



Transport, energy and the environment

Transport and energy are vital to the EU economy. Europeans and the products they consume in ever increasing quantity and variety are carried across the continent by all modes of transport – but most of all by road.

As the economy grows, so does the demand for transport and energy. But this growth means increasing congestion and fuel consumption, which in turn create more pollution. These are Europe-wide problems that require Europe-wide solutions decided at EU level.

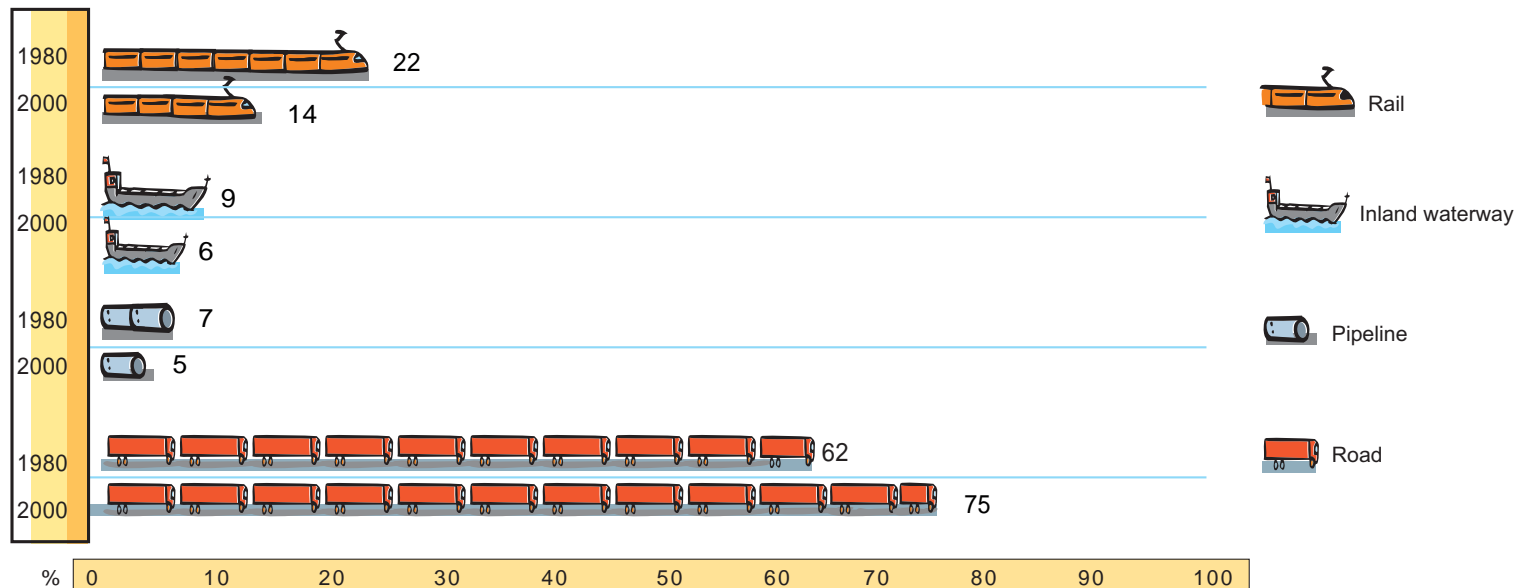


Going places

Railways and inland waterways (i.e. rivers and canals), once so important for carrying goods and passengers around Europe, now carry only a fifth of the total. Three quarters go by road. The graph shows, in percentage terms, how Europe's total inland transport industry is shared among different modes of transport, and how these shares have changed over recent decades.



Percentage of the total inland transport (in tonne – kilometres), per mode, 1980 and 2000

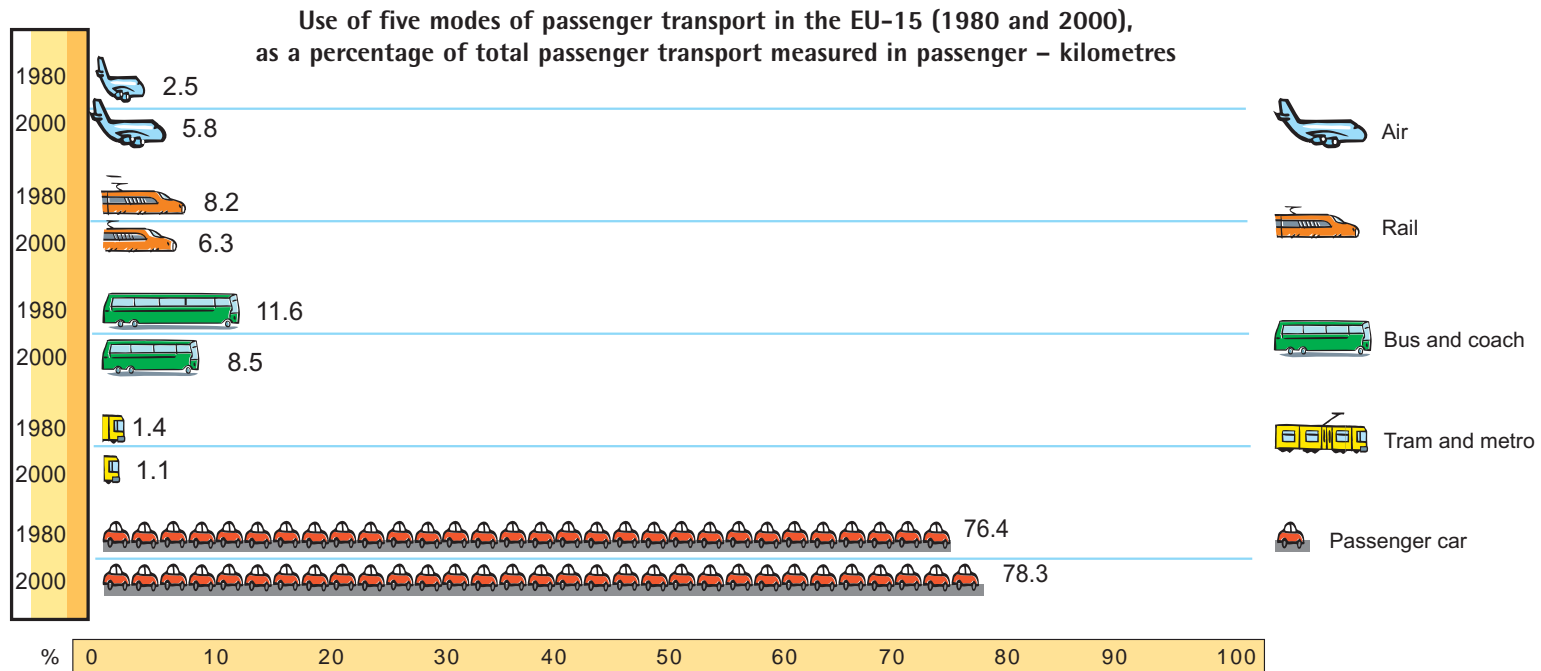


Figures cover the EU-15, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

Source: Eurostat

Air transport has also increased rapidly over the last two decades, creating congestion at Europe's airports. To tackle this problem, the EU is working towards a unified European system of air traffic control (the 'Single European Sky').

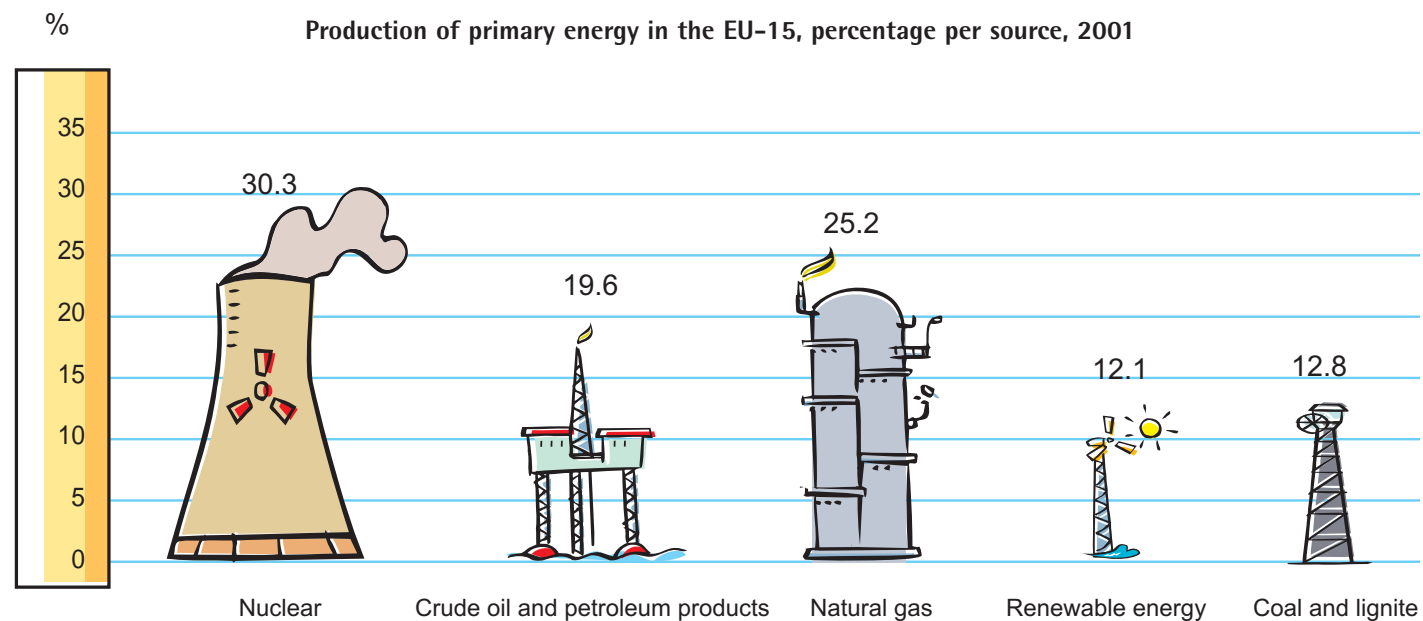
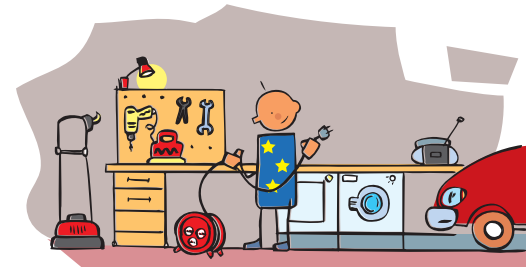
To ease congestion on the roads, the EU is encouraging transport firms to get as much freight as possible onto trains, barges and ships. It is also backing local authorities in their efforts to promote and improve public transport, especially in Europe's crowded cities.



Source: European Commission.

