

Exploring public attitudes, informing public policy

Selected findings from the first five rounds



“ Europe’s economic and societal challenges demand better and more innovative policy-making. We need reliable and accessible data so that policymakers have a real understanding of the problems to be tackled and to ensure that the policies they create are targeted and effective... [The ESS is] making a major contribution to the creation of effective social and economic policies in Europe ”

Máire Geoghegan-Quinn, EU Commissioner for Research, Innovation and Science

Remarks made as part of the opening address to the ESS International Conference – ‘Cross-National Evidence from European Social Survey: Exploring Public Attitudes, Informing Public Policy in Europe’, Nicosia, Cyprus, 23 November 2012

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Attitudes and behaviours in a changing Europe

Over the past decade, the ESS has become an authoritative source of reliable data about Europe’s evolving social, political and moral fabric

It was in the 1990s that the European Science Foundation first identified the need for a new regular and rigorous Europe-wide survey to chart changes in social values throughout Europe. By 2001, the European Commission had been joined by 21 national research councils and ministries throughout Europe to jointly fund the first round of the ambitious European Social Survey (ESS).

Since then the survey has been fielded every two years and over time a detailed research infrastructure has flourished. All EU Member States apart from Malta have participated in the ESS, as have nine other countries outside the EU (Albania, Kosovo, Iceland, Israel, Norway, Russia, Switzerland, Turkey and Ukraine).

The objectives of the ESS Research Infrastructure, updated in 2013, are:

- to chart stability and change in social structure, conditions and attitudes in Europe and to interpret how Europe’s social, political and moral fabric is changing
- to achieve and spread higher standards of rigour in cross-national research in the social sciences including, for example, sampling, data collection, reduction of bias and the reliability of questions

- to introduce soundly-based indicators of national progress, based on citizens’ perceptions and judgements of key aspects of their societies
- to undertake and facilitate the training of European social researchers in comparative quantitative measurement and analysis
- to improve the visibility and outreach of data on social change among academics, policymakers and the wider public.

In 2005, the ESS became the first social science project to win the Descartes Prize for ‘excellence in scientific collaborative research’. It was included in the European Strategy Forum for Research Infrastructures (ESFRI) European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures in 2006 and again in 2008 and 2010. In 2013 an application was submitted to award the ESS the legal status European Research Infrastructure Consortium – ERIC – in order to secure the long-term sustainability of the survey.

The ESS is widely used by academics, researchers, politicians, policymakers and journalists interested in understanding more about patterns in public attitudes and behaviour over time and across countries. This booklet focuses on a selection of findings based on the first five rounds of ESS data. It draws on published research from leading international scholars complemented by additional analysis from researchers in the Centre for Comparative Social Surveys, City University London. ◀

Addressing key social issues

The ESS questionnaires cover a wide range of topics that tap into key issues facing contemporary Europe

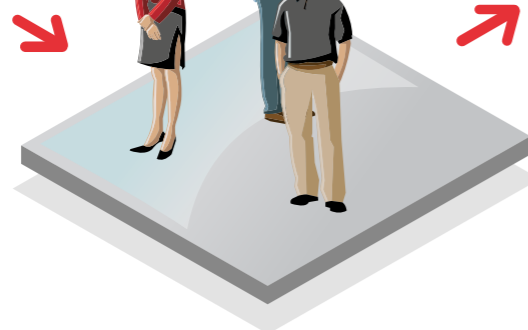
Some core questions are asked in every round of the survey. Other topics change from round to round, enabling the survey to cover a wide range of topics and adapt to changing demands. These round-by-round 'rotating modules' are designed by leading academic specialists in the field in association with questionnaire design specialists within the ESS team. The subjects and authors of rotating modules are selected following a Europe-wide competition at each round. Some modules have been selected to be repeated.

Investigating public attitudes across European countries every two years and disseminating the results without delay enables governments, policy analysts and scholars to keep up-to-date with social trends that affect how democracy is working and how European citizens perceive their lives, their nations and the world.



CORE TOPICS IN ALL ROUNDS

- Moral and social values
- Health and well-being
- Trust in institutions
- Education and occupation
- Social capital and social trust
- Household circumstances
- Citizen involvement and democracy
- Social exclusion
- Political values and engagement
- Socio-demographic characteristics
- Immigration
- Crime



ROUND 1
2002/03

- Citizenship
- Immigration



ROUND 2
2004/05

- Work, family and well-being
- Health care seeking
- Economic morality



ROUND 3
2006/07

- Personal and social well-being
- The timing of life



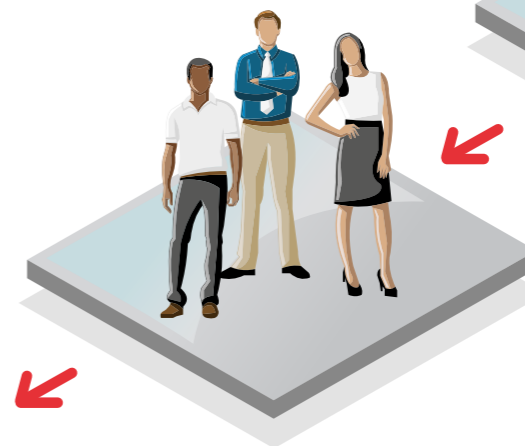
ROUND 4
2008/09

- Attitudes to age and ageism
- Welfare



ROUND 5
2010/11

- Work, family and well-being in recession
- Trust in justice



ROUND 6
2012/13

- Personal and social well-being
- Understanding and evaluations of democracy

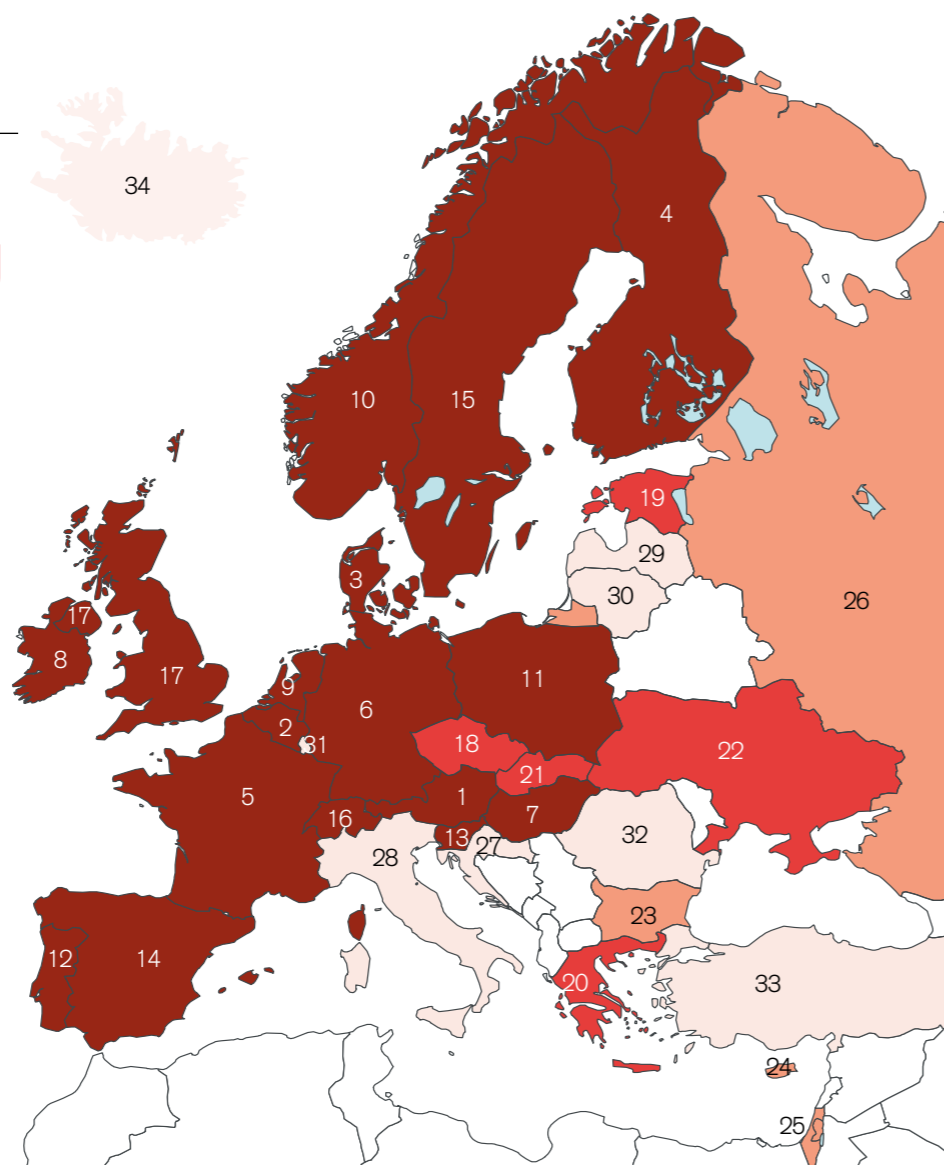


ROUND 7
2014/15

- Health inequalities
- Immigration

ESS participating countries

More than 30 countries across Europe took part in at least one of the first five rounds of the ESS



