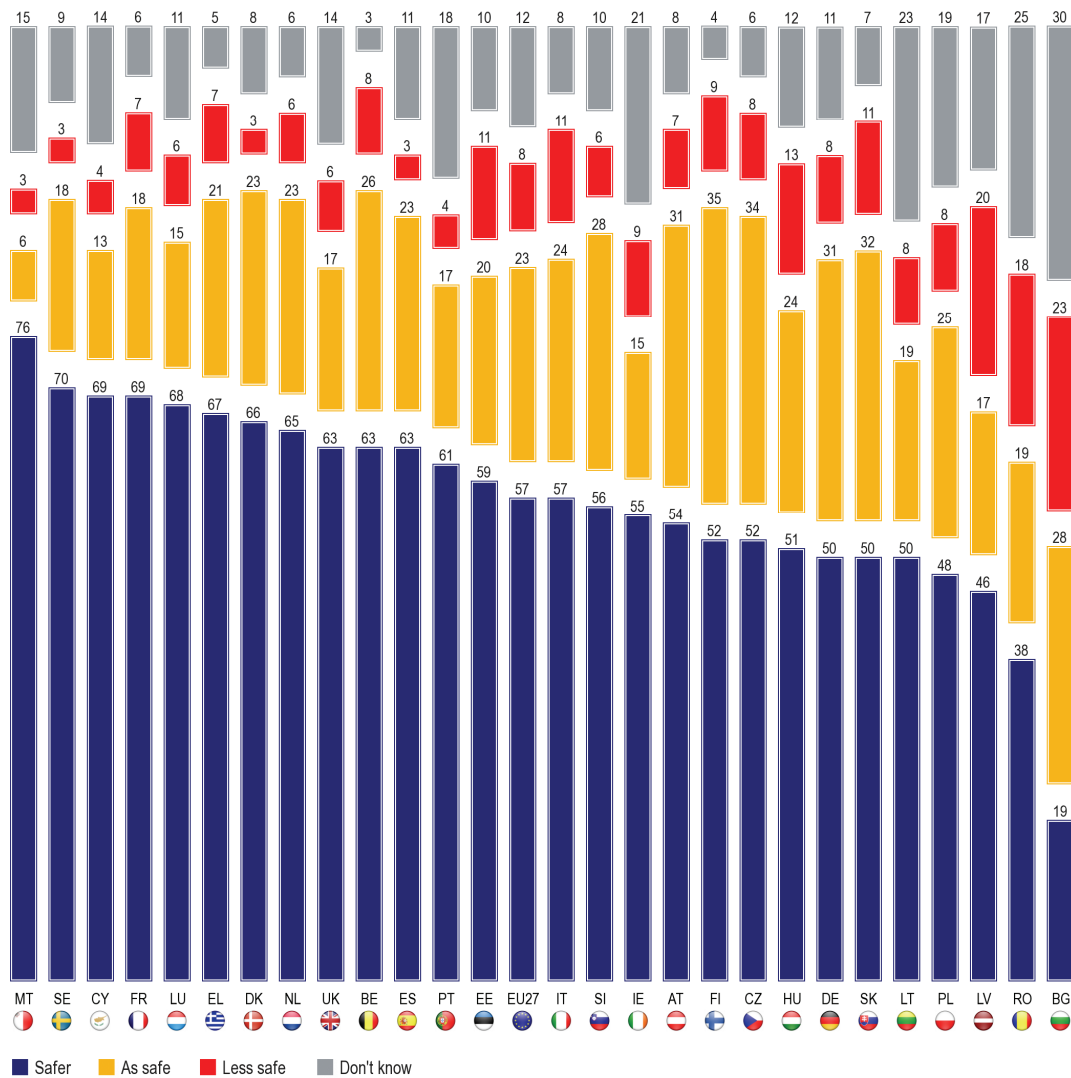
Nearly six in ten (57%) of European citizens agree that blood transfusions are safer than they were around 10 years ago, compared to 23% who think that there has been no change, 9% who think transfusions are less safe now, and 12% who say they 'don't know'. This relatively high percentage is interesting when considering the fact that fewer than four in ten people have given blood.

