

The Demographic Future of Europe – Facts, Figures, Policies

Results of the Population Policy Acceptance Study (PPAS)



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Foreword by the ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION

The results of the DIALOG project entitled "Population Policy Acceptance Study", funded by the European Commission and coordinated by the Federal Institute for Population Research under the direction of Charlotte Höhn, provides an opportunity to discover what the population in fourteen European countries thinks about family, children, partnership, equity and ageing. More than 30,000 people from the North Sea to the Mediterranean, from the Danube Delta to the English Channel, were questioned by experts in a study which was completed over a number of years.

The results reflect fundamental transformations. On the one side, we have globalisation and the need to become flexible, and on the other side citizens who wish to remain anchored in their local environment and traditional values. As a consequence, Europe is ageing rapidly, both in absolute terms and in relation to a dramatically falling fertility. Although longer life expectancy is a gain for the individual, it leads at societal level to major problems which cannot be solved within the established structures.

There appear to be worrying trends in Germany, Austria, Belgium, Italy and the Czech Republic, where desired number of children is falling

rapidly. If "fear of the future" is specified in six countries as a reason for a life without children, this means that the foundation for fresh optimism must be created if fertility is to rise again. This is all the more important given that choosing to have children is a long-term, irrevocable decision based on confidence in future life course. At the same time, the findings show once more that there is a need for greater efforts to convince young people to start a family earlier.

This survey also shows that there is a desire in all countries for greater flexibility in individual life planning and for more efficient use of financial resources. There is a divergence of answers in Europe to the question of what governments need to address. It is primarily the State which is considered to be responsible for providing health and work for young people. Reliance on the State is least prevalent in the Czech Republic, Romania and the Netherlands.

Respondents generally accepted the statements which advocated making better use of the capacities of women and men in family and job, spanning the generations in integrating our elderly fellow citizens, and increasing the self-reliance of the individual in our societies. Although the ageing processes which are

underway in Europe are considered to be a negative trend, Europeans see the contribution made to society by the elderly to be positive. This approval must however lead to greater willingness to care for the elderly in the sense of generational solidarity. The surveys show a fundamental willingness on the part of Europeans to work longer in future, but provide no assurance that there is an individual willingness to act according to this insight.

The ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION would like to thank all who have participated in the DIALOG project for their valuable work.



Dr. Ingrid Hamm
Executive Director

Foreword by the Federal Institute for Population Research

Europe is undergoing profound demographic change. Each generation of children is quantitatively smaller than that of their parents; the proportion of children and adolescents among the population is becoming smaller and smaller, whilst that of the elderly is growing inexorably. Fewer and fewer people are marrying; more and more marriages are failing. Many areas of our society are affected by this; just think about the challenges faced by the social security systems as a result of demographic ageing. Politicians and society are forced to adjust to demographic change. Many people in Europe are concerned about these changes and are looking to politicians and researchers for solutions.

DIALOG - Population Policy Acceptance Study, the results of which we present in this brochure, is a research project focussed on the field of tension of population, politicians and researchers. As a tool to survey opinions and attitudes on demographic change, as well as on neighbouring policy areas, it is admirably suited to bring politicians, population and researchers into a discussion.

In the framework of the PPAS, people in 14 European countries were asked about their opinions on family and family policy, on desired

fertility and the circumstances opposing its realisation, about the role played by elderly people in our societies and the expectations of successful policy on the elderly, on living together as partners in various living arrangements, and on policies promoting gender equity and on the reconciliation of family and gainful employment. We, the team of researchers of the Population Policy Acceptance Study, wish to inform the public and politicians of what Europeans think about demographic change and of their expectations as to the features of population-relevant policies.

For this reason, the DIALOG project team, together with the Federal Institute for Population Research as the project coordinator, and the ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION, is organising a conference entitled "The Demographic Future of Europe - Facts, Figures, Policies". This is linked to the goal of presenting the research results obtained in the framework of the PPAS to the public and of entering into an exchange with politicians on those results.

This brochure describes the results of the surveys in a concise form. The main statements emphasise the most important results; additionally, the differences between the countries are

stressed and the political consequences of the results proposed.

I would like to thank the European Commission and the ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION. By promoting the project, the European Commission has contributed to the success of the international comparative evaluations. We are grateful to the ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION that researchers and politicians were able to have an exchange on demographic topics. And not lastly, I would like to thank all participating colleagues from PPAS partner countries for the successful, open cooperation in recent years.



Dr. Charlotte Höhn
Director und Professor

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What is the DIALOG – Population Policy Acceptance Study?

DIALOG – Population Policy Acceptance Study (PPAS) – The Viewpoint of Citizens and Policy Actors Regarding the Management of Population Related Change is an international comparative research project studying the attitudes of the population to demographic change and population-relevant policies. The background is that Europe is experiencing similar demographic trends, with a low fertility, a rising divorce rate, an increase in life expectancy and ageing of the population, posing new challenges to the social security systems, which have hence become relevant to the political arena.

The overarching goal of the study is to carry out comparative analyses Europe-wide on attitudes and opinions of the population on demographic change, knowledge of the extent of demographic trends, reproductive behaviour, the exchange of resources and assistance between the generations, the gender roles and expectations as to population-relevant policies, and to provide information to formulate these policy areas. This goal is also served by the conference organised together with the ROBERT BOSCH FOUNDATION, entitled “The Demographic Future of Europe - Facts, Figures, Policies”.

The project is promoted by the EU (Contract No. HPSE-CT-2002-00153) and is coordinated by the Federal Institute for Population Research. 14 European countries have taken part in the survey: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovenia. The Belgian Data have been collected only in Flanders. Additionally, Switzerland has participated in the Delphi study. In the period from 1999 to 2003, more than 34 thousand women and men aged between 18 and 75 have been interviewed in the countries of the PPAS.

A major element in the PPAS is the change in the family and its consequences. It was for instance asked how the increasing number of co-habiting, unmarried couples, the increase in childlessness or the fall in the marriage rate are judged. The research project is orientated towards finding the reasons for declining fertility and why people are marrying later; research is carried out into the preferred living arrangements for partnerships and the ideals of reconciling family and gainful employment; also investigated are desired fertility and expecta-

tions of family policy to make it easier to have the desired number of children.

The project is entitled “DIALOG” because it is one of its main goals to promote a dialogue between the public, politicians and researchers, and to offer politicians choices for action on the basis of the research results. Representatives of public life from the political and cultural arenas, the business community or journalism were indeed themselves included in a Delphi study in the PPAS, their task being to draft future scenarios and measures for their implementation.

A detailed scientific analysis of the international comparative PPAS results will be published in 2006. Volumes 1 and 2, to be published by Springer Verlag, will be entitled “People, Population Change and Policies”.

Fewer and fewer marriages, fewer and fewer children? – Attitudes towards the demographic trends

The patterns of family formation in Europe have fundamentally changed in recent decades. A very low fertility can be observed in the majority of the countries participating in the PPAS. The average numbers of births were 1.2 – 1.4 in 2003. Exceptions are Finland and the Netherlands, with 1.7 births per woman. More and more children are being born to unmarried mothers. Values of 30 % - 40 % are no longer rare. Only in Cyprus (3.5 %), Italy

(13.6 %) and in Poland (15.8 %) are women more seldom unmarried when their children are born. The proportion of marriages which end in divorce is increasing, although there are considerable differences between the countries. The lowest value measured was found in Italy, at 13 %, and the highest in Finland, at 51 %. With the exception of Italy, the total divorce rate reaches values in excess of 20 %.