Power for the people

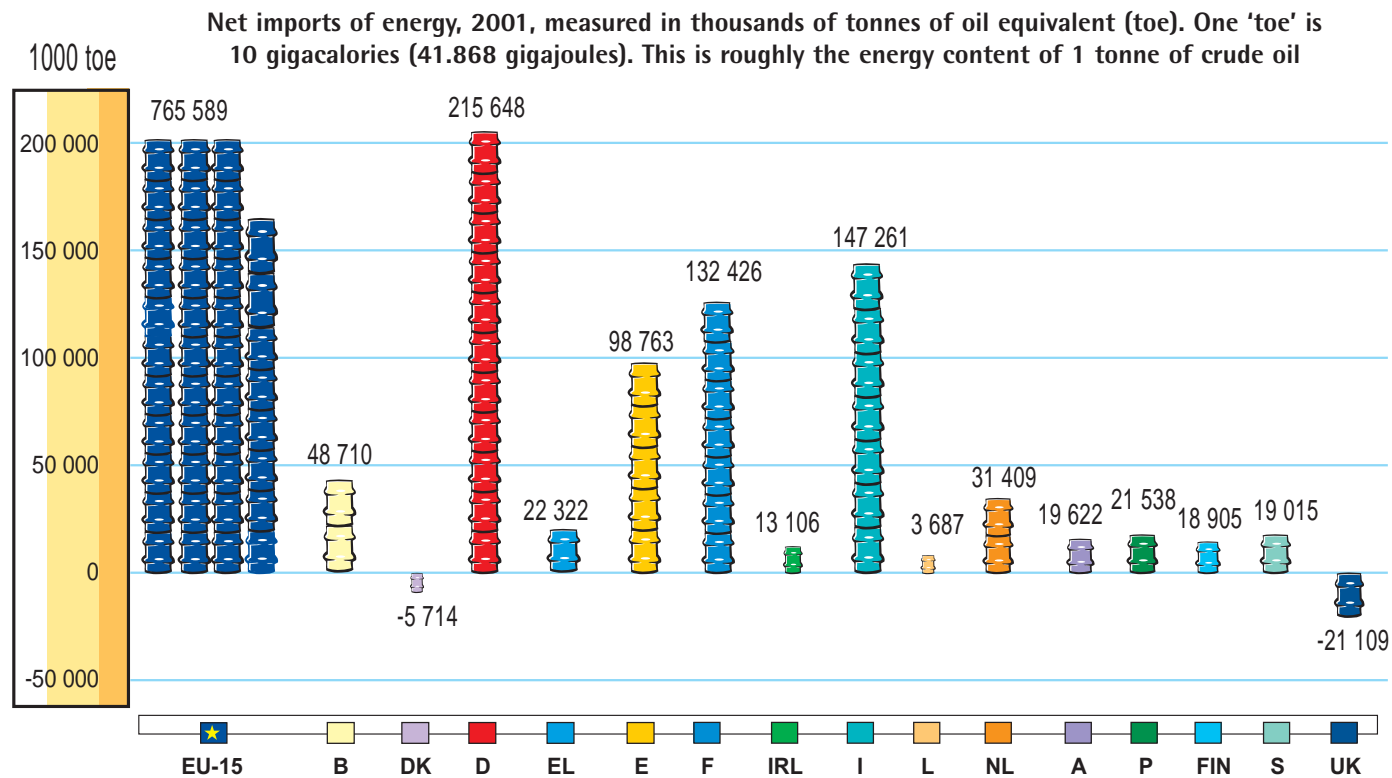
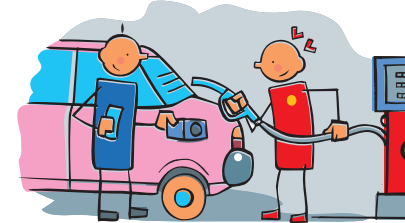
'Primary energy' is energy extracted from natural sources – coal, lignite, crude oil, natural gas, nuclear fuel and renewable sources such as wind, water, solar and geothermal energy. The graph shows what percentage of the EU's total production of primary energy is derived from each of these sources.



Source: Eurostat

Two EU countries (Denmark and the United Kingdom) are net exporters of energy, thanks to their North Sea oil and gas reserves, but the EU as a whole produces only about half the energy it consumes. The rest has to be imported.

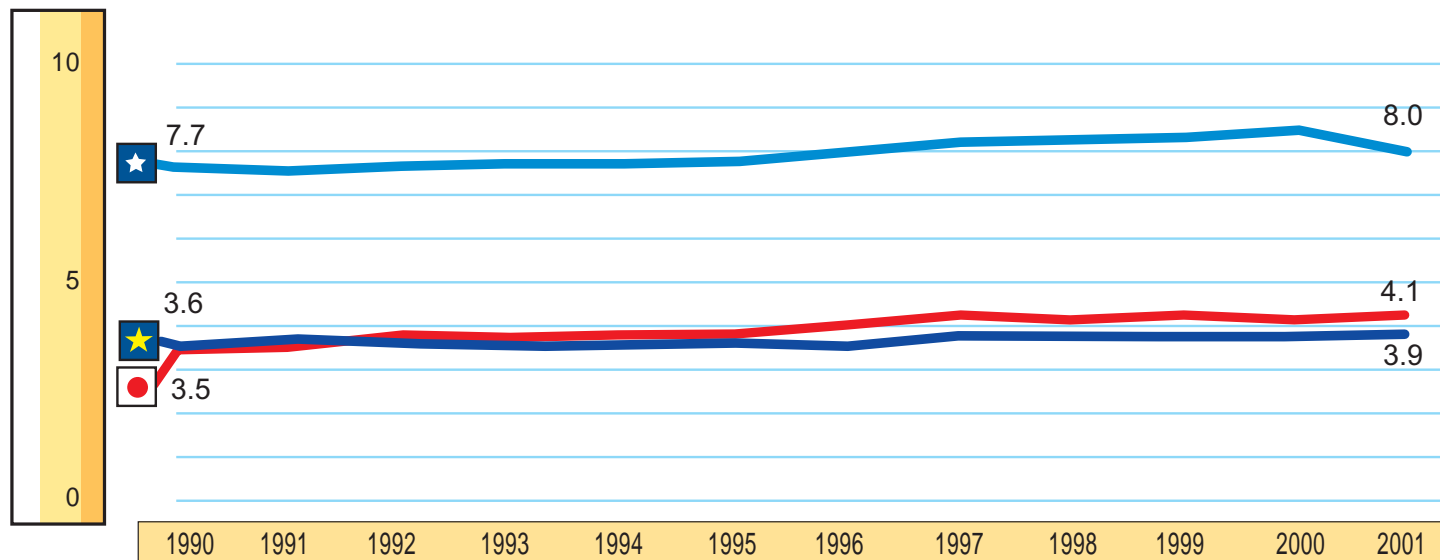
Dependence on imported energy, especially on oil, makes Europe vulnerable to international political crises, such as the oil crisis in 1973. So the EU is working hard to develop its own energy resources.



Individually, Europeans consume less energy than US or Japanese citizens. Nevertheless, energy demand in most countries is growing, so we need to develop ever more energy-efficient technologies – such as car engines that consume less petrol.



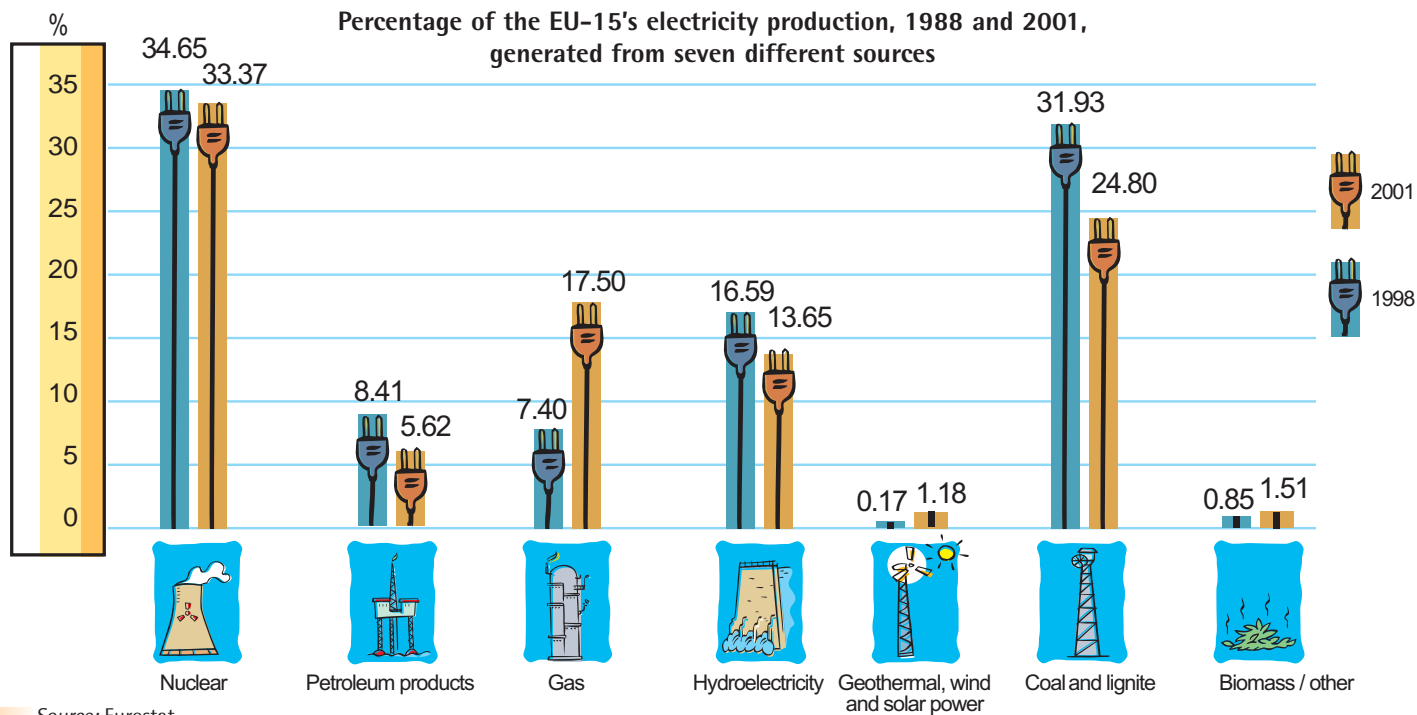
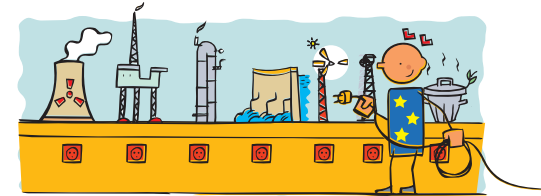
Consumption of primary energy per person (toe per capita), 1990-2001, in the EU-15, United States and Japan



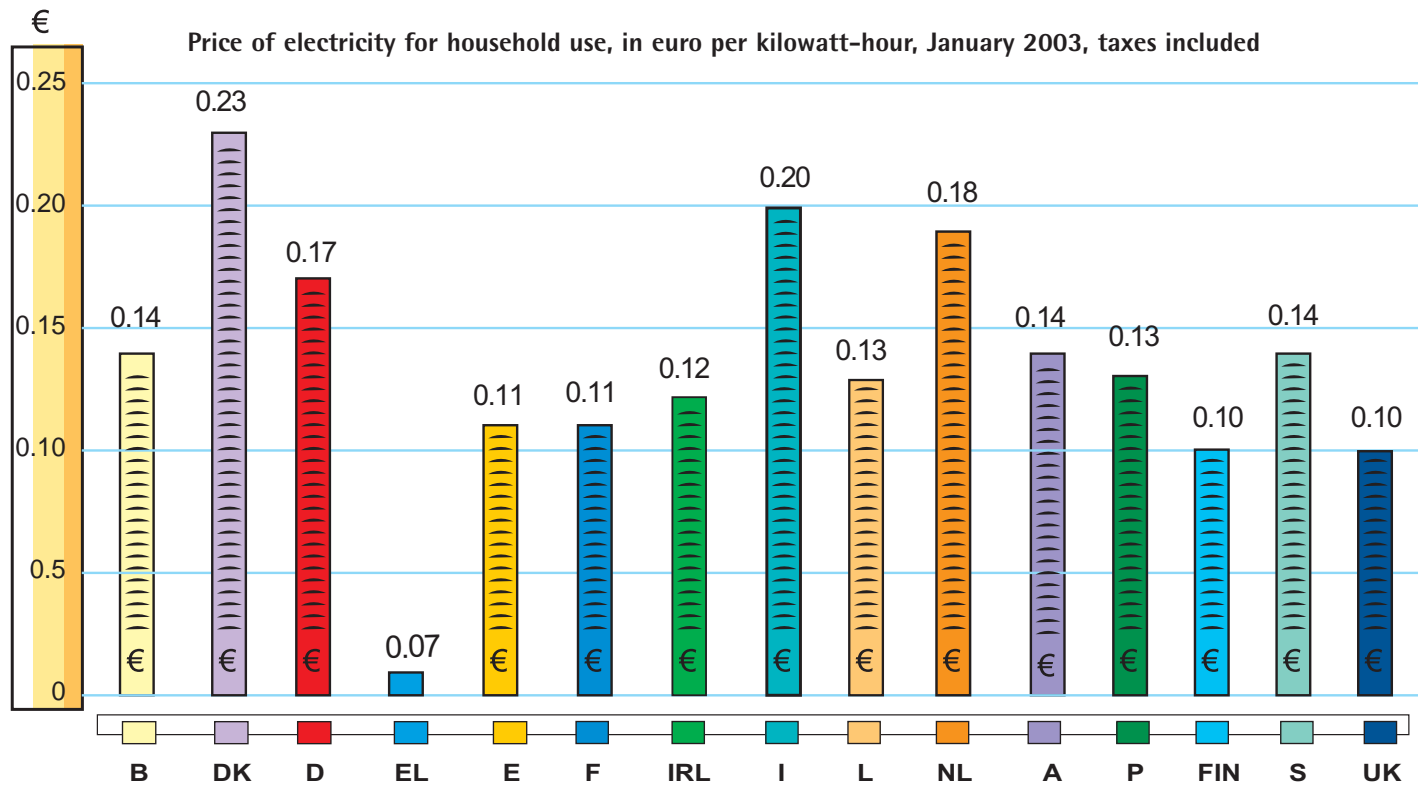
Source: Eurostat, IEA

At one time, the EU generated a large part of its electric power from coal and lignite, which were abundant natural resources. But as reserves have dwindled, coal mining in many countries has become too expensive. Meanwhile, huge reserves of natural gas (a relatively clean fuel) have become available, so power plants have been switching from solid fuels to gas.

