

General public survey after the introduction of the euro in Slovenia

Summary

Fieldwork: January-February 2007

Report: March 2007

This survey was requested by Economic and Financial Affairs, R-4 and coordinated by Directorate General Communication

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.

Flash EB Series #205

General public survey after the introduction of euro in Slovenia

Conducted by
The Gallup Organization, Hungary
upon the request of the
Economic and Financial Affairs, R-4



Survey organised and managed by the
Eurobarometer Team of Directorate-General
Communication

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THE GALLUP ORGANIZATION

Introduction

The „Survey of the general public in Slovenia on the introduction of euro ", Flash Eurobarometer 205, was conducted for the European Commission, Directorate-General Economic and Financial Affairs.

The survey covers the following themes:

- personal experience when using euro cash, converting from tolar to euro, and understanding values in euro;
- personal experience regarding the dual display of prices: how useful respondents found it, and whether or not it was implemented correctly;
- personal experience with euro coin starter kits; problems experienced with exchanging tolar into euro;
- awareness of the security features of euro banknotes;
- fears regarding correct price conversion and the correct rounding of prices, and fears about increased inflation due to the changeover;
- sources and channels of information (regarding the changeover), sense of being informed about the euro; satisfaction with the information received from national authorities; and the usefulness of euro spots, ads and the euro calculator.

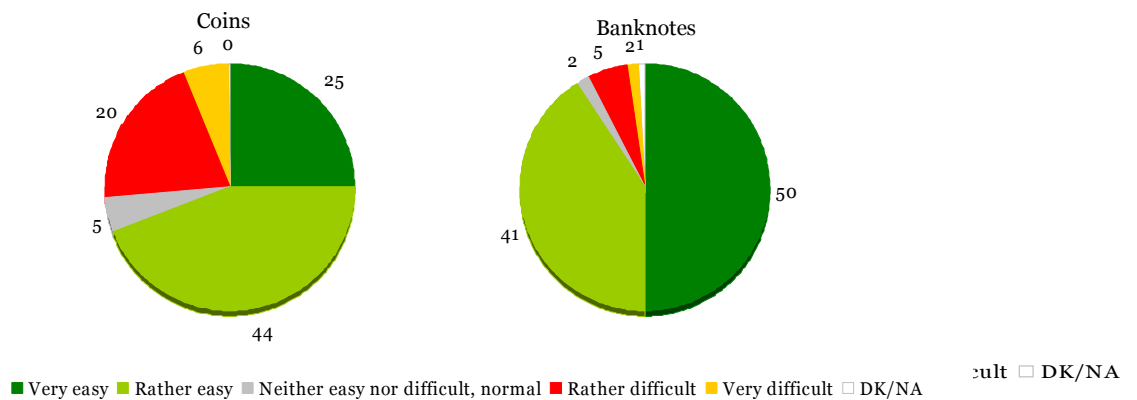
The telephone interviews were conducted between the 29th of January, 2007 and the 3rd of February, 2007 by CATI d.o.o Slovenian partner institute. 1004 interviews were conducted. The national sample was representative of the population aged 15 years and above. Smaller discrepancies stemming from sampling procedure were corrected by a weighting procedure called *raking*. The sample was weighted for age, sex, region and economic activity to accurately reflect the parameters of the universe.

Personal experience

The majority of Slovenes reported that they distinguish easily both between euro banknotes and euro coins. Nearly all respondents confirmed this about banknotes (91%). While half of the population said that they *very easily* differentiate the banknotes, only a quarter of the population said the same about the coins.

While 7% of Slovenians find it difficult to manipulate and differentiate euro banknotes --and 26% say the same about euro coins-- only 2% and 6%, respectively, say that it is *very difficult*¹.

How easy or difficult is to distinguish and manipulate euro cash



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

Q1. / Q2. When you pay cash, would you say that it is: very easy, rather easy, rather difficult or very difficult to distinguish and to manipulate coins / banknotes?
%, base: all respondents

rather difficult or
coins / banknotes?
base: all respondents

¹ We note that we measured similar proportions in our last euro survey in September 2006 in the then 12 euro-area countries. 94% of citizens regarded the euro banknotes to be easily distinguishable, while 74% said the same about euro coins. (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 193. The euro, 5 years after the introduction of the banknotes and coins in 12 Member States.)

The next question asked which currency Slovenian citizens used as a mental benchmark when

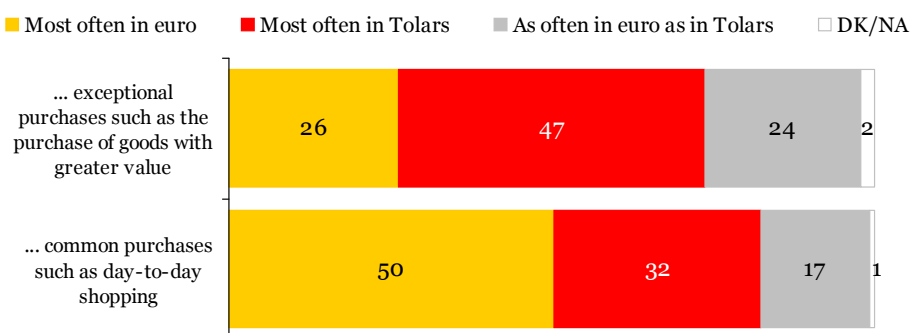
- purchasing exceptional, greater value products; and
- doing common, day-to-day shopping.