While there has been a significant increase in the level of blood donation recorded by Eurobarometer between 2002 and 2009, perceptions around the safety of blood transfusions have remained stable over this period (in 2002 the EU15 percentage of people who believed blood transfusions were 'safer now' or 'as safe' was 79%, compared to 80% in the 2009 wave).

QE7 Do you think that blood transfusions are safer, as safe or less safe than they were around 10 years ago?
- EU



QE7. Do you think that blood transfusions are safer, as safe or less safe than they were around 10 years ago?



The respondents most likely to think that blood transfusions are safer now than they were 10 years ago are those who reside in Malta (76%), Sweden (70%), France and the Republic of Cyprus (69%). There have been significant decreases in the percentage of interviewees who perceive transfusions to be safer, between the 2002 and 2009 Eurobarometers, in Sweden (81% in 2002), Spain (79% in 2002 down to 66% in 2009) and Denmark (75% in 2002 down to 66% in 2009).




Respondents in Bulgaria are most likely to think that blood transfusions are less safe now (23%), and also report the highest level of confusion on whether there has been any change (30% 'don't know'). Those from Latvia and Romania are the next most

likely to think that blood transfusions are less safe now (20% and 18%), and also exhibit relatively high 'don't know' levels (17% and 25% respectively).

A **socio-demographic analysis** reveals only minor differences:

- ❖ Perceptions of improved safety in blood transfusions are stronger among those under the age of 25: nearly two thirds of people 15-24 (65%) think that blood transfusions are safer now than they were ten years ago, compared to 51% of those over 54. Consequently, students are more likely than average to show positive perceptions (66%).
- ❖ As noted in regard to blood donation, education and job level are minor discriminators in driving more positive perceptions of improved blood transfusion safety: people who have studied to age 20 or beyond are more likely than those who left school at age 15 or younger to have positive perceptions (62% compared to 52%) as are those in managerial jobs (65%) compared to people looking after the home (53%), the unemployed (54%) and the retired (50%).
- ❖ Financial hardship is a factor influencing perceptions of the safety of blood transfusions now compared to ten years ago. Just under half (49%) of respondents who report having difficulty paying their bills most of the time consider blood transfusions to be safer now, compared to nearly six in ten (59%) of those who almost never experience this difficulty.

QE7 Do you think that blood transfusions are safer, as safe or less safe than they were around 10 years ago?

	Safer	As safe	Less safe	DK
EU27	57%	23%	8%	12%
Age				
 15-24	65%	17%	5%	13%
25-39	60%	23%	7%	10%
40-54	58%	25%	8%	9%
55 +	51%	24%	11%	14%
Education (End of)				
 15-	52%	22%	10%	16%
16-19	56%	25%	9%	10%
20+	62%	23%	7%	8%
Still studying	66%	17%	4%	13%
Respondent occupation scale				
 Self- employed	56%	26%	8%	10%
Managers	65%	23%	6%	6%
Other white collars	60%	26%	6%	8%
Manual workers	60%	22%	8%	10%
House persons	53%	24%	10%	13%
Unemployed	54%	22%	11%	13%
Retired	50%	24%	11%	15%
Students	66%	17%	4%	13%
Difficulties paying bills				
Most of the time	49%	22%	13%	16%
From time to time	55%	25%	9%	11%
Almost never	59%	23%	7%	11%

CONCLUSIONS

- **Less than four in ten (37%) Europeans have given blood in the past, according to the latest Eurobarometer results -**

There has been a significant positive evolution in the percentage of respondents who report having given blood in the October 2009 wave compared to the preceding Eurobarometer in 2002 (31%). This is driven largely by the fact that many of the countries which joined the European Union after 2004 report higher than average levels of blood donation, as well as some notable increases among older Member States: Austria, France, Greece, Spain and Germany. The analysis of blood donation by country reveals no particular skews to region.

The results regarding perceptions of the safety of blood transfusions are encouraging: a majority of Europeans (57%) think that the safety of transfusions has improved over the past ten years. The proportion of interviewees who perceive blood transfusions to be safer or as safe as they were ten years ago has remained relatively stable from the 2002 to the 2009 Eurobarometer. This suggests, then, that campaigns focusing on the need for transfusions, and more specifically blood donors, may be successful in encouraging increased levels of blood donation in Europe.