However, reserves of all fossil fuels are limited, and burning them releases carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere, contributing to global warming. So the EU is putting extra effort into developing clean, renewable energy resources.

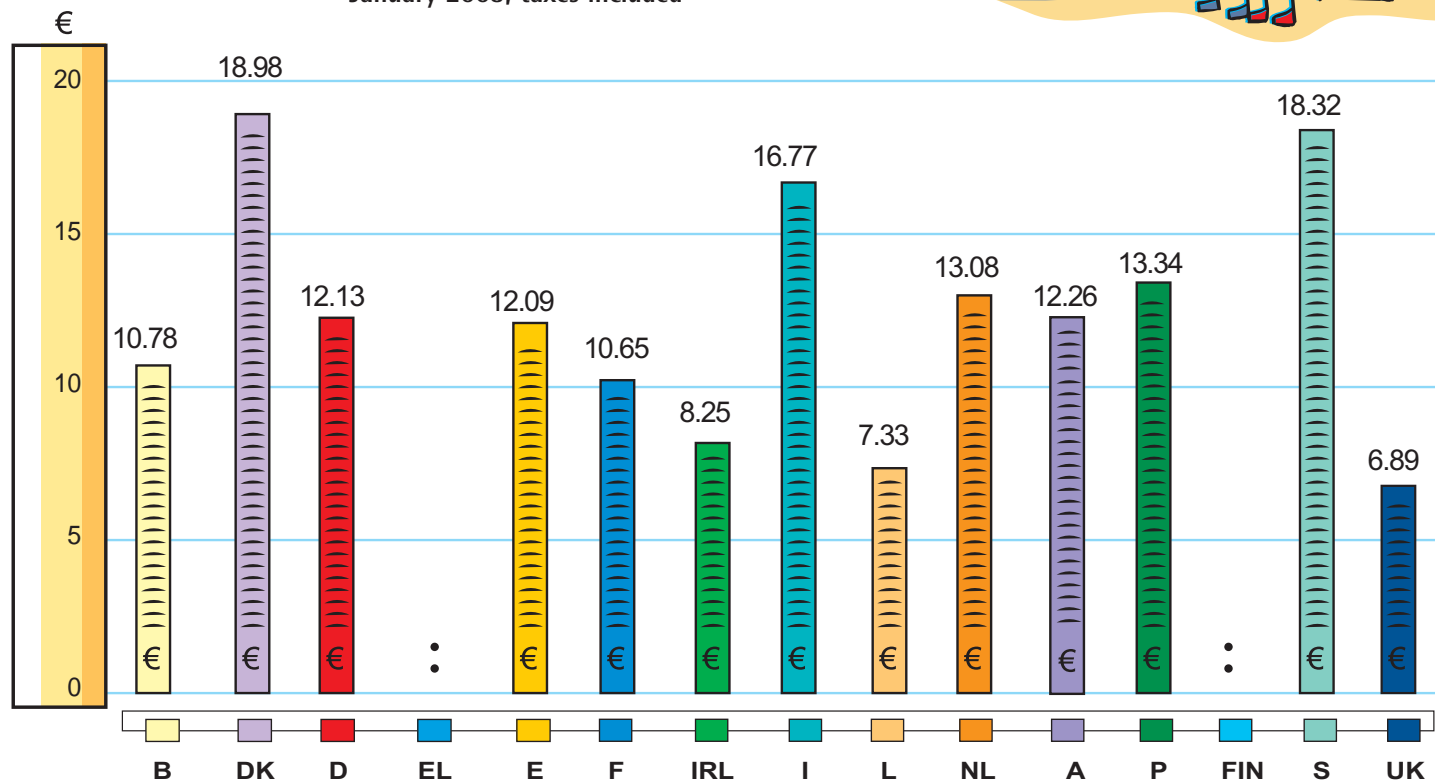
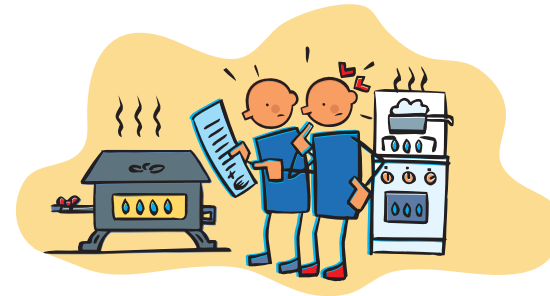


Household gas and electricity prices vary considerably from one EU country to another, especially when national taxes are taken into account. To bring prices down, the EU is opening up national electricity and gas markets to greater competition and, at the same time, developing trans-European networks that will deliver energy more cheaply and efficiently throughout the EU.



Source: Eurostat

Price of natural gas for household use, in euro per gigajoule,
January 2003, taxes included



No figures are available for Finland or Greece, as few households in these countries use natural gas.
Source: Eurostat

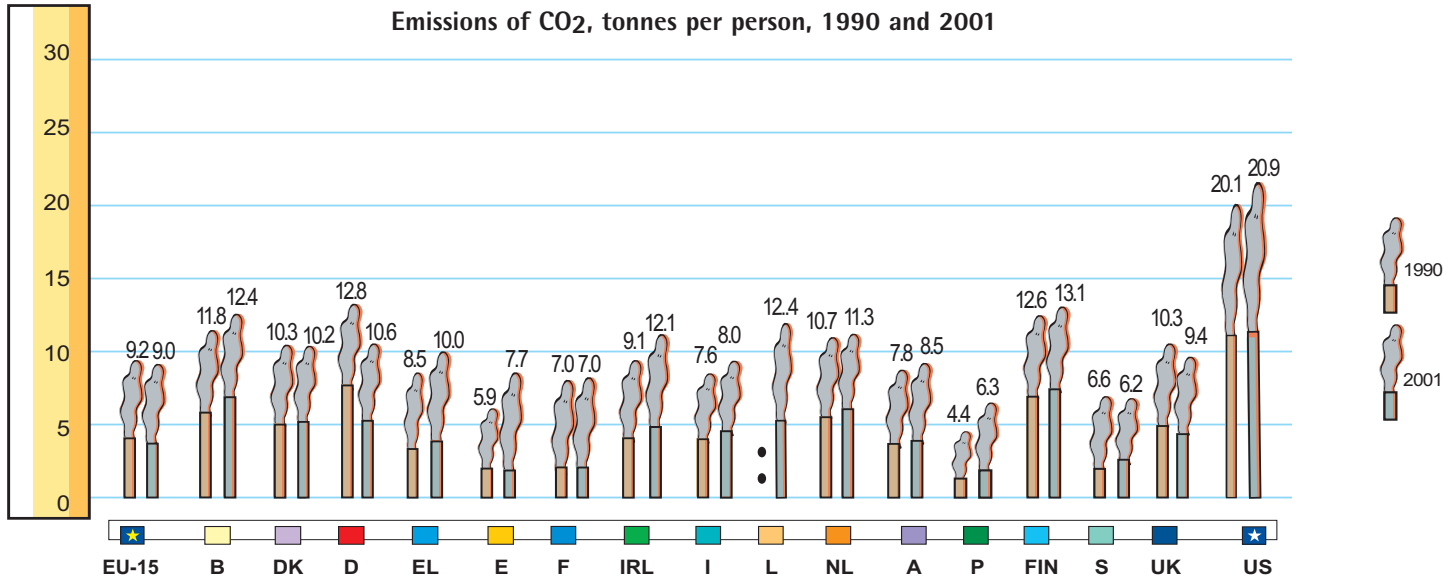


Protecting the environment



Pollution recognises no frontiers, so it cannot be tackled effectively by individual countries working in isolation. That is why Europe-wide measures are needed to protect the environment. Sustainable development is a top priority for the EU, which takes environmental concerns into account in all its policy-making.

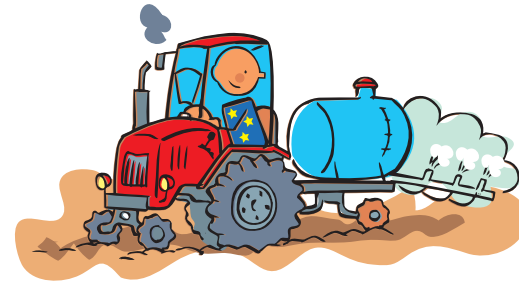
By burning fossil fuels, Europe puts carbon dioxide (CO₂) into the atmosphere. CO₂ is a 'greenhouse gas' that contributes to the problem of global warming. So the EU is working with its global partners to cut greenhouse gas emissions. By signing the Kyoto Protocol it has committed itself to stabilising these emissions from 2000 onwards. The situation varies from one country to another but, in the EU as a whole, emissions are lower now than in 1990. However, action is needed to help curb the rising emissions from transport.



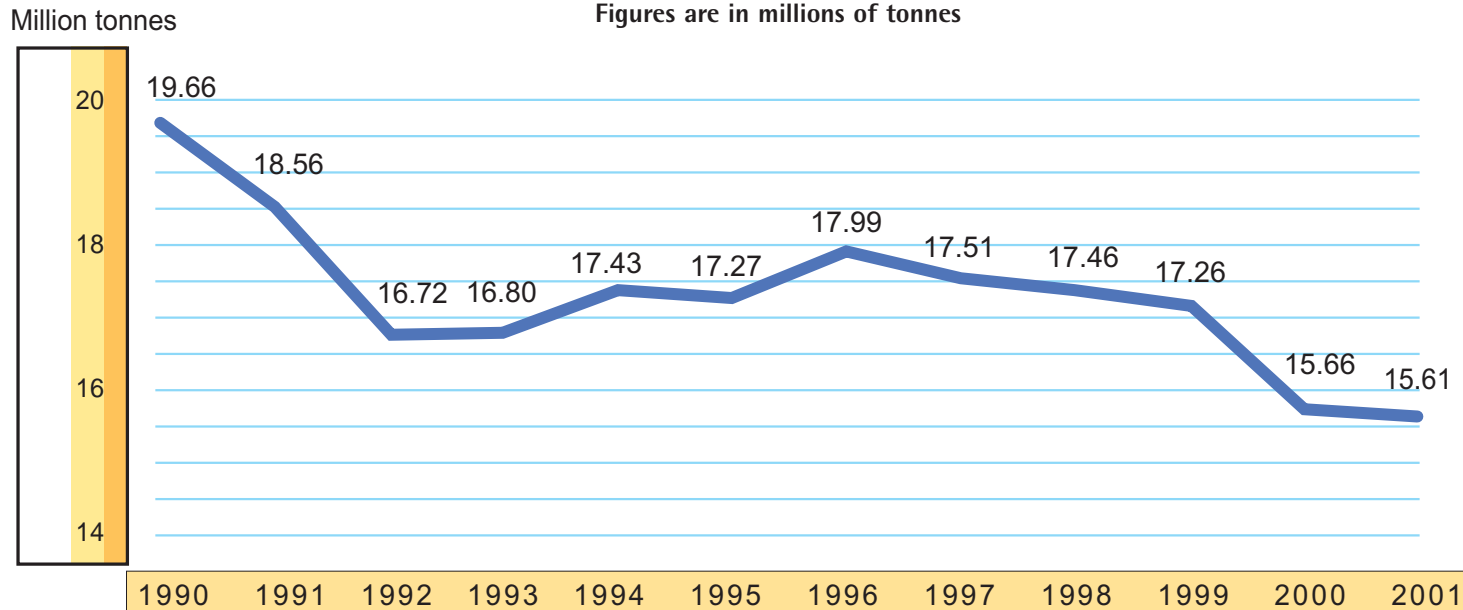
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Sources: UNFCCC, European Environment Agency, Eurostat.

Water pollution is another challenge for the EU. For example, rainwater carries fertilisers from farmland into streams and rivers, damaging the freshwater environment. To tackle this problem, European farmers are cutting back on their use of chemical fertilisers (phosphate, nitrogen and potash).