Trends which place families at a risk are generally valued negatively

Demographic trends showing a risk to families staying together are valued very negatively. These include the increase in the divorce rate (in an average of all countries, 79 % answered negatively or very negatively), the falling number of births (75 %), the increasing number of lone parents (75 %) and the increase in the number of single persons (61 %) and childless couples (60 %).

Assessment of demographic trends, respondents up to 50 years ("somewhat negative" and "very negative", in %)

Countries	Declining number of births	Increasing number of divorces	Increasing number of childless couples	Increasing number of single parents	Declining number of marriages	Increasing no. of persons living alone	Increasing no. of unmarried couples	Increasing no. of births in co-habitation
Austria	80	77	66	54	30	50	17	25
Belgium	59	81	34	64	20	30	8	18
Czech Rep.	83	86	62	77	36	61	15	29
Finland	81	91	66	87	44	75	21	26
Germany	82	71	65	67	34	52	19	20
Hungary	91	90	84	94	52	92	25	68
Italy	82	80	59	86	52	77	29	51
Lithuania	92	90	82	88	63	84	27	33
The Netherl.	21	83	22	67	13	23	8	12
Poland	70	81	63	76	51	63	37	57
Slovenia	92	85	81	87	43	80	22	36
Cyprus	89	90	84	79	-	57	35	83

The fall in the significance of marriage is seen less negatively, and more neutrally

It is largely tolerated in Europe that the number of unmarried couples is increasing, that children are born whose parents live in non-marital cohabitation, and that the number of marriages is falling.

The evaluation of family-related demographic trends is an expression of the fact that living together as a couple with children is still extremely important in the attitudes of people in Europe. Family formation however no longer absolutely needs to be based on marriage.

Major differences between the countries – less traditional attitudes in Belgium and the Netherlands

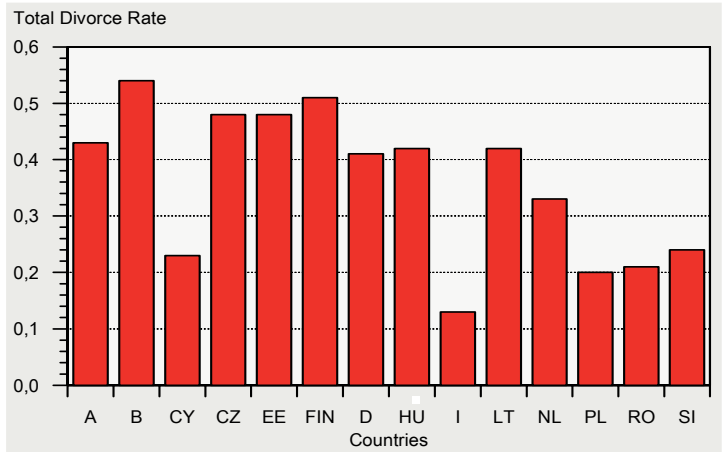
The evaluations are largely uniform when it comes to the demographic trends most frequently disapproved of: the increase in the number of divorces, the falling number of births and the rising number of lone parents. In the Netherlands, a country with a high fertility in European comparison, the fall in the number of births, at 21 %, is regarded much less negatively. The rising number of childless couples, of those living in non-marital

cohabitation, as well as of single persons, and the decline in the number of marriages and the growing number of births to unmarried couples is valued less critically in Belgium and the Netherlands.

Trend towards more traditional valuations in Southern Europe and the former Socialist countries

Statements expressing a turn away from marriage and children (childlessness, increasing number of single persons, births out of wedlock) are more strongly rejected in Southern Europe and the former Socialist countries. There is little acceptance of the increasing number of lone parents in any of the countries.

Total divorce rates, PPAS-countries, 2002/2003



Political conclusions:

The exclusive link between marriage and family has become less significant in the attitudes of the population. Family policy models linking family promotion solely to marriage no longer seem up to date. Family promotion should take place where adults live together with minor-age children.

Living alone or in family? – Preferred living arrangements

Being married and having children is the most frequently preferred living arrangement

The majority of respondents in all countries personally prefer the living arrangement of marriage and having children. This living arrangement finds the highest approval in Poland, Italy and Lithuania, at more than 80 %. Marriage is the least accepted in the Netherlands and in Germany, at approx. 53 %.

The PPAS countries, however, differ as to the

desired path to this living arrangement. In the Czech Republic, Finland, Italy, Lithuania and Poland, preference is given to marrying and having children without living together beforehand. Living together in non-marital cohabitation prior to marriage is preferred in Germany and the Netherlands.

Living arrangements without children are becoming more acceptable

Marriage with children continues to be preferred

in absolute terms among living arrangements in Finland, Lithuania and Poland. This is also shown by the finding that living arrangements without children are highly unpopular. 8.7 % of respondents in Poland, 11.8 % in Lithuania and 13.0 % in Finland prefer a living arrangement which does not include children. This share is much higher in the Czech Republic (26.7 %), in Germany (28.4 %) and in the Netherlands (31.3 %).

Living alone – with or without children – is unpopular

Only very few respondents prefer to live alone. With the exception of Germany, only approx. 3 % do not want to live in a partnership in the other countries. This share is much higher in Germany, at 13.3 %. Those who consider living alone to be the most desirable living

Preferred living arrangements, respondents up to 50 years (in %)								
Living arrangements	children	Czech Rep.	Finland	Germany	Italy	Lithuania	The Netherl.	Poland
Living alone	with children	1,3	1,0	2,8		1,5	0,3	1,3
	without children	2,4	2,1	10,5		1,7	2,5	2,1
Partnership with separate households	with children	2,4	1,9	4,6	1,2	1,4	2,6	1,0
	without children	4,9	2,7	6,4	1,8	0,9	5,3	1,2
Non-marital co-habitation with no intention to marry	with children	4,9	7,1	6,4	5,3	3,4	9,0	1,7
	without children	3,4	3,5	5,4	1,3	1,3	5,7	0,9
Non-marital co-habitation followed by marriage	with children	22,9	27,6	40,7	27,6	13,9	43,6	8,1
	without children	14,1	2,7	4,3	2,6	3,7	13,3	2,4
Marriage without previous co-habitation	with children	41,2	48,2	12,2	58,2	67,4	9,5	78,3
	without children	1,2	1,8	0,6	2,0	3,4	3,0	1,3
Sharing dwelling with more than two persons	with children	0,0	0,5	2,2		0,2	1,0	0,6
	without children	0,7	0,2	1,2		0,8	1,5	0,8



arrangement do not want children. Only a very small minority would not like to have a partner, but do want children.

Non-marital cohabitation is a preliminary stage to marriage

Non-marital cohabitation with no intention to subsequently marry is a living arrangement which few people prefer. This living arrangement is preferred most frequently in the Netherlands, at 14.7 %. The values are also still relatively high in Germany and Finland, at 11.8 and 10.6 % respectively. It is of virtually no significance in Poland, at 2.6 %. Non-marital cohabitation with no intention to marry is

desired both with and without children.