ESS Participation
Rounds 1-5

5 rounds		4 rounds		3 rounds		2 rounds		1 round	
1 Austria	10 Norway	18 Czech Republic	23 Bulgaria	27 Croatia	34 Iceland				
2 Belgium	11 Poland	19 Estonia	24 Cyprus	28 Italy					
3 Denmark	12 Portugal	20 Greece	25 Israel	29 Latvia					
4 Finland	13 Slovenia	21 Slovakia	26 Russia	30 Lithuania					
5 France	14 Spain	22 Ukraine		31 Luxembourg					
6 Germany	15 Sweden			32 Romania					
7 Hungary	16 Switzerland			33 Turkey					
8 Ireland	17 UK								
9 Netherlands									

One Europe or many?

Despite closer European integration significant differences between countries remain

The last ten years have seen significant progress towards European integration – EU membership has expanded to include many of the countries in central and eastern Europe and there has been greater harmonization of policy in some areas. Has this led to a convergence in attitudes and behaviour between the different regions of Europe? Can Europe and its citizens increasingly be considered as sharing a common experience or do important national and regional differences persist and continue to emerge?

ESS data collected in more than 30 countries at multiple points in time can be used to shed light on this issue. The research presented in this booklet points to important differences between European countries in many areas.

Significant differences in political engagement and social attitudes persist between eastern and western Europe, underpinned by differences in history, culture, institutional and legal frameworks. There is also evidence of a growing economic and political divide emerging between north and south, fuelled by countries' differing experiences of the Eurozone crisis.

Key findings covered in more detail in the booklet include:

- Workers in the Nordic countries appear to have been affected less severely by the economic crisis than workers in other areas of Europe. This may reflect differences in the levels of employment protection available to them compared with other countries.

“Significant differences in political engagement and social attitudes persist between eastern and western Europe”

- Southern Europe (particularly Greece) has seen a steep decline in political legitimacy following the Great Recession. The impact of economic decline on political legitimacy has been felt more strongly in Eurozone countries compared with the rest of Europe.
- The Nordic countries are most trusting of their police and courts and believe that their institutions are legitimate holders of power and authority; while eastern, and sometimes southern, European countries tend to be less trusting.
- Political engagement remains lower in former communist countries compared with western Europe. This disengagement reflects dissatisfaction with the current political reality as much as the legacy of communism.
- While attitudes towards homosexuality have become more permissive across many European countries, this is not the case across much of eastern Europe where agreement that gay people should be free to live their lives as they wish remains low.

ESS IMPACT

In 2008 an international review panel chaired by Bob Groves declared that “the importance of the ESS... and its clear signals of impact justify continuous funding to... maintain its quality”

Work in the Great Recession

The economic crisis has had a significant effect on people's experience of work. However, the effects have not been felt equally across Europe

What effect did the economic crisis precipitated by the bank failures of 2008 have on people's everyday experience of work and family life? In 2010/11 the ESS repeated questions on this topic first asked in 2004/05, allowing a direct comparison of people's experiences in the period prior to the crisis and a period when many countries had been experiencing recession.

A team of European researchers led by Duncan Gallie from the University of Oxford found that the crisis had significant effects on the quality of work. The size of these effects varied across countries depending on the severity of the economic downturn and the protection afforded by different welfare regimes and employment regulations.

Between 2004/05 and 2010/11:

Work intensity – the effort required and the time pressures of work – rose in all regions of Europe. The rise in work intensity was clearly linked to the experience of economic crisis. Employees were more likely to report higher levels of work intensity if

their organisation had recently experienced financial difficulties; there had been staff reductions in the workplace; or their own jobs had become less secure.

Job insecurity rose sharply in the liberal economies of the UK and Ireland, as well as in southern and eastern Europe though not in the Nordic countries or the Continental countries i.e. Germany, Belgium, the Netherlands or France. There is no evidence that the economic crisis led employers to change the structure of the workforce by increasing the proportion of workers in less secure temporary jobs (although the proportion of part-time workers did increase in most countries). The rise in job insecurity was felt equally among permanent employees as well as part-time and temporary workers.

Opportunities for training declined in many countries. The odds of receiving training were 20 per cent lower in 2010/11 compared with 2004/05, even taking account of other possible changes in the workforce and workplaces. The most significant declines were in eastern Europe, followed by Ireland. In contrast there was no decline in training in the Nordic countries whilst Germany and Belgium actually saw increased provision. Countries with stronger regulations for protecting people's jobs – leading to longer-term relationships between employers and their workforce – were more likely to maintain training provision.

Experience of **work-family conflict** among married and cohabiting couples increased in most countries. A number of changes in working conditions contributed to the change, including an increase in working unsocial hours; an increase in working overtime, and at short notice; and the growth in job insecurity. The pressure imposed by work on family life was generally higher in countries experiencing a greater rise in unemployment.

Gallie and his colleagues argue that declining job quality matters, not only because of the potential negative effect on individuals' health and well-being, but also because, longer term, it may serve to undermine people's commitment to work and prospects for future economic growth. ◀

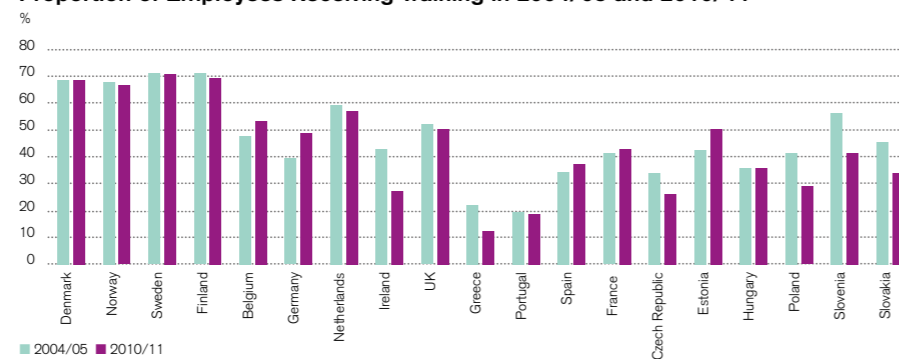
“Declining job quality may serve to undermine people's commitment to work and prospects for future economic growth”



ESS IMPACT

The ESS is a key provider of research training, whether in the form of face-to-face teaching or online courses

Proportion of Employees Receiving Training in 2004/05 and 2010/11



ESS 2004/05 and 2010/11

Social determinants of health

Health inequalities persist across socio-economic groups

A person's health continues to depend heavily on where they live, how much they earn, their education, career and employment history. The persistence of such health inequalities within and between countries presents an enduring challenge for both scholars and policymakers.

Research using early rounds of ESS data from 21 countries found evidence of a clear link between health and multiple indicators of socio-economic position. Terje Eikemo and colleagues found that people were more likely to rate their health as 'poor', or to report suffering from a limiting, long-standing illness, if they had lower incomes, worked in lower status occupations or did not complete secondary education.

