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**DEFENSE AND SECURITY IN PUBLIC OPINION:  
EUROPEAN TRENDS AND A NATIONAL CASE (PORTUGAL)**

*RESEARCH REPORT*

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## *Foreword*

This text is the result of research carried out in two levels. At the first, general level the expression of public opinion on security and defense issues in the European Union (EU) was considered and data was selected and analyzed. The main source for this kind of study is the Eurobarometer, regularly published by the 10<sup>th</sup> Directorate of the European Community.

However, differences between European Union countries are sometimes conspicuous, and Eurobarometer gives us only very general data on related defense and security issues. A closer level of observation is needed to provide a deeper view of public opinion. In this approach data on Portuguese public opinion is studied. This case is worthy of international attention, not only because Portugal is a long standing member of NATO, and a relatively young democracy, but also for its geographical discontinuity, as the national territory comprises the Mainland plus two strategically situated island groups - Madeira and the Azores, where a well known US military base is located. And Eurobarometer data and reports do not usually break down by region, even when they are Autonomous Regions with special status. The only way to arrive at a deeper understanding of public opinion in this country was then to gather specific and original survey data.

Since data on Portugal results from a survey line<sup>1</sup>, and the last questionnaire has been oriented in part to the aims of this study, I would therefore like to acknowledge the support of the Portuguese Ministry of Defense and the Institute of National Defense, which made this shift possible - besides the obvious support of the NATO Academic Affairs Office.

Of course, the author assumes all the responsibility for her opinions and for possibly deceiving the reader or the Internet surfer...

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<sup>1</sup> M. Carrilho, (director), *Defense and Security in Portuguese Public Opinion* (annual survey : 1991-1996). Institute of National Defense, Lisbon.

## ***Introduction***

This work derives from the consideration that European integration cannot avoid the issue of security and defense, and that legitimacy conferred by citizens' support is necessary for the success of actions or projects leading to the formation of a European Defense and Security Identity.

It is worth briefly recalling the background of today's situation. Since the tragedy of the Second World War concerns about peace and security have been at the heart of the European project. And while in the meantime NATO certainly guaranteed military defense throughout the Euro-American area, it was also evident that an only European political cooperation project could help create the climate necessary to remove the old demons of nationalist extremism. This project was demonstrably begun with the creation of the European Coal and Steel Community (1951), which permitted common control of the mother industries of arms production.

However, questions directly related to military issues, due to age-old mutual mistrust among European peoples, remained extremely delicate.

An important part of the initial European construction project - the European Defense Community (EDC) - failed at birth. In the last stages of ratification by the various national parliaments it was rejected by the French National Assembly (1954). The lessons learned from the failed EDC experiment were hard but helped the European construction process begin on more solid foundations. And some of those lessons are still valid today: there can be no common defense unless within a structure of solid common political bases, namely on external policy; and there cannot (and should not) be a common construction of military defense that is not based on the full confidence among peoples, convinced of the common interest, and in citizens' support via their parliaments.

“To produce” security in Europe to some extent became a latent effect of an explicit strategic option that advanced towards economic integration - from the creation of the European Economic Community (and the Euratom) onwards.

The Treaty of Rome (1957) carefully avoided the issues of external policy, security and common defense, so as not to compromise progress via other paths.

Two decades later, the European Single Act (1986) admitted the inclusion (Title III, article 30) of dispositions on European cooperation in matters of foreign policy. The questions of security were referred to only as a factor that “could contribute in an essential manner to the development of a European identity in matters of foreign policy” (Title III, article 6a).

After the fall of the Berlin Wall and the collapse of the USSR, instability in the international system made extremely evident the possibly dangerous incapacities and lack of coordination at the level of definition of European common action in the area of foreign and defense policies. The Persian Gulf War and the civil war in the former Yugoslavia were examples of this European weakness.

Only the EU treaty of 1992 clearly introduces the concept of “foreign policy and common security” (Title V). The 1996-97 Intergovernmental Conference that produced a new treaty text (Amsterdam 1997) was however unable to achieve significant advances over the 1992 document.

The emergence of a European identity in terms of defense and security will certainly depend on an appropriate sequence of coordinated measures and actions taken up at the level of interested partners and structures - EU, NATO, WEU, OSCE, and single countries. NATO, via the Brussels declaration, and on occasion of the meeting of the North Atlantic Council (10-11 January, 1994), endorsed the concept of Combined Joint Task Forces as well as other measures to support the emergence of a European Security and Defense Identity.

However, within the European integration process and beyond the necessary level of “exogenous internationalization”, it is absolutely necessary to take into account the level of the “attributed internationalization”, i.e., the attribution of various matters to the field of European decision-making, via public opinion <sup>2</sup>. This means that European citizens’

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<sup>2</sup> Regarding the concepts of attributed internationalization, exogenous internationalization, and endogenous internationalization, and their use, see Richard Sinnott (1996), «European Public Opinion and European Integration after 1989», and Oskar Niedermeyer and R. Sinnott (1995), eds. *Public Opinion and Internationalized Governance*.

recognition of the legitimacy of international and supranational instances in finding the best solutions is an essential aspect for effective integration .

The study of public opinion on defense and security issues in this legitimization process is the general aim of this work. We will thus focus on several key issues related to this area : traditional and new vulnerabilities, the public's perception thereof and attribution of priorities in European policies; support for common foreign and defense policies and opinions on respective decision-making processes (national vs. common); expectations on and effects of recent important conflicts (Gulf, former Yugoslavia); enlargement of NATO and of the European Union . These topics will be seen at the general, European level and at the individual case level (Portugal). Regarding this country, we have the opportunity to present an overview of more specific data - namely concerning legitimacy problems and ongoing changes in the Armed Forces and NATO enlargement.

Concepts used are current in political sociology and it is not the purpose of this text to discuss them. However, although without going into detail on the theoretical framework, some relevant aspects concerning the main concept referred to in this text - public opinion - should be mentioned. And the first to stress is the absence of a consensual definition of the concept itself, despite long lasting debate on the subject <sup>3</sup>.

Public opinion can be said to be a political creation. It was a product of Enlightenment, though with earlier origins ( see Macchiavelli's use of the concept of opinion <sup>4</sup> ), and has a both rational and equalizing dimension, as J. Habermas explains<sup>5</sup> . It was an instrument of criticism against the monarchy, corresponded to the dilution of absolute authority, and acquired consistency with the dawn of representative democracy and modern political

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<sup>3</sup> H.L.Childs (1965) mentioned , at the time, four dozen definitions in his work *Public Opinion: Nature , Formation and Role*. Princeton, NJ: Van Nostrand.  
See also W.P.Davison (1968) *Public Opinion: Introduction*. In D.L.Sills, (Ed.), *International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Vol.13, pp.188-196, New York: Macmillan & Free Press.

<sup>4</sup> Several references to the importance of «opinion» or «opinions» for creating or maintaining political support appear in Macchiavelli 's *The Prince* and *Discourse on the First Decade of Tito Livio* . On this issue, M.Santaella Lopez, *Opinion Publica e imagen politica en Maquivelo*, Madrid : Alianza Editorial, 1990.

<sup>5</sup> J. Habermas, *The structural transformation of the public sphere: an inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*, Cambridge, MA, 1989, MIT Press, pp.36 and follow.

theory (see Madison, Bentham, Stuart Mill on the role of the majority and representative democracy).

During the first stages of consolidation of the opinion studies, specialists tended to consider public opinion as a product or specific result of social interaction . Widely debated in the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century by authors such as W. Lippmann and J. Dewey it was, however, only in the 1930s and in the U.S., namely with the Gallup Polls, that public opinion took on the sense that it has today, i.e., linked with the idea of the possibility of measurement . In fact, “perhaps the most common conception of public opinion today equates it with a more or less straightforward aggregation of individual opinions, or “what public opinion polls try to measure””<sup>6</sup>.

Public opinion research cannot skip a basic question, beyond the descriptive results and related interpretations : can opinion be consistent or is it always volatile, can it or can it not lead to consequential action?

Today the concept appears shorn of behavioral attributes, and the possibility of evaluating the opinions of a certain public regarding a determined matter is accepted - but not that of foreseeing its behavior in the future. Extreme criticism towards public opinion research was expressed by French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, when he wrote in 1973 the well-known article “l’opinion publique n’existe pas”<sup>7</sup> (public opinion doesn’t exist).

However, today it is almost assumed that although “public opinion” doesn’t necessarily mean the existence of a coherent “public”, and even though it is a sum of individual opinions, it is still relevant . Elections are a sum of individual expression as well and they determine the political shape of governments. On the other hand, opinion polls are continually used by political decision-makers, sometimes as an instrument of self-legitimization , but other times as one that allows them to link their actions with the feelings of their reference public, namely voters . All ministries, political parties in government or in the opposition, and local and national candidates use surveys and opinion

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<sup>6</sup> Vincent Price, *Communication Concepts, 4: Public Opinion*, Newbury Park, CA.: Sage, 1992, p.22

<sup>7</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, «L’opinion publique n’existe pas», in *Les Temps Modernes*, n° 318, Jan. 1973, pp. 1292-1309.

polls. To shed a humorous light on the issue we might say “ l’opinion publique n’existe pas” ... “eppur si muove”<sup>8</sup>

In any case, after a period when public opinion was often considered volatile, meaningless and incoherent - and not worth considering by international policy makers, more recent research ( Page and Shapiro,1992) has highlighted lines of coherence and stability in the expression of public opinion. Those authors confirm rational-choice theories by also stressing the underlying rationality of public opinion. Translated into the political field, this point of view leads to the consideration that public opinion can be a factor of moderation in decisions on international policies, and is more likely to favor peaceful solutions<sup>9</sup>.

Of course, opinions expressed by the interviewees may not lead to real action, involving individual commitment such as donating money for a cause, taking part in a demonstration, joining a political party or association... And opinions are connected and are influenced by media and other information, opinion-makers and public debate<sup>10</sup>.

The truth is that for the complete study of opinion, its formation and effects, a confluence of two research orientations is needed : one related to social processes and the other to individual opinions. If we want to delve into the actual reasons explaining certain opinion expressions, or if we try to identify some trends, we must take account of the encompassing context. In fact, only the acts of “individuals give life to the structural properties of political systems, just as the latter in turn constrain the behaviors of individuals”<sup>11</sup>.