Results show that while greater value exceptional purchases are mainly calculated in tolar, most Slovenians calculate in euro when it comes to day-to-day shopping².

47% of Slovenians calculate great value purchases most frequently in tolar, and 26% count in euro. Another quarter of the population responded that for such purchases they count in tolar as often as they count in euro (24%).

When it comes to day-to-day shopping, half of the respondents use euro most frequently as a mental benchmark (50%), and nearly a third (32%) use tolar. 17% of Slovenians reported most often using both tolar and euro as mental benchmarks when purchasing everyday products.

The most frequently used currency when counting and calculating ...



source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

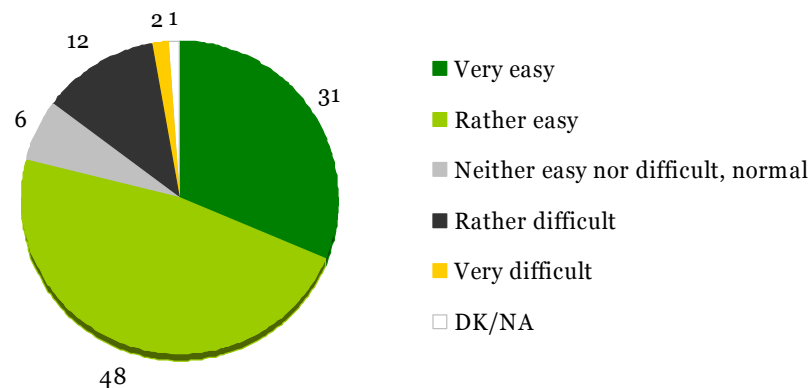
Q3. In which currency do you count or calculate most often when you do ...
%, base: all respondents

The vast majority of the Slovenian population agrees that it is easy (or very easy) to convert tolar to euro (79%), and nearly a third found it *very easy* (31%).

14% of Slovenians said that it was difficult for them to convert tolar to euro; however, a mere 2% reported it to be very difficult.

² We saw a similar tendency in the then 12 euro-area countries. Most citizens calculated goods with greater value in their national currency (40%), and less often in euro (29%). For their day-to-day shopping, however, most people calculated in euro (57%), although some used their national currency (22%). (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 193.)

How easy or difficult is to convert from Tolar to euro



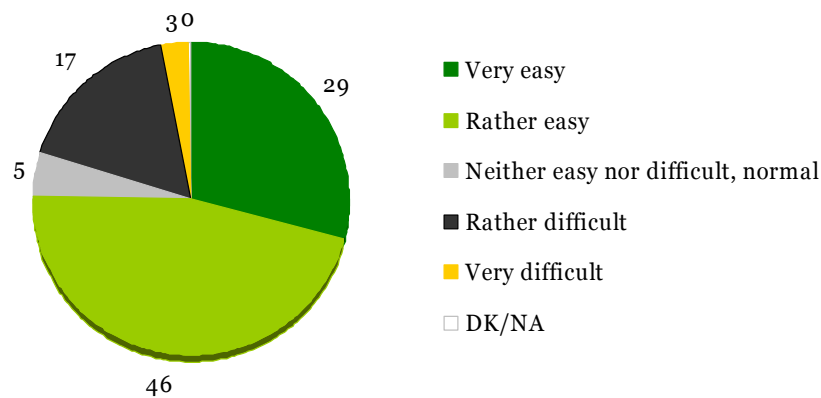
Source:
FLASH EB 205
January –February 2007

Q4. How easy or difficult is for you to convert from Tolar to Euro?
%, base: all respondents

75% of the Slovenian respondents reported that they understand the values displayed in euro very or rather easily. 29% said that they *very easily* understand values in euro.

Every fifth Slovenian (20%), found it very or rather difficult to understand values expressed in euro, while 3% found it *very difficult*³.

How easy or difficult is to understand the value in euro



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January –February 2007

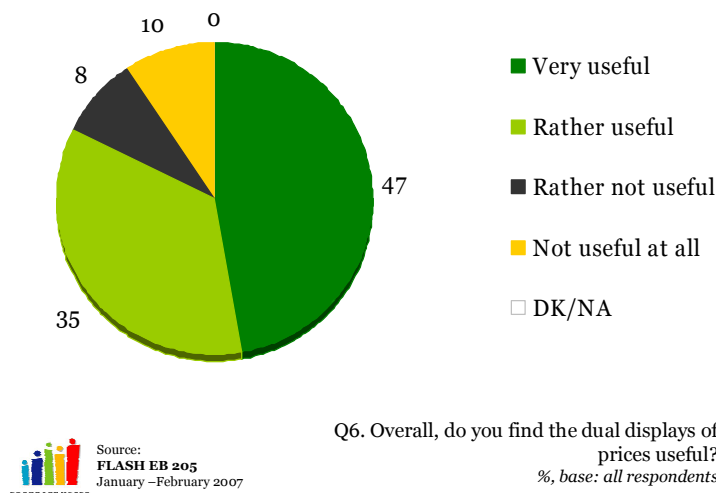
Q5. And how easy or difficult is for you to understand the value in Euro?
%, base: all respondents

Nearly half of the population found the dual display of prices *very useful* (47%); the combined proportions of those who found it very useful and those who found it useful was 82%.

