



We proposed four different metaphors that the media and commentators often adopt to describe the Union, and we asked our respondents to choose the one that comes closest to their view. The EU was described, respectively, as the “common house” of all European citizens; an “apartment building” in which national peoples live next to each other like good neighbours; a “playground” that facilitates (mutually beneficial) economic exchanges among member states and citizens; finally, a “sinking ship” from which member states should escape as fast as they can.

Overall, the most appealing image is the apartment building (30.1%), followed by the playground (26.0%), the common house (23.8%) and, finally, the sinking ship (20.3%). In Germany, more than 54% of respondents declared themselves closest to the image of the apartment building, while only 6.9% of them opted for the common house. By contrast, in Italy and Poland a plurality of respondents opted for the common house image (38.1% and 31.9% respectively). In Spain (33.8%) and Sweden (34.5%), instead, a plurality identified with the playground metaphor. Finally, 33.2% of French and 32.3% of British respondents see the EU as a sinking ship.

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