In particular, in a community of democratic countries such is the European Union, joint efforts for cooperative and common outputs in the international stage , enforcing capacities included, have to be legitimized by a strong set of fundamental values - such as solidarity,

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<sup>8</sup> The last saying contains the well-known words of Galileo Galilei about the Earth ( «Nevertheless, it keeps moving»)

<sup>9</sup> An overview on this argument can be found in A-M. Boissonnault and Ed. Cloutier, « Les publiques paralleles: une analyse des mouvements d’opinion des sous-groupes de la population canadienne», Research Report, Brussels: NATO Office of Information and Press,Academic Office.

<sup>10</sup> On literature about media and public opinion, from a sociological point of view see G.Thuchman, «Mass Media Institutions», in N.Smelser (1988) *Handbook of Sociology*, pp. 626.

<sup>11</sup> S.H. Chaffee (1975), «The Diffusion of Political Information», in S.H. Chaffee (Ed.), *Political Communication: Issues and Strategies for research*, pp. 86.

freedom, justice - and politics guided by respect for human rights and the law<sup>12</sup>. European Security and Defense Identity, to be existing more than in the formal way has to be embodied. In all this process European citizens' beliefs, opinions and behavior are crucial. Parallel to that, and "given the public's democratic control over the elected officials responsible for international relations and EC (EU) policy, national politicians must be attentive to public concerns over policies"<sup>13</sup>. The fact itself that since 1973 the European Commission promotes annual surveys in all the member states demonstrates the importance that decision makers confer to public opinion. Europe integration depends not only on the capacity of European authorities to act for the common benefit but also on "decision-makers abilities to convince EU citizens that (they) are acting in their interests"<sup>14</sup>.

Investigating public opinion is an important contribution towards obtaining a multi-faceted knowledge needed for any successful action in this delicate field.

This study focusing on public opinion intends to use this method as a tool, among other possible sociological instruments. All of them would be necessary for better understanding some features of a major historical process: the reshaping of European security architecture and the possible build up of a common European foreign and security policy, after the end of the former bi-polar world.

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<sup>12</sup> A Report of a High-level Group of Experts on the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), patronized by the European Commission stressed that « a foreign policy based on values that the majority of citizens do not share would quickly lose legitimacy and public support, which is why, as we enter a new phase of our history, the views of European citizens and public opinion formers are of paramount importance to the CFSP». Report, 19 December 1994. Document, European Commission, Brussels.

<sup>13</sup> Galber & Palmer (1995), « Understanding variation in public support for European integration», p.12.

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<sup>14</sup> Abel Matutes (1997) «Europe Must Convince Public Opinion», in Emma Bonnino et al. *How Much Popular support is there for the EU?*, p.49.

## **1. European Public Opinion**

### **1. European Public Opinion**

#### **1.1. Perceptions on vulnerabilities**

The risks and threats that face societies of today are often of a global nature, though they are no more implacable than those that have in different ways assailed human groups over the centuries.

The devastating wars, wide-ranging epidemics and insect plagues, combined with almost total dependence on climatic irregularities and the degree of natural soil fertility definitely did not provide our ancestors with better conditions of life and greater security than we enjoy today. For example, in the European wars in the 17<sup>th</sup> century nearly 12 million people,

soldiers and civilians, are calculated to have died<sup>15</sup>. Also in Europe, between the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century and the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century 40 death-dealing epidemics were registered (various types of plague - an average of one epidemic every ten years). There were periods of widespread famine that decimated up to half the population of some cities; there were major fires (London 1666) and huge earthquakes (Lisbon 1755). Yet while the despair was great and while some preventive measures might have lessened the fatal consequences, resignation held sway as one of the most cultivated virtues. Ultimate responsibility for the good and evil of this world was left to divine providence - despite advanced philosophical discussions that remained in the elite circles<sup>16</sup>. And not only in the Catholic countries. Did not Luther refer to the plague as being “a decree of God”?

More recently, the period between the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was most tragic for disasters linked to industry (mines, railways, bridges, etc.), with a total number of nearly 150 thousand deaths. Yet although there were some protests and strikes on the part of the working class, a vague sort of “social resignation” still prevailed in many countries. As for war, even a century ago it was frequently held to be a necessary evil, or even an act of God to punish and purify humanity. Only at the end of the Second World War, following the slaughter of nearly 40 million persons (or more, according to some sources), was the idea that wars were inevitable, and in some way useful, seriously questioned and disputed at the intellectual and political level<sup>17</sup>.

It is true that in the last half century scientific and technological progress have provided humanity with answers to some age-old evils. Yet at the same time it is undeniable that the greater complexity of the organizational and technological network has created new situations of vulnerability. And nowadays, mainly in the most developed countries, we live in what is called the era of “unbearable risk”<sup>18</sup>. Contributing factors include both the

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<sup>15</sup>See André Corvoisier, *Dictionnaire d'Art et d'Histoire Militaires*, Paris: P.U.F., 1988, p. 677

<sup>16</sup> Namely, a-propos the Lisbon earthquake, Jean-Jacques Rousseau sustained, in his «Correspondance à Voltaire sur le Désastre de Lisbonne», that most of the disasters are worsened by man's lack of foresight.

<sup>17</sup> This issue is developed in M. Carrilho (1985), *Democracia e Defesa*, pp.24-29.

<sup>18</sup> On this issue, see Jacques Theys «La Société vulnérable», in Jacques Theys and Jean-Louis Fabiani (1987), *La Société Vulnérable - Evaluer et Maitriser les Risques*, Paris: Presses de l'École Normale Supérieure, pp.3-36. On the concept of risk see Niklas Luhmann (1991) *Soziologie des Risikos*, Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co.. We used the Italian versions (1996), *Sociologia del rischio*, Milan:Mondadori.

apocalyptic vision of the consequences of any nuclear war and the actual physical dimension of certain industrial catastrophes (Seveso, Bhopal, Chernobyl), and on the other hand the intensification of perceptions resulting from the diffusion of education and informational means of understanding political and social phenomena, associated with teaching, and to the advent of the consumer society and the security values that are inherent therein.

Insecurity, risk and threats are all mirrored in the political sphere - not only because of their actual existence, with the real consequences stemming therefrom, but also due to the perception that citizens ( which also mean voters, in a democracy ) have of the societies in which they live . Faced with certain major problems, people no longer resign themselves via religion or the acceptance of a social ordering. Rather they first tend to hold responsible those who hold power at various levels, mainly in the Government and in the State structures. Indeed, the placement of responsibility, along with the very issue of responsibility, has become a feature of advanced democracies. Thus, knowledge of problems that cause major concern among people should interest all those who can contribute to provide or provoke some answer or some prevention of those vulnerabilities.

Although in Europe Eurobarometer data constitute the most complete source for identification of some aspects relevant to the objective of our study, they obviously do not present a systematic and detailed outlook on the detection of vulnerabilities .

However, some significant information on perception of risks and vulnerabilities in Europe can be selected from the large amount of data collected by the EU , and namely from figures on the level of fears about several problems, and on the tasks people consider key priorities for action by European authorities.

If we consider in the first place a traditional concern - the risk of a major war - we can easily see, through Table 1, that in the beginning of the 1980s it was particularly evident, with a peak, in 1980, of 42% who considered a world war possible within the next ten years; then, a visible decrease began in 1984 , to a minimum of 14% in 1989; the beginning of the 1990s show a strong increase. We can easily connect these oscillations to the international situation and the sequence of events: the first period corresponds to the last years of the Cold War, to the sequels of the Soviet invasion of Afganistan and to the missile

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crisis in Europe. Then, the disappearance of Brezhnev, followed by the short passage of Andropov through power in the USSR and the stabilization of East-Western relations created a favorable environment for developing confidence in the chances of peace. Gorbachov's Perestroika, followed by the fall of the Berlin Wall (1989) correspond to the most optimistic period, i.e., when the fear of a major war dropped to 14%. But, in August 1990, the invasion of Kuwait and the consequent Gulf Crisis cause an immediate sharp rise in concerns on the risk of war.

Table 1  
Perceived Risk of a World War in the next 10 years  
(%, EC 12)

1980	1981	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990
42	35	30	32	25	23	24	23	17	14	31

Source: Gallup International Association / Eurobarometer :Trends 1974-1990

Nevertheless, if we see tables 2 and 3, regarding 1993 and 1996, we can say that people are more concerned about factors of insecurity that more affect their daily lives. Thus when Europeans give the European Parliament, and the EU authorities in general, priority to act in certain areas, to a certain degree they reveal the vulnerabilities of their own societies. Over the past few years a number of subjects have been repeatedly indicated as cause for the most concern. They continually occupy the top spots in Eurobarometer lists, and are the following: unemployment; environmental deterioration; organized crime and drug use and trafficking; AIDS and cancer; poverty.

Note that the wording of the questionnaires has not been entirely identical over the years, as some similar issues have been presented in rather different ways. Such are the cases of the

item “security and defense” in the 1993 questionnaire, which in 1996 was replaced by “keeping peace by intervening more firmly in possible conflicts”, and the item “international organized crime”, not included on the 1993 questionnaire .

Table 2  
Key Priorities  
(%, EC 12)

1.st.	Fight against unemployment	86
2 <sup>nd</sup> .	“ “ AIDS and cancer	85
3 <sup>rd</sup> .	“ “ drugs & trafficking	85
4 <sup>th</sup> .	Protection of environment	84
10 <sup>th</sup> .	Security and defense	71

Source: Eurobarometer 39 (Autumn 1993)

Table 3  
Key Priorities - 1996  
(%, EU 15)

1 <sup>st</sup> .	Fight against international organized crime	87.2
2 <sup>nd</sup> .	“ “ drugs and trafficking	86.4
3 <sup>rd</sup> .	“ “ AIDS and cancer	85.5
4 <sup>th</sup> .	“ “ unemployment	84.7
5 <sup>th</sup> .	Protection of environment	82.9
6 <sup>th</sup> .	Keeping peace by intervening more	78.9

Source: Eurobarometer 44.2 bis, Mega (Spring 1996)

Comparison of the two previous Tables highlights certain aspects regarding to concerns on problems that people think should be faced and realities that may threaten people in today’s societies: we can say that drug trafficking and international organized crime appear at the top (86.4% and 85.5% ), followed by AIDS and cancer (85.5%) ; by unemployment (84.7) and the necessity to protect the environment (82.9%). And it may be considered especially relevant that the need for more active intervention of the EU in order to keep peace in possible conflicts is considered a key priority by 78.9% of the interviewees. We can say

that from 1993 to 1996 questions concerning peace, defense and security rose from 10<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> place in the ranking of priority concerns.