By contrast, the share of those who would like initially to enter non-marital cohabitation and wish to marry only later is relatively high. This path of family formation is the most popular in the Netherlands, at 56.9 %, and in Germany at 45 %. Values of slightly more than 30 % are reached in the Czech Republic,

Finland and Italy. Non-marital cohabitation possesses little significance as a preliminary stage to marriage in Poland and Lithuania.

If children are desired, non-marital living arrangements are relatively insignificant

Respondents would like to live together with children primarily on the basis of marriage. Living alone with children, partnerships with separated households and long-term non-marital cohabitation with children were rarely mentioned as preferred living arrangements. Some of these living arrangements were however mentioned

more frequently, above all in the Netherlands and in Germany. 9.0 % of the Dutch regard non-marital cohabitation with children without subsequent marriage as the preferred model (Germany: 6.4 %).

Partnership involving living together but not sharing a household is not popular

So-called "living apart together" has only very small support as a preferred living arrangement. "LAT" is favoured by the highest proportion of respondents in Germany, at 11.0 %. With the exception of the Netherlands, the values are lower than 5 % in the other countries.

Political conclusions:

Marriage with children is key to the personally-preferred living arrangements. Having said that, a greater diversity of paths to this goal has arisen; non-marital living arrangements have taken on additional significance. At the same time, there are still pronounced East-West differences in Europe as to attitudes towards the family. The family policies of the individual countries should accommodate these particularities.

Are children no more wanted? – Desired number of children of women and men

Average of two children wanted

Average desired fertility in Europe is still in line with the two-child family. More than half of all women and men in all PPAS countries want to have two or more children. Only in Cyprus are three or more children most often wanted. Desired number of children is only lower than two in four countries.

Major differences between the countries

Desired fertility reaches the highest values in Cyprus, at an average of 2.4 children. Poles want 2.3 children on average. Relatively high desired fertility of more than two is still to be found in Finland, Estonia and Lithuania, as well as in Hungary and the Netherlands, but in the latter countries only among women. By contrast,

desired number of children has already fallen far below two in four European countries (Germany, Austria, Belgium, and Italy). The lowest number of desired children is to be found in Germany, where women only wish for 1.75 children, and men in fact only want 1.59 children. This is the lowest desired number of children of the PPAS countries.

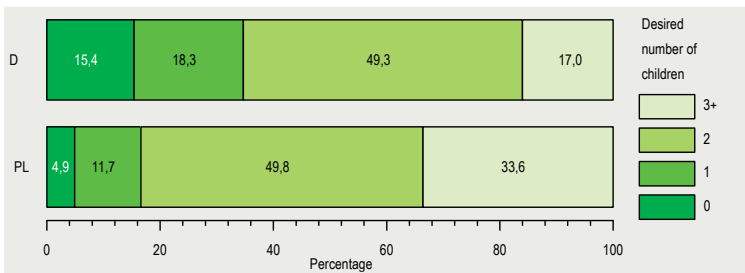
Desired number of children (average and percentage)

Countries	Desired number of children (average)		Desired number of children (percentage)							
	Women	Men	0		1		2		3+	
			Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Austria	1,84	1,78	8,2	11,1	32,7	33,5	35,1	34,4	24,0	21,1
Belgium	1,86	1,81	10,4	15,3	22,7	19,6	45,3	43,3	21,5	21,8
Czech Republic	1,97	2,02	6,9	6,4	15,0	19,6	58,3	50,4	19,8	23,6
Estonia	2,16	2,09	2,6	7,1	16,3	14,1	56,4	53,2	29,9	25,7
Finland	2,18	2,14	7,5	10,7	14,0	14,4	44,5	41,3	34,0	33,6
Germany	1,75	1,59	15,4	22,8	18,3	19,1	49,3	41,1	17,0	16,9
Hungary	2,19	1,90	3,2	7,7	15,6	20,6	53,7	53,7	27,4	18,0
Italy	1,92	1,86	7,1	9,1	18,9	16,9	53,4	56,9	20,6	17,1
Lithuania	2,03	2,16	4,1	4,4	20,7	9,8	53,6	60,0	21,7	25,7
The Netherlands	2,13	1,98	12,9	17,5	7,3	5,3	49,2	52,7	30,7	24,4
Poland	2,33	2,29	4,9	9,1	11,7	10,6	49,8	45,8	33,6	34,5
Slovenia	2,01	2,02	2,9	4,7	17,8	14,6	59,2	60,4	20,1	20,3
Cyprus	2,36	2,42	0,9	1,6	23,5	27,0	33,6	25,1	42,0	46,2

Particularities in the structure of desired fertility

The differences in average desired fertilities can be explained from the special orientations of the respondents towards a certain number of children. Considerable shares of desires for 3 and more children lead to a high desired number of children. This is the case in Cyprus, Poland and Finland in particular. Approx. 34 % of women and men in

Desired number of children in Germany and Poland, women (in %)



Poland want to have three or more children. In the other countries, the largest group would like to have two children. This trend is particularly strong in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania and Slovenia. For instance, the desired number of children of 2.0 is caused in Slovenia by the fact that approx. 60 % would like to have two children. The desire for three and more children, by contrast, is relatively low, at 20 %. An exception is Austria, where the share of first and second children is virtually identical in desired fertility.

Few people want to have no children

The desire to remain childless is virtually non-existent in the majority of countries. As a rule, only fewer than 10 % do not want to have children, whilst desired childlessness is frequently lower than 5 % (women and men in Cyprus, Slovenia

and Lithuania, women in Poland, Hungary and Estonia). Desired childlessness is remarkably high, by contrast, in Western Europe (Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium). 15.4 % of women and 22.5 % of men in Germany do not want children. In the Netherlands, it is 12.5 % and 17.5 % respectively, and in Belgium 10.4 % and 15.3 %. In these countries, the polarisation phenomenon when it comes to family formation, that is a split between the childless and those who form a family, is already reflected in desired fertility.

The trend is for women to want more children than men

This statement does not apply to all countries, and the differences in the desired number of children between women and men are frequently very slight. Pronounced differences can be found in Germany (M: 1.59, F: 1.75), Hungary (M: 1.90, F: 2.19) and the Netherlands (M: 1.98, F: 2.13). The desired number of children of men is higher

than that of women in Cyprus, Lithuania and the Czech Republic.

Desired number of children and reality are far apart

In particular in the Eastern European transition states, where the desired number of children is still high and fertility is low, desire and reality are far apart. The differences are less pronounced in countries such as Germany (low desired number of children, low fertility), Belgium (low desired number of children, medium fertility) or the

Political conclusions:

Desired number of children, which is still relatively high in many countries, offers an opportunity for European family policy. If it becomes easier to achieve the desired number of children, more children can be born once again.

Countries with a low desired number of children are faced with the task of looking for concepts encouraging more family-friendly attitudes.

The considerable share of those wanting no children in some countries gives rise to the problem of whether family policy is still able to promote more births.