³In 2006, the citizens in the then 12 euro-area countries were asked how difficult the use of the euro is after five years. The majority do not find the euro at all difficult to use (59%), while for 15% it causes a lot of difficulty. (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 193.)

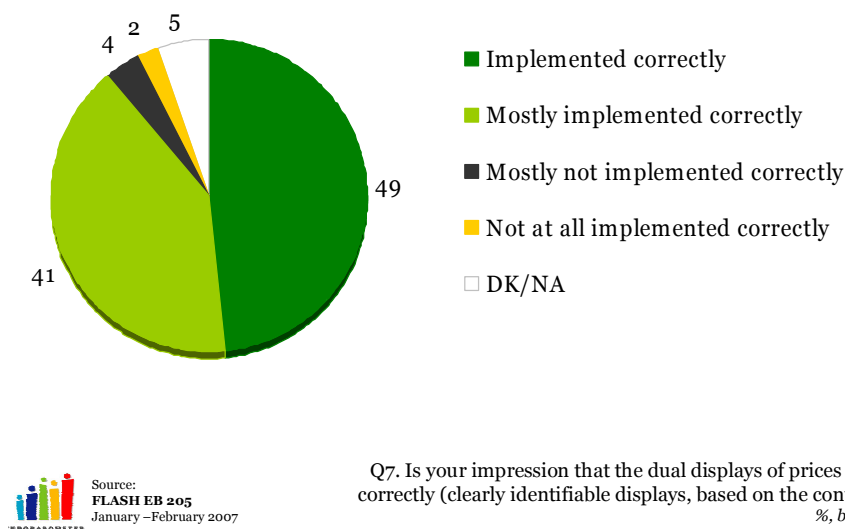
On the other hand, 18% of Slovenian citizens found the dual display of prices *rather not useful or not useful at all*, while one out of ten respondents found it *not to be useful at all* (10%)⁴.

Overall usefulness of the dual displays of prices



Half of Slovenians believe that the dual display of prices was implemented correctly (49%), while 41% think that it was mostly implemented correctly. Barely 6% of Slovenians thought that it was not at all or mostly not implemented correctly.

The correct implementation of the dual displays of prices

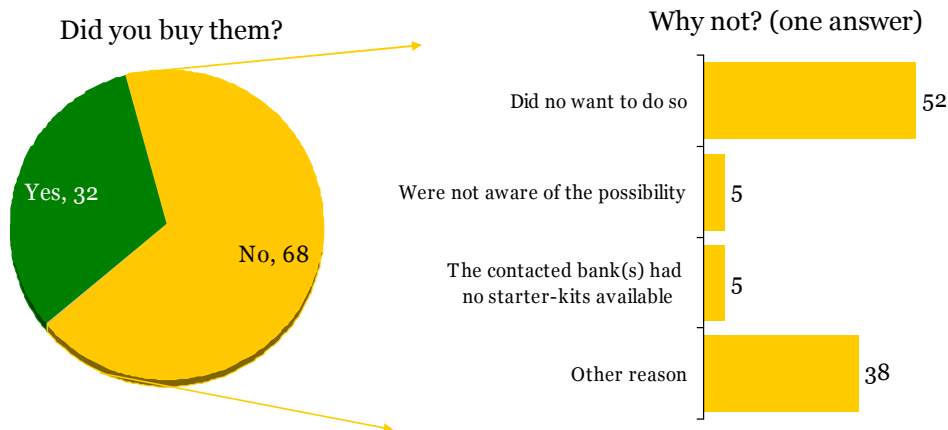


A third of Slovenian citizens bought euro coin starter kits before January 1, 2007 (32%), while two thirds did not (68%).

⁴ In September 2006, 60% of the citizens of the then 12 euro-area countries said that it was useful that the shops extended the dual display of prices (and 38% disagreed); and 58% would like the dual display to be permanently maintained (39% disagree). (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 193.)

Among those who did not buy euro starter kits, the majority said that they did not want to do so (52%). Respondents mentioned reasons not listed in the questionnaire in the next highest proportion (38%). 5% of those without euro starter kits could not obtain such a kit because the contacted bank(s) did not have these available. Another 5% of the respondents were not aware of this possibility.

Buying euro coin starter kits, and reasons of not buying them



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January –February 2007
EUROBAROMETER

Q8. Did you buy one or more euro coin starter-kits before 1 January 2007?
%, base: all respondents

Q9. Why did you not buy a euro coin starter-kit?
%, base: those who did not buy euro coin starter kits before 1 January 2007

Only 3% of Slovenian citizens experienced difficulties in the first week of January when they wanted to exchange tolar to euro or to withdraw euro cash at a bank. The vast majority of the population did not experience any problems (96%).

The few respondents who reported experiencing problems (32 persons altogether) were asked about the kinds of problems they experienced. Respondents could choose between different pre-coded answers.