However, it must be noted that while Europeans show consensus on the strengthening of EU action to face several important problems that cause insecurity at the individual, societal, or international level, they still prefer prudence with enforcing military defense: setting up a European army is considered a priority only by a minority of 40.6%, in 1996.

General perceptions on a typical major risk, the possibility of radiation, are worth considering. Europeans express clearly their concern both on civilian and military use of nuclear energy, as Table 4 demonstrates.

We can observe that industrial use of nuclear energy is most worrisome, and was perceived as such by the same average in 1993 and 1995.

Perception of risk following military use (i.e. nuclear experiments) increased (+5%) in the same period. Note that 1995 fieldwork was carried on some months before the French nuclear experiments in Mururoa.

Table 4  
Perceptions of risk of radiation  
(%, EC12)

	1993	1995
Nuclear power station	63	63
Pollution from nuclear experiments	57	62
Uranium mines	27	28
Transportation of radioactive waste	26	22
X Rays	10	8

Source: Eurobarometer 43 (Autumn 1995)

## 1.2. Common foreign and defense policies after 1989

Security and defense policies inseparable from international and foreign policies in supranational entities such European Union are the same as in individual states. This area of politics has the particularity of being the most exclusive of all State attributes. Political theoreticians and social scientists have stressed this feature and the Weberian formulation about the State's legitimized monopoly of violence embodied in the military institution has passed to a wide-range of informed public.

In Europe, as we stressed in the Introduction, foreign and defense issues have been a very thorny problem. The First and Second World Wars are tragic evidence of that, and by late 1945 it was clear that the future of Europe did not exist outside international cooperation. From then on, fundamental steps were taken to ensure peace in Europe. International agreements, treaties and organizations - and namely NATO and the EC/EU - have succeeded in keeping Europe at peace for half a century. The European public in all the countries has been generally supportive, especially of the most important structures (NATO and EC/EU). However, joint and common European policy in the field of security and international affairs has turned out to be the most complex objective to achieve .

National concerns remain central , for instance, in people's evaluation and support for the performance of the EC/EU<sup>19</sup>. Furthermore, public support for European integration is related to the perception of economic and security benefits , as recent research stresses<sup>20</sup> .

International events - the dismantling of USSR, the Persian Gulf War, civil war in the former Yugoslavia - came to influence the path of European integration and NATO strategy and organization. Both the EC/EU and NATO had to introduce adaptations or modifications in order to cope with new realities and face the enlargement dilemma (expansion vs. cohesiveness). A more politicized period was initiated - where the evaluation of public opinion has become even more worthy of examination. For methodological and clarity reasons, data analysis will be presented separately - European foreign policies, defense policies, recent conflicts (Gulf War and civil war in former Yugoslavia) and NATO enlargement.

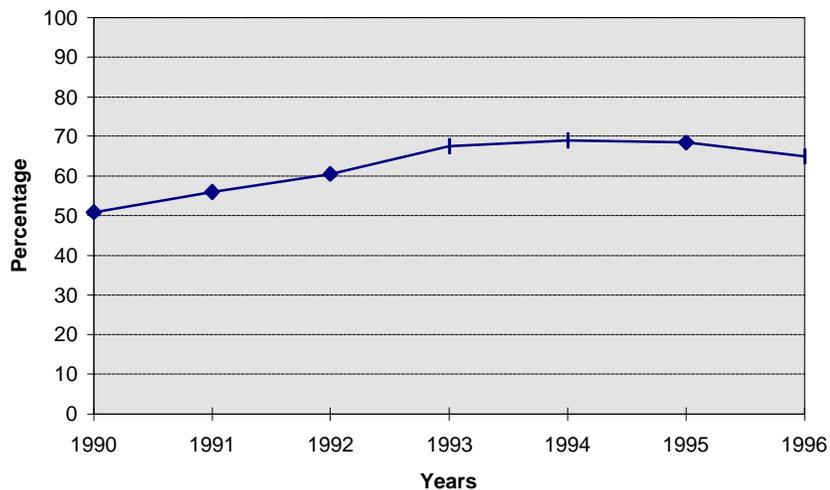
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<sup>19</sup> M.Gabel and H.Palmer (1995), p.13.

### 1.2.1. Foreign Policy

If cooperation among the European states on external policy has not been greater in the last decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century it is certainly not due to the lack of European support for that idea. This is in fact what we may conclude if we take data since the beginning of the 1990s into consideration .

Figure 1  
Support for a common foreign policy  
(%, EC 12, EU 15)



1990-1995, 12 EC countries; 1996, 15 EU countries

Source: Eurobarometer, from number 33 (Autumn 1990) to 46 (1996, released 1997)

Common decision-making on foreign policies and the creation of a common foreign policy obtain significant majority support rates : six or seven Europeans out of ten say they prefer

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<sup>20</sup> *Ibidem, passim*

this model to only national decision-making. And this is not thought to be an option based on the idea of mutual control, as it could be if the question was asked in a general manner. The actual question is very clear; respondents in each of the (12 or 15) EU member-countries are asked to choose between the community option or decision-making only by national governments <sup>21</sup>.

However, as we could easily expect, percentages vary from country to country . (These data are not included in the present work but can be consulted in the Eurobarometer editions ) . If we consider only the differences (on the average) of 5 points and more, we observe that Portugal and the United Kingdom seem a little less enthusiastic than other countries about common decision-making . The United Kingdom and Portugal look also less supportive of the idea of a common external policy. However, in both countries the tendency from 1991 to present is positive, showing an increase of favorable opinions.

Denmark 's case is worth mentioning since the support for joint European decision making increased significantly - from four out of ten persons (1990 and 1991), it rose to five in 1992 and seven in 1995.

Two countries, Italy and Netherlands, show continuous higher support for the same issues : seven to eight favorable opinions out of ten, during the period 1990-95. In Greece, supporters of a common external policy register a sharp increase , from less than the average rate (five) in 1990 , to eight out of ten in 1995.

In general, we can say that joint decision-making in foreign policy gets more support than the creation of a common policy. The existence of a common external policy may appear as more binding than joint decision-making, since this modality suggests, case by case, negotiation among partners. We can interpret this result as a reflection of support for a more prudent and gradual European bind in this area.

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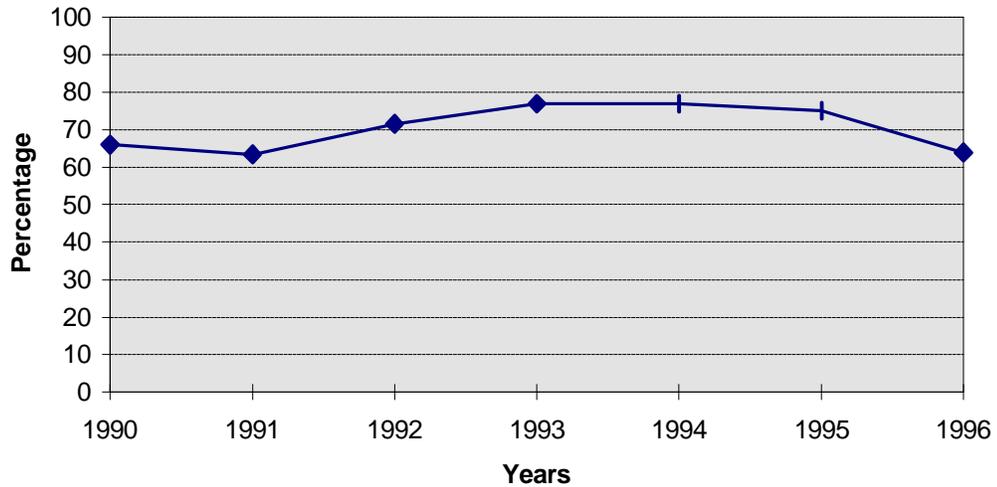
<sup>21</sup> «Some people believe that certain areas of policy should be decided by the NATIONAL government, while other areas of policy should be decided jointly with the European Union. Which of the following areas of policy do you think should be decided jointly within the European Union?»

### **1.2.2. Defense policy**

Though in a less expressive way, what we remarked about external policy can be said about defense policy. Most Europeans - about seven out of ten - are in favor of the existence of a *common defense policy*, as we can see in Figure 2.

Even when modalities of decision making are concerned an average over fifty percent have been inclined to joint decision-making (data not included). And we should note that several areas exist where people prefer their own, national decision-making, such as in education, cultural policies etc..

Figure 2  
Support for a common defense policy



Source: Eurobarometer, from number 33 (Autumn 1990) to 46 (1996, released 1997)

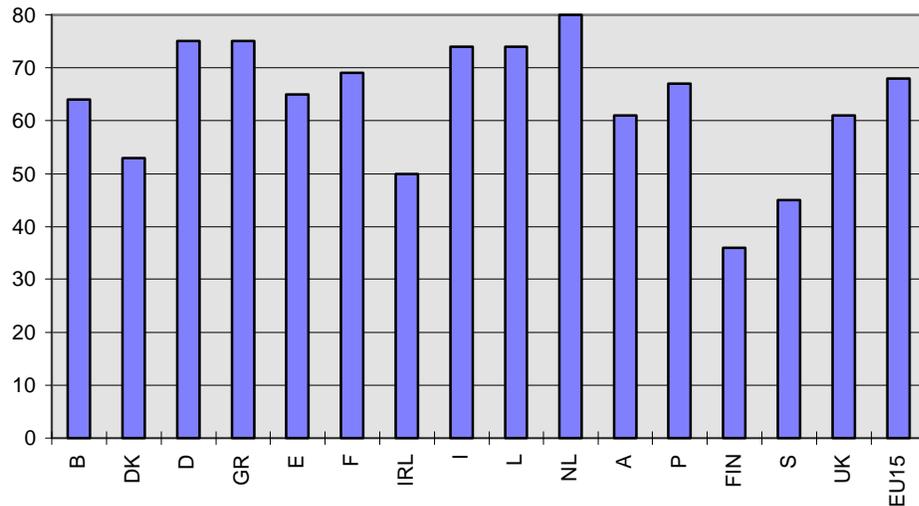
European's expectations regarding the status of the EU in the near future also reveal aspects they consider important, thus, when questioned on what they expect to be commonly decided and done in the year 2010, 65% believe that the EU will act jointly together. Only 19% hold a contrary opinion.<sup>22</sup>

It is worth stressing that the most significant asymmetries among EU members can be found regarding the issue of defense. Figure 3 has been included to provide a better description of data selected from the last available Eurobarometer (Autumn 1996, fieldwork released in May 1997).