ANNEXES

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER N°333b

“Blood donation and blood transfusions”

TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS

Between the 2nd and the 19th of October 2009, TNS Opinion & Social, a consortium created between TNS plc and TNS opinion, carried out wave 72.3 of the EUROBAROMETER, on request of the EUROPEAN COMMISSION, Directorate-General for Communication, “Research and Speechwriting”.

The SPECIAL EUROBAROMETER N°333b is part of wave 72.3 and covers the population of the respective nationalities of the European Union Member States, resident in each of the Member States and aged 15 years and over. The basic sample design applied in all states is a multi-stage, random (probability) one. In each country, a number of sampling points was drawn with probability proportional to population size (for a total coverage of the country) and to population density.

In order to do so, the sampling points were drawn systematically from each of the “administrative regional units”, after stratification by individual unit and type of area. They thus represent the whole territory of the countries surveyed according to the EUROSTAT NUTS II (or equivalent) and according to the distribution of the resident population of the respective nationalities in terms of metropolitan, urban and rural areas. In each of the selected sampling points, a starting address was drawn, at random. Further addresses (every Nth address) were selected by standard “random route” procedures, from the initial address. In each household, the respondent was drawn, at random (following the “closest birthday rule”). All interviews were conducted face-to-face in people's homes and in the appropriate national language. As far as the data capture is concerned, CAPI (*Computer Assisted Personal Interview*) was used in those countries where this technique was available.

ABBREVIATIONS	COUNTRIES	INSTITUTES	N° INTERVIEWS	FIELDWORK DATES	POPULATION 15+
BE	Belgium	TNS Dimarso	1.001	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	8.866.411
BG	Bulgaria	TNS BBSS	1.000	02/10/2009 12/10/2009	6.584.957
CZ	Czech Rep.	TNS Aisa	1.066	02/10/2009 15/10/2009	8.987.535
DK	Denmark	TNS Gallup DK	1.040	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	4.503.365
DE	Germany	TNS Infratest	1.550	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	64.545.601
EE	Estonia	Emor	1.011	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	916.000
IE	Ireland	TNS MRBI	1.008	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	3.375.399
EL	Greece	TNS ICAP	1.000	03/10/2009 19/10/2009	8.693.566
ES	Spain	TNS Demoscopia	1.003	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	39.059.211
FR	France	TNS Sofres	1.000	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	47.620.942
IT	Italy	TNS Infratest	1.032	02/10/2009 17/10/2009	51.252.247
CY	Rep. of Cyprus	Synovate	503	02/10/2009 17/10/2009	651.400
LV	Latvia	TNS Latvia	1.018	03/10/2009 18/10/2009	1.448.719
LT	Lithuania	TNS Gallup Lithuania	1.026	02/10/2009 16/10/2009	2.849.359
LU	Luxembourg	TNS ILReS	513	05/10/2009 16/10/2009	404.907
HU	Hungary	TNS Hungary	1.044	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	8.320.614
MT	Malta	MISCO	500	02/10/2009 17/10/2009	335.476
NL	Netherlands	TNS NIPO	1.007	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	13.288.200
AT	Austria	Österreichisches Gallup-Institut	1.005	02/10/2009 16/10/2009	6.973.277
PL	Poland	TNS OBOP	1.000	03/10/2009 19/10/2009	32.306.436
PT	Portugal	TNS EUROTESTE	1.031	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	8.080.915
RO	Romania	TNS CSOP	1.010	02/10/2009 15/10/2009	18.246.731
SI	Slovenia	RM PLUS	1.031	02/10/2009 19/10/2009	1.748.308
SK	Slovakia	TNS AISA SK	1.006	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	4.549.954
FI	Finland	TNS Gallup Oy	1.017	02/10/2009 19/10/2009	4.412.321
SE	Sweden	TNS GALLUP	1.012	02/10/2009 19/10/2009	7.723.931
UK	United Kingdom	TNS UK	1.354	02/10/2009 18/10/2009	51.081.866
TOTAL			26.788	02/10/2009 19/10/2009	406.827.648

For each country a comparison between the sample and the universe was carried out. The Universe description was derived from Eurostat population data or from national statistics offices. For all countries surveyed, a national weighting procedure, using marginal and intercellular weighting, was carried out based on this Universe description. In all countries, gender, age, region and size of locality were introduced in the iteration procedure. For international weighting (i.e. EU averages), TNS Opinion & Social applies the official population figures as provided by EUROSTAT or national statistic offices. The total population figures for input in this post-weighting procedure are listed above.