What arguments are against children? – Reasons why no children are being born

The most frequently mentioned reason – desired number of children has been reached

The considerable significance is a result of three causes. Firstly, also those women were asked who have already concluded their family formation phase and reached their desired number of

children. Secondly, desired fertility is so low in some countries that it is quickly attained. Thirdly, those who do not wish for children attach a higher importance to this reason. This reason has reached the highest significance in Austria, Cyprus and Romania. It appeared to be less

important to respondents in Italy, Finland and the Netherlands.

Misgivings about the future prevent achievement of desired number of children

Concerns about the future were mentioned as the second most important reason for not wanting

Reasons against the birth of children, female respondents up to 50 years (means*)

Countries	I already have all the children I want	My state of health does not allow it	I live alone and I don't have a steady partner	My job and professional activities would not allow it	I would have to give up leisure-time interests	I want to maintain my present standard of living	A(nother) child would cost too much	I am too concerned about the future my children will have	I would not be able to enjoy life as I have so far	I am / My partner is too old	My partner does not want a(nother) child
Austria	1,41	2,80	2,60	3,04	3,38	2,62	2,84	2,59	3,12	2,08	2,75
Belgium	1,82	2,46	2,49	2,49	-	-	2,97	2,53	3,03	2,36	2,83
Czech Rep.	1,99	2,12	2,78	3,35	3,85	3,52	3,21	2,61	3,82	2,72	2,68
Estonia	1,93	1,50	2,19	2,73	3,72	3,12	1,84	1,91	-	1,96	2,14
Finland	2,65	3,65	1,84**	4,27	4,38	3,96	4,06	3,54	4,01	2,92	3,47
Germany	1,96	3,39	2,07**	3,06	3,38	2,70	2,89	2,55	3,13	3,25	3,21**
Hungary	1,84	3,65	4,25	4,25	4,55	3,83	3,26	2,56	4,48	3,35	3,72
Italy	3,36	3,90	3,93	3,95	4,00	3,97	3,91	3,95	3,99	3,60	3,98
Lithuania	2,36	3,08	3,56	3,69	3,80	3,11	2,92	1,97	3,50	3,59	3,44
The Netherl.	2,45	3,14	3,58	3,85	3,86	3,30	3,45	3,15	3,59	2,96	3,21
Poland	2,18	3,05	2,84**	4,08	4,16	3,25	2,71	2,17	3,74	3,37	3,15
Romania	1,72	2,87	3,63	3,47	3,72	3,26	2,73	2,35	3,63	3,15	2,72
Slovenia	2,19	2,83	3,44	3,30	3,59	3,14	3,34	2,84	3,69	-	-
Cyprus	1,60	2,99	3,83	3,53	3,82	3,53	3,04	2,16	3,67	3,38	3,23

* the lower the mean, the higher is the importance of the reason ** only female respondents without a partner



any (more) children in six countries (Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Romania, Slovenia and Cyprus). Greater weight appears to be attached to this reason in the transition states of Central and Eastern Europe (highly important in Estonia, Lithuania, Cyprus and Poland). By contrast, concern for the future in Finland, Italy and the Netherlands is much less significant.

Too old for another child

One's own age or that of the partner is named in five countries as the second most important reason against a(nother) child. These are countries in which family formation starts relatively late, namely Austria, Belgium, Finland, Italy and the Netherlands.

High costs of children discourage the desire to have children

The high costs that a(nother) child would cause

are stated as the second most important reason in Lithuania and Poland, and as the third most important reason in Hungary. In this context, the fear of not being able to maintain one's standard of living plays a major role for respondents in Germany (third most important reason). In Austria, Lithuania and Cyprus, it was placed at No. four. Considerable weight was also attached to the cost of having children as the fourth most important reason in Estonia, Germany, Romania and Cyprus.

The state of health does not permit it

The third most important reason preventing the birth of a child is the state of health in eight countries (Belgium, Finland, Italy, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Cyprus). A close link can be seen here to the late birth of children.

Reconciliation problems are initially not so important

Reconciliation problems that might occur in the future are not regarded as being so important in opting against a(nother) child. Only in Belgium does this reason rank fourth, whilst in the other countries it is placed in the middle. This result of the surveys does not mean that improving conditions for reconciling family and gainful em-

ployment is insignificant in terms of future family policy. It is simply an expression of the fact that reconciliation problems occurring later are not yet regarded as being very important at the time of opting for or against another child.

Individualistic motives are less significant

Individualistic motives such as "I wouldn't be able to enjoy life as before" or "I'd have to give up my hobbies" are of subordinate significance when deciding against having children. These reasons are more significant in Austria, Belgium and Germany.

Political conclusions:

Concern about the future has been named as a major reason against opting for another child. Opting for children is a decision which imposes long-term ties which would be strongly supported by good perspectives for one's own family.

Many respondents consider themselves to be too old to have a child. A major task hence arises for family policy, namely to set the stage to facilitate an early start of the family formation phase.

Time or money? – Expectations of family policy

There is a consensus in favour of a combination of financial support and flexible working hours in family policy

The measures mentioned most frequently as an average of all countries are: firstly, better regulations on maternity leave for working wo-

men. Secondly, lower wage and income taxes for parents with minor-age children. Thirdly, more and better opportunities to work part-time for parents with children, and fourthly, flexible working hours for working parents with small children.

Respondents in the Western countries tend to prefer more measures aiming to improve reconciliation of family and gainful employment

In particular, there are calls for more and better opportunities to work part-time (first place in Aus-

Preferences for family policy measures, female and male respondents, up to 50 years ("very in favour" and "somewhat in favour", in %)

Countries	1st place	%	2nd place	%	3rd place	%
Austria	More and better part-time working opportunities	90,5	Lower wage and income taxes	88,8	Flexible working hours	88,3
Belgium	More and better part-time working opportunities	85,2	Flexible working hours	80,5	Lower wage and income taxes	80,2
Czech Rep.	An allowance at the birth of each child	90,5	Lower wage and income taxes	87,8	Improved parental leave arrangements	86,8
Estonia	A substantial decrease in the costs of education	96,0	A substantial rise in child allowance	94,5	Improved parental leave arrangements	91,0
Finland	Flexible working hours	82,6	Lower wage and income taxes	79,5	Financial support for parents taking care of their children	79,3
Germany	More and better part-time working opportunities	89,9	Flexible working hours	89,3	Better day-care facilities for children under 3 years old	88,5
Hungary	Better housing for families	94,9	A substantial decrease in the costs of education	93,7	A substantial rise in child allowance	92,3
Italy	More and better part-time working opportunities	89,2	A substantial rise in child allowance	89,2	Lower wage and income taxes	88,9
Lithuania	An allowance at the birth of each child	95,9	Financial support for parents taking care of their children	95,7	Improved parental leave arrangements	94,7
The Netherl.	More and better part-time working opportunities	78,9	Flexible working hours	72,0	Improved parental leave arrangements	71,2
Poland	Child allowance dependent on family income	92,5	An allowance at the birth of each child	92,2	Improved parental leave arrangements	91,1
Romania	Lower wage and income taxes	98,2	Improved parental leave arrangements	97,9	Better housing for families	97,4
Slovenia	Better housing for families	97,8	Better day-care facilities for children under 3 years old	97,8	Improved parental leave arrangements	97,3
Cyprus	Lower wage and income taxes	95,9	Improved parental leave arrangements	93,7	Flexible working hours	91,5



tria, Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands) and for more flexible working hours (first place in Finland, second place in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands).