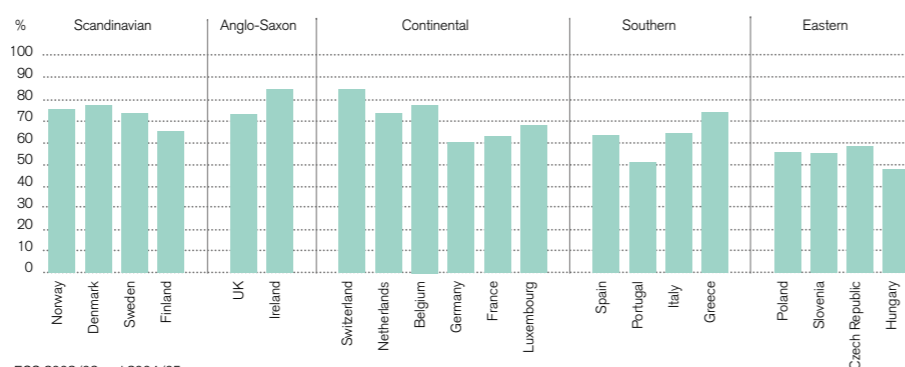
A lack of income could affect health not only through reducing the availability of material resources, but also by contributing to feelings of frustration and relative deprivation. Aside from the link between health and objective income, Karen Olsen and Sverre Dahl found evidence that self-reported health varied depending on people's perceptions of their financial situation. They found that

people saying they were able to cope or live comfortably on their current income rated their health better than those who said they were struggling.

Researchers have hypothesised that, by addressing socio-economic inequalities, welfare states can raise overall health outcomes at the country level. Eikemo and colleagues found that around half of the cross-country variation in health outcomes observed in the ESS could be attributed to differences in the nature of welfare provision. As shown in the chart below, Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon welfare regimes appear to lead to better health outcomes compared with southern and eastern regimes, with a higher proportion of people rating their health as '(very) good'. This may be the result of the more universal coverage of health-care provision. ◀

“ Research using ESS data found evidence of a clear link between health and multiple indicators of socio-economic position ”

Proportion of respondents who rate their health as '(very) good', by welfare regime



ESS 2002/03 and 2004/05

Eikemo, T.A., Bambra, C., Judge, K. and Ringdal, K. (2008) 'Welfare state regimes and differences in self-perceived health in Europe: A multilevel analysis', *Social Science & Medicine* 66: 2281-2295
 Olsen, K.M. and Dahl, S. (2007) 'Health differences between European countries', *Social Science & Medicine* 64: 1665-1678

ESS IMPACT

Across the world, approaching 60,000 people have registered to use the ESS data website. Users include academics, students, think tanks and government bodies

A woman's work is never done?

Women doing most of the housework can lead to feelings of work-life conflict – for men

One of the greatest social changes across Europe in recent decades has been the increase in female participation in the labour market. However, changes in women's work patterns outside the home have not always been matched by changes in the way household tasks are divided between the sexes. It is still common for women to do the majority of housework, even when they work full-time.

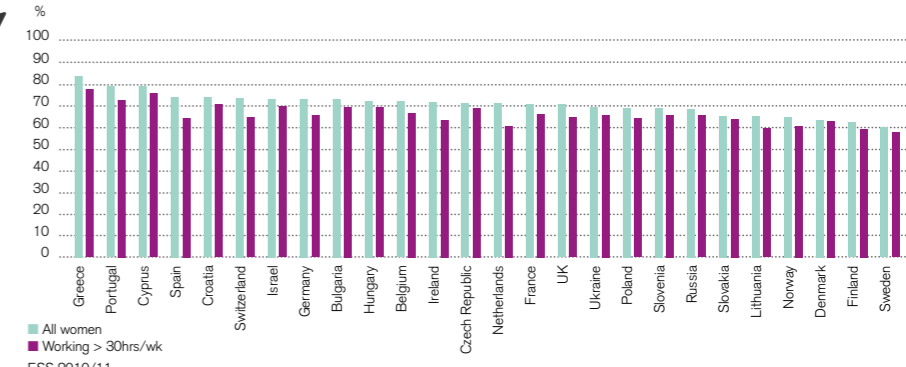
The chart below – based on ESS data collected in 2010/11 – shows the share of housework done by women living with a male partner for all women aged 20 to 64 (light green bars) and just for women working more than 30 hours a week (purple bars). It shows that even women in full-time paid work are responsible, on average, for around two-thirds of the total time heterosexual couples spend on housework. The distribution of household labour between men and women is most equal in the Nordic countries and least equal in southern Europe.

Researchers have used the ESS to explore the effect of the so-called 'double burden' of paid and domestic work on women's experiences of work-family conflict. One study of seven northern European countries by Jacqueline Scott and Anke Plagnol found that, despite the added burden of being responsible for most of the housework, women in these countries working full-time did not experience greater feelings of work-life conflict than men working similar hours.

In fact, their study, based on ESS data collected in 2004/05, suggests it may be men rather than women who have most to gain from a more equal distribution of housework between the sexes. Northern European men whose female partners did most of the housework were more likely to experience work-family conflict compared with men who took on a larger share of the housework. Perhaps men in this situation feel guilty for not doing their fair share or perhaps the unequal division of household tasks creates tension between them and their partner. ◀



Proportion of housework done by women



Note: Figures calculated for women aged 20-64 who live with their male partner

Scott, J. and Plagnol, A.C. (2012) 'Work-family conflict and well-being in Northern Europe' in Scott, J., Dex, S. and Plagnol, A.C. (eds.) *Gendered Lives: Gender Inequalities in Production and Reproduction*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar

Welfare under pressure?

There is widespread public support for the welfare state despite concerns about the economic consequences and welfare dependence

The welfare state, a cornerstone of the European Social Model, is under pressure. Policymakers face the challenge of responding to the new demands created by an ageing population, immigration and globalisation at a time of fierce budgetary constraints. In the face of these pressures public legitimacy will be of paramount importance in shaping future provision.

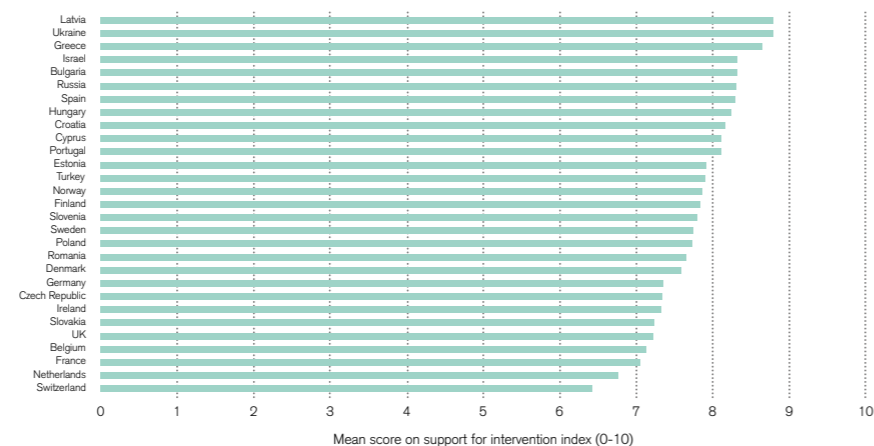
A module of questions asked in 2008/09 provides an in-depth perspective on how Europeans view welfare provision. Although collected before the full impact of the Great Recession became apparent, the data provides valuable insights into people's underlying attitudes. Stefan Svallfors argues that, overall, Europeans favour government involvement to ensure the well-being of its citizens. As the figure below shows, when asked how far it should be the government's responsibility to provide a range of services including adequate healthcare and a reasonable standard of living for the old or unemployed, most countries score between

“Overall, Europeans favour government involvement to ensure the well-being of its citizens”

7 and 9 on a 0-10 scale (with higher scores indicating greater support for government involvement). Interestingly, support for government involvement is highest in the less well-developed welfare states of eastern Europe.