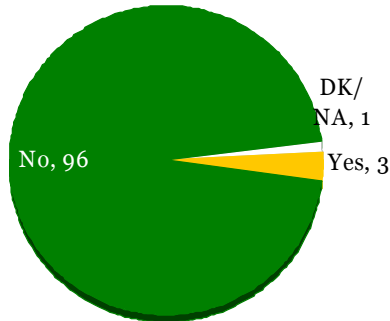
Citizens mentioned *long queues at counters* in the highest proportion (53%). “Other” reasons besides the ones listed in the questionnaire were mentioned by the same share of respondents (53%).

The second highest proportion of respondents mentioned that *there was not enough euro cash at the bank counters* (24%). The third highest proportion experienced that *ATMs were temporarily out of order* (12%).

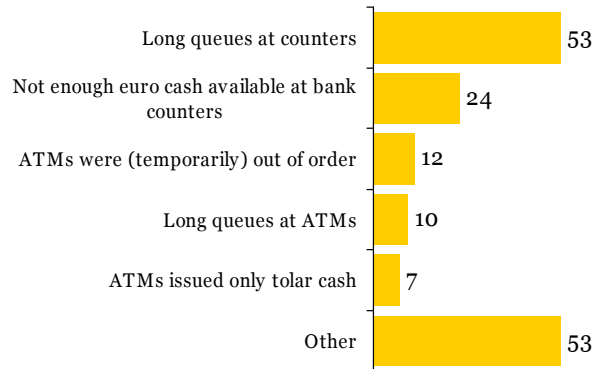
Every tenth person experiencing problems mentioned that there were *long queues at the ATMs* (10%). Finally, 7% said that *ATMs issued only tolar cash*.

Problems experienced when exchanging Tolars or withdrawing euro in the first week of January

Did you experience any problems?



What kinds of problems did you experience?



Source: FLASH EB 205 January –February 2007

Q10. When you exchanged Tolar cash into euro cash or withdrew euro cash with banks in the first week of January, did you experience any problems?

%, base: all respondents

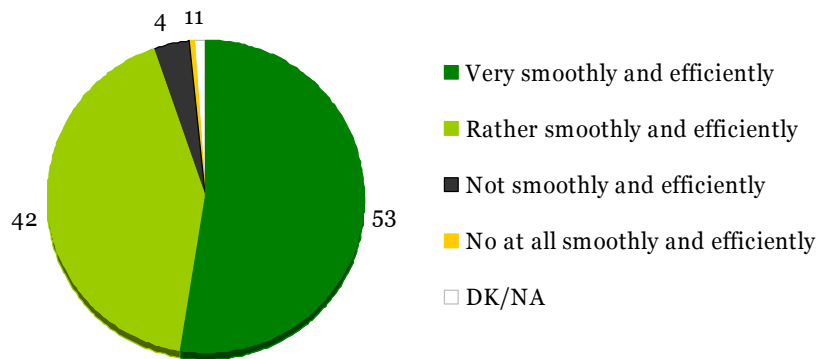
Q11. What kind of problems did you experience?

%, base: those who experienced any problem

The majority of Slovenians agreed that the changeover to euro happened very smoothly and efficiently (53%). Relatively many think that it was rather smooth and efficient (42%). Combining the proportions of positive answers, 95% of Slovenian citizens perceived the changeover to be successful.

Barely 5% disagreed, while 1% said that the changeover was not at all smooth or efficient.

The success of changeover



Source: FLASH EB 205 January –February 2007

Q12. Overall, did the changeover to the euro in your view happen smoothly and efficiently, or not?

%, base: all respondents

Knowledge

Euro banknotes have several security features which enable easy confirmation of genuineness. Due to the special print procedure, the banknotes feel unique. Held against light, the watermark, the security thread and the see-through number become visible. The front and back of a genuine banknote feature all three security elements. By tilting the banknote, a shifting image appears on the hologram on the front; on the back, the glossy stripe (on the €5, €10 and €20 banknotes) or the colour-changing number (on the €50, €100, €200 and €500 banknotes) becomes visible.

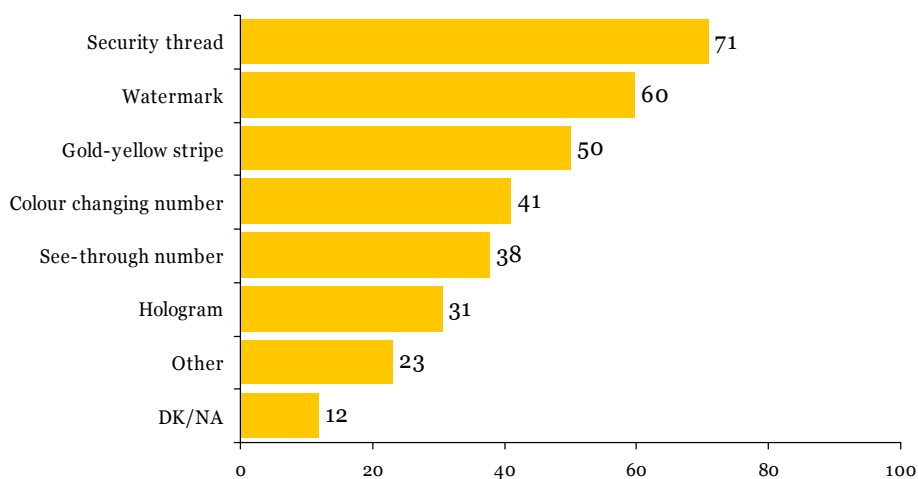
When asked to list the security features of the euro banknotes, every tenth Slovenian citizen did not reply (12%). (The answers were prompted, not spontaneous.)