In light of the significance of reconciliation-orientated measures, it should not be overlooked that financial support is hardly less important. A lower wage and income tax is the second most important measure in Austria and Finland, and the third most important in Belgium and Italy.

In the Eastern European transition states, financial assistance and an improvement in the housing situation tends to be more important than reconciliation-orientated measures

The measures called for are highly divergent. Higher maternity allowances are considered to

be the most important measures in the Czech Republic and Lithuania (second place in Poland). Lower wage and income taxes are preferred in Romania (second place in the Czech Republic). A reduction in education costs was rated highest in Estonia (second place in Hungary). In addition to the desire for financial transfers, the most significant measure desired in Hungary and Slovenia is an improved housing situation (Romania third place).

Eastern Europe has higher expectations as to family policy

The proposed family policy measures were strongly favoured in general terms. The degree of approval in the former Socialist countries once more clearly exceeds the evaluation in the Western countries. The measure regarded as being the most important each time reaches more than 90 % approval in all places in Eastern Europe. The highest value is found for the reduction in the wage and income tax in Romania, at 98.2 % approval. In the Western countries, the degree of approval is less than 90 % as a rule. It is noticeable that approval of the measures is relatively low in the Netherlands, and also in Finland.

Family policy above all makes it easier to have the desired number of children

When asked what would be the impact of the implementation of the favoured measures, the majority of respondents in all countries answered that it would make it easier to have the actually desired number of children. Agreement was very low in Austria, at 31.7 %, and very high in Romania, at 89.6 %. A probable option for another child is less strongly favoured by comparison. It is very low in Italy, at 5.9 %, but reaches high values in some countries (Estonia, Finland, Romania and Lithuania).

Political conclusions:

Europeans would like to see more family policy. Quite divergent measures are regarded as being important here in the individual countries. Family policy should therefore not be restricted to a single path. The most effective is likely to be a mix of financial transfers and measures making it easier to reconcile family and gainful employment. Such measures help families, but expectations that they will necessarily lead to higher fertility should not be attached to them.

Reconciliation or staying at home? – Preferred reconciliation of family and work

The desire to reconcile work and family is widespread

The majority of female respondents in the PPAS countries want to have children and at the same time work for pay. The proportions of those who want to reconcile family and gainful employment are very high in Estonia (97.7 %), Romania (86.0 %), Belgium (77.7 %) and Slovenia (76.1 %). Reconciliation is less frequently desired in the Netherlands (53.4 %) and in Lithuania (45.2 %). Lithuania is the only country in which the simultaneous reconciliation of both fields of life does not have a majority.

Different reconciliation models striven for

In the desire for reconciliation, quite different models are regarded as being ideal as to the number of children and the working hours regime. In Estonia, Poland, Romania and Cyprus, the largest group would like to work full-time and have two children; the highest values here were recorded in Estonia, at 55.8 %. Part-time employment is more frequently the aim in Belgium, Germany, Italy and the Netherlands. In Italy, 48.1 % opted for the part-time employment/two children model.

Leaving work altogether is unpopular

Only very few women want to follow the classical breadwinner-homemaker model. More popular by contrast is leaving work as long as the children are small. The largest group of respondents opted for this model in Lithuania, at 48.4 %. In Italy (24.0 %), the Netherlands (22.5 %), Germany (21.7 %) and Poland (19.9 %), leaving work for a limited time is named the second most frequently. Gainful employment without children is equally unpopular.

Ideal situation for reconciliation of paid work and family, female respondents (in %)

Ideals of reconciliation		Belgium	Estonia	Germany	Italy	Lithuania	The Netherl.	Poland	Romania	Slovenia	Cyprus
Full-time job	no children	5,1	1,6	7,9	2,1	2,9	7,3	3,0	5,5	2,6	1,8
Full-time job	one child	12,4	6,8	8,1	4,3	5,4	4,7	12,0	27,0	7,8	6,6
Full-time job	two children		55,7	8,1	6,1	8,2		27,7	34,4	29,4	23,8
Full-time job	more than two children		30,2	2,1		2,6		8,4	11,7	6,0	9,6
Part-time job	no children	2,0	0,2	1,7	0,7	0,3	6,2	0,4	0,5	1,3	13,7
Part-time job	one child	65,3	0,5	12,2	13,7	5,4	48,7	2,9	2,7	3,0	0,7
Part-time job	two children		2,1	24,1	49,1	16,2		14,2	7,4	17,7	1,1
Part-time job	more than two children		2,3	7,2		7,4		5,9	2,8	12,2	21,5
No job as long as the children are young		10,9	0,5	21,7	24,0	48,4	22,5	19,9	6,0	16,8	15,6
No job at all when there are children		4,0	0,1	4,9		3,3	10,6	5,5	2,1	3,1	5,9

Can working women be good mothers? – Attitudes to women at work

The results show that reconciliation of family and gainful employment is desired, but not universally accepted.

Working mothers can be just as caring towards their children as those who do not work

The majority of women and men in each country agree with this. The degree of approval is particularly high in Germany (88.7 % of women and 83.5 % of men), Austria and the Netherlands,

whilst this is more commonly placed in doubt in Poland and Estonia.

The statement that a pre-school child probably suffers from his or her mother going to work leads to polarisation

Roughly one-half of respondents agree with this statement. In comparison, approval is very low in the Netherlands (21.3 % of women and 31.7 % of men), whilst this opinion is shared by more than one-half in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania and Poland.

It is presumed by a major share that family life suffers if the woman works full-time

In Lithuania, Hungary and Germany, somewhat more than half agree with this view, at 69.2 – 52.5 %. The view is held by a little less than half in Romania, Cyprus and the Netherlands.

The majority does not accept the statement that the role of a housewife is just as fulfilling as gainful employment

Agreement with this statement is particularly low in Romania and Lithuania. In Italy, by contrast, 47.0 % of women and 54.8 % of men show a relatively high degree of acceptance.

Men tend to be more critical towards the role of the woman as a working mother

They more frequently hold the opinion that working women have a less caring relationship with their children, that pre-school children suffer from their mothers going to work, and that working is just as fulfilling as being a housewife.

Attitudes towards gainful employment of women, female and male respondents up to 50 years (agreement in %)								
Countries	A working mother can establish a just as warm and secure relationship with her children as a mother who does not work		A pre-school child is likely to suffer if his/her mother works		All in all, family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job		Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men
Austria	86,6	76,2	57,6	65,0	-	-	41,5	41,3
Estonia	57,9	47,9	34,3	44,2	38,4	47,6	35,6	36,7
Germany	88,7	83,5	41,9	47,7	54,7	52,5	32,5	35,4
Hungary	68,2	62,9	50,6	52,7	56,0	57,7	46,5	49,3
Italy	-	-	69,6	70,4	-	-	47,0	54,8
Lithuania	68,2	68,4	64,6	57,4	69,2	65,5	26,7	26,7
The Netherl.	76,3	70,1	21,3	31,7	45,4	45,6	31,9	32,4
Poland	57,4	53,4	52,4	49,7	-	-	42,6	44,4
Romania	68,1	65,9	44,2	41,1	48,5	48,3	16,8	18,8
Cyprus	65,8	55,2	49,6	50,8	47,8	47,4	30,2	32,0

Woman, man or both? – Attitudes to gender roles

It is largely accepted that women and men contribute to the household income

This statement was the most commonly agreed with in all countries in which it was to be evaluated. In Romania, 92.1 % answered “I agree” or “I agree completely”. It was 88.2 % in Hungary. The lowest degree of approval, at 77.1 %, was found in Germany.