People are critical of aspects of welfare provision. For example, in most countries – with the exception of the Nordic countries – a majority believes that many people manage to obtain benefits and services to which they are not entitled. There is also concern about the economic consequences of provision in many countries. Around half of people in the UK, France, Slovakia and Hungary – and

Degree of support for government intervention

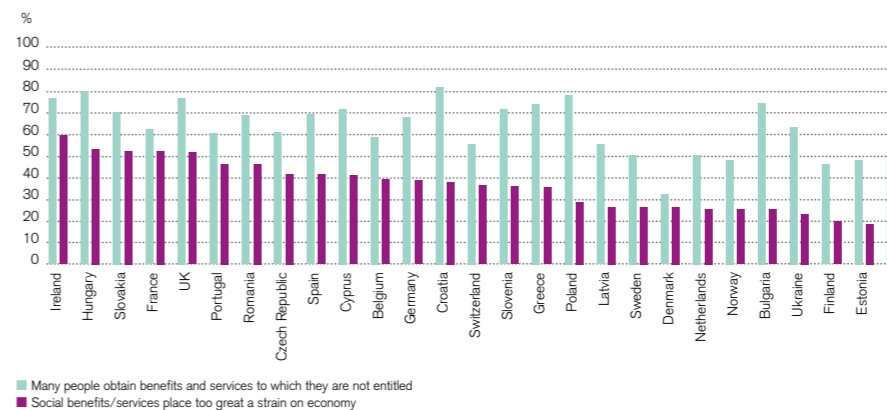


ESS 2008/09
Note: Scores are national averages derived from 6 items measured on a 0-10 scale

ESS IMPACT

ESS has helped to inform and improve the methodology of other surveys in Europe. These include the European Values Survey (EVS), the European Quality of Life Survey (EQLS), the Survey for Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE) and the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP)

Proportion of respondents expressing concerns about welfare provision



ESS 2008/09
Note: Proportion of respondents who agree/strongly agree with each statement

60 per cent in Ireland – agree that social benefits and services place too great a strain on the economy.

Research by Torben Fridberg, published in an edited volume of findings from the ESS welfare module, demonstrates that popular support for the welfare state is related to the perceived legitimacy of the system. People are less likely to favour widespread government provision – or raising taxes to pay for increased public spending – if they believe that provision puts a strain on the economy, that benefit claimants cheat the system, or that the tax authorities are inefficient or unfair. There is therefore a risk that dissatisfaction with how the system works may undermine long-term support for welfare provision.

The risk of a public backlash against the European Social Model should not be overstated however. Wim van Oorschot and colleagues use ESS data to show that,

“People are less likely to favour widespread provision if they believe that provision puts a strain on the economy, that benefit claimants cheat the system or that tax authorities are inefficient or unfair”

while some people feel that the welfare state places a strain on the economy or that provision has led to welfare dependency, these feelings are generally less prevalent than the belief that the welfare state has achieved its intended social goals of preventing poverty, reducing inequality and making it easier to combine work and family life. Belief in the positive achievements of the welfare state is widespread, while criticism tends to be concentrated among those on the right of the ideological spectrum. Higher levels of welfare provision increase perceptions of both the negative and positive consequences of the welfare state. However, increased spending is most likely to lead to increased support for the welfare state's achievements. ◀

ESS IMPACT

National Coordinators in Poland have provided methodological training based on the ESS to the Central Statistical Office and the National Bank of Poland

Svallfors, S. (2012) *Welfare attitudes in Europe: Topline Results from Round 4 of the European Social Survey*, London: Centre for Comparative Social Surveys
 Fridberg, T. (2012) 'Legitimacy of the system and support for the welfare state' in Ervasti, H. et al. (eds.) *The Future of the Welfare State: Social Policy Attitudes and Social Capital in Europe*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar
 Van Oorschot, W., Reeskens, T. and Meuleman, B. (2012) 'Popular perceptions of welfare state consequences: A multilevel, cross-national analysis of 25 European countries', *Journal of European Social Policy* 22:181-197

National accounts of well-being

Countries with high levels of personal well-being do not necessarily have high levels of social well-being, and vice versa

Governments around the world increasingly recognise the need to look beyond economic indicators and also consider measures of their citizens' subjective well-being. The most common approach to measuring well-being, especially when making cross-national comparisons, is to use a single measure of happiness or life satisfaction. However, such summary measures only provide a limited perspective on whether people are living the good life.

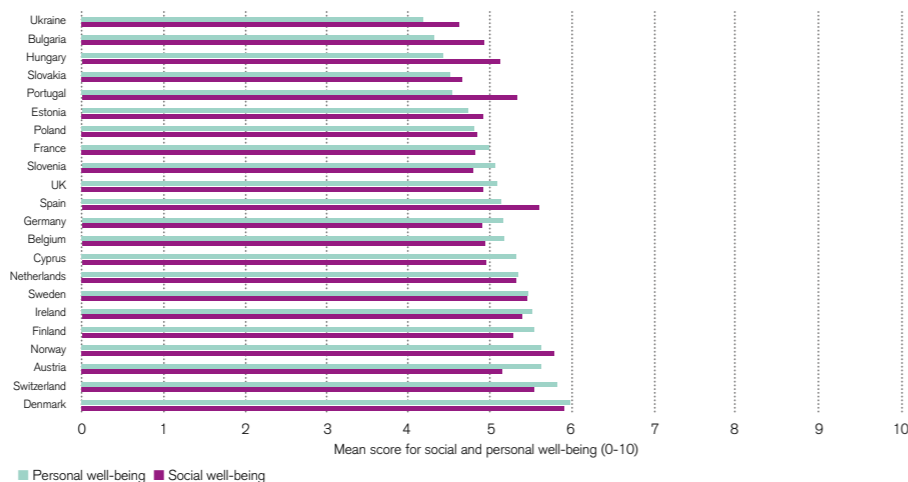
An ESS module fielded in 2006/07 included a detailed suite of questions enabling researchers to distinguish between different dimensions of individuals' personal well-being as well as different dimensions of social well-being including the quality of people's relationships with family and friends and their connection to the wider community.

“Countries with similar overall levels of well-being can exhibit very different well-being profiles”

Analysis of this data by the UK's New Economics Foundation combining personal and social well-being into an overall index of well-being for each country reveals that Denmark, Switzerland and Norway have the highest levels of overall well-being, while central and eastern European countries such as the Ukraine, Bulgaria and Hungary have the lowest.

Countries which score highly on measures of personal well-being do not necessarily score highly on social well-being and vice versa. As the figure below shows, Spain and Portugal score much higher on social well-being than they do on personal well-being, as do most central and eastern European countries.

Levels of personal and social well-being



ESS 2006/07

Note: National average score for personal well-being derived from scores on five main components measured on a 0-10 scale. National average scores for social well-being derived from scores on two main components measured on a 0-10 scale.

ESS IMPACT

Items from the ESS well-being module have been widely used to develop both the New Economics Foundation (NEF) national accounts of well-being, and the UK's Office for National Statistics (ONS) Measuring National Well-being Programme

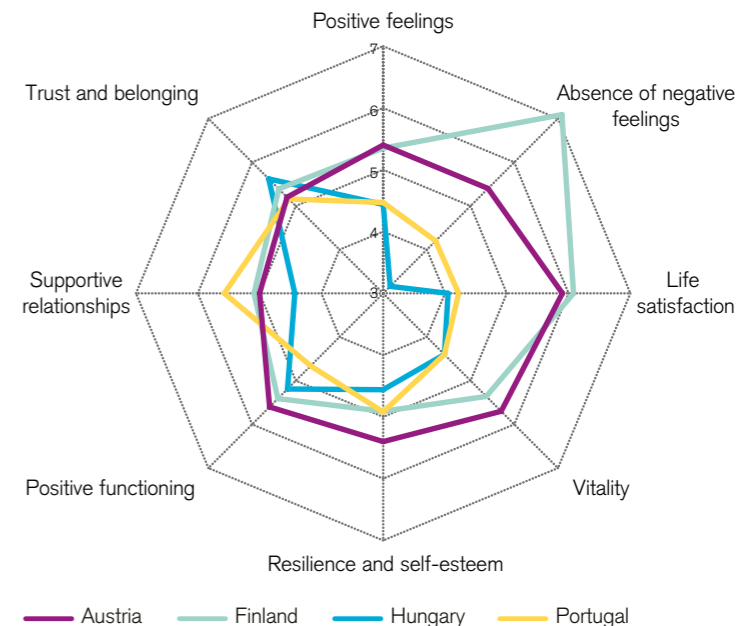
The data also suggests that people's feelings about the quality of relationships with those close to them may differ from the extent to which they feel a sense of trust or belonging with people more generally. In some countries (e.g. Bulgaria, UK, Spain and Portugal) people are more positive about their relationships with friends and family. In other countries (e.g. Hungary, Sweden and Norway) people are, on average, more positive about their connections to the wider community.