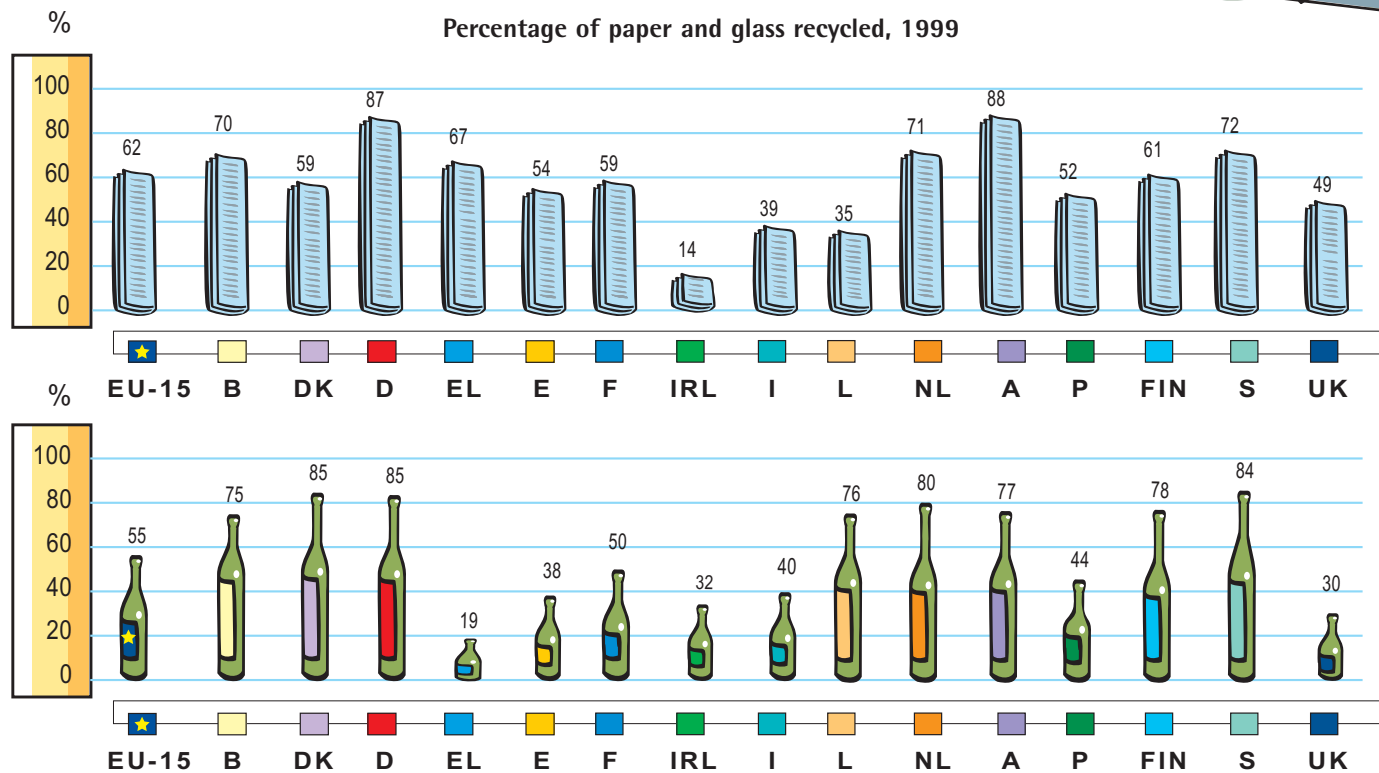


Trend in the consumption of commercial fertilisers, EU-15, 1990-2001.
Figures are in millions of tonnes



Source: European Commission; United Nations, FAOSTAT

Recycling waste such as used paper and glass is also good for the environment. It saves trees, energy and landfill space and cuts air pollution. Most EU countries have made progress on this front.



Source: European Commission.



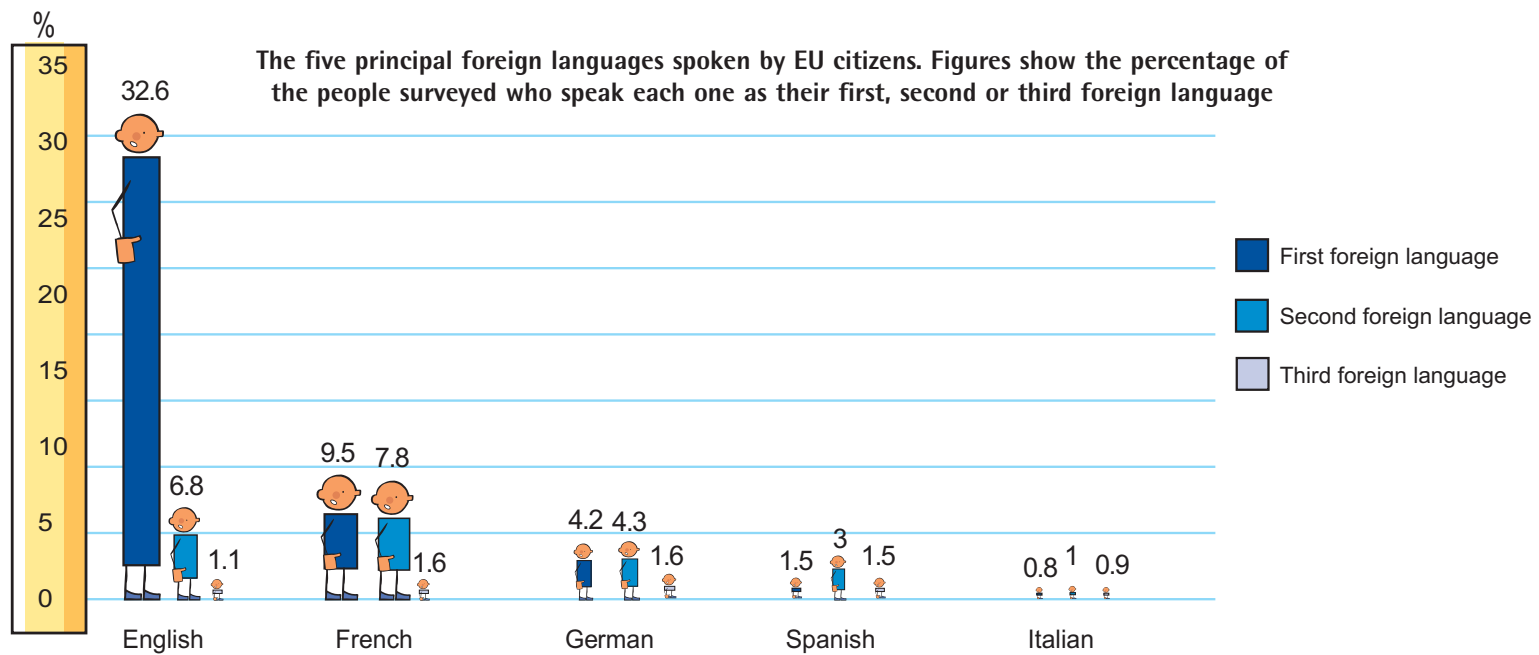
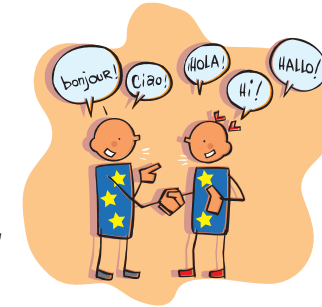
Europeans living together

Increasingly, EU citizens are getting to know one another and developing their sense of belonging together as Europeans. Many spend their holidays in another European country, and increasing numbers of people go to study or work abroad, thanks to freedom of movement within the EU. Also, a high percentage of European school pupils learn at least one European language besides their own.

Chatting with the neighbours

According to a survey in December 2000:

- 53% of Europeans say they can speak at least one European language in addition to their mother tongue;
- 26% of Europeans say they can speak two foreign languages;
- besides their mother tongue, people in Europe tend to know English (41%), French (19%), German (10%), Spanish (7%) and Italian (3%);
- overall, English is the language most often spoken as a first foreign language in Europe.

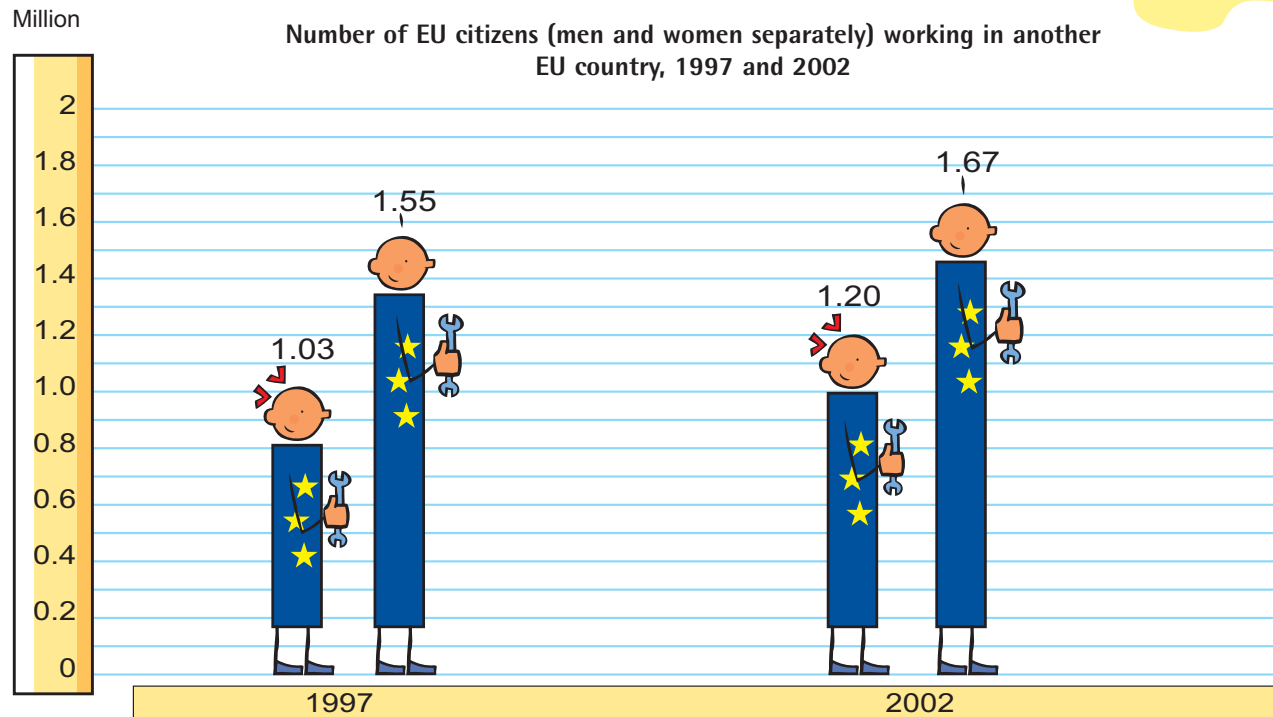


Source: Eurobarometer.



Working together

The number of EU citizens working in another EU country has risen as more people discover the opportunities available. Freedom of movement has become a reality in the European single market.



The figures do not include foreigners working in Italy.

Source: EC

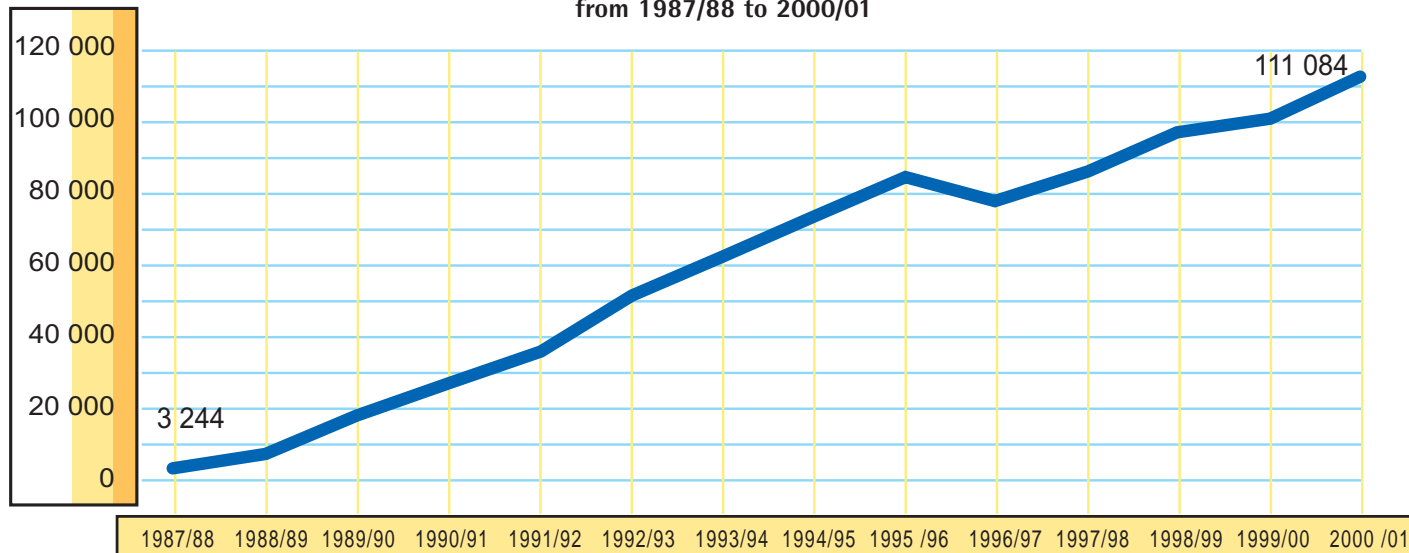


Studying together

Increasing numbers of young people are following educational courses in European countries other than their home country. This is largely thanks to EU schemes such as the Erasmus programme which has provided mobility in Europe for more than a million students since it began in 1987.



