



EuroPCom 2015
Session 26 report
21.10.2015

Analysis of the Eurobarometer survey

This session was **chaired by Luciano Morganti**, Professor at the *Vrije Universiteit Brussel* and at Vesalius College. The keynote lecture on the results of the Eurobarometer survey on public opinion in the EU regions was given by **Edouard Lecerf**, global director political & opinion research at TNS.

In his introductory remarks, **Mr Morganti** pointed out that Europe's vocation was not to impose but to inspire. He presented the most recent Eurobarometer survey, emphasising its regional focus, with 209 EU regions surveyed and 62 511 citizens interviewed. He pointed out that this year's survey was the follow-up to a previous edition launched in 2012 on the same topic.

Edouard Lecerf analysed the main findings of the survey. He presented the situation before (2012) and developments during (2012-15) the study, as well as future prospects. Public opinion on the economy, employment, migration, the environment and trust in the EU were the main topics covered. Since 2012, when 45% felt that their regional economic situation was good, there has been an overall improvement. However, there are big contrasts among regions in France and Italy. **Mr Lecerf** pointed to differences between the future projections of optimistic and pessimistic regions.

Concerning the most important issues regions face, **Mr Lecerf** covered unemployment, migration and the environment. Unemployment was still in first place in 142 regions although it had decreased by nine points since 2012. According to the results of the survey, concerns about migration had doubled in three years, from 12 to 24 points. **Mr Lecerf** stressed that Europe was already immersed in the migration crisis when the survey was carried out (3-23 September 2015). Migration was the main issue in 17 regions in Italy, Greece and South Germany. Some Italian and German regions were more worried about migration today than in 2012. The environment was in the 8th position, meaning that this was not a main concern at a regional level for Europeans.

Mr Lecerf also addressed the question about which representatives were best placed to explain the EU to citizens. Regions in Italy, Greece and Cyprus said "none of them" (the options were MEPs, members of the EC, your national, regional or local representatives). **Mr Lecerf** explained that it was important to note that participants had replied to this spontaneously.

The keynote lecture concluded with a reference to the "halo effect": in areas where there are more migrants people might be less worried about the issue than in regions with no/low immigration.