Readers are reminded that survey results are estimations, the accuracy of which, everything being equal, rests upon the sample size and upon the observed percentage. With samples of about 1,000 interviews, the real percentages vary within the following confidence limits:

Observed percentages	10% or 90%	20% or 80%	30% or 70%	40% or 60%	50%
Confidence limits	± 1.9 points	± 2.5 points	± 2.7 points	± 3.0 points	± 3.1 points

QUESTIONNAIRE

NEW

ASK QE6 AND QE7 ONLY IN EU27 - OTHERS GO TO DEMOGRAPHICS

QE6 Have you given blood before?

Yes	1
No	2
DK	3

EB58.2 Q59

NOUVEAU

POSER QE6 ET QE7 UNIQUEMENT EN UE27 - LES AUTRES ALLER AUX DEMOGRAPHIQUES

QE6 Avez-vous déjà donné votre sang ?

Oui	1
Non	2
NSP	3

EB58.2 Q59

QE7 Do you think that blood transfusions are safer, as safe or less safe than they were around 10 years ago?

QE7 Pensez-vous que les transfusions sanguines sont plus sûres, aussi sûres ou moins sûres qu'il y a environ 10 ans ?

(READ OUT – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

(LIRE – UNE SEULE REPONSE)

Safer	1
As safe	2
Less safe	3
DK	4

Plus sûres	1
Aussi sûres	2
Moins sûres	3
NSP	4

EB58.2 Q61

EB58.2 Q61

TABLES

Special Eurobarometer 333b – Blood donation and blood transfusions



QE6 Avez-vous déjà donné votre sang ?
 QE6 Have you given blood before?
 QE6 Haben Sie schon einmal Blut gespendet?

	UE27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	D-W	DE	D-E	EE	IE
	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Oui	37	36	43	30	37	41	41	44	46	38
Non	63	64	57	70	63	59	59	56	54	62
NSP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT
	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Yes	51	41	52	23	51	48	46	35	44	29
No	49	59	48	76	49	52	54	65	56	71
DK	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK
	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Ja	32	66	25	22	32	48	34	45	30	37
Nein	68	34	75	78	67	52	66	55	70	63
WN	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0

Special Eurobarometer 333b – Blood donation and blood transfusions



QE7 Pensez-vous que les transfusions sanguines sont plus sûres, aussi sûres ou moins sûres qu'il y a environ 10 ans ?
 QE7 Do you think that blood transfusions are safer, as safe or less safe than they were around 10 years ago?
 QE7 Sind Sie der Ansicht, dass Bluttransfusionen heute sicherer, genauso sicher oder unsicherer sind als vor 10 Jahren?

	UE27	BE	BG	CZ	DK	D-W	DE	D-E	EE	IE
	EU27	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Plus sûres	57	63	19	52	66	51	50	46	59	55
Aussi sûres	23	26	28	34	23	31	31	29	20	15
Moins sûres	8	8	23	8	3	6	8	18	11	9
NSP	12	3	30	6	8	12	11	7	10	21

	EL	ES	FR	IT	CY	LV	LT	LU	HU	MT
	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Safer	67	63	69	57	69	46	50	68	51	76
As safe	21	23	18	24	13	17	19	15	24	6
Less safe	7	3	7	11	4	20	8	6	13	3
DK	5	11	6	8	14	17	23	11	12	15

	NL	AT	PL	PT	RO	SI	SK	FI	SE	UK
	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB	EB
	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3	72.3
Sicherer	65	54	48	61	38	56	50	52	70	63
Genauso sicher	23	31	25	17	19	28	32	35	18	17
Unsicherer	6	7	8	4	18	6	11	9	3	6
WN	6	8	19	18	25	10	7	4	9	14