Number of students taking part in the Erasmus programme, each academic year from 1987/88 to 2000/01

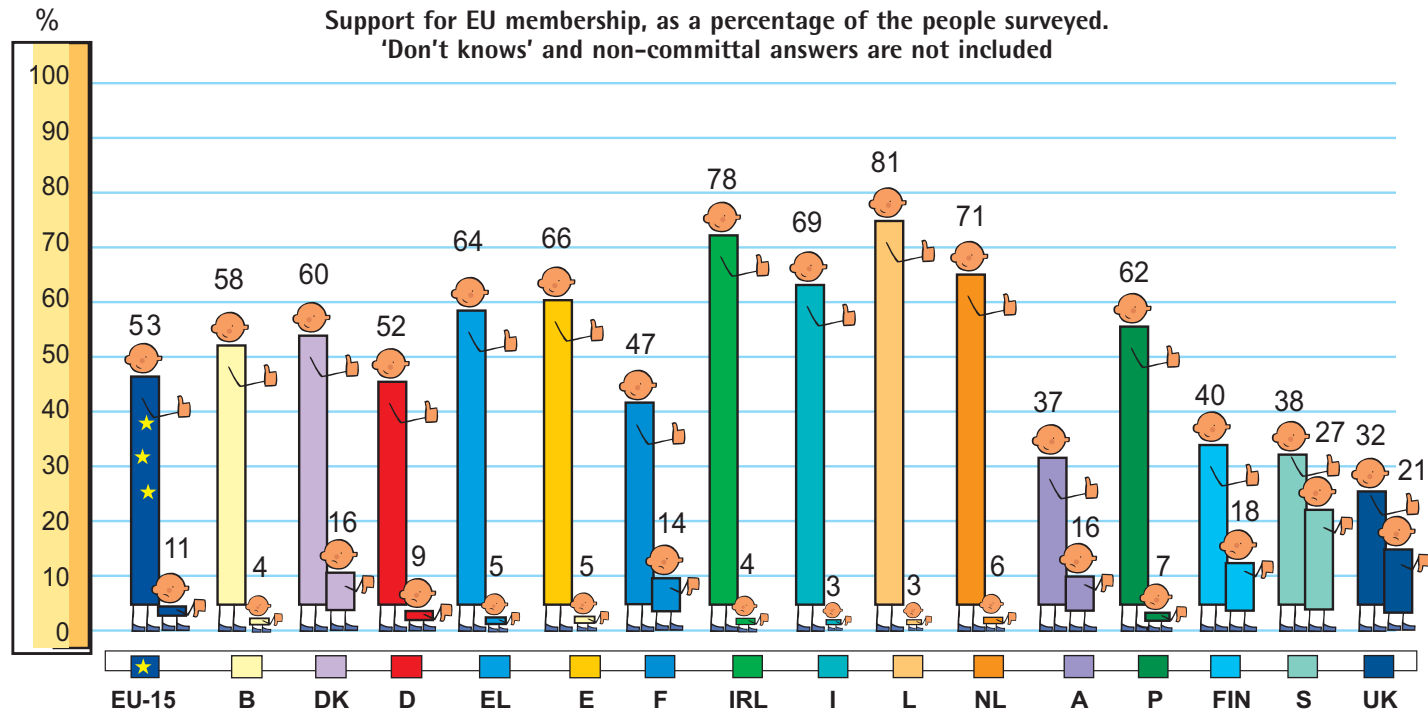
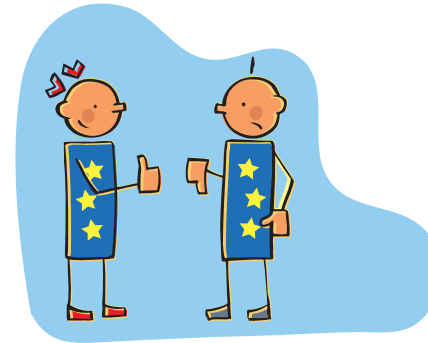


Source: European Commission.

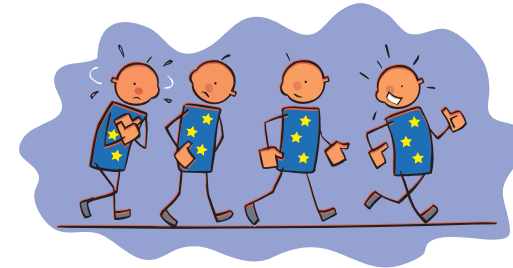


Feeling European

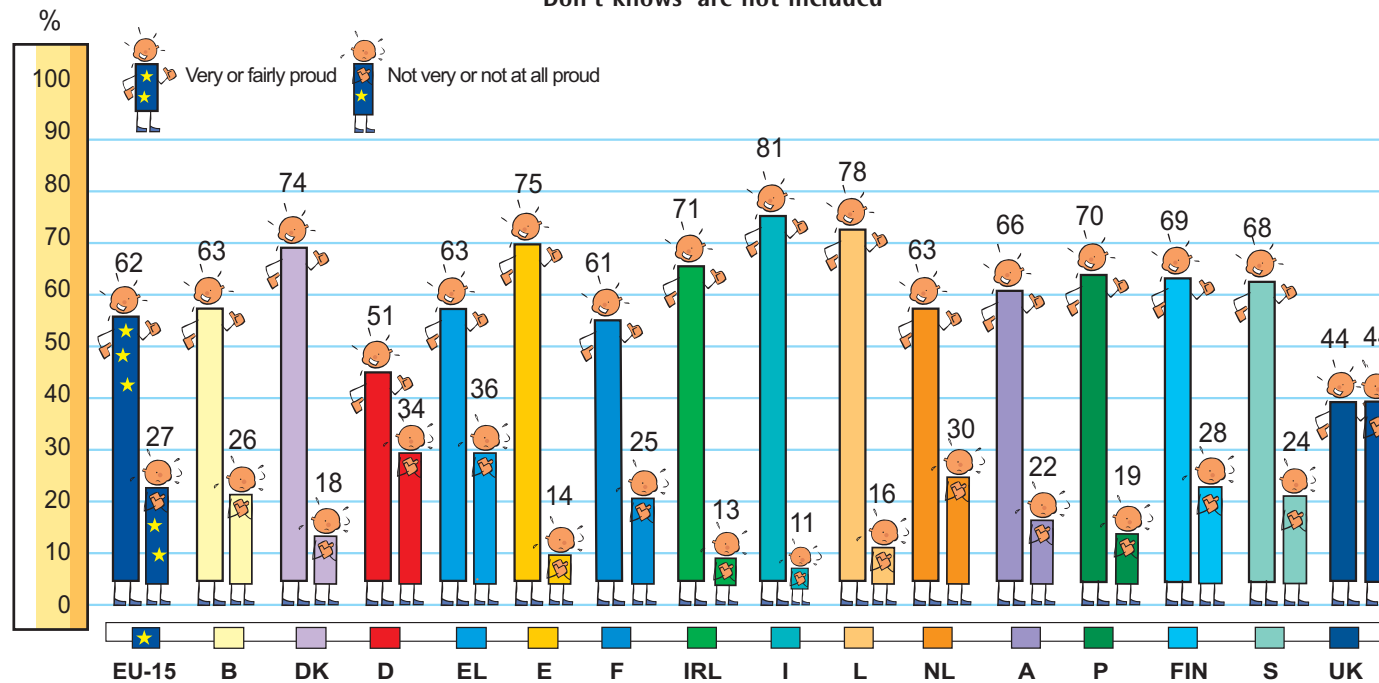
Public support for the EU varies from country to country and fluctuates over time. According to a Eurobarometer survey (May 2002), approval of EU membership is weakest in prosperous countries that joined the EU relatively recently (Austria, Finland, Sweden) and in the United Kingdom – which has a notably 'Euro-sceptic' press. Support is strongest in Luxembourg (one of the original six member states, with a high standard of living) and in Ireland, which has prospered significantly since joining the EU.



In Spring 2002, the Eurobarometer survey asked a representative sample of EU citizens the following question: 'Would you say you are very proud, fairly proud, not very proud or not at all proud to be European?'. A quarter of those who responded felt not very or not at all proud to be European. This may be due to lack of public awareness of what the EU is doing or to disappointment with the perceived results. Either way, the EU clearly has to do more to inform its citizens and to give them a greater say in European decision-making. These are now top priorities for European leaders.



Degree of pride in being European, as a percentage of the people surveyed.
 'Don't knows' are not included



Source: Eurobarometer.



New member states and candidate countries

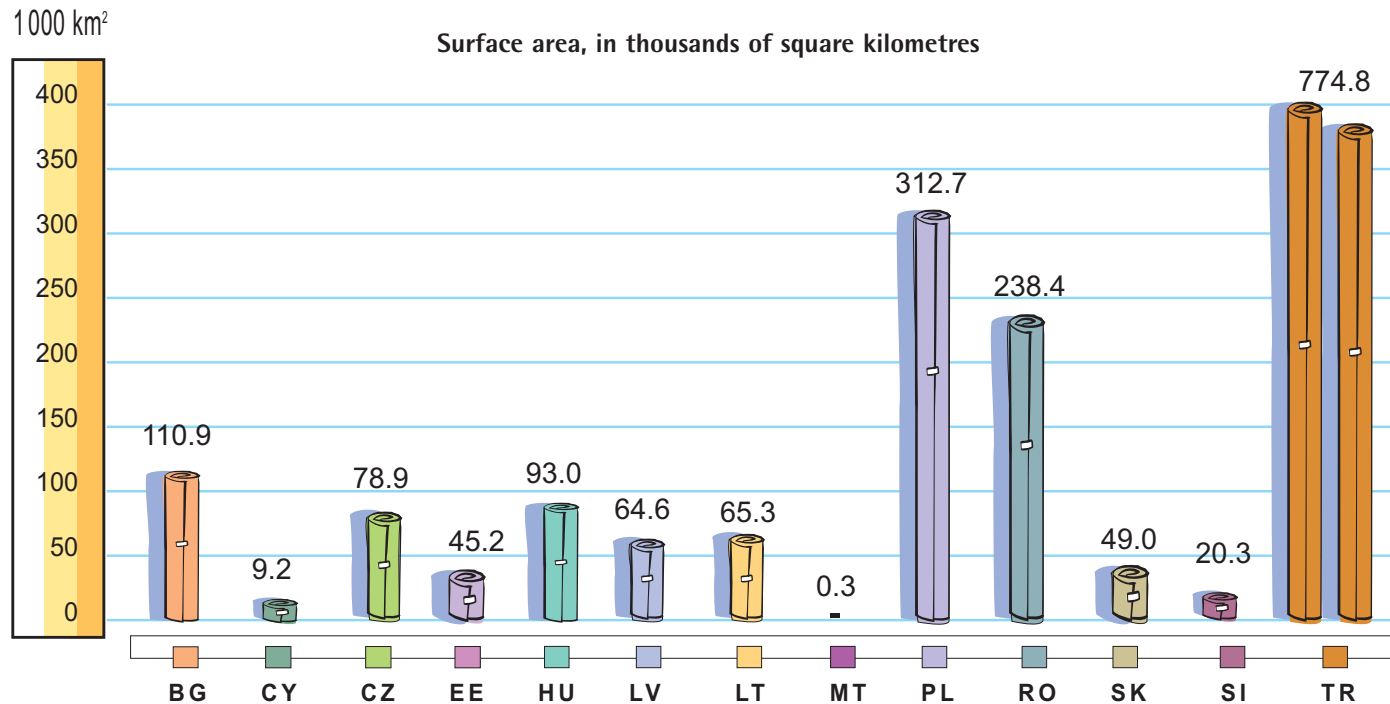
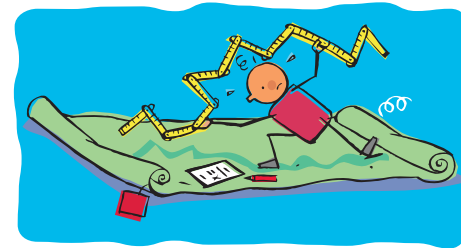
The 13 countries covered in this chapter were all given the status of candidates for European Union membership. Before a candidate country can join the EU it must have a stable system of democratic government, and institutions that ensure the rule of law and respect for human rights. It must also have a functioning and competitive market economy.