Figure 3

Support for common defense and military policy

(%, EU by country)



Source: Eurobarometer 46 (Autumn 1996 - released 1997)

### 1.2.3. Recent conflicts: The Persian Gulf and the former Yugoslavia

The expression of European public opinion on two specific conflicts - the wars in the Gulf and in the ex-Yugoslavia - ought particularly to be considered.

*Persian Gulf War* - Regarding the Gulf War two surveys were carried out at significant times: one, just before the U.S. led international intervention ; and the other during the same intervention (see Table 5) . In both , respondents were given a series of options to take by the EU in order to best deal with the crisis. In October 1990 the most voted option (70%) was to “create a European common defense organization” . To accelerate political, economic and monetary integration was also seen (61%) as a way to promote European security and defense . Yet formation of a European Rapid Intervention force was supported by a smaller percentage (50%) - either because it was not held to be very feasible , or because respondents were mistrustful of the effects of such a force. The second

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<sup>22</sup> Data reported in Eurobarometer 43 (Autumn 1995)

hypothesis is more likely , when we take into account the results of another question asked at the same time. The vast majority of Europeans considered that among the various organizations and countries, the United Nations (83%) followed by the United States (74%) were most capable of resolving the crisis.

The second survey did not include the question on formation of a rapid intervention force. This item was rather merged with the item “to create a common defense organization”, whence resulted the option “to constitute a common European military intervention force”. And another option was also introduced: “to create a common external policy”. In the 12 member countries the latter option was chosen by 75% of respondents. But the constitution of a military force also garnered significant support (61%).

The above mentioned increased support for the acceleration of political, economic, and monetary integration in order to face the Gulf crisis must also be stressed , confirming that European security is perceived as a pluri-dimensional reality.

Concerning public opinion on the Gulf War issue there is a feature worth mentioning: widespread agreement and consensus on multinational action was registered throughout the world , not just in Europe and the United States. It even motivated the use of the concept “world public opinion” in international research<sup>23</sup>.

Table 5  
Gulf crisis : EU should...  
(% EC 12)

	Autumn 1990	Spring 1991
Improve political, economic and monetary integration	61	64
Create a common defense organization	70	-
Create a European rapid intervention force	50	-
Create a common external policy	-	75
Create a common European military force	-	61

<sup>23</sup> C. Wilcox, A. Tanaka, D. Allsop (1993) p. 71-73.

Source: Eurobarometer 34 (Autumn 1990) ; Eurobarometer 35 (Spring 1991)

*War in the former Yugoslavia-* The violent conflict in the area of the former Yugoslavia has been particularly worrisome to Europeans, because after the dismemberment of the Yugoslav federation, it became obvious that there was no common foreign policy (the example of the initial recognition of Croatia is well-known). Also, once the conflict was unleashed the European community was unable to deal with the situation and achieve peace. The concern is also due to the fact this is a conflict in a country European by both geography and history, that contains a condensed version of conflicting factors affecting Europe as a whole.

The collected data reported in Table 6 reveal two significant aspects. In the first place, a 1991, 28% of those in the 12 member countries inquired about the EC 's initiatives in the former Yugoslavia had no knowledge of them or did not know how to answer; 42% said those efforts were either "not very useful or useless"; and only 29% felt positive about them ("useful" or "very useful"). In some countries the majority went so far as to come out clearly on the negative side: 56% in Germany, 57% in Denmark were against. Only in Greece were favorable opinions clearly greater than the unfavorable opinions, with 44% versus 20% (37% did not know or could not answer). It is significant that this occurred in an EC member most affected by the conflict in the Balkans. Perhaps the evaluation depends more on factors such as opinion-makers than on the very reality of EC/EU efforts to resolve the conflict.

Table 6  
Evaluation of the EC initiatives in ex-Yugoslavia  
(%,EC12)

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IR	I	L	NL	P	UK	EC 12
Did not hear	20	18	8	24	32	21	30	20	14	8	22	23	19
Very/mod. useful	26	21	26	44	25	28	36	31	44	49	41	28	29
Useless/not very useful	29	57	58	20	31	39	19	39	34	40	22	43	42

DK/NA	13	5	9	13	11	12	14	11	8	2	15	7	9
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Source: Eurobarometer 36 (Autumn 1991)

Another relevant aspect is the mostly favorable opinion on a more active role for the EC/EU insofar as the pacification of the former Yugoslavia, as Graphic 3 demonstrates. In mid-conflict, during the Spring of 1993, 55% of European citizens in the 12 EU member countries supported the idea of a “military intervention in the former Yugoslavia so as to restore the peace”. Only 28% did not agree, while 17% did not know how to answer or had no opinion .

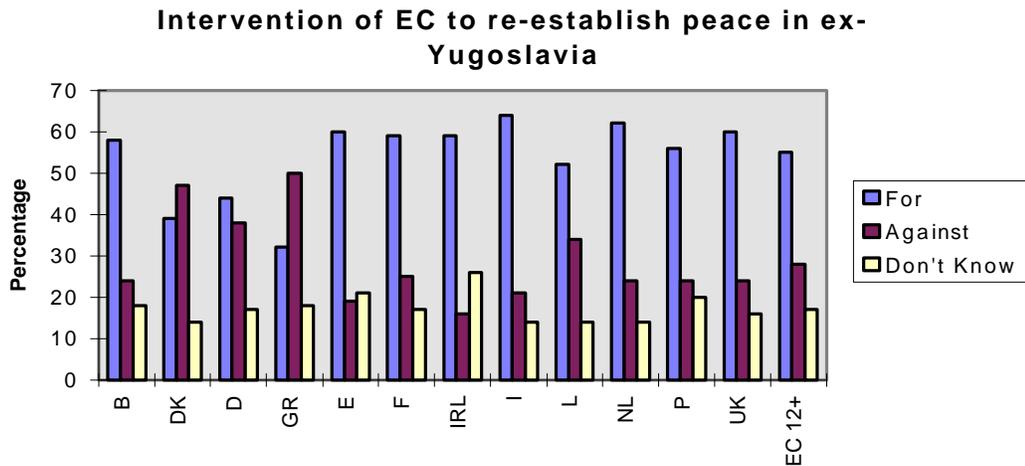
Only in Greece did a 50% majority come out against such an opinion; and in Denmark the contrary opinions were more (47%) than the favorable ones (39%) though they were still not a majority.

Italy demonstrates to be the strongest supporter of increasing European intervention in the former Yugoslavia in order to re-establish peace.

As an interpretative hypothesis in the case of Greece we may raise the fear of military involvement and eventual expansion of the conflict, in a country where military spending is already above the level of the other European Union countries (5.5% of GDP in 1993, while other partner countries were spending much less: for example, Portugal, 2.9% and Spain, 1.9%<sup>24</sup>).

Figure 4

<sup>24</sup> SIPRI Yearbook, 1993, *World Armaments and Disarmament* , p.370



Source: Eurobarometer 39 (Autumn 1993)

### 1.3. EU and NATO enlargement as instruments of security

The theme of security underlines the reasons for enlarging two big structures -UE and NATO- to the Central and Eastern European countries. Although the present study is more

concerned with the enlargement of NATO, public opinion on the question of enlargement of the Union is worth mentioning, as to confirm the thesis of enhanced security.

Indeed, in response to the question “in our opinion what is the reason to accept Eastern European countries as new EU members?”, a significant percentage (45%) of respondents answered “interest in mutual security”. Note that in all the countries this was the reason most cited. “Economic interest” and “moral duty” were indicated by only 20% and 23% respectively.

This does not mean to say that the citizens of the 15 European Union countries enthusiastically support enlargement (in fact, this is not the chosen opinion as regards the immediate more desirable future. The preferred option (55%) is: “the existing members should take more action in the existing E.U.”<sup>25</sup> But it does mean that it is the aim of security that first of all seems to legitimize eventual enlargement.

Table 7  
Reasons for EU enlargement  
(%,EU15)

	B	DK	D	GR	E	F	IRL	I	L	NL	A	P	FIN	S	UK	EU12
Moral duty	21	25	15	10	37	29	29	31	29	21	18	38	19	26	17	23
Economic interest	24	12	23	27	19	20	24	17	25	23	38	15	15	9	18	20
Security interest	45	58	56	56	36	42	40	42	33	46	39	42	57	59	58	49
None	9	3	4	6	6	7	2	9	12	8	3	4	6	4	4	6
DK/NA	2	2	3	2	3	2	5	2	2	3	2	3	4	3	4	3

Source: Eurobarometer 44.1 (Autumn 1995)

<sup>25</sup> EB 44.2 Mega, ( Spring 1996); EB 45 (1996), p. B 60.