The attitude that working women are respected is not as widely spread as the

acceptance of women's contribution to the household income

Only in Romania does a narrow majority of 53.8 % of respondents agree with this statement. In the other countries, the shares of concurring answers range from 41.4 % (Slovenia) to 32.2 % (Germany).

The classical role division between women and men – the man is responsible for the income and the woman for the household – is favoured only in Hungary

In Hungary, a relatively large proportion agrees with this model of the gender roles, at 61.2 %. In Poland, Lithuania and Romania, less than half accept it, at approx. 45 %. It is largely rejected in Germany, Austria and Estonia.

Very different attitudes towards the role of the man

The idea that work should be more important for a man than the family finds no approval. This is only affirmed relatively strongly in Italy, at

Agreement to issues concerning the role of women and men, women and men up to 50 years (“fully agree” and “agree”, in %)

Countries	Both men and women should contribute to the household income	A man's job is to earn money; a woman's job is to look after the home and the family	It is not good if the man stays at home to look after the children and the woman goes out to work	Family life often suffers because men concentrate too much on their work	For a man the job should be more important than the family	Working women are highly respected
Austria	78,7	34,1	29,6	69,3	5,8	-
Estonia	88,2	30,6	34,5	82,2	4,8	38,8
Germany	77,1	23,2	25,2	61,7	6,9	38,9
Hungary	80,1	61,2	56,3	75,6	8,3	32,2
Italy	-	-	41,1	73,3	41,2	-
Lithuania	82,0	45,8	40,7	59,9	7,2	34,1
The Netherlands	-	-	7,9	39,4	2,8	32,6
Poland	78,4	46,4	42,6	61,4	5,4	39,1
Romania	92,1	44,4	83,9	39,1	10,9	53,8
Slovenia	-	-	-	-	10,0	41,4



41.2 %. It is clearly rejected in the other PPAS countries.

It is recognised that family life suffers if men concentrate too much on their job. With the exceptions of Slovenia and Poland, where low approval is recorded, at 39 %, the majority of respondents affirm this. The highest agreement was found in Estonia, at 82.2 %, and in Hungary at 75.6 %.

Opinions vary widely on whether the man should stay at home and the woman goes out to work. There is considerable acceptance for this in the Netherlands – only 7.9 % consider this not to be good. There is virtually no acceptance

in Romania and Hungary for the man to stay at home. 83.9 % and 56.3 % respectively do not consider the “only woman working” model to be a good one.

Who does what in household? – The distribution of housework

The distribution of housework is seen from women's point of view. According to their statements, they do most of the housework themselves. 74.9 % of women in Austria said that they do the housework alone. This share is also

The distribution of housework, women (in %)



very high in Hungary, at 70.4 %. The lion's share of the housework is done by women in Estonia and Romania as well. In these countries, however, housework is more balanced in a spirit of partnership between women and men. In Estonia, 48.7 % stated that they did the housework together. In Romania, it was 35.2 %, in Hungary 25.6 % and in Lithuania 23.6 %. It is rare in all countries for men to be largely responsible for the housework. Approx. 4 % of female respondents in Austria and Romania stated that their partners assumed principle responsibility for the housework. In Estonia, Hungary and Lithuania, it was as low as 1 - 2 %.

Political conclusions:

As to gender equity, governments are expected to improve conditions in three areas: firstly, to ensure that women and men receive equal pay for equal work. Secondly, to create better conditions for the employment of women, and thirdly, to pursue a policy enabling men to take part in housework and childcare.

What is important in life? – Values

Harmonious partnership enjoys the highest appreciation

This area of life is regarded as the most important in almost all countries. The exceptions are Hungary (having enough money/income) and Poland (offering security to those who are close to one). The highest value was allotted to having a harmonious partnership in Cyprus, Hungary and the Czech Republic. 99 % of respondents in Cyprus answered “very important” or “impor-

tant”. The comparatively lowest value is found in Slovenia, but even there, 96.6 % chose the categories “important” or “very important”.

Offering security to those who are close to one is the second most important area

This value has been given second place in five countries (Estonia, Finland, Hungary, Slovenia and Cyprus). Having enough money/income takes second place among the values in the Czech Republic and Germany.

Work as an important area of life

Satisfaction with work reached third place in six countries among judgments of importance (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania and Cyprus). Exceptions were Poland (living in a nice house) and Slovenia (having enough time for oneself).

Material orientations are less significant

Things like “having enough money/income”, “having holidays at least once a year” and “living

Values of women and men up to 50 years (means*)

Countries	Having enough time for myself	Living with my partner in harmony	Providing security to those close to me	Being respected outside my family	Having enough time for my friends	Having enough money/income	Having holidays at least once a year	Living in a nice, spacious house	Striving for self-fulfillment	Husband and wife both earning their own money	Being satisfied in the job
Belgium	1,76	1,38	-	1,87	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Czech Rep.	1,88	1,31	1,83	2,15	2,33	1,43	1,74	1,84	2,00	2,07	1,46
Estonia	2,15	1,44	1,68	2,15	2,53	1,87	2,28	2,04	2,03	2,10	1,54
Finland	2,08	1,48	1,69	2,62	2,20	2,00	-	2,24	2,26	-	-
Germany	1,73	1,47	1,74	2,10	1,93	1,63	2,18	2,37	2,32	2,58	1,57
Hungary	2,56	1,30	1,22	1,71	2,42	1,19	1,57	1,51	1,73	2,00	1,51
Lithuania	1,90	1,45	1,65	1,86	2,42	1,36	1,56	1,97	2,23	2,01	1,53
Poland	1,79	1,47	1,45	1,90	2,24	1,42	1,77	1,47	1,98	1,97	1,65
Slovenia	1,70	1,49	1,55	2,14	2,14	1,78	1,80	2,28	1,79	2,15	-
Cyprus	1,60	1,22	1,40	1,44	2,08	1,43	1,73	1,88	1,94	2,17	1,33

* the lower the mean, the more important is the value; using a scale from highly important to completely unimportant

in a nice, spacious house“ rank in the middle. There are, however, major differences between the countries. In Hungary, 84.7 % said that this is highly important. In Finland it was 22.7 %.