Ten of the 13 candidates have met all these requirements, completed membership negotiations and are part of the EU from 1 May 2004. Two others (Bulgaria and Romania) expect to follow in 2007. Turkey is the 13th.



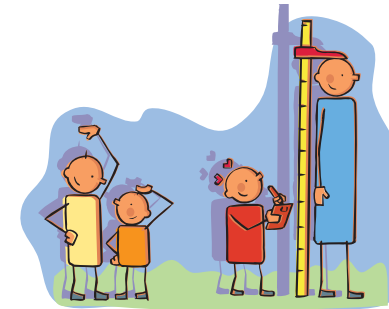
How big are they?

Enlargement over the next few years to take in 12 of the 13 candidate countries will increase the EU's population by over 100 million, and its surface area by more than one million square kilometres. With Turkey, the EU would have an extra 70 million people and increase its surface area by more than 18%.

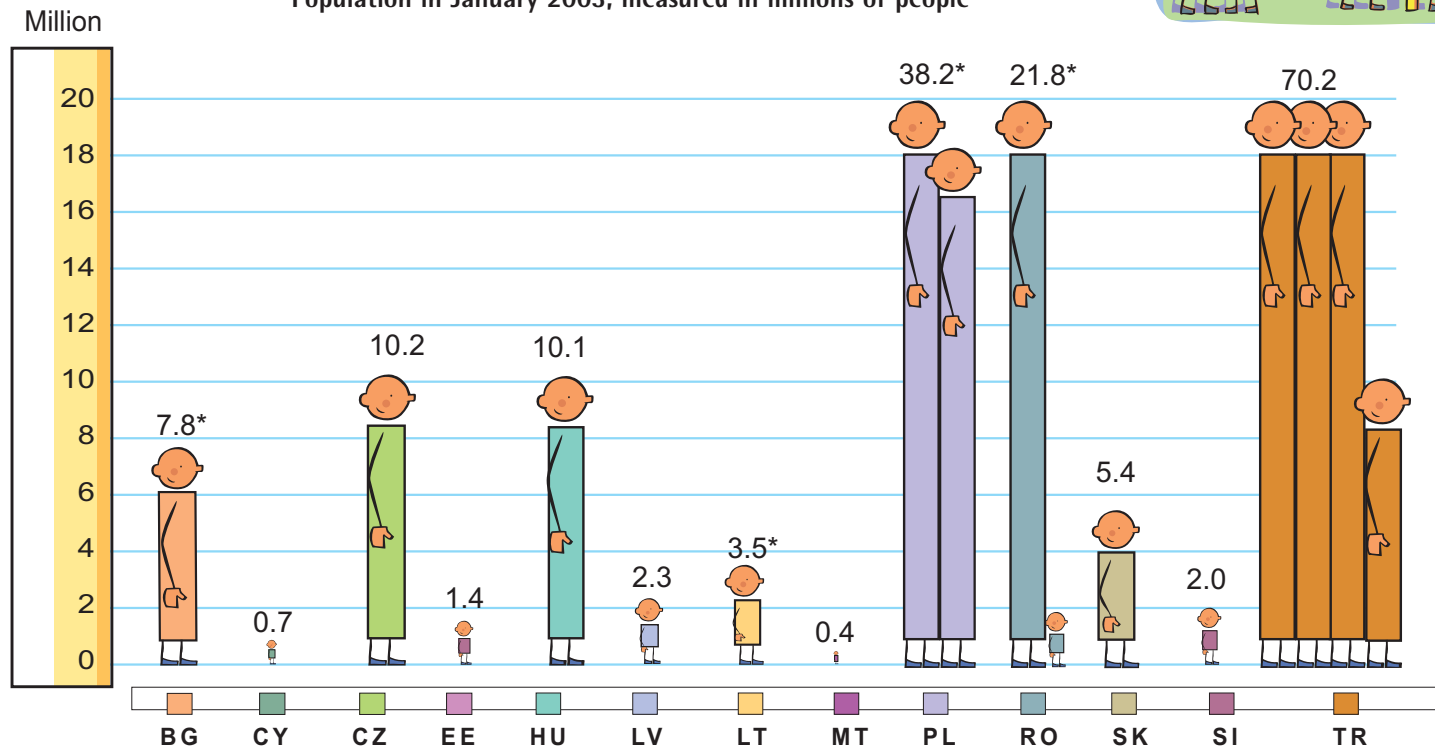


Source: Eurostat

How many people live there?

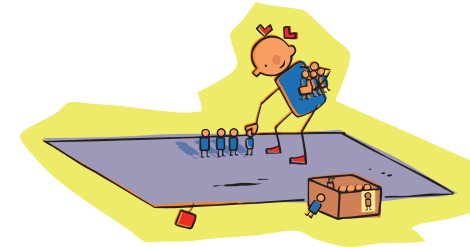


Population in January 2003, measured in millions of people

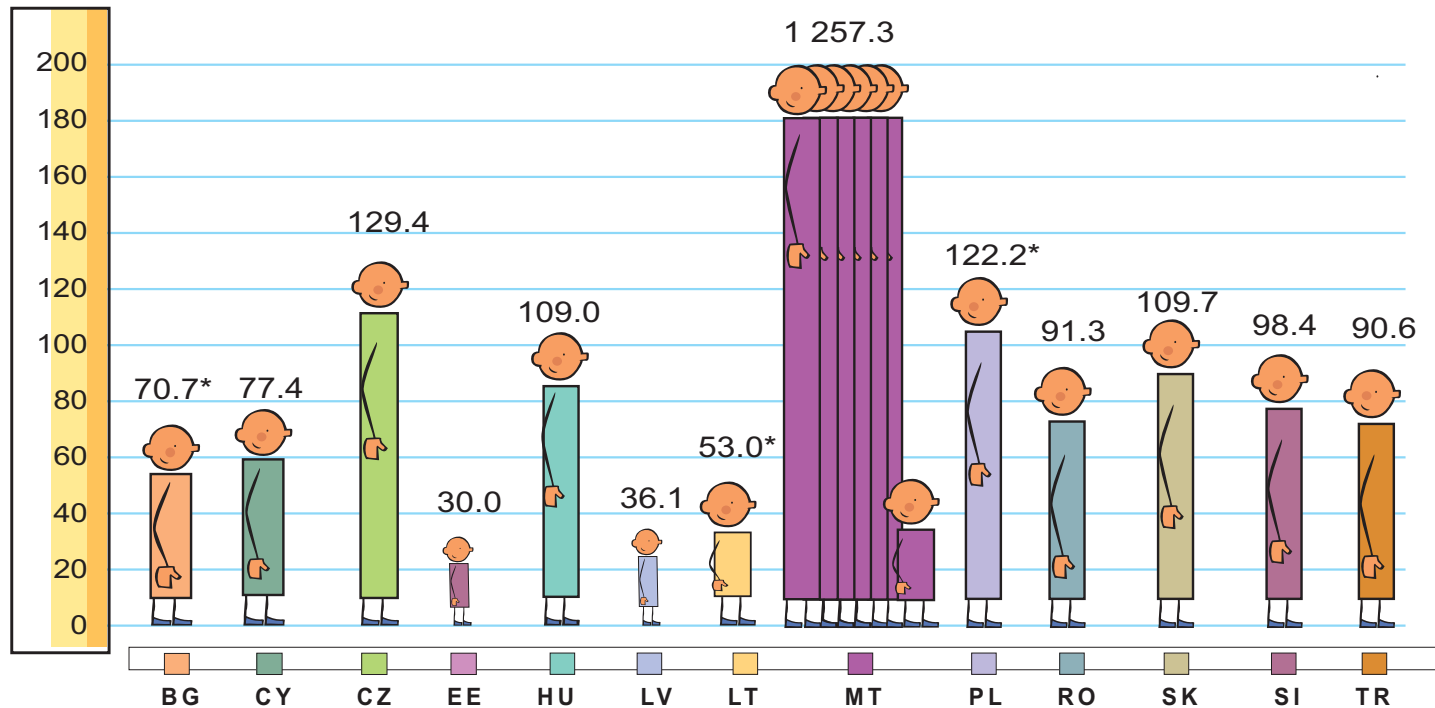


Source: Eurostat

The population density varies considerably, from crowded Malta to sparsely populated Estonia. In general, the figure is lower than the EU-15 average of 120.2 people per square kilometre.



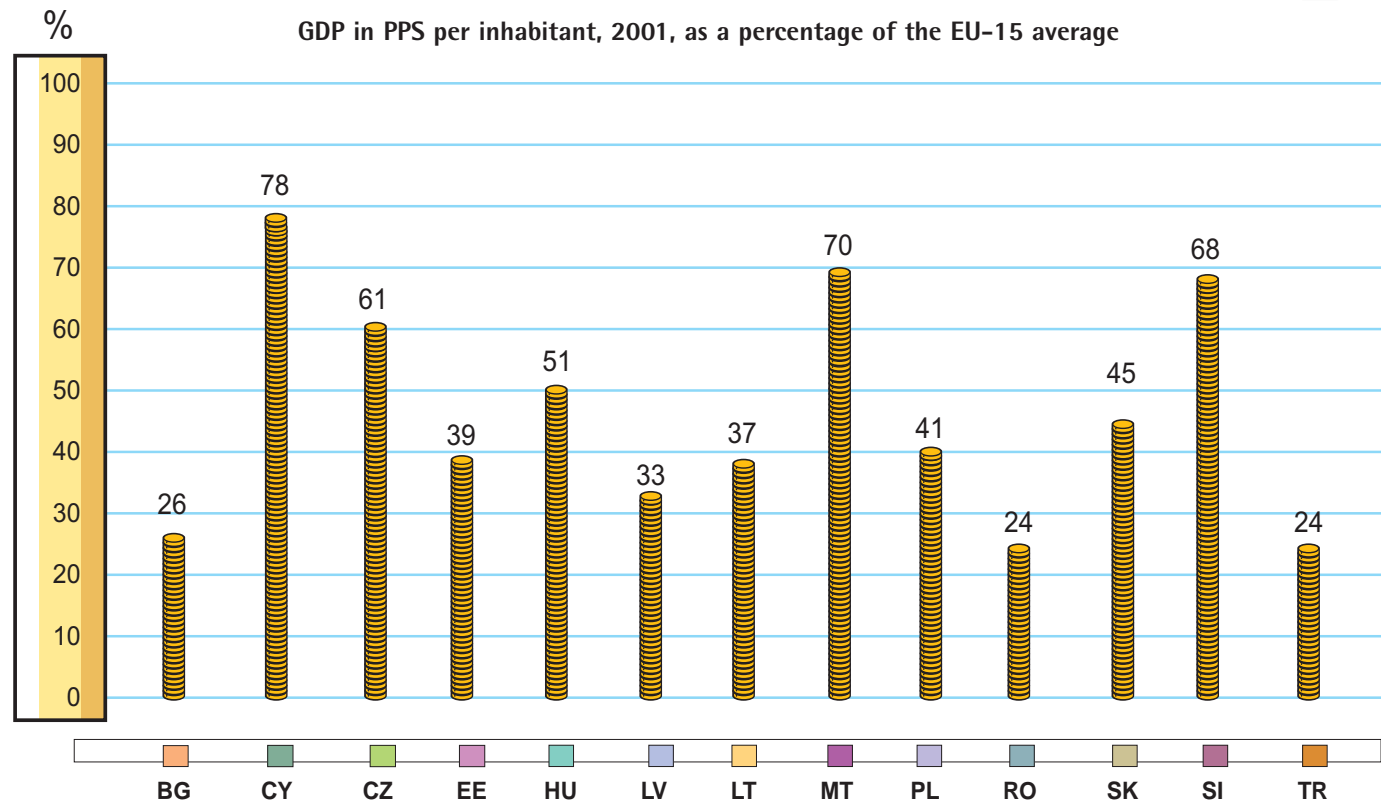
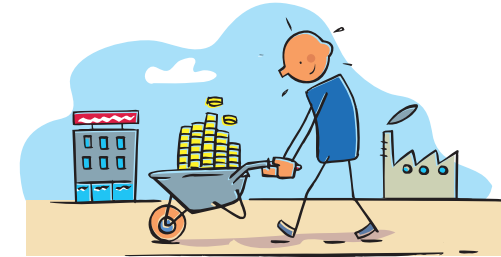
Population density, measured in persons per square kilometre, January 2003