There are both similarities and differences in the individual characteristics associated with higher personal and social well-being:

- volunteering is associated with both higher personal and social well-being
- ill-health or disability has a particularly strong and negative effect on personal well-being but is also associated with lower social well-being
- although young people under 25 score highly on most measures of well-being they score lower than average on measures of social trust
- women tend to score lower than men on personal well-being but higher on social well-being.

Researchers at the New Economics Foundation have used ESS data to construct well-being profiles – or national accounts of well-being – for 22 European countries. These profiles provide a nuanced picture of the character of well-being within each country and can be used to decide whether policy needs to be targeted in a

National well-being profiles



ESS 2006/07

Note: National average scores on individual components of personal and social well-being. The countries shown have similar overall levels of well-being, but different mean scores on each component

particular direction or aimed at improving well-being more generally. The chart above highlights how even countries with similar overall levels of well-being such as Austria and Finland or Hungary and Portugal can exhibit very different well-being profiles, scoring higher on some measures and lower on others. An online interactive tool is available to explore countries' well-being profiles in more detail. www.nationalaccountsowellbeing.org

“Women score lower than men on personal well-being but higher on social well-being”

Political aftermath of the Great Recession

Growing economic discontent may undermine the political system, particularly in Eurozone countries hit hardest by the Great Recession

The after-effects of the Great Recession of 2008 in Europe are likely to extend far beyond direct effects on people's material well-being. Evidence from the ESS suggests that poor economic performance may even pose a threat to the democratic legitimacy of those countries worst affected.

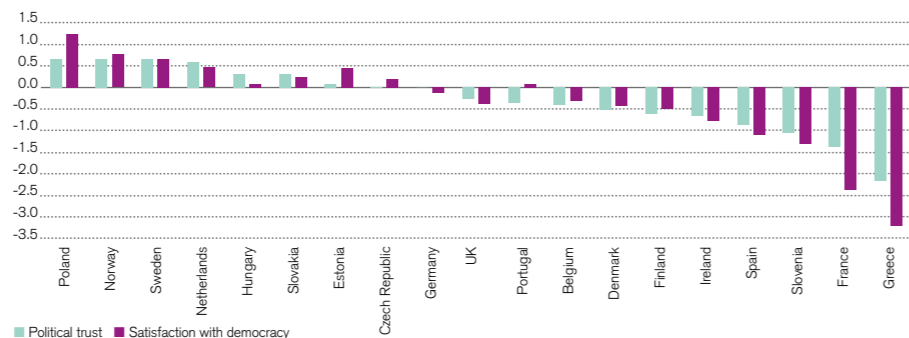
Research by Javier Polavieja uses ESS data to investigate the effect of economic circumstances on public support for the political system. He compares levels of political trust and satisfaction with democracy in 2004/05 and 2010/11 and finds evidence of a significant decline in most countries. As the figure below shows, the decline is most apparent in some of the countries worst hit by the economic crisis including Spain, Ireland and, in particular, Greece (but also in France).

Further analysis confirms that the decline in support for the political system between 2004/05 and 2010/11 is explained by a parallel increase in the average level of dissatisfaction with the economic situation over this period. The economically vulnerable,

i.e. those in lower status occupations, who are either currently unemployed or have experienced unemployment in the past are most likely to distrust the political system and to feel dissatisfied with how democracy works. However, the increase in dissatisfaction with economic performance since the start of the economic crisis – and the corresponding decline in support for the political system – has not been confined to those who have personally experienced economic hardship.

The effect of the economic crisis on political legitimacy has been felt most strongly in the Eurozone countries i.e. those countries where scope for responding to the crisis is more constrained. In the Eurozone, but not in other European countries, changes in attitudes towards the political system 2004/05 to 2010/11 are strongly correlated with the decline in GDP over the same period. ◀

Average change in political trust and satisfaction with democracy 2004/05 to 2010/11



ESS 2004/05 and 2010/11
 Note: Political trust and satisfaction with democracy measured on 0-10 scale. The chart shows the average change in national mean scores over time, controlling for individual background characteristics

Polavieja, J.G. (2013) 'Economic crisis, political legitimacy and social cohesion' in Gallie, D. (ed.) (2013) *Economic Crisis, Quality of Work and Social Integration: The European Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

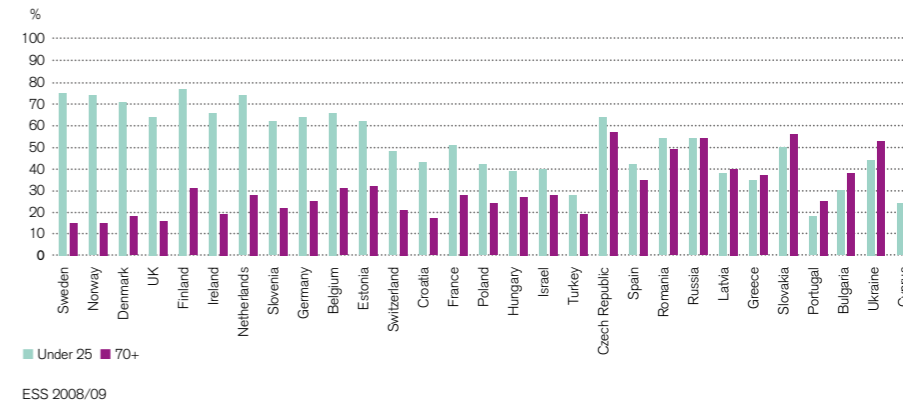
ESS IMPACT

In 2011, David Willetts, UK Minister for Universities and Science, noted that the ESS enables “governments, policy analysts and scholars to keep up with societal trends that affect how democracy is working and how European citizens perceive their lives, their nation and the world”

Experiencing ageism

It is not only older people who face discrimination because of their age

Proportion of under 25s and 70+ who say they have experienced age-based prejudice in the last 12 months



ESS 2008/09

Growing concern about Europe's ageing population has focused attention on the impact of ageism, with 2012 designated European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. As with other forms of prejudice, ageism – making unwarranted assumptions about people because of their age – can have a considerable detrimental impact on an individual's well-being, their behaviour and their abilities. ESS data collected in 2008/09 suggests that ageism is one of the most pervasive forms of prejudice across Europe.

A significant proportion of people in all European countries report that they have experienced prejudice or been treated unfairly in the last year as a result of their age. This figure ranges from around one in six people in Portugal and Cyprus to as high as one in two in the Czech Republic, Finland and the Netherlands. In all countries the proportion who report experiencing ageism is higher than the proportion who report experiencing prejudice or unfair treatment as a result of their sex or ethnicity.

It is not only older people who face discrimination because of their age. Young people in Europe also face particular challenges as they make the transition to adulthood. The proportion of people aged 70 and above who report experiencing age-based prejudice ranges from 15 per cent in Sweden to 57 per cent in the Czech Republic, while for people under 25 this figure ranges from 18 per cent in Portugal to 77 per cent in Finland.

As the figure above shows, in many countries people under the age of 25 are significantly more likely to report experiencing age-based prejudice than people aged 70 and above. This is particularly the case in the Nordic countries, the UK and Ireland. Whilst this may partly reflect young people's greater willingness to report prejudice it does suggest that young people's experience of ageism merits further investigation. ◀



Marriage and partnerships

Acceptance of non-traditional unions, including cohabitation, and homosexuality continues to vary across Europe

Across Europe, patterns of family formation are changing: cohabitation, either as a precursor or as an alternative to marriage, is becoming increasingly common. A growing number of countries have now legalised same-sex marriage or civil unions. However, the prevalence of such non-traditional unions, the extent to which they have gained acceptance in society and the legal framework surrounding them continue to vary significantly across countries. Data from the ESS sheds light on the nature and potential consequences of these contextual differences.