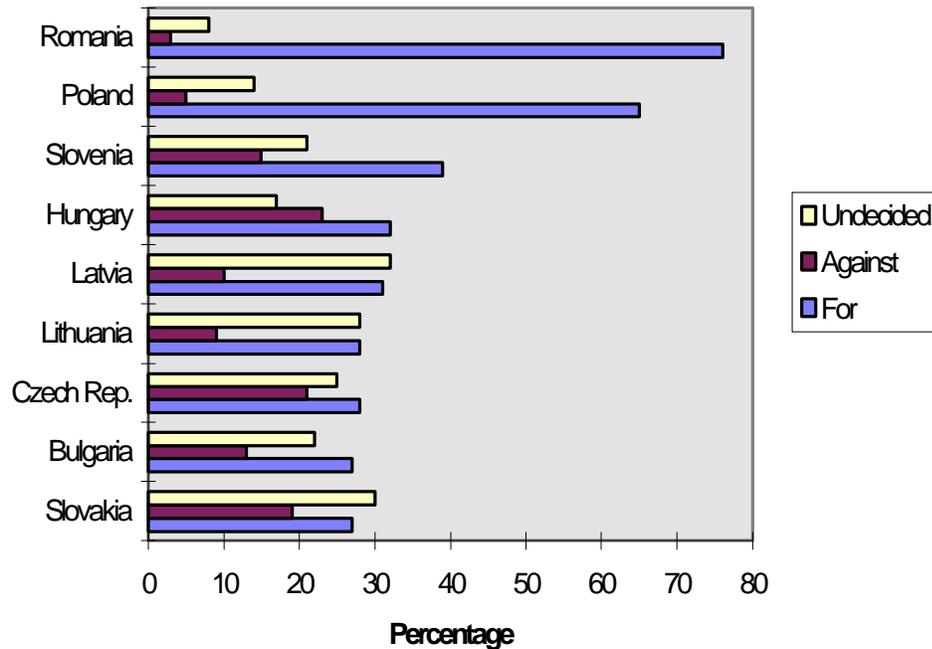
Regarding the enlargement of NATO it would be interesting to analyze the results of two questions asked in the possible candidate countries for membership in the Alliance. In the

first, the following was asked “if there were to be a referendum tomorrow on the question of (our country’s) membership in NATO, would you personally vote for or against membership?”. Overall, considering the total average, favorable opinions were significantly more expressive than those against, or undecided: respectively 53%; 17%; 10%.

Nevertheless this result is misleading as the heterogeneity among the countries is such that the use of the average value has no sociological value, since expressive differences were registered (see Figure 4 - where we do not include the total average). Romanians and Poles were the most enthusiastic with 76% and 65% in favor respectively. In Slovenia, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Bulgaria the percentage supporting was greater than the undecided, although long from being a majority. And in a number of countries the undecided were even more than those favorable: such were the cases of Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia. In Lithuania the percentage of favorable and undecided was identical. The countries that registered more significant percentages of contrary opinions were: the Czech Republic, with 7 percentage points less than the favorable opinions; Slovakia, with 8 points less; and Hungary with 9 points less.

Figure 5

### NATO membership in candidate Countries



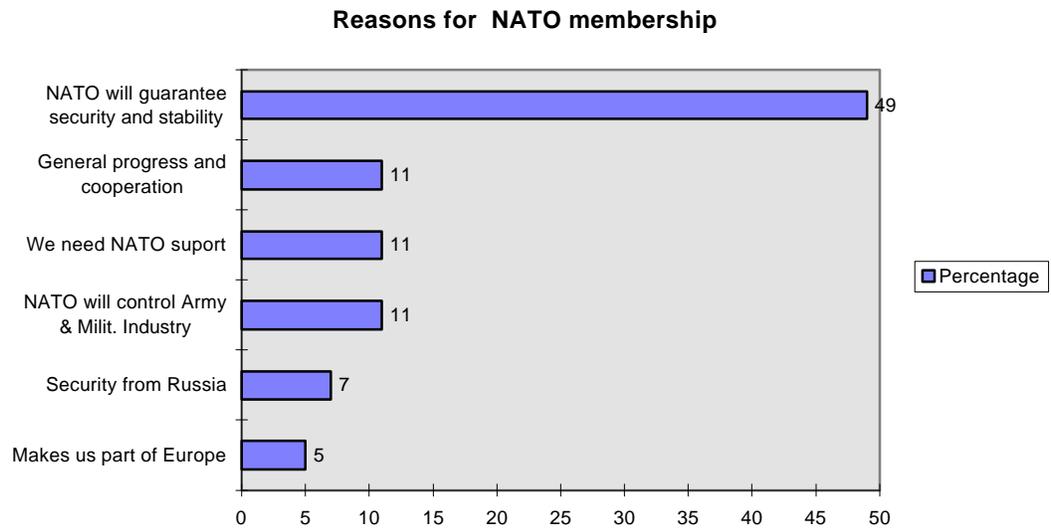
Source: Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, number 7, (March 1997)

Hence it may be said that the first round of insertion of new countries in the NATO structure does not take into account the intensity of public opinion expressed in each of the candidate countries. The results confirm that there is no correspondence between the support for NATO expressed by public opinion and the decision to invite a determined country, as demonstrated by two extreme cases, the first, of a candidate not invited, the second of an invited country, i.e., Romania where support was the highest and the Czech Republic, one of the less supportive.

A second question sought to establish the reasons that determined the different opinions. Thus an open-ended question was asked. "what are the main reasons why you would vote for/against NATO membership/ Any other reasons".

Those who in the various countries said they favor NATO membership did so mainly because “NATO will guarantee security and stability (in our region)” (49%). The reason of explicit defense regarding Russia was not very significant in the whole (7%). The countries that revealed greater “concern” about security and stability were Poland (59%) and Lithuania (58%), where also “more people referred to security and protection from Russia as a reason for entering NATO”<sup>26</sup>.

Figure 6



Source : Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, number 7 (March 1997)

<sup>26</sup> CEEB, n.7, 1997, p.40.

## **2. Portuguese Public Opinion: a closer view**

## **2. Portuguese Public Opinion: a closer view**

### **2.1. Vulnerabilities**

Defense is a univocal concept only in constitutional definitions and in documents elaborated at defense ministries, where tradition and the norm are determinant. For their part, citizens tend to consider several -old or new -aspects when they think about what defense should offer the people.

In Portugal, for example, defense means both defense of national territory and defense of the interest of the Portuguese people - and these interests are linked to security needs. This became evident through an open question presented to the interviewees, followed by another question on the ranking of the most important defense objectives<sup>27</sup>.

We found that security needs are related to different levels of vulnerability, from personal to global. In our survey we were particularly concerned with threats and risks at the local and global level.

Taking into account the data for several years we can note significant changes of opinions on world problems. The most consistent interpretative hypothesis is that opinions change according to major events and media information. In fact, in 1991, just after the Gulf War, risk of war was the main concern of the Portuguese among other global problems. In 1992 and 1993, ecological disasters were first, during a period where big fires and the risk of oil slicks especially in Portugal's forests and coast line were more frequently reported. In 1994, AIDS and war were first, nearly *ex-aequo*. During that year, the tragic dimension of the war in ex-Yugoslavia, was brought to everybody's attention, and the same happened with the Rwanda civil war. At the same time, people became aware that AIDS concerned not only "risky-categories", and that it was difficult for medical research to discover a decisive treatment for the disease.

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<sup>27</sup> These questions were presented in 1991, 1992 and 1993 inquiries. See M.Carrilho (1992),(1993), (1994).

The most recent inquiry (1996) shows that international organized crime and drug trafficking are the main concerns of the Portuguese, among other world problems. These are problems increasingly present in everyday life and not only in urban concentrations but in rural areas as well. At the same time, the media have reported on the expansion of gangs and mobs in countries like Russia and , later, in Albania.

However, if we consider data broken down by Continent, the Azores and Madeira, we notice that in Madeira AIDS came first over crime and in the Azores the risk of war is the first concern for one out of four persons. Cross tabulations by age-groups and gender demonstrate that in Madeira the younger and especially men are the most worried about AIDS. This can be explained because crime rates are lower in the Islands - and by sexual habits, taking into consideration international tourism.

In the Azores, the younger consider war and crime in parallel ( 40% and 40%) . And on the average, war is the second major concern . This can be explained by the existence in the island of St. Maria of an important US military base and the evidence of training and intensive military traffic during some international events.

Table 8  
Concern on World Problems

	Continental Portugal (%)	Azores (%)	Madeira (%)
Organized criminality and drug trafficking	45.0	36.0	27.0
Environmental disasters	12.2	11.0	6.0
Wars	17.8	26.0	24.0
AIDS	21.5	22.0	39.0
DK/NA	3.5	5.0	4.0

## 2.2. Conflicts and perceptions of threats and risks

Situations that are perceived as potentially threatening ought to be studied and carefully considered. Regarding Portugal, a few international situations that might affect the Portuguese were taken into account in our line of surveys. These include, not only post Cold War conflicts in Europe but also distant conflicts as well, provided they involve Portuguese citizens, such as the cases of Angola, Mozambique, and South Africa.

Furthermore, since Islamic fundamentalism is becoming a cause of concern not only in Africa but also in the European Mediterranean countries as well, it was mentioned in the list of questions.

We asked the same question with a two year interval: “Do you think that one or more of the following situations can - or cannot - represent a threat or risk to Portugal?”. Results (only the positive ones) are reported in Table 9.

Table 9

### Possible threats/risks to Portugal

	Continental Portugal (%)		Azores (%)	Madeira (%)
	1994	1996	1996	1996
War in ex-Yugoslavia	26.9	35.5	39.0	45.0
Armed conflicts in ex-USSR	27.0	24.3	32.0	27.0
Armed conflicts in South Africa	44.0	22.5	22.0	37.0
Islamic fundamentalism/Muslim extremism in North Africa	24.5	34.5	42.0	33.0
Armed conflicts in Angola and Mozambique	48.4	46.3	51.0	48.0
DK/NA	-	20.3	19.0	26.0

At first sight, the Portuguese seem primarily concerned about the situation of those countries with which they have close and long standing ties: Angola and Mozambique, former colonies. Conflicts in South Africa, considered the second threat in 1994, dropped to the last place in 1996. This can be explained by the improvement of political stability, and the belief of the resident Portuguese community (around 600.000) in the South African process of democratic transition and consolidation, transmitted to their relatives in Portugal.

About the war in ex-Yugoslavia as risk or threat, a significant increase occurred - from 26,9% in 1994 to 35,5% in 1996. This can be explained by the evidence that the Balkan situation concerns Europe - and particularly NATO countries. In fact, since January \* 1996 Portugal has taken part in IFOR, and lately, SFOR, as a member of NATO.