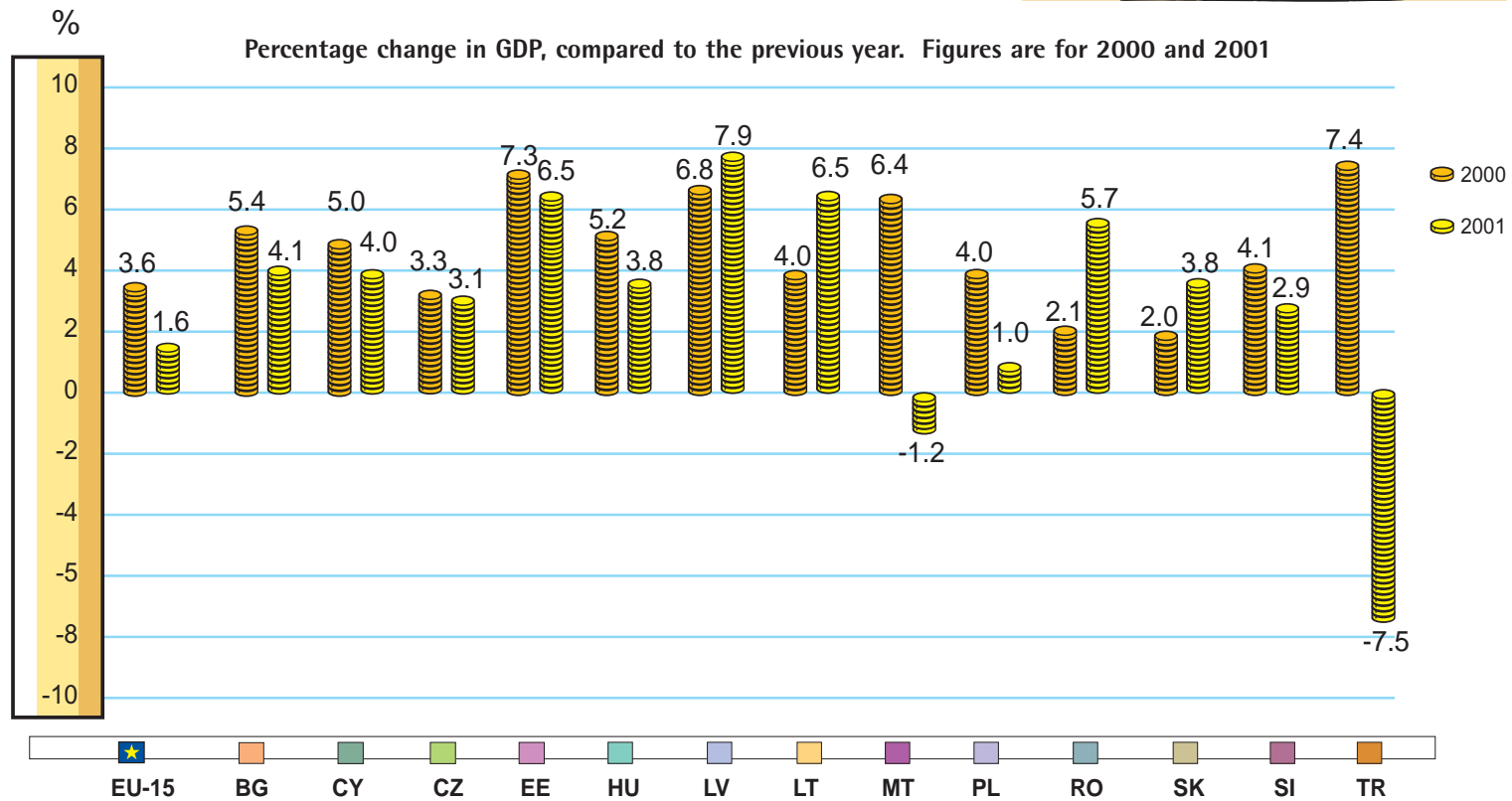
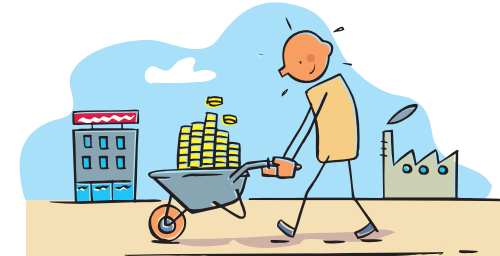
Source: Eurostat

Making economic progress

The 10 new member states and the three remaining candidate countries are, at present, less wealthy than most other EU countries, and they all have different levels of prosperity. Wealth per inhabitant (GDP per capita) is greatest in small, prosperous countries like Cyprus and Slovenia.



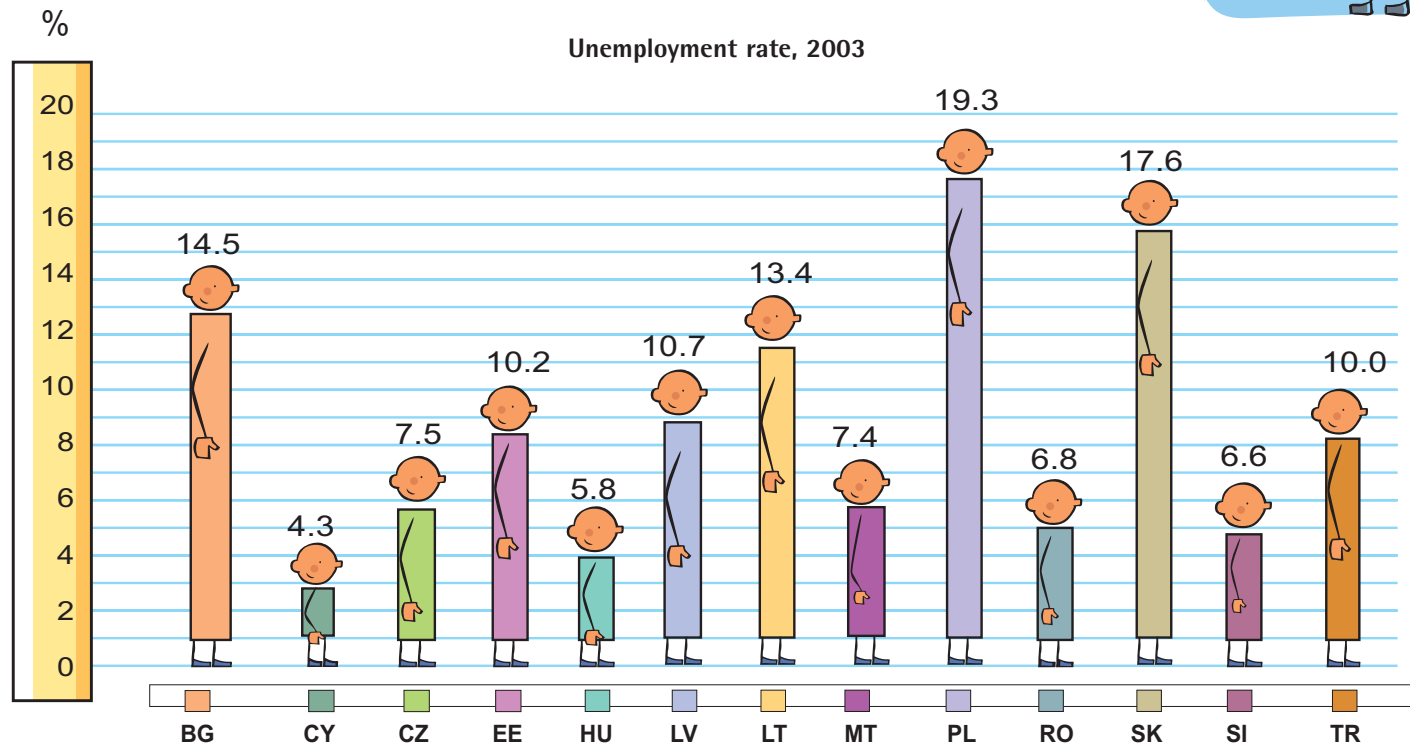
Over the past decade, all the candidate countries have developed thriving market economies. Major economic reforms are creating new jobs and an overall level of economic growth (5% in 2000) that exceeds the EU-15 average.



Source: Eurostat

People at work

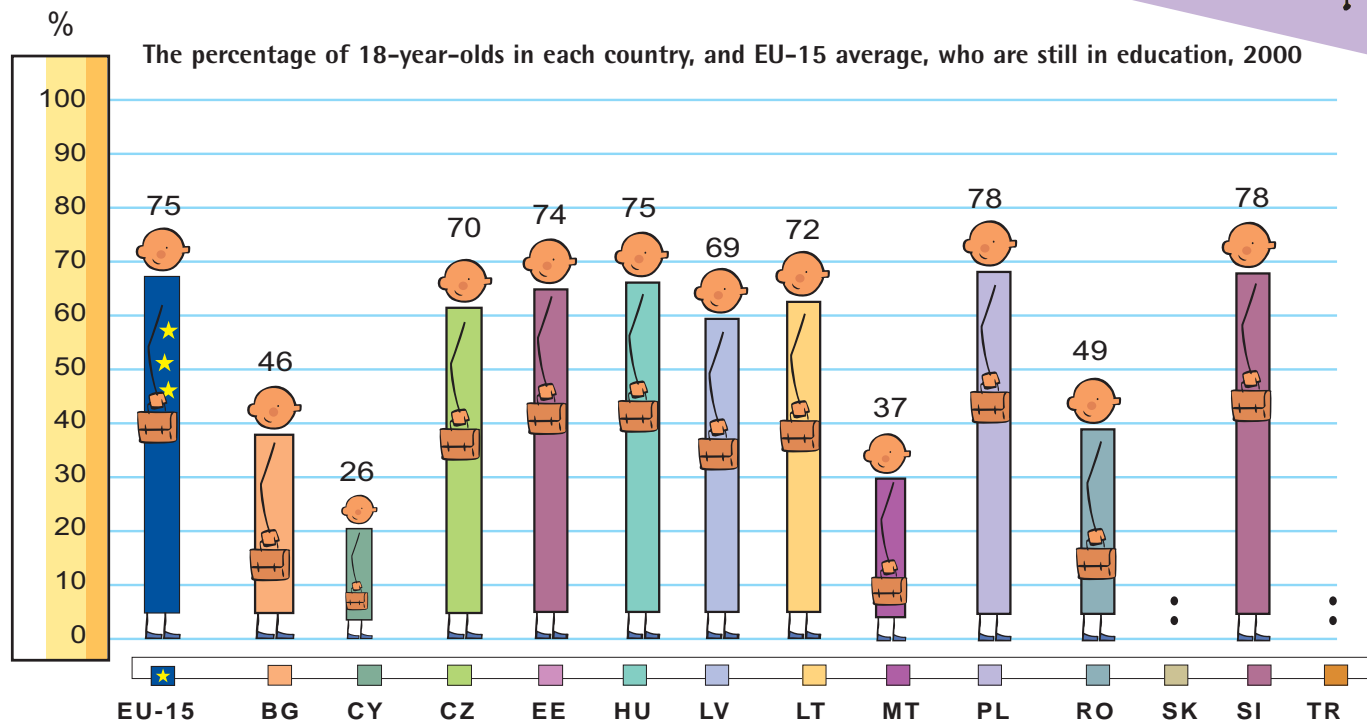
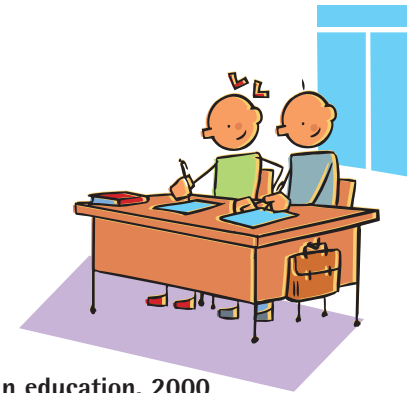
Economic reforms in the candidate countries have made business and industry leaner and fitter, but this has also meant job losses in some sectors. As in the EU, young people under 25 are much worse affected by unemployment - except in Cyprus and Malta. EU membership is expected to boost growth and employment.