Researchers Judith Soons and Matthijs Kalmijn suggest, for example, that the value climate surrounding cohabitation can have a direct effect on the well-being of cohabiting couples. Their analysis of ESS data collected between 2002/03 and 2006/07 shows that married people across Europe tend to have higher well-being i.e. to be happier and feel more satisfied with their lives than people who are cohabiting. This remains the case even after controlling for differences in the background characteristics of married and cohabiting couples.

“ Married people across Europe tend to have higher well-being than people who are cohabiting. The well-being gap is lower in countries where cohabitation is more prevalent and where fewer people disapprove of cohabitation ”

The size of the well-being advantage associated with being married varies significantly across European countries. Cohabitation has the greatest negative effect on well-being in Romania while in several countries, including the Netherlands and Norway, well-being is the same or higher among cohabitantes. Soons and Kalmijn use ESS data to demonstrate that the well-being gap between marriage and cohabitation is lower in countries where cohabitation is more prevalent and where fewer people disapprove of cohabitation.

Acceptance of homosexuality also varies significantly across countries. One of the ESS's core questions – included in every

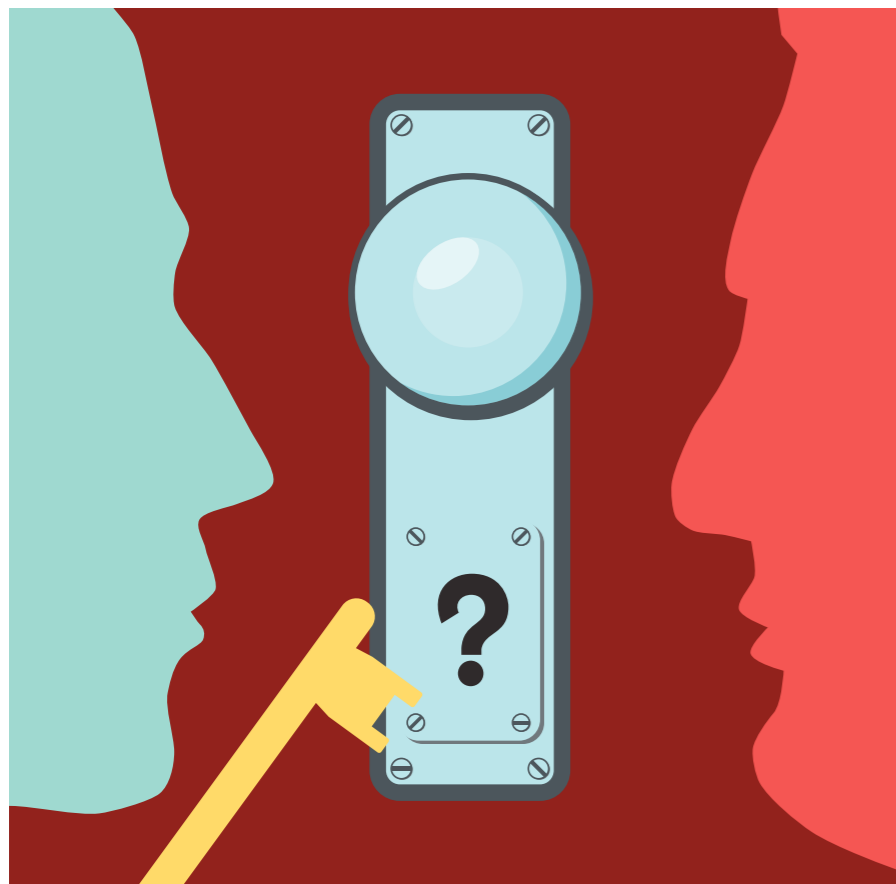
Acceptance of homosexuality: Proportion agreeing: 'Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own lives as they wish'			
	2010/11	Change since 2004/05	Year same-sex unions first legally recognised
Netherlands	93	4	1998
Sweden	90	6	1995
Denmark	90	2	1989
Belgium	87	8	2000
UK	85	9	2005
Norway	84	6	1993
Ireland	84	6	2010
France	83	7	1999
Germany	83	9	2001
Switzerland	83	8	2007
Spain	81	7	2005
Finland	75	12	2002
Czech Republic	67	8	2006
Portugal	63	1	2010
Slovenia	53	-2	2006
Greece	52	-1	X
Hungary	48	-3	2009
Poland	48	5	X
Slovakia	45	-2	X
Estonia	43	2	X
Ukraine	34	-3	X

round of the survey – asks people how much they agree or disagree with the statement that 'Gay men and lesbians should be free to live their own lives as they wish'. Agreement with this statement has increased over time in most western European countries. However, there is less evidence of change in many eastern European countries.

The table above shows that countries which are most accepting of homosexuality, including the Netherlands, Sweden and Denmark, were among the early adopters of civil partnerships and have since legalised

same-sex marriage. Acceptance is also high – and has grown since 2004/05 – in countries such as the UK and Spain which have more recently legalised same-sex partnerships. However, acceptance of homosexuality remains low in countries such as Slovakia, Poland and Estonia where no legal recognition of same-sex partnerships exists. This pattern is consistent with the fact that legal recognition is likely to follow prevailing social attitudes. However, it is also possible that institutionalising same-sex partnerships through legislation may help to shape subsequent attitudes on homosexuality. ◀

ESS IMPACT
The ESS was awarded the Descartes Prize for 'excellence in scientific collaborative research' in 2005 in recognition of its world-leading quality



Soons, J. and Kalmijn, M. (2009) 'Is marriage more than cohabitation? Well-being differences in 30 European countries', *Journal of Marriage and Family* 71:1141-1157

Political participation post communism

A lack of good governance and high levels of corruption contribute to low political engagement in central and eastern Europe

Two decades after transition to democracy, political participation in central and eastern Europe remains significantly lower than in western Europe. People are less likely to engage in institutionalised political action – contacting a politician, working for a political party or organisation – or via non-institutionalised routes such as signing a petition or joining a demonstration. Why might this be? What are the prospects that participation levels will increase in future?

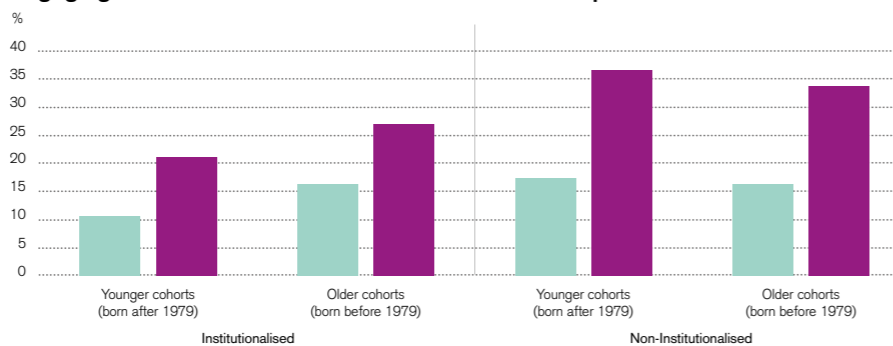
Marc Hooghe and Ellen Quintelier argue that persistently low levels of participation in central and eastern Europe reflect the current political situation in these countries and are not simply an inevitable legacy of an authoritarian past. They pool ESS data collected between 2002/03 and 2008/09 to compare participation rates across regions. They make separate comparisons for people born in or before 1979 and those born after 1979 and find that even among the younger cohort, i.e. those who came of age politically following the transition to democracy, political

participation is lower in post-authoritarian central and eastern European countries compared with the established democracies in western Europe. The participation gap cannot solely be attributed to the residual effects of older cohorts growing up under a non-democratic regime and being used to limited political involvement.

Further analysis suggests that lower participation rates in post-authoritarian regimes can be explained by current political reality, namely a lack of good governance, continuing high levels of corruption, and relatively poor economic performance, all of which can serve to reduce trust and discourage people from engaging with politics.