The most uncomfortable issue is that concerning the perception of Muslim extremism as a threat. While in 1994 only 24,5% of the Portuguese were worried about that phenomenon, in 1996, 34,5% - one out of three interviewees - think that it can be a threat or risk to Portugal. From cross-tabulations we found some asymmetries. In major urban areas (Lisbon, Oporto, Setúbal) people consider Islamic fundamentalism more suspiciously. The explanation could be related to the fear of terrorist acts that usually more affect larger urban areas.

The younger are the less worried about all the possible threats - they may seem to them quite far away. Professionals are more concerned about the possible Islamic threat (50%). Here we can guess the influence of media and other information, higher in this category.

It especially seems to us that data on Muslim extremism ought to be taken into consideration by policy-makers of EU-Mediterranean countries.<sup>28</sup> The danger of simplification - Islamic countries equals extremists - exists. This is favored by another factor, that is the way how people see "others". To test this hypothesis we asked the interviewees to express their trust of several foreign countries. The United States and European countries were included, and Morocco - the nearest country to Portugal having "another" culture and religion. The result was that the United States came first and Morocco came last.

### 2.3. Armed Forces in the process of change

The transformations and changes that have affected the Armed Forces are an issue that has captured the attention of sociologists over the last few decades. For example, Morris Janowitz, in his renowned work “The Professional Soldier”, put forth the idea that in the future the Armed Forces would develop a non-traditional role of vigilance, linked to the needs of coordinated international tasks, in a world where the military must be committed to seek “viable international relations, rather than victory”. He thus proposed the concept of “constabulary forces”<sup>29</sup>.

Following the Cold War period, repeated joint multinational missions have confirmed the importance of non-traditional tasks carried out by the Armed Forces. Namely, military involved in peacekeeping and similar missions have to deal with a wide-range of social encompassing problems that make them shift out from the strictly military tasks. This has implications at the institutional level, such as specific training and increased expertise, which means heightened professionalism. The need for more enhanced professionalism also implies a major organizational change in several countries: the switch from conscription to all-volunteer forces<sup>30</sup>.

At the same time, the influence that society always has on the military institution is making its mark nowadays: the marketplace economy and market-oriented social values

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<sup>28</sup> Data not included in this text. Available in M. Carrilho, *Defesa e Segurança no Contexto Internacional. A Opinião Pública Portuguesa*. Lisbon: I.D.N., 1997.

<sup>29</sup> Morris Janowitz first proposed the «Constabulary Concept» in 1960, in the first edition of *The Professional Soldier*. Then, in 1971, in a second edition of this work, he added a prologue, where the idea was further developed. Quotation is from M. Janowitz, *The Professional Soldier*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., p. 418.

<sup>30</sup> A number of important researches and studies on these issues have been recently published. Among them, see: Fabrizio Battistelli, *Soldati- Sociologia dei Militari Italiani nell’Era del Peace-keeping*; Daniker, Gustav, *The Guardian Soldier- On the Nature and use of Future Armed Forces*; Jurgen Kuhlmann and Stefan Sarvas, «On Post-Modern Military», in J.Kuhlmann ed, *The Present and Future of the Military Profession*; Pierangelo Isernia, *Dove gli Angeli Non Mettono Piede*.

do not leave the Armed Forces untouched. Charles Moskos<sup>31</sup> proposed a model of analysis based on the thesis that in contemporary Armed Forces we can identify the parallel existence of *institutional* elements ( legitimacy through norms and transcending individual self-interest) and *occupational* ones (legitimacy in terms of marketplace principles such as contractual obligations from both sides, i.e., the Armed Forces as a State agency and the military as professionals)<sup>32</sup>.

Another aspect concerning the insertion of the Armed Forces in society is their legitimacy - especially after the end of the Cold War and the “disappearance of the enemy”. As mentioned above, people nowadays are more worried about certain security problems than about the risk of a major war.

By studying the Portuguese case , we sought to better learn the orientation of public opinion on these issues. We thus present data on the following: military tasks; missions abroad; military service....

### **2.3.1. Military tasks**

In our line of opinion surveys we attempted to find out what kinds of tasks people would more likely to confer the Armed Forces during peace time. We discovered that people quite easily accept the idea of involving the military in diverse tasks, even when not of a recognizable military nature or having little to do with the Armed Forces’ true capacities.

Of a list of suggested jobs for the peacetime Armed Forces, presented to the interviewees, the one that brought out the most support was collaboration in forest-fire prevention activities (91%). In second place with close to 83% came helping police in the streets, then ocean vigilance activities in order to protect fishermen (80.5%), followed by the construction of schools and roads. Up to this point, however, the given tasks have all been those to which the Armed forces either in some way are, or could possibly be, capable of

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<sup>31</sup> See Charles Moskos (1982) «From Institution to Occupation: Trends in Military Organization», *Armed Forces & Society*, Vol.4, 41-50, and C. Moskos & F. Wood (1988), *The Military, More than Just a Job?*

<sup>32</sup> Charles Moskos (1988), Institutional and Occupational Trends in the Armed Forces, in C. Moskos & F. Wood, op. cit., p. 17-17.

carrying out. But it is rather surprising that the idea of seeing the military offer assistance to the aged people was supported by a greater number of respondents than those who believed that such a task should not be performed by the military in peace time (48% against 43%). Cross tabulations reveal that the most fragile categories are those most likely to agree with this kind of idea, i.e., those with least educated, the more aged, and women - especially those who stay at home .

In the Azores and Madeira the alignment of opinions on this issue is also generically analogous. Nevertheless, the majority do believe that the military should not be involved in old-aged assistance . However, the idea appears more acceptable to the elderly : the opinions of the more aged group of the survey sample (55 to 64 years) divide themselves right down the middle on this theme .

Results seem to confirm that we are faced with two kinds of connected problems. On the one hand, those related with the problem of legitimacy of Armed Forces in peacetime, especially in a country like Portugal, where external military threats are seen as remote. On the other hand, we could say that an institutional lack with regard to some social needs and vulnerabilities is perceived - people tend to attribute to the Armed Forces some functions (linked to environmental and personal security) seen as necessary and not covered or accomplished by other institutions. This can corroborate functionalist theories (namely Talcott Parsons') on the need for institutions to correspond to strategically oriented functions in society.

Common to both is the State entity, which seems to be considered in some way responsible, in the view of public opinion.

Table 10  
Tasks in peacetime  
*Armed Forces should collaborate in...*

	Continental Portugal (%)	Azores (%)	Madeira (%)
Assistance to the aged people	48.1	35.6	38.0
Construction of schools and roads	62.7	44.6	49.0
Policing the streets	82.8	68.3	81.0
Forest-fire prevention	80.5	65.3	76.0

Note: only positive answers are reported in this table

### 2.3.2. International missions: from Africa to former Yugoslavia

The participation of Portuguese soldiers in missions under the United Nations aegis is only a recent occurrence.

The only instance in this century whereby the country took part in an international conflict was during the First World War when Portuguese troops served in Flanders, and endured the traumatic outcome of the battle of La Lys. However the wars in Angola, Guinea-Bissau, and Mozambique lasted from 1961 to 1974 and obliged the Portuguese military and people to accustom themselves to long journeys abroad to regions affected by armed conflict. The experience of the colonial war, which was coupled with a national effort that was clearly anachronistic when compared with the international trend to decolonization, would also have repercussions among both the military and the civil society. However, it is also true that over the centuries the Portuguese military were used to operating in an extensive geographical field. At the time of the April 25<sup>th</sup> 1974 revolution the Portuguese Armed Forces could thus be found in places as distant and different as Angola and Timor. There soon followed the “historic return” to within the limited national boundaries of the far western corner of continental Europe.

Given this complex historical legacy, how could the military and the public in general be expected to react to Armed Forces involvement outside of the country?.

A study carried out among the Portuguese officers corps in 1989 and 1990 enabled us to confirm that they were very willing and almost eager to take part in military missions abroad, in the context of the United Nations and NATO.

As for public opinion, public concern on the question was manifested from the start in the line of surveys begun in 1991. A summary of the comprehensive data from 1991 to 1996 can be seen below.

Table 11

Support for military participation in international missions

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1996
Re-establish peace in former Yugoslavia	37.9	43.9	54.8	41.7	44.7
Re-establish peace in Angola and Mozambique	-	45.8	85.3	54.0	60.5
Support to people of East Timor	-	60.0	83.7	57.4	64.7

There seems to be considerable acceptance of the idea of Portuguese military participation in missions abroad. Regarding the former Yugoslavia, the level of support is similar to the European community average (Eurobarometers 39 and 40). Yet the most support is for Portuguese military participation in situations linked to national history (Timor, Portuguese speaking Africa). From 1991 to 1993 there was a major rise in the levels of support for such missions, weather in Africa and Timor, or in the former Yugoslavia. However, in 1994 there was sharp drop off in support levels from the high point registered in 1993.

In 1996 the interviews were carried out in the period immediately following the deaths of two Portuguese soldiers (although due to an accidental explosion), and it would have been understandable if support for the mission in the former Yugoslavia had waned. Yet the opposite was the case, as support even rose slightly, though not significantly, over the 1994

level without, however, being higher than the sum of the negative opinions plus “don’t know” and “no answers”.

The reasons for such oscillations may be largely due to the amount of media-driven information available. As we have already noted <sup>33</sup>, until the middle of 1993 attention on the terrible reality of the war and its consequences on civilians prevailed over any other concerns. Later, following intensely publicized incidents involving UN peace-keepers, attention began to focus on the risks inherent in peace missions. Experts have noted that in other countries lower support is related to information and awareness and consciousness of the risks the military runs in such situations<sup>34</sup>.

In Portugal the consistency of opinions registered in 1996 can indeed be related to the public debate that was immediately unleashed. On the one hand media treatment of the episode highlighted the accidental aspect of the explosion, which did not occur during a confrontation, though the local risks were obvious. The fact that only professional soldiers, and not young draftees, were included in the mission was also a focal point of the media’s handling of the event. On the other hand, we cannot ignore other aspects that are suggested by political sociology and the theories of public opinion, and especially the importance of the role played by political figures or players in the public arena. The Prime Minister’s immediate decision to cut short a trip abroad in order to be present at the victim’s funerals and to offer comfort to family members may have emphasized the national significance of the mission, and also enhanced support for same among the Portuguese.