Individualistically-orientated values take on a lower ranking

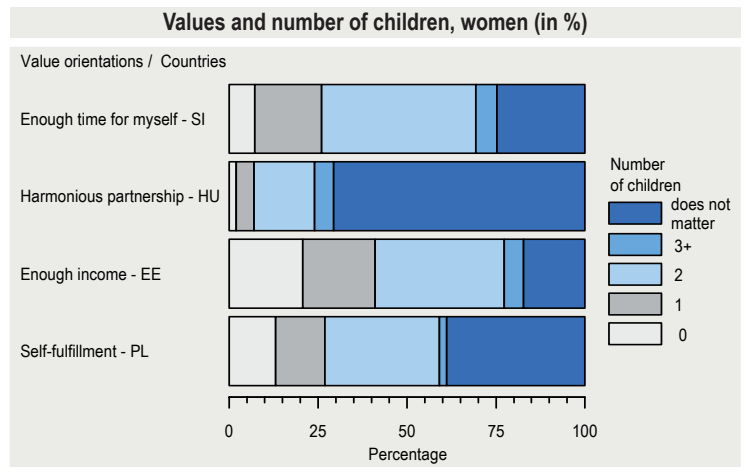
Orientations such as “having enough time for oneself and one’s interests“, “having enough time for friends“ and “striving for self-fulfillment“ are much less important in comparison with other values. In Germany, for instance, 19.4 % chose highly important in response to “striving for self-fulfillment“. Only 7.8 % of respondents in Estonia answered that “having enough time for friends“ was highly important.

Realisation of most values does not depend on the number of children

In particular, realisation of the values “living in harmony with one’s partner“, “being respected outside the family“ and “being satisfied in the job“ are largely regarded as being independent of the number of children. It was answered most frequently in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and Poland that their realisation does not depend on the number of children.

If realisation of the values is not considered to depend on the number of children, the respondents take the view that it is possible to realise them with two children

Two children as an upper limit was frequently named in connection with “having enough time for oneself and one’s interests“, “having enough money/income“ and “having enough time for friends“. In Estonia, Germany, Italy and Slovenia, realisation of values is less frequently regarded as being independent of children. In some cases, the realisation of the values is connected with wanting to remain childless. If one would like to have enough money/income and time for oneself and friends, it is relatively frequently said that this is best done without



children. This answer was given frequently in Germany in particular. For instance, 27.4 % stated that one can only achieve a sufficient income without children.

Only very few respondents think that the stated values can be also be achieved with three or more children.

The share of those who consider three and more children to be compatible is as a rule very low, at values around 5 %. Only in Cyprus is the share comparatively high, at 10 – 20 %.

Worried about demographic change? – Evaluation of ageing

Demographic ageing, which is also expressed in the increase of the share of persons aged 65+, is seen as an unfavourable trend

The share of respondents who value demographic ageing negatively is higher than 50 % in all countries with the exception of Belgium. Approx. 70 % valued demographic ageing negatively in the Czech Republic, Germany, Estonia, Poland and Lithuania. A very negative view of ageing is taken in Poland in particular, with a high share of the answer ‘very

Evaluation of the increasing proportion of people aged 65 and over, respondents up to 50 years (in %)

Countries	negative	very negative
Belgium	38,7	9,1
Czech Republic	45,4	28,3
Estonia	46,6	24,1
Germany	42,8	29,6
Italy	58,4	
Lithuania	43,2	26,7
The Netherlands	48,3	16,7
Poland	38,9	32,6
Romania	41,5	17,6

bad’. In Romania and in particular in Belgium, the trend is much less frequently judged to be bad or very bad.

Who is to look after the elderly? – Intergenerational solidarity

Society is given considerable responsibility for caring of elderly people

Between 95.2 % (Austria) and 61.8 % (Estonia) take the view that society should care of elderly people by providing proper institutions and services. Expectations of society relating to care of the elderly are particularly strong in Austria and Slovenia.

Children are also considered to have a responsibility in caring of the elderly

The statement that children should take care

of their parents is very frequently accepted. Children are however given less responsibility for caring than society. Only in Poland, Romania and Lithuania is the share of approval very high, at 90.1 %, 87.4 % and 85.5 % respectively. In Finland, at 31.6 % agreement, the view is rarely taken that the children should take care of the elderly.

Relatives are given less responsibility

Approval with the statement that it is the “duty of the relatives to take care of the elderly“ is lower than was the case with society’s and children’s responsibility. Only in Poland is the share of concurring answers very high, at 80.2 %. Children, and also the rest of the family, are given greater responsibility for care than society. Society is made

more responsible in the other countries, not including the Czech Republic.



Living together with elderly parents is not always desired

The willingness to have elderly parents live with one is common only in a few of the PPAS countries. The response "If my parents are old and the necessity arises, I would ask them to live with me" found considerable approval in Romania (85.9 %), Poland (85.1 %) and Lithuania (82.9 %). A relatively large distance exists in Germany (16.4 % approval) and in Belgium (23.5 %).

The role of the sandwich generation is accepted in the majority of countries

There is little agreement with the assertion that one should not also have to take care of one's parents if one has small children. Agreement with this is very low in Lithuania (6.6 %), Slovenia (8.2 %), Estonia (8.9 %) and Romania (12.9 %). High shares of 46.3 and 43.5 % respectively of agreeing answers in Belgium and Finland show that a double burden of looking after parents and children is less widely accepted there.

The generations are holding together

This is indicated by the low shares of agreement with the statements that "old people should live in old people's homes" and "it is not the task of the



children to take care of their aged parents". The highest values are reached in Finland, at 17.7 % and 23.8 % respectively.

Responsibility for the care of elderly people ("strongly agree" and "agree" together, in %)

Countries	Society should create proper institutions and services	Old people should live in an old people's home	It is the duty of the relatives to take care of the elderly	Old people should live in old people's homes only when there is nobody of the family who can take care of them	I would like my aged parents to live with me	Children should take care of the elderly	If you have small children you should not also have to care for your aged parents	It is not the task of the children to look after their aged parents
Austria	95,2	8,0	62,0	70,3	67,2	74,4	18,5	-
Belgium	-	-	-	36,4	23,5	-	46,3	-
Czech Republic	67,9	12,9	67,6	62,4	79,6	70,7	23,4	10,3
Estonia	61,8	8,4	19,4	51,9	42,9	57,5	9,1	11,2
Finland	84,3	17,7	19,4	38,3	42,7	31,6	43,5	23,9
Germany	84,4	14,6	67,8	47,9	16,4	73,5	21,5	14,8
Lithuania	81,9	8,5	34,5	79,1	82,9	85,8	6,6	5,8
Poland	65,3	6,1	80,2	67,9	85,1	90,1	32,4	9,3
Romania	85,5	5,3	64,0	57,0	85,9	87,4	12,8	7,6
Slovenia	93,1	66,5	47,9	77,2	8,2	58,4	10,9	15,2

Going into an institution or staying at home? – Preferred living arrangements in old age

Staying at home with assistance is the most frequently preferred living arrangement in old age

If one can no longer manage the household in old age, then people would still like to remain at home with regular assistance. 64 - 88 % of respondents opted for such a model.

Children's assistance the most important

Support in the household should be primarily provided by the children or the family. Data are available for eight countries. This form of

care in old age was selected as being the most important in five countries (the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovenia). Particular importance is attached to it in Poland and Romania, where 60.2 and 53.0 % respectively opted for this living arrangement. "Staying at home with the help of the children/family" reached second place in the three other countries. In Austria and Estonia, greatest importance was attached to a combination of "professional help and help from children" and in Germany to "staying at home only with professional help".

With the exception of Germany and Austria, in all other countries the value of professional assistance is much lower than that of the children or the family.