These findings indicate that generational replacement alone cannot be relied upon to raise participation levels in central and eastern Europe. Citizen engagement is likely to remain low unless future governments are able to improve performance. ◀

Proportion of respondents in established and post-authoritarian democracies engaging in institutionalised and non-institutionalised political action



ESS 2002/03, 2004/5, 2006/07 and 2008/09

Note: Percentage of respondents taking part in at least one political act in the past 12 months. Post-authoritarian countries include Bulgaria, Czech Republic, East Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Romania, Slovenia and Slovakia. Established democracies include Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK and West Germany.

Hooghe, M. and Quintelier, E. (2013) 'Political participation in European countries: The effect of authoritarian rule, corruption, lack of good governance and economic downturn', *Comparative European Politics*, advance online publication 18 March 2013, doi:10.1057/cep.2013.3

ESS IMPACT

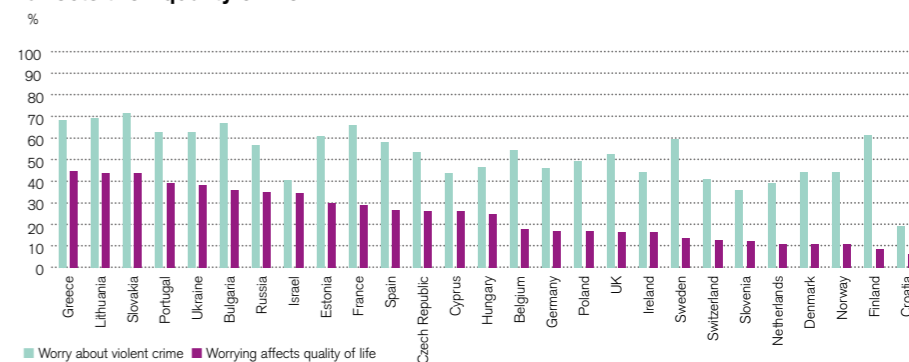
Questions from the ESS Trust in Justice module have been adopted by the EC's Euro-justis project to provide EU institutions and Member States with new indicators for assessing public confidence in justice

Fear of crime

Fear of crime – and lack of trust in the police – can have significant consequences for well-being



Proportion of respondents who worry about violent crime, and those whose worry affects their quality of life



ESS 2010/11

A safe society is a core demand of citizens and central for their well-being. Fear of crime can have a direct detrimental effect on well-being and is arguably one of the most pressing concerns affecting people's quality of life in some countries.

ESS data collected in 2010/11 shows that countries vary not only in the extent to which their citizens are afraid of crime but also in the extent to which this fear leads to reduced well-being. In the figure above, the light green bars represent those who worry about violent crime and the purple bars represent those who feel their worry has an impact on their quality of life. The relationship between the two is not the same across all countries.

Despite fear of crime being relatively high in the Nordic countries, the impact upon quality of life there is low, significantly lower than in many southern and eastern European countries. In Greece and Lithuania, for example, more than two in five people feel that their well-being is affected by their fear of crime compared with around one in ten in Norway.

Jackson, J. et al. (2012) *Trust in Justice: Topline Results from Round 5 of the European Social Survey*, London: Centre for Comparative Social Surveys

Across all countries, women, the young and the elderly are the most likely to feel that fear of crime reduces their quality of life.

Fear of crime appears to be related to people's trust in authority and, in particular, the police. Analysis of ESS data shows that those people reporting that fear of crime reduces their quality of life have less trust in the police and are less likely to think that the police are doing a good job.

A team of researchers led by Jonathan Jackson has looked in more detail at patterns of trust in justice across Europe. They find that the Nordic countries are most trusting of their police and courts and believe that their institutions are legitimate holders of power and authority; while eastern, and sometimes southern, European countries tend to be less trusting. ◀

The politics of immigration

Concerns over the cultural threat posed by immigration boosts support for far-right parties in Europe

The electoral success of far-right parties, such as Greece's Golden Dawn and the anti-Islam Party for Freedom in the Netherlands, following the Great Recession has prompted renewed interest in the reasons for these parties' appeal. While their success may partly be linked to the economic uncertainty and austerity facing the Eurozone, analysis of ESS data – albeit data collected before the economic crisis – suggests that support for anti-immigration parties also owes much to concerns over the effects of immigration on a country's culture and way of life.

Elisabeth Ivarsflaten used data collected in 2002/03 to model support for far-right parties in seven European countries: Austria, Denmark, Flanders, France, Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland over the same period. She compared the extent to which support for the Far Right has been driven by different grievances including dissatisfaction with the economy; distrust of politicians and/or the EU; and anti-immigrant sentiment. Her findings suggest that the common factor which drove support for far-right parties is anti-immigrant sentiment and a desire for tougher restrictions on who should be allowed to enter and remain in the country.

A second study conducted by Geertje Lucassen and Marcel Lubbers used the same data – this time across 11 countries – to explore the relationship between anti-immigrant attitudes and support for the Far Right in more detail. In particular they sought to distinguish the extent to which support for far-right parties was driven by the perception that immigration poses a threat to jobs and the economy and/or by the perception that immigration and cultural diversity pose a threat to the country's way of life.

Their results suggest that while in 2002/03 both were important drivers of anti-immigrant sentiment, perceived cultural threat was a stronger predictor of support for far-right parties than perceived economic threat. The study also considered the possibility that Muslims may be seen as posing a particular cultural threat but found no evidence of a link between the proportion of Muslims living in a country and support for far-right parties. ←

Ivarsflaten, E. (2008) 'What unites right-wing populists in western Europe? Re-examining grievance mobilization models in seven successful cases', *Comparative Political Studies* 41:3-23
Lucassen, G. and Lubbers, M. (2012) 'Who fears what? Explaining far-right-wing preference in Europe by distinguishing perceived cultural and economic ethnic threats', *Comparative Political Studies* 45:547-574

Immigrants' civic participation

Many immigrants play an active role in civil society

The political consequences of immigration are usually considered in terms of how members of the public and policymakers in the receiving country respond to the presence of immigrants. Also important to consider are the attitudes and experiences of immigrants themselves. As the proportion of immigrants in many European countries continues to grow, the strength of civil society in Europe will depend increasingly on whether immigrants are sufficiently integrated into society to play an active role.

The ESS is a valuable tool for studying the attitudes and behaviour of immigrants as it is one of the only cross-national studies to collect data from non-citizens. The survey includes questions about country of origin, length of residence and citizenship status. Pooling data across multiple rounds of the survey provides sufficient cases for detailed analysis.

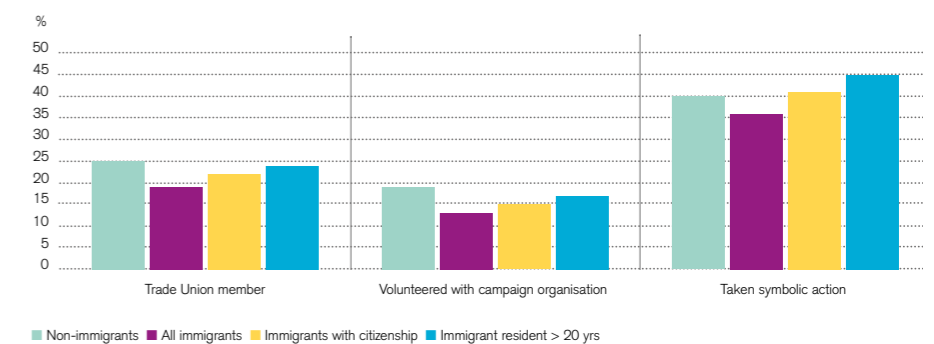
Researcher Mariya Aleksynska pools ESS data collected between 2002/03 and 2008/09 to study the civic participation

“The ESS is a valuable tool for studying the attitudes and behaviours of immigrants”

of immigrants. She finds that, although immigrants are initially less likely to participate than individuals born in that country, immigrants do come to play an active role in civil society over time either through membership of a trade union or political party, volunteering for an action group or campaigning organisation or taking symbolic action through signing a petition, boycotting products or joining a protest.