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<sup>33</sup> M. Carrilho, *Defesa e Segurança na Opinião Pública Portuguesa*, Lisbon, Bertrand, 1995, pp. 49 ff.

<sup>34</sup> Jan van der Meulen, «Trendletter: information bulletin of the working group», *Public Opinion, Mass Media and the Military*», January 1995, pp. 3-4.

Table 12

Opinions on the Portuguese mission in Bosnia

*“The Portuguese troops in Bosnia enhance the international importance of Portugal”*

	Continental Portugal (%)	Azores (%)	Madeira (%)
Agree	68.8	79.0	73.0
Disagree	24.5	12.0	19.0
DK/NA	6.7	9.0	8.0

Table 13

*“Military missions abroad are...”*

	1994	1996
Very dangerous	35.4	64.5
Moderately dangerous	47.6	28.0
Not very dangerous	6.5	5.7
Not at all dangerous	3.8	0.7
DK/NA	6.7	1.2

Table 12, with data on perceptions about existing risks, shows that those Portuguese who support military participation in international missions do not form their opinions simply because they believe such missions are not dangerous. Yet, as in other countries, should our soldiers be killed or injured, or taken hostage or prisoner, a drop in support for the mission in question would likely follow.

### **2.3.3. Military service: from conscription to all-volunteer**

The organization of military forces has not been constant over the centuries. On the contrary, it has not only accompanied social and technological changes and transformations, and also at times has been the precursor of innovation. One of the most illustrative examples of this was the pioneering development in military institutions of the principles of modern organization, or, more recently, the research and application of communication techniques in the military field, which eventually became the roots of the Internet.

The manner of recruiting military personnel has also differed over time. Standing armies based on the strategic model of the “nation armée” introduced by the French Revolution have tended to predominate. And in order to ensure that there would be enough men under arms to take part in the great battles, compulsory service was introduced - first via the infamous forced levies, later via the feared drawings by lot and finally in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, by general conscription.

At the same time the Officer Corps became more professional, a trend which began in the middle of the last century: it accepted the bourgeoisie, an opening that corresponded to the need to take most advantage of technological innovations, which did not mix well with improvisations, dilletantism or the traditional prerogatives of “blue blood”.

The model of military organization based on conscription prevailed uncontested for nearly a century. More recently, however, profound changes in the nature of the threats and risks to contemporary society, the rapid technological evolution of the military, the complexity of instruments and means, as well as organizational techniques, have tended to determine ever more demanding areas of specific competence. The training needed to handle most modern armament takes a long time. In general, the Armed Forces are tending to reduce numbers and become more professional.

Parallel to this trend, compulsory military service no longer enjoys the moral force that stemmed from its character as an equalizer. As armies reduced size, conscription stopped being general, returning to a lighter version of the old “sortes”, with only a few “falling” into

the organization's clutches. The legitimacy crisis was profound. In different countries public opinion has been increasingly more in favor of voluntary service.

The trend to professionalism that affected only the Officer Corps in the last century is now being extended to the ranks. Countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States have for years had only volunteer systems. Belgium and the Netherlands are moving towards voluntary service. France is already scheduled to switch to the new system, while Spain and Italy are studying the same course.

In the last five years Portuguese public opinion has slowly but clearly shifted to support totally voluntary military service - in peacetime, obviously.

1996 data reveal a clear preference on the part of respondents, both on the Mainland and in the Autonomous Regions, for a voluntary military service. At the same time opinions appear to be very defined, as nearly all answered the question, with an almost insignificant number of those who marked "no answer".

Table 14  
Military service (in peacetime)

	Continental Portugal (%)	Azores (%)	Madeira (%)
Conscription	31.5	30.0	33.0
All-volunteer	65.8	69.0	64.0
DK/NA	2.6	1.0	3.0

## 2.4. Alliances and NATO enlargement

When we consider defense alliances, what comes to mind immediately is the Atlantic Alliance, of which Portugal has been a member since 1949. And following the break-up of the Warsaw Pact, the process of redefinition of the international system affected NATO, as one should expected. The prospect of imminent global confrontation diminished - it had always underpinned the logic of nuclear dissuasion - and in 1989 and 1990 the dismantling of Soviet power brought NATO to the brink of the so-called “victory syndrome” that generally leads to the disbanding of alliances. Public opinion that for decades had largely supported the Alliance begun to show signs of division, and doubts about NATO’s rationale, its *raison d’être*, multiplied.

The Gulf War and the following outbreak of the conflict in ex-Yugoslavia constituted new situations of great risk that NATO was yet unprepared to, insofar as it had been set up to deal with threats from the Soviet Union. And for some years NATO did not have the conditions to take on a new role - the conflict in the former Yugoslavia continued without any international instance being able to step in and force the belligerents down.

In the various NATO countries, public opinion generally accompanied this flow. The recent role of NATO in the former Yugoslavia has yet to yield all the expected results, and the success of the IFOR and SFOR missions can only be validly measured in the future. On the other hand, NATO’s new tasks are not yet fully understood by public opinion, though more so in the United States and Canada <sup>35</sup> (where there are no imminent threats to the American continent) than in Europe (where worries are on the rise, though in the sense of perceptions of new threats).

In Portugal, there is a generalized belief that the country ought to join international alliances so as to better assure its own defense. Indeed, in a earlier survey (1991), 88% considered that the country could not defend itself alone in a war. Given the unequivocal nature of the response, we did not repeat the question, but rather sought to identify the definite

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<sup>35</sup> The difficulties NATO’s image faces in the United States and Canada are referred to in *NATO and Public Opinion: Report on the 7<sup>th</sup> Seminar on NATO and Public Opinion*, Brussels, January 1995, NATO Office of information and Press, p. 19.

orientations of Portuguese opinion regarding not only NATO but also other areas of security and the alliance.

The following table shows the evolution of opinions on this issue.

Table 15  
Best way to ensure the defense of Portugal  
(% / Years)

	1992	1994	1996
Military alliance only with European Union countries	21.1	19.6	20.8
Military alliance only with the United States	1.2	2.5	2.5
Military alliance like the current NATO	35.8	43.2	29.0
Military all. with all Europ. countries, including Russia ,plus USA	10.1	-	23.3
Non participation in any alliances and maintenance of neutrality	12.3	16.5	15.3
DK/NA	19.5	15.4	9.0

From the above data we may highlight some seemingly more significant aspects:

NATO continues to constitute the favored military alliance of the Portuguese; there are noticeable fluctuations in support for NATO;

Support for a limited alliance within the European Union has been maintained and is supported by nearly a fifth of all Portuguese;

An enlarged system of alliances that includes Russia (like the OSCE) clearly gained favor between 1992 and 1996;

An alliance only with the United States is practically not taken into consideration;

A position of absolute neutrality for Portugal, outside of an military defense alliance, has been supported by a percentage that rose somewhat from 1992 to 1994, but since has seemed to stabilize.

It should be emphasized that there has been a notable rise in the index of formation of opinion. In the last four years the percentage of Portuguese who had an opinion on these issues rose by 10%. In 1992 19% of respondents either did not know how to respond or simply did not answer; in 1996 that figure had dropped to 9%.

We begin our analysis by focusing on this last aspect. It seems that the increase of the level of expression of opinion is related to the greater diffusion of information, some interest by people in these issues, and the fact that the population is progressively constituted by people with better education than the previous generations.

If the prevalence of indexes of support for an only European solution does not demand lengthy attention, the same cannot be said for data concerning NATO and the enlarged alliance of an OSCE type. Although data is not yet available that shows a tendency for a drop in support, with or without stabilization, in opinions on the Atlantic Alliance, it is certain that it has been dropping when compared with the idea of an enlarged alliance. It is possible that there is a certain diffuse perception of the importance acquired in the last few years by Russia in the international arena, and that many people believe it is safer to see that country involved in an alliance with the West.

In any case, data concerning 1996 carry a clear message: for the first time the opinions of the Portuguese are dispersed (between 20% and 29%) regarding possible defense alliances, and there is no definite pole of alignment.

To provide more of an explanation, we shall focus on the attributes, characteristics and situations that shape the opinions of people in certain senses.

In the first place is age: the youngest (18-24 years old) support the Atlantic Alliance the most, at a level more than 6% above the national average. And to the contrary, in our survey the oldest age group (between 55 and 65 years old) gave it the least support, 5% less than the national average. But it is also the youngest age groups - 18-24 and 25-34 - who most support the idea of an enlarged defense including Russia, though the difference is not very expressive (nearly 3% above the national average). These positions have not only to do with age and with general cultural references more relative to each generation, but also and mainly are due to the level of education. Those who attended or completed higher education

are those who most support NATO (37%), and the least educated are the most reluctant (only 14%).

The entirely European option (Alliance only within the European Union) found more supporters in the 35-44 age group - a level that was nearly 7% above the national average.

There are also some asymmetries on the issue between men and women. Women are generally less supportive of NATO, less supportive of an enlarged alliance, and more supportive of Portuguese absolute neutrality.

If we take into account national regional differences, we see that there are strong asymmetries on the Portuguese mainland, for example: NATO is the most popular in the greater Oporto area (followed by the Algarve). In the Alentejo the opposite is the case: there are 18 percentage points of difference dividing the two regions, i. e., 38.5% of favorable opinions in greater Oporto and 20.7% in the Alentejo. Especially significant is the index of opinions in the latter region that favor absolute neutrality for Portugal (27%, or more than 12% above the national average). This fact may be linked to prevailing political orientations - evidently the case in the Alentejo. Indeed, Portuguese who vote in favor of the PCP (Portuguese Communist Party) are not very enthusiastic about NATO and more favor absolute neutrality, in percentages very similar to those mentioned above concerning the Alentejo, where the PCP is very influential. However, they are mostly supporters of an alliance solution that also includes Russia (37% or nearly 14% above the national average).

#### *Autonomous Regions*

Given the strategic importance of the Portuguese island regions in the western security system, a more detailed analysis of their survey results is called for.