Relatively high significance of old people's homes in some countries

In addition to the extraordinarily high significance of the various forms of care at home, "living in a home for the elderly" has relatively high significance in three countries. 18.9 % in Slovenia, 11.0 % in Austria and 10.8 % in Germany prefer this living arrangement in old age.

Little importance attached to living together with children

Only in Lithuania does moving in with the children, at 13.7 %, take on comparatively high significance. This is not popular in the other countries.

Preferred living-arrangement in older age, if an elderly person is not longer able to deal with everyday chores in the household (in %)

Preferred living-arrangement	Austria	Czech Republic	Estonia	Germany	Lithuania	Poland	Romania	Slovenia
At home, but with professional help	21,8	12,9	10,9	30,1	8,5	8,4	9,5	9,8
At home, but with regular help from children/family	18,8	23,3	17,0	21,3	35,5	60,2	53,0	34,2
At home, but with regular professional help and help from children or other relatives	27,6	17,8	41,4	29,3	16,3	14,0	12,6	14,1
At home, but with one of children or other relatives moving in with me	5,2	10,1	4,8	-	9,6	5,3	10,0	5,9
In a house that meets the needs of elderly people	7,0	9,2	9,9	-	3,5	2,2	2,9	6,3
Moving in the house of one of my children	2,5	4,6	1,8	4,2	13,7	3,5	5,5	4,6
Sharing a house with relatives or friends	2,4	2,9	0,3	1,9	1,8	2,5	2,1	1,8
In a room in boarding house	2,2	12,2	10,4	-	5,2	0,7	0,2	4,1
In a home for the elderly	11,0	6,6	2,9	10,8	2,8	3,2	4,0	18,9

Are the elderly appreciated and needed? – Attitudes towards the elderly

Attitudes of people in the PPAS countries are not negative towards the elderly

Although demographic ageing is considered to be a negative trend, the role of elderly persons in society was valued positively. All statements expressing a rejection of elderly people, by contrast, hardly found approval.

Society should give greater consideration to the rights and problems of elderly people

Such statements found the highest degree of approval in all countries. With the exception of the Czech Republic (second place) the state-

ment “Society should take into consideration the problems of elderly people” was agreed with the most frequently in all other countries. More than 90 % of respondents answered in this vein. Only slightly less acceptance was given to the stronger consideration of the rights of elderly people. The differences between the countries here are extremely small.

The knowledge and experience of elderly people are appreciated

A very large share of the respondents takes the view that younger people can benefit from

the knowledge and experience of the elderly. This is agreed with the second most frequently in Lithuania and third most frequently in the Czech Republic, Estonia, Romania and Slovenia. The degree of concurrence ranges between 81.1 % (Estonia) and 91.3 % (Poland). The statement that the elderly are important to society thanks to their great experience finds very high acceptance in Poland (92.2 %) and Austria (90.7 %). This is much less the case in Lithuania (75.8 %) and Estonia (65.4 %).

Evaluation of issues concerning the role of elderly people in the society (“fully agree” and “agree”, in %)

Countries	Thanks to their great experience, elderly people are still socially useful	The elderly guarantee maintenance of traditional values in society	The subsequent generations could profit from presence, knowledge and experience of the elderly	Society should take into consideration the rights of the elderly	Society should take into consideration the problems of the elderly	The elderly take away economic resources from the society	The elderly are an obstacle to change	The elderly are a burden for society	The elderly are an important resource for emotional support
Austria	90,7	84,3	89,6	91,3	92,9	-	17,2	9,2	72,2
Czech Republic	81,3	71,4	81,6	90,3	89,8	13,5	6,4	6,8	75,5
Estonia	65,4	69,0	81,1	86,2	91,6	19,2	9,9	14,1	65,6
Germany	89,5	75,2	90,1	92,3	92,8	19,9	15,9	10,5	71,1
Lithuania	75,8	80,7	87,8	87,2	91,4	11,0	9,1	6,6	74,8
Poland	92,2	89,3	91,3	92,9	93,7	5,0	4,7	4,4	75,9
Romania	84,8	88,3	85,3	95,3	94,9	19,3	11,4	7,1	52,1
Slovenia	84,9	84,0	86,7	93,0	93,4	13,8	15,8	10,0	73,6

The elderly stand for maintaining traditions

Roughly 80 % of respondents hold this view. Approval is relatively low in Estonia (69.0 %), the Czech Republic (71.4 %) and Germany (75.2 %). By contrast, much higher acceptance values were recorded in Poland (89.3 %), Romania (88.3 %), Austria (84.3 %) and Slovenia (84.0 %).

The role of the elderly as a resource of emotional support is seen more differentiated

In comparison to the previous statements, the share of non-concurring answers is higher. Even so, however, more than half agree with this statement. Higher values, at more than 70 % agreement, can be found in Poland, the Czech Republic, Lithuania, Slovenia, Austria and Germany. In particular in Romania (52.1 %) and also in Estonia (65.6 %) the role of the elderly as a resource of emotional support is more strongly doubted.

Negative statements on elderly persons are only recognised by minorities

Three different statements had to be assessed putting forward a highly negative view of the role of the elderly in society (The elderly are an obstacle to change; The elderly are a burden for society; The elderly take away



economic resources). The majority of respondents disagreed with these statements in all countries.

The most frequent agreement is still to be recorded as to the opinion that the elderly are an economic burden. The highest frequency of concurrence is to be found in Germany, at 19.9 %, followed by Romania (19.3 %) and Estonia (19.2 %). This is most stridently rejected in Poland, with a share of concurring answers of only 5 %.

Rejection of the opinion "The elderly are an obstacle to change" is even stronger. The

highest acceptance of the statement is found in Austria, at 17.2 %, once more in Germany, at 15.9 %, and in Slovenia, at 15.8 %. The highest degree of rejection is directed at the statement that "The elderly are a burden for society". The degree of approval is extremely low in Poland (4.4 %), Lithuania (6.6 %) and the Czech Republic (6.8 %). Higher values can be found in Estonia, Germany and Slovenia.

Political conclusions:

Elderly people are seen positively in society. The generations are holding together. The elderly wish for support from their children. Falling back on institutional assistance is only accepted if there are no other possibilities. The younger generation appears to be willing to provide the help that is wanted. The family context therefore plays a major role in supporting elderly people. It is hence important for policies to support families in achieving solidarity between the generations.

What can be done for elderly people? – Desired measures

Primary importance attached to improving the health services for elderly people

The measures for elderly people most frequently named are improvements to the health services and the expansion of non-institutional home care services. An improved orientation of the health care system to meet the needs of the elderly was named most frequently in the Czech Republic, Germany, Lithuania and Poland. This measure reached second place in Estonia and Slovenia, and third place in Belgium. This measure was particularly frequently mentioned in Poland, Lithuania and Germany. The expansion of home

care services is most important to respondents in Belgium and Slovenia.

The elderly should work for longer

Making it possible to continue working after retirement was agreed with in particular in Estonia, where at 54.4 % it was named extraordinarily frequently, and in Romania (38.4 %). Such a measure is also considered relatively important in Lithuania, Germany and Belgium (second place).

Strengthening the role of the family in care of elderly people

The results so far have shown that cohesion



between the generations is strong. It therefore does not come as a surprise that arrangements enabling family members