As the figure below shows, immigrants are increasingly likely to participate the longer they have lived in a country. After 20 years' residence immigrants are as likely, or even more likely, to participate compared with people born in the country. Acquiring citizenship status also has a positive effect on participation. ←

Proportion of respondents taking part in civic action in the last 12 months, by immigrant status



ESS 2002/03, 2004/05, 2006/07, 2008/09

Note: Symbolic action refers to signing a petition, boycotting or taking part in a demonstration
Sample includes those migrating from 92 countries to 19 destination countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK

Aleksynska, M. (2011) 'Civic participation of immigrants in Europe: Assimilation, origin and destination country effects', *European Journal of Political Economy* 27:566-585

ESS IMPACT

ESS findings on well-being and trust, published in a 2010 collective monograph, were used in the development of legislation in Bulgaria, including the Investment Promotion Act (IPA) and the Law on Foreigners in the Republic of Bulgaria

Want to know more?

The ESS is a research infrastructure serving many thousands of academic and non-academic users

Six ESS surveys have now been conducted, carried out every two years and covering more than 30 countries throughout Europe. Further rounds are planned to paint an accurate picture of European attitudes, values and behaviour across both time and countries. So far the ESS has generated:

Almost **250,000** individual interviews over the first five rounds

Source: Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD)



More than **2,400** publications based on ESS data, including over **1,000** articles in peer-reviewed academic journals

Source: Malnar, B (2012) Google Scholar study of ESS-based publications

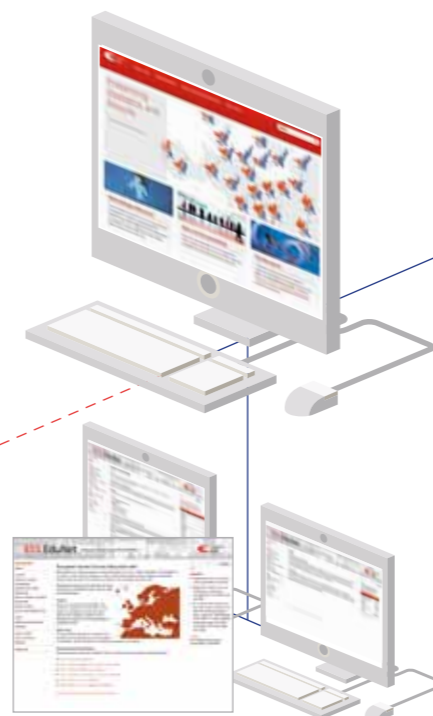


Approaching **60,000** users registered to use the ESS data website worldwide

Source: Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD), May 2013

The ESS has become a major European research facility and an authoritative monitor of social change. Its cutting-edge methodology and knowledge transfer have helped to place Europe at the forefront of quantitative social measurement. Academically driven, the ESS is also intended to inform social policy at a national and European level. Information on the survey's methodology and findings is readily available through a range of channels:

ESS website: which allows unrestricted access to the project's protocols, methods, data and other resources.
www.europeansocialsurvey.org



Edunet: an online training resource using ESS data to guide students through the analysis of large-scale cross-national data.



ESSTrain: a programme of state-of-the-art training courses for researchers across Europe in approaches to comparative measurement.



Nesstar: an online data analysis tool which can be used to explore ESS data.

ESS Multilevel Data: combines data from ESS respondents with national and regional level data from sources such as OECD, WHO and Eurostat to make it easier for researchers to explore how contextual factors might influence attitudes and behaviour.

ESS Topline Results Series: accessible short reports of findings on topics such as welfare, trust in justice, and work and well-being.



ESS Policy Seminar Series: specialist seminars bringing together leading academics and policymakers to discuss how ESS data can inform debate on the key social and economic challenges facing Europe.

Quality enhancement programme: a continuing programme of studies investigating issues associated with the collection of large scale cross-national survey data such as minimising response bias and using the internet to collect data.

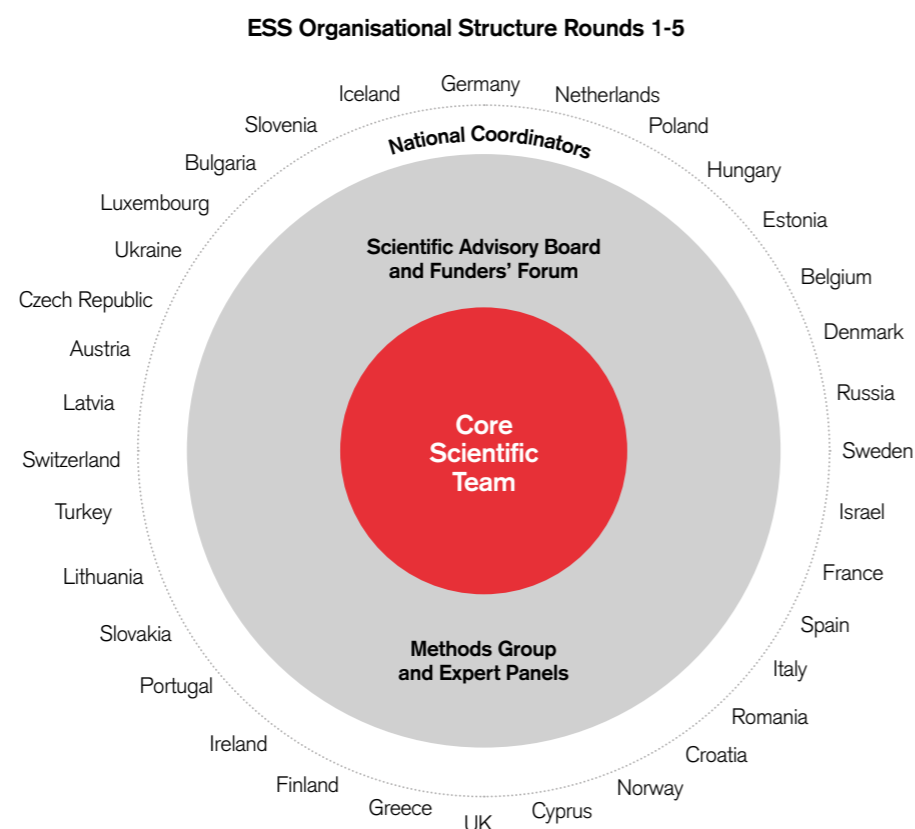
Further information on any aspect of the survey is available by contacting the ESS team: ess@city.ac.uk

A successful European collaboration

The research highlighted in this booklet paints a vivid picture of the beliefs, values and behaviours of citizens in Europe. During this period of economic and political turmoil it is more important than ever to identify patterns and trends in social attitudes and behaviour.

It is therefore reassuring that approaching 60,000 people from across the world have chosen to register at the ESS website to access its detailed data or protocols. Equally significant is the growing number of publications, in the form of articles and books. In addition to this output, the ESS continues to exert its influence on cross-national methodology by championing the most rigorous standards in survey design and data collection.

None of this would have been possible without the hard work and dedication of hundreds of researchers from right across the European Research Area (ERA). Within the ESS itself, the Core Scientific Team (CST) has driven the project academically, supported by excellent advice from both its Scientific Advisory Board chaired by Max Kaase and its Methods Group chaired by Denise Lievesley. Meanwhile National Coordination teams have excelled at the task of realising the demanding ESS specification within their countries. Our biggest debt, however, is to the 250,000 respondents



across Europe who have devoted around an hour of their time to share their views with trained interviewers. Continued public participation in social surveys is essential in order to produce the sort of data that can lead to better policy and a better Europe. ◀

**Rory Fitzgerald, ESS Director,
City University London, 2013**

“ Public attitudes matter in democratic societies. They reflect what citizens believe, want, fear and prefer. They are difficult to measure, are often unexpressed, and cannot be inferred from electoral choices alone... This is why the ESS exists. It is specifically designed to meet the exacting demands of academics, policymakers and civil society alike for rigorous cross-national data on social attitudes and behaviour ”

Professor Sir Roger Jowell,
Founding Director of the European Social Survey

Find out more about the ESS

The European Social Survey provides rigorous cross-national data about public attitudes and behaviour over time in more than 30 European countries. This booklet presents findings from the first five rounds of the survey.

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Want to know more?
A successful European
collaboration

Find out more about the ESS:

www.europeansocialsurvey.org

Contact the ESS team by e-mail: ess@city.ac.uk

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