Of the security elements of the euro banknotes, Slovenian citizens mentioned the *security thread* in the highest proportion (71%). Less than two thirds of respondents mentioned the *watermark* (60%), and half mentioned the *glossy stripe* (50%).

Ranking fourth among mentions, 41% of the respondents knew that the *colour-changing number* is also one of the security elements of euro banknotes, while 38% were aware of the *see-through number*.

The *hologram* was listed among the security elements in the lowest proportion; every third Slovenian citizen mentioned it (31%). Nearly one fourth of the respondents said that *other* elements not listed in the questionnaire were among the security features of euro banknotes (23%), e.g. lie colours, print, invisible security code, etc.

Familiarity with the security features of euro banknotes



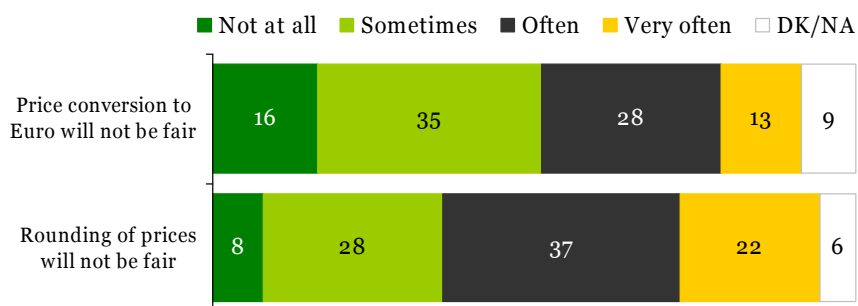
Fears

Slovenians were asked about their fears in terms of the euro changeover, related to unfair price conversions to euro, the unfair rounding of prices; and an increase in inflation. In general, a relatively large proportion of Slovenian citizens were worried about price rises due to the changeover to the euro⁵.

Slovenians are most worried about the *unfair rounding of prices*: 59% of the respondents mentioned that rounding of prices will often or very often not be fair. Every fifth said that they thought prices will very often be incorrectly rounded (22%). 8% of Slovenians did not think this will happen at all, and 28% were worried that it will happen sometimes.

Fewer people were afraid that the *price conversion would often or very often not be fair* (41%). Nevertheless, every tenth citizen was worried that very often, price conversion to euro would not be fair (13%). On the other hand, the majority thought that prices would *only sometimes* or *not at all* be incorrectly converted (51%). We note that twice as many people thought that incorrect price conversions would not happen *at all* than thought that incorrect rounding of prices would not happen at all (16% and 8%).

Fairness of price conversion to euro and of rounding of prices



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

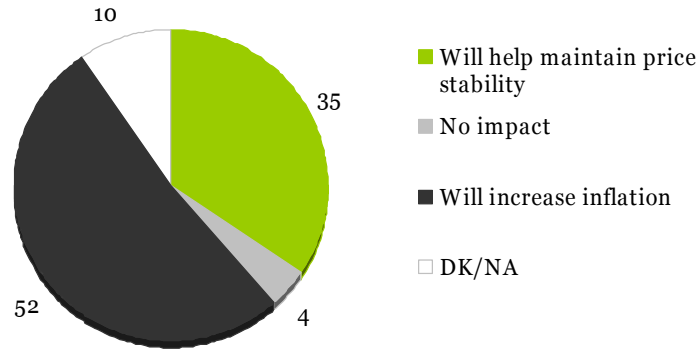
Q14. Do you think that during and after changeover to euro it will happen very often, often, sometimes or not at all, that ...
%, base: all respondents

⁵ The worries of Slovenians are not unique, contrary to opposite evidence (showing greater price stability in the euro-area compared to pre-euro period). In September 2006, the vast majority of euro-area citizens (93%) responded that in the last five years, since the introduction of euro cash, the euro has added to the increase of prices. (Source: Flash Eurobarometer 193.)

The majority believe that the euro will increase inflation (52%). Significantly less, one third of Slovenian citizens, believe the opposite: that the euro will help price stability (35%).

The proportion of those who believe that the euro will not have an impact on prices is barely 4%. The proportion of those who could not or did not want to answer this question was relatively high (10%).

Price stability or increased inflation?



Q14a. Do you think the euro will help to maintain price stability or, on the contrary, increase inflation in Slovenia?
%, base: all respondents

Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007
EUROBAROMETER

Information

Respondents were asked about the information source they used most frequently and the second most frequently to find out about the introduction of the euro.