Source: Eurostat

Education

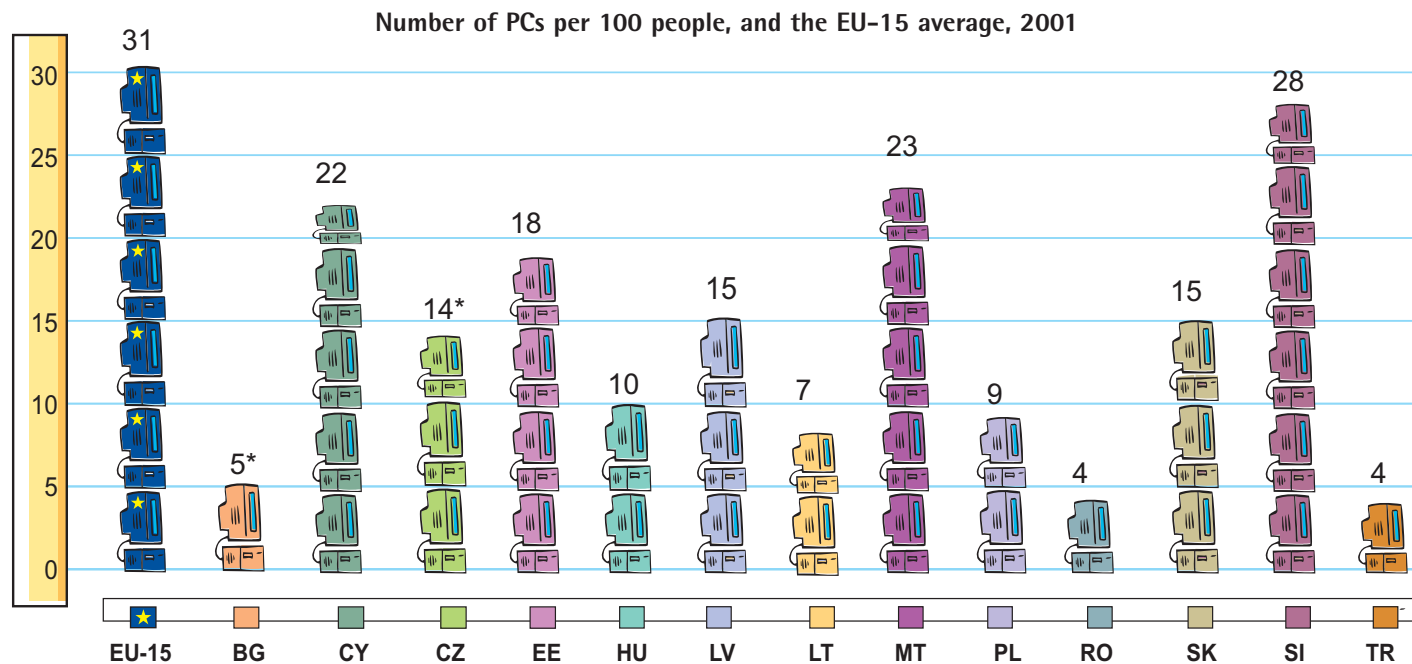
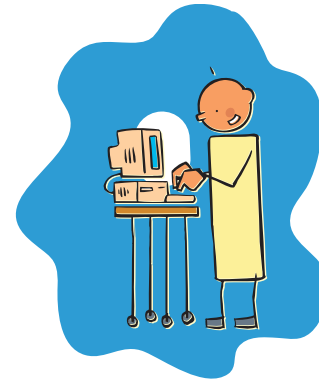
Citizens of the candidate countries and new member states are, on average, as well educated as other EU citizens. In some countries, the percentage of 18-year-olds still in education is higher than the EU-15 average. In all 13 countries, younger people are better educated than older age groups and higher education greatly reduces the risk of unemployment.



Figures for Cyprus exclude students studying abroad. Figures for Poland are estimates.
Sources: Unesco, OECD, Eurostat.

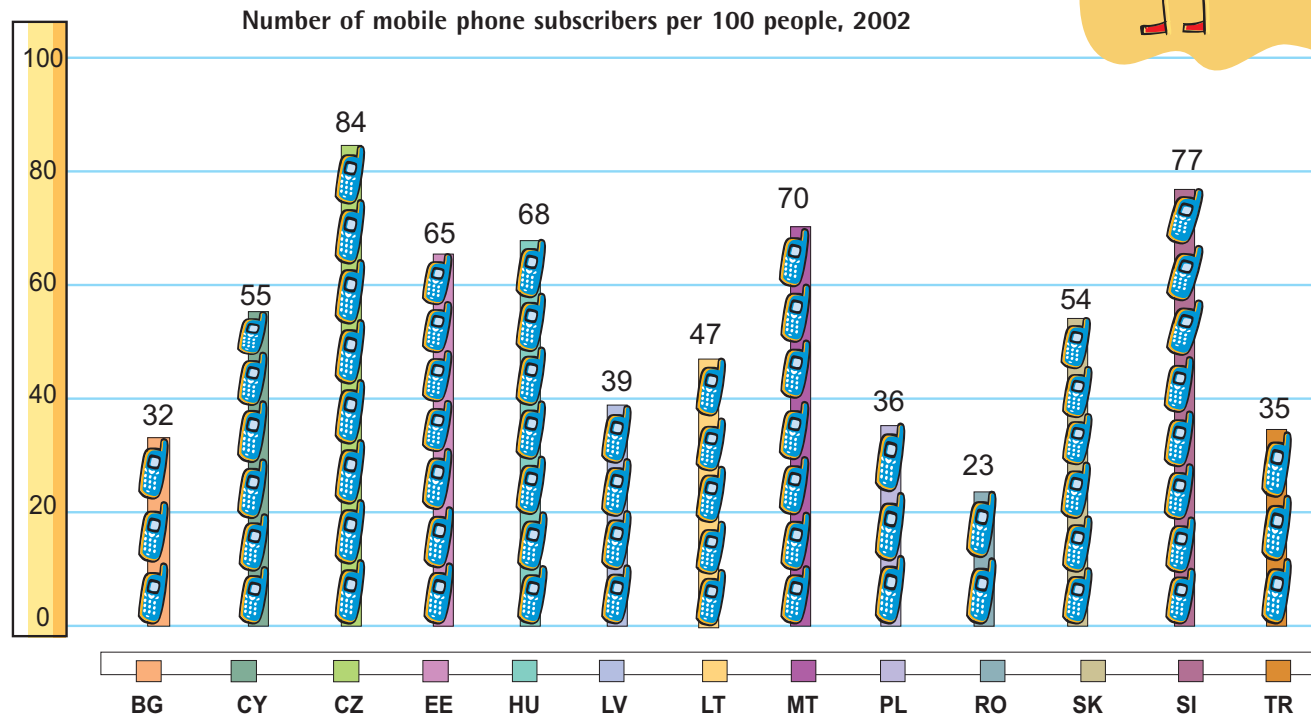
The information society: catching up fast

On average, there are fewer personal computers per 100 people in the new member states and candidate countries than in the EU-15, but PC ownership is rising rapidly. Continued economic progress will see the new member states steadily catching up with the rest, and greater use of the internet will, in turn, make their economies more competitive.



Source: Eurostat

Since the mid-1990s, mobile phone ownership in the candidate countries and new member states has grown at a spectacular rate.

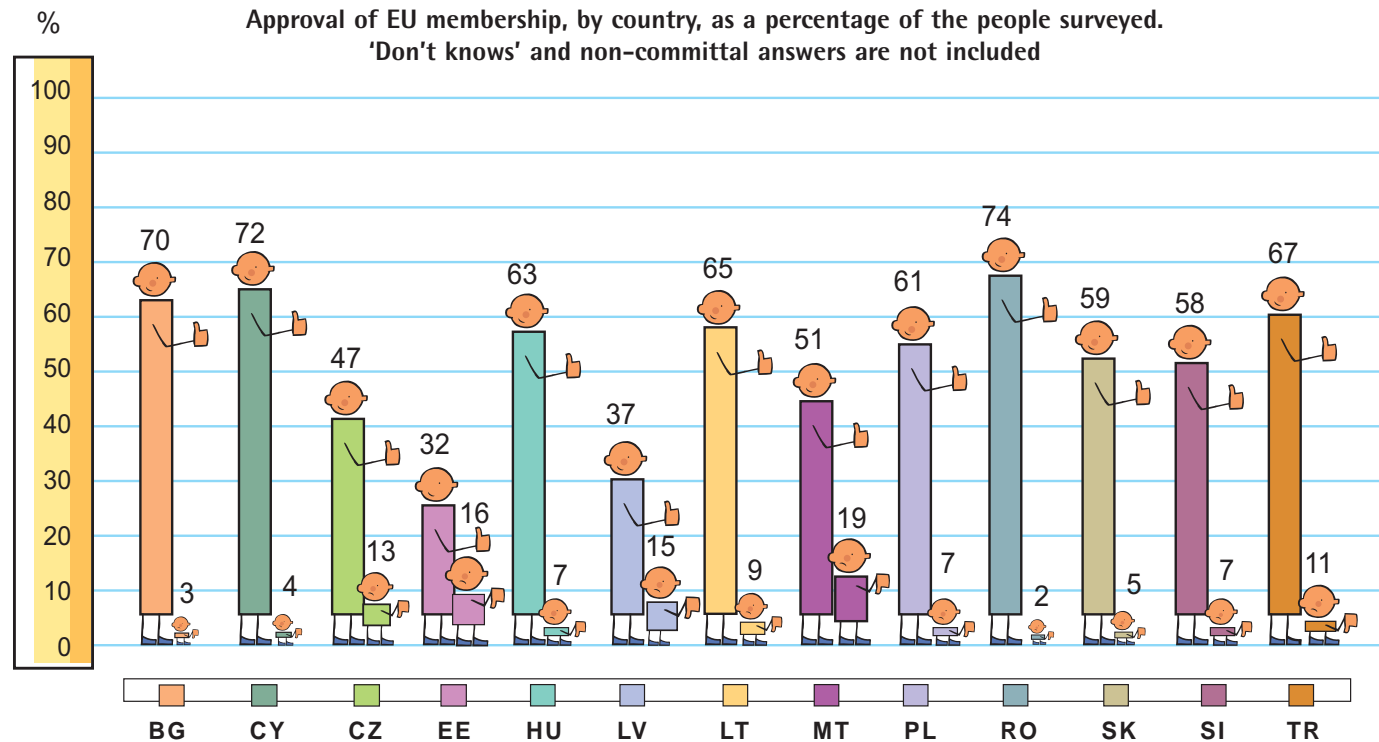


Source: Eurostat



Confident in the future

In May 2003, a Eurobarometer survey asked a representative sample of people in the candidate countries whether EU membership was a good or bad thing. Nearly two thirds (64%) of them said their country would benefit from EU membership. Only 8% said the opposite.

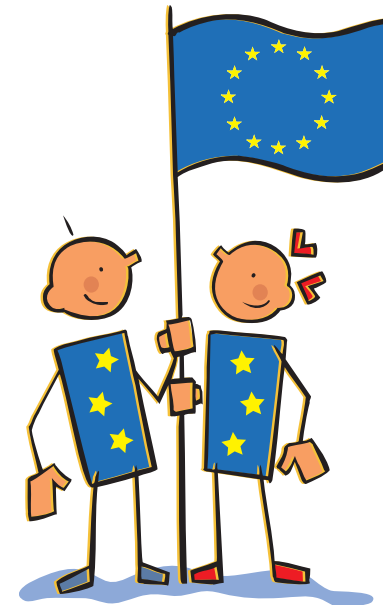


Conclusion

With its enlargement in 2004–07, the European Union is grasping a truly historic opportunity – uniting a once-divided continent and creating a peaceful, stable and democratic Europe. This enlargement will also create a single market of nearly half a billion consumers, with excellent potential for economic growth and increasing prosperity.

But peace, democracy, stability and prosperity must not stop at the Union's new borders. That is why the EU will continue forging closer ties with its near neighbours – Russia, Belarus, Ukraine, Moldova, the Caucasus and Balkan regions, the Middle East and North Africa. By working constructively with all these countries on political as well as economic issues, and by giving them easy access to the enlarged single market, the EU aims to spread prosperity, stability and democratic progress throughout its neighbourhood.

Over the period 2000–06, enlargement will cost the EU only about a thousandth of its annual GDP. This is a tiny price to pay for the benefits of a united Europe and a more stable world.



European Commission

**Key facts and figures
about the European Union**

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Summary

The European Union (EU) covers a large part of the continent of Europe. In 2004, its membership increases from 15 to 25. When two more countries join in 2007, the EU will have a population of nearly half a billion.

The European Union aims to be a fair and caring society. All EU countries are committed to peace, democracy, the rule of law and respect for human rights, and they work together to promote these values in the wider world.

To become more competitive and prosperous, the EU is creating new and better jobs and giving its citizens new skills. In partnership with its near neighbours, the EU is also working to spread prosperity and democratic progress beyond its borders.

This booklet sets out many basic facts about the European Union, and presents up-to-date figures in a series of clear and entertaining graphs and illustrations.

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Key facts and figures about the European Union

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