In Table 16 we see that the Atlantic Alliance also finds the most favor among respondents from the Autonomous Regions - and especially the Azores, where it was supported by 35% of interviewees. This figure demonstrates the particular link binding the Azorean people to NATO, certainly due to the presence of the American base at Lages. The idea of an alliance only between European countries finds favor similar to that on the mainland, and just slightly above it. The most all-encompassing solution - Europe, Russia, the United States - is the least popular in the Autonomous Regions.

Regarding absolute neutrality - and although that index does not reach significant levels - it must be stressed that in the Azores it registers much less than on the mainland (-6.3%). Comparatively, we see that the Portuguese of the Azores are more supportive of the country's participation in military alliances.

Table 16

Best way to ensure the defense of Portugal

(%, 1996)

	Mainland Portugal	Azores	Madeira
Military alliance only with European Union countries	20.8	22.0	23.0
Military alliance only with the United States	2.5	6.0	1.0
Military alliance like the current NATO	29.0	35.0	26.0
Military all. with all Europ. countries including Russia ,plus USA	23.3	20.0	19.0
Non participation in any all. and maintenance of neutrality	15.3	9.0	14.0
DK/NA	9.0	8.0	17.0

*NATO enlargement*

The question of integrating the countries of Eastern Europe in the structures that for decades have assured economic development and a generic political cohesion (European Union/Community), along with military defense and security, has become a focal point of discussion on the future of Europe.

The very European Commission carried out opinion surveys in the countries directly involved - which well demonstrates the level of interest in the issue on the part of both the community authorities and the citizens of those countries<sup>36</sup>.

In Portugal, however, the issue has yet to become a focus of public debate, and remains in the newspaper pages. The most immediate and evident aspect of reporting has mainly called attention to Russian difficulties and opposition to the proposed enlargement. Only when the Founding Act on cooperation and security relations was signed by Russia and NATO<sup>37</sup>, and at the Madrid summit<sup>38</sup>, did the issue take up more media space.

Despite the limitations, and taking into account the historic significance of the process, we feel it necessary to obtain an indication of Portuguese opinion on the issue and also the level of formation of the opinion. A number of additional questions were introduced and effected in April of 1997.

We asked three questions: one on the very enlargement of NATO, another aiming to evaluate how the Portuguese rate Russia's influence on the matter, and a third on the consequences of enlargement for Portugal.

First of all, analysis of the results in Tables 18 and 19 shows that Portuguese opinion is divided on the issue: 34.9% are favorable (very desirable/moderately) to the enlargement of NATO, and 34.3% do not support the same (little desirable and not at all desirable). The percentage of those with no opinion is particularly high, at 30%.

The reasons behind such opinions are partly related to Russia's position: of the 29.5% who believe that NATO should only be enlarged if Russia agrees, more than two thirds responded that they thought such enlargement to be little or not at all desirable (data not included in the tables).

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<sup>36</sup> Central and Eastern Eurobarometer, number 7 (March 1997)

<sup>37</sup> 14 May, 1977

<sup>38</sup> 8-9 July, 1997

Yet, from a comprehensive point of view, a substantial number of respondents seem to be very supportive of Western interests vis-à-vis Russia: 41,5% answered that the enlargement of NATO ought to occur even without Russia's agreement.

The idea that the enlargement may diminish Portugal's influence in the organization finds little acceptance: only one in five respondents were sensitive to such an argument. It is, however, one more element that contributes to explain the opinions against enlargement, as we found in data exploration.

In order to reveal some of the asymmetries between the opinions of various groups, we arrived at the conclusion that they are significant only insofar as age, gender and social position, and for this reason only those respective tables are presented. However, regional cross referencing did reveal significant data: in the Southern Interior, more than half of all respondents (50.9%) had no opinion on the matter.

The youngest (aged 15-24) were the firmest supporters of NATO enlargement (53.4%) - even without Russian agreement (56%). Also the youngest group had the highest rate of formation of opinion, related to the level of education and media consumption. Cross tabulation by gender shows (table 18) that women are much lesser informed and aware of the issue, with near to 38% of non-opinions (DN/NA).

Taking the distribution of opinions by social class, we found that the middle and upper middle classes are significantly more favorable to NATO enlargement - 42.5% and 48.5% respectively, versus the 27.5% found among the lower middle and lower classes (data not included). Also, in this case the significance of information consumption can be an explanatory factor. However, it is worth noting the data that indicates enhanced perception among the youngest regarding the need for security in the strategic field we are located in, and which involves grouping a larger number of European countries within NATO.

If we compare the support rate for NATO (29%) in 1996 data to the 1997 results we can say that they reflect the positive effect, for NATO's image, of the IFOR and SFOR missions in the former Yugoslavia, where Portuguese troops are serving- and the negative

influence of the Russian criticism (and discrete threats) towards the NATO members and sovereign countries that are candidate for membership.

Table 17  
NATO enlargement to Eastern Europe  
(%, 1997)

	Total	Age					
		15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	65+
Very/moderate desirab.	34.9	53.4	31.2	29.9	37.7	32.2	21.8
Little/not at all desirab.	34.3	29.0	43.9	42.4	35.6	28.0	25.0
DK/NA	30.7	17.5	25.1	26.7	26.7	38.7	51.8

Table 18  
Agreement with the phrases...  
(%, 1997)

	Total	Age/ Gender						F	M.
		15/24	25/34	35/44	45/54	55/64	65+		
NATO enlargement only if Russia agrees	29.5	30.9	39.1	35.6	31.3	21.6	20.9	25.7	33.3
NATO enlarg. even without Russia agreement	41.5	56.0	44.0	40.3	38.7	41.0	25.3	36.2	46.8
DK/NA	29.0	13.1	20.9	24.1	30.0	37.4	53.8	37.9	20.1

## **Conclusion**

By definition, we cannot find stable conclusions on the issue of public opinion on defense and security issues - since opinions are subject to change depending on several factors. However, from the analysis reported in this study, we can draw some conclusive remarks.

- In the first place, considering the area of vulnerabilities and related perception of insecurity, we can say that along with traditional threats and risks - namely war - new ones are emerging related to some conditioning aspects of modern societies and are perceived as worrisome - examples include organized crime and drug trafficking or environmental disasters. The insecurity in these fields can lead to questioning on the capacities of European or national institutions and the ability of authorities to cope with such problems.
- Regarding foreign and defense policies, there is generalized support by public opinion, though cautious in the case of some European countries. Clear asymmetries can be noted among the member countries: namely the most recent members of the European Union, especially the Nordic ones, are far less supportive of common foreign and defense policies and of the build-up of a European military force.
- The Persian Gulf War and the civil war in the former Yugoslavia were special moments from the point of view of the expression of public opinion - which tended to consider European capacities for dealing with those situations rather pessimistically. At the same time Europeans were inclined to favor the moderate improvement of common foreign and security policies.
- NATO enlargement and EU expansion are approved insofar they are seen as instruments to improve security in Europe. Legitimization seems to be based on security interests more than other considerations.
- NATO enlargement achieves heterogeneous support indexes among recent and future possible members. There is no correspondence between public opinion support for NATO membership in a country and NATO's decision to invite that country. High levels of support for NATO membership are found in non-invited countries: it will be worth

paying attention to future opinion polls in those countries, in order to see whether deceived expectations affect public support for NATO.

- NATO enlargement is an objective supported even without the agreement of Russia, according to the expression of Portuguese public opinion on the issue.
- In the context of new demands, the public vision (Portugal) of the Armed Forces' role is changing: non-traditional and peacekeeping missions are well accepted or even suggested by public opinion .
- Concerning new tasks for the Armed Forces, the preference (Portugal) for a professional force is increasing among the public - namely for all volunteer recruitment instead of conscription .

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## *Technical Specification*

### **Eurobarometer**

Each Spring and Autumn since 1973, Eurobarometer (EB) surveys on European public opinion have been conducted on behalf of the Directorate-General for Information, Communication, Culture and Audiovisual of the European Commission. EB have included Greece since 1980, Portugal and Spain since 1985, the former German democratic Republic since 1990 and Austria, Finland and Sweden from 1995 onwards.

A set of questions is regularly asked to representative samples of the population in each country : 1000 per country, with the exceptions of Luxembourg (less) the United Kingdom (more) and Germany (West and East, 2000).

The basic sample design is a multistage, random one. In each country, a number of sampling points with probability proportional to population size and density was drawn. This points represent the whole territory of all the member states, according to EUROSTAT-NUTSII, and to the distribution of resident population in terms of metropolitan, rural and urban areas. In each of the sampling points, addresses were selected by random route procedures, from a starting random address.

Interviews are face-to face in respondents homes<sup>39</sup>.

### **Surveys on Portugal**

A line of annual surveys on defense and security issues in Portuguese public opinion was initiated in 1990 , the result of an agreement between the Institute of National Defense and the University (ISCTE, Higher Institute for Management Sciences). It was directed by the author of this work.

Surveys were made by face to face interviews alternating with telephone interviews, i.e., one year face to face, the following year telephone interviews.

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<sup>39</sup> These - and more detailed - specifications are reported in each EB publication.

A set of identical questions plus a number of different ones, depending on the issues to observe, were asked each year to a national representative sample of Portuguese population (Mainland, the Azores and Madeira). This sample is constituted by individuals from 18 to 64 years age (1990-1996) and from 18 years to 65 and plus years age in 1997. It is proportional to the structure of the Portuguese population as a whole. Sampling points were drawn according to the population size and density.

The selection of the interviewees was done by the random route method plus quotas with control variables: gender, age, occupation. Face to face interviews were carried on at the people's homes.

In the telephone surveys the Bellview program was used (CATI - Computer Assisted Telephone Interview).

Samples sizes were: 1000 in Mainland Portugal; 150 in Azores and 100 in Madeira. Each of this three areas were considered as a whole for sampling purposes.

Cross-tabulations were made by gender, age group, occupation, education level, district, habitat size, objective social status (based on income and occupation).

In this work we only present some cross-tabulations by main regions (Mainland Portugal, Azores and Madeira) and by gender and age-group.

Fifteen per cent of the work of each interviewer was monitored by telephone or directly.