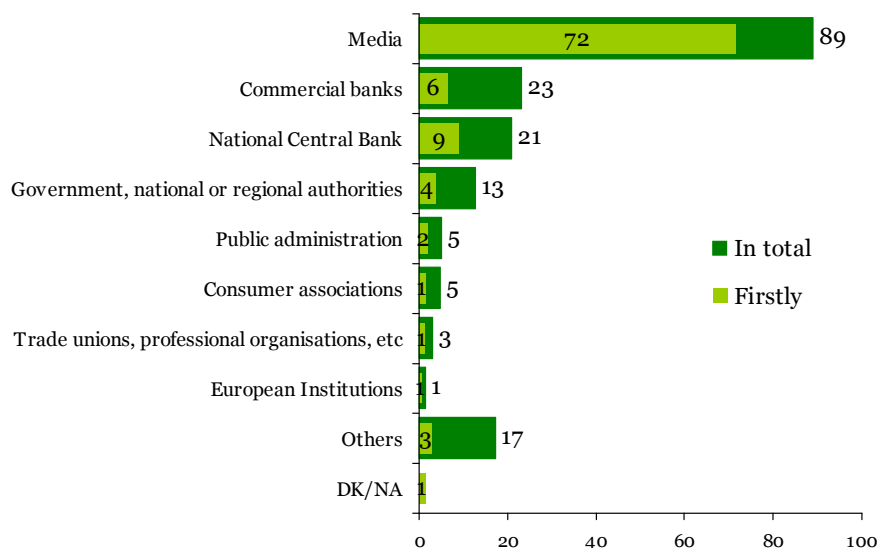
In line with our earlier findings, this survey confirms the outstanding role played by the *media* in distributing news and information about the euro and the European Union. On the whole (if we combine information sources mentioned in first and second place), 89% of Slovenian citizens obtained information related to the introduction of the euro from the media, and nearly three-fourths of the population mentioned the media as their primary channel of information (72%).

On the whole, Slovenians mentioned commercial banks as their second most frequently used source of information (23%). If we look at the order of first mentions, commercial banks were mentioned only in third place, in a far lower proportion than the media (6% vs. 72%).

All in all, the National Central Bank is the third most frequently “used” source of information (21%); and it is the second most frequently mentioned most preferred source (9%). Despite the fact that it is mentioned second most often as the primary source of information, its rates of mention are far lower than the rates of mention for the media are.

Every tenth citizen sought information in first and second place from government, national and regional authorities (13%). All the rest of the listed authorities were mentioned as channels of information relatively infrequently. 5% of respondents chose the public administration, and 5% opted for consumer associations in first and second place. Only 3% of respondents mentioned trade unions,

Sources of information about the euro’s introduction



Q15. Where do (did) you get information about the introduction? Firstly? And secondly?
%, base: all respondents

source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

and less than 2% mentioned European institutions in total. The latter is not surprising, as the European institutions are not natural sources for information on country-specific details of the changeover.

A relatively high proportion identified other authorities not listed as sources of information (17%).

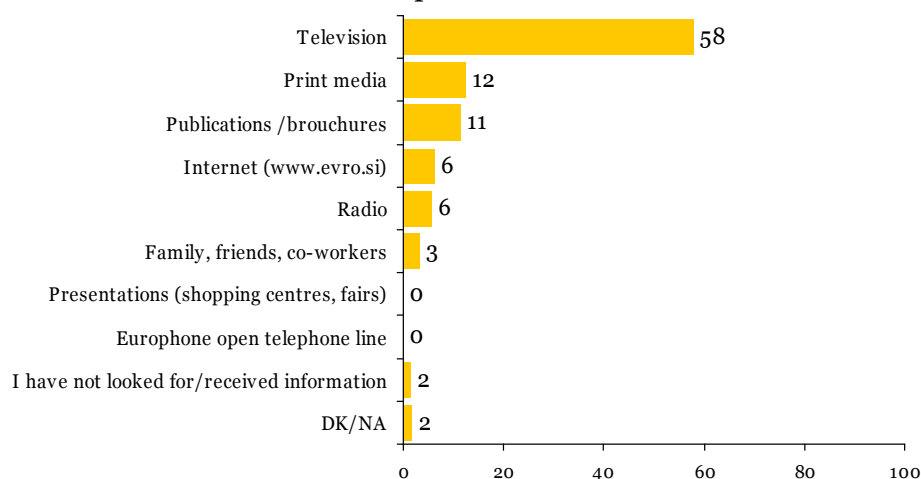
Television was the most efficient source of information during the changeover period; the majority of Slovenians selected this source (58%).

The second most efficient source was *print media* (12%), but it was mentioned in far lower proportions than television was. A similar proportion, about every tenth respondent named *publications and brochures* as the most efficient sources of information (11%).

All other sources were mentioned relatively rarely: *internet* and *radio* were mentioned as the most efficient source by 6-6% of citizens, while *family, friends, and co-workers* were mentioned by 3%.

2% of Slovenian citizens interviewed did not look for or did not receive information about the changeover to the euro. The proportion of those who could not or did not want to answer the question was also 2%.

The most efficient source of information during the changeover period



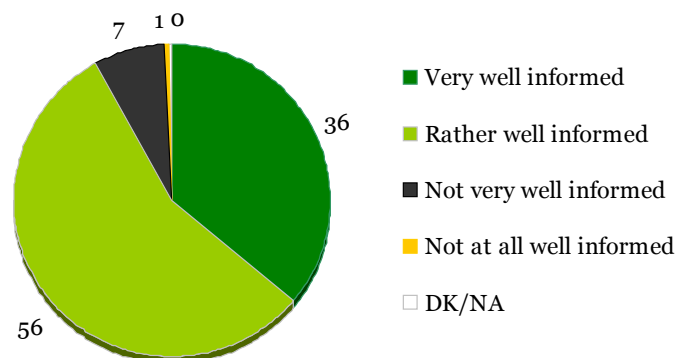
Source:
FLASH EB 205
January –February 2007

Q16. Which channels were the MOST efficient source of information during changeover period?
%, base: all respondents

Feeling informed about the euro

The vast majority of Slovenians felt themselves to be *well informed* about the euro (92%), and 36% considered themselves even *very well informed*.

8% of the citizens thought otherwise; only 1% saw themselves as *not at all well informed*.



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January –February 2007

Q17. To what extent do you feel informed about the euro? Do you feel... :
%, base: all respondents

We also asked Slovenian citizens about the first and second most important issues related to the euro *about which they would like to have more information*.

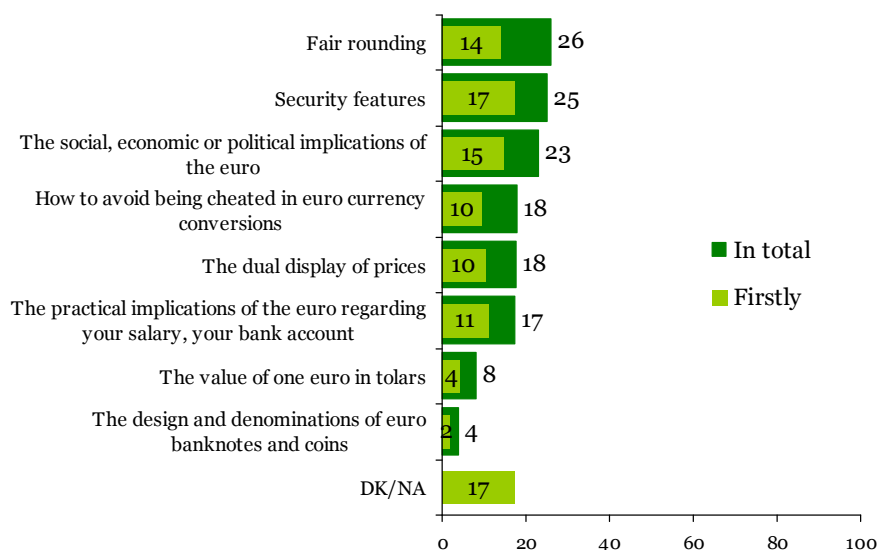
A relatively high proportion of Slovenians could not decide which euro-related issues they wanted more information about (17%).

On the whole, citizens would like to have more information most of all (in first and second place) about the *fair rounding of prices* (26%). Slovenians mentioned in similar proportions that they would like more information about *security features* (25%), and about the *social, economic and political implications of the euro* (23%). These issues were also among the primary concerns of Slovenian citizens, albeit in a different order. The highest percentage of respondents mentioned security features (17%), the next most frequently mentioned concern was the social, economic and political implications of the euro (15%), followed by the fair rounding of prices (14%).

All in all, 18% of Slovenians would also like to receive more information about *how to avoid being cheated in euro currency conversions*; about *the dual display of prices* (18%); and about the *practical implications of the euro regarding their salary and bank account* (17%).

Every tenth Slovenian (8%) would like to receive more information about the *value of one euro in tolar*s, while barely 4% say that they want more information about *the design and denominations of euro banknotes and coins*.

Most important euro-related issue about which respondent would like more information



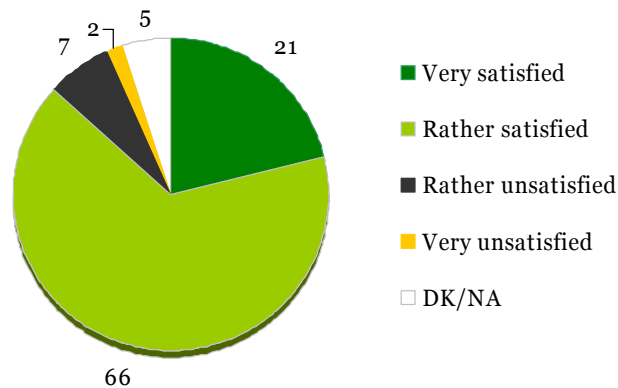
Q18. What is the most important issue about the euro that you would like to have more information on? Firstly? And secondly?
%, base: all respondents

Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

87% of Slovenian citizens were satisfied with the information provided by national authorities, and every fifth citizen reported being *very satisfied* (21%).

Nearly one tenth of Slovenians reported that they were unsatisfied with the information they received about the euro, and 2% were *very unsatisfied*. A relatively high percentage, 5% of the respondents did not want to or could not answer the question.

Satisfaction with the information provided by national authorities regarding the euro



Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

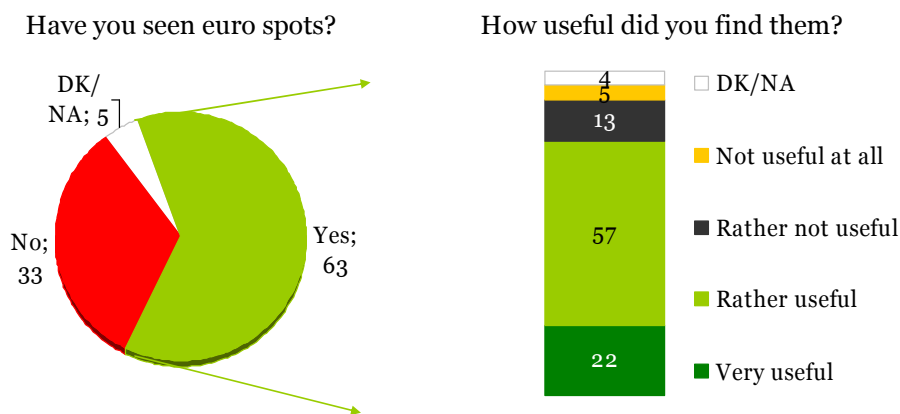
Q19. How satisfied are you with the information provided by the national authorities regarding the euro?
%, base: all respondents

Two-thirds of Slovenian citizens reported having seen *euro spots on television* (63%), while one third said they had not seen them (33%).

The vast majority of citizens who saw such euro spots found them useful (79%). Among them, every fifth citizen said that they were *very useful* (22%).

The proportion of those who saw these euro spots on television but did not regard them as useful was also relatively high (18%). 5% found these spots even *not to be useful at all*.

The usefulness of the euro spots on TV



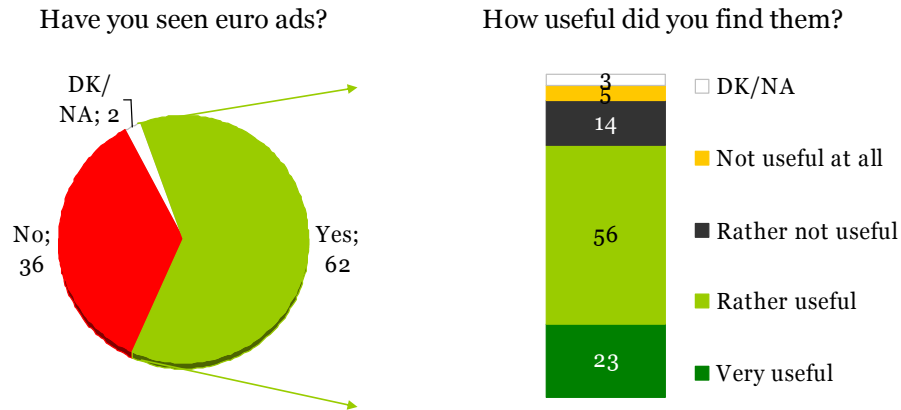
Source:
FLASH EB 205
January – February 2007

Q20. Have you seen the euro spots on TV?
%, base: all respondents
Q20a. How useful did you find them?
%, base: those who see the euro spots on TV

The proportions of citizens who reported having seen *euro advertisements in Slovenian magazines* (62%), and the percentage who reported not having seen them (36%) were similar to the proportions for euro spots.

Among those who saw euro ads in magazines, eight out of ten found them to be *useful* (79%), and every fifth respondent found them *very useful* (23%). A relatively high proportion did *not* find the euro ads in magazines useful (19%), and 5% said that these were *not useful to them at all* (similarly to the case of the euro spots).

The usefulness of the euro ads in Slovenian magazines



Q21. Have you seen the euro advertisements in Slovenian magazines?
%, base: all respondents

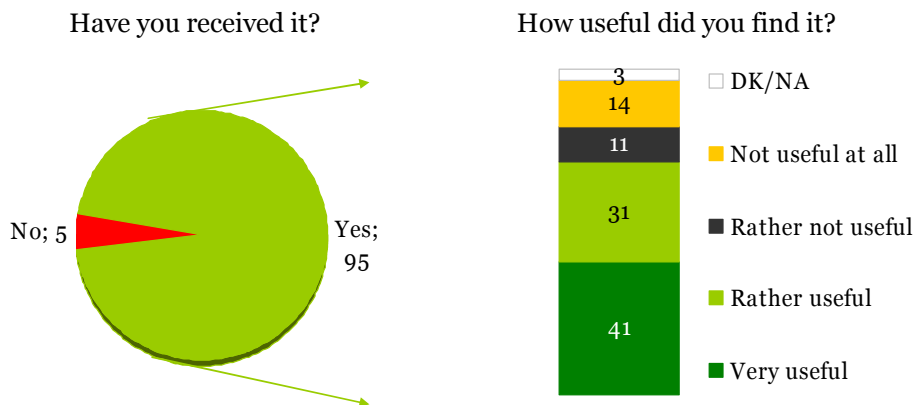
Q21a. How useful did you find them?
%, base: those who see the euro ads in Slovenian magazines

Source: FLASH EB 205 January – February 2007

Almost every respondent said that they had received a euro calculator (95%). Barely 5% of Slovenians said that they did not get one. Nearly three fourths of those who received such a euro calculator agreed that it was *useful* (72%), and two fifths said it was *very useful* (41%). A quarter of those citizens who received the euro calculator said that this tool was *not useful* (25%); and 14% of them said it was *not useful at all*.

The proportion of Slovenian citizens who considered the euro calculator which they had received to be very useful was much higher than the proportion of citizens who found the euro spots on TV or ads in the printed press to be very useful. On the other hand, the euro calculator was regarded as *not useful* by a much higher proportion than the proportion of citizens which considered TV spots or newspaper advertisements not to be useful.

The usefulness of the euro calculator



Q22. Have you received the euro calculator?
%, base: all respondents

Q22a. How useful did you find them?
%, base: those who received the euro calculator

Source: FLASH EB 205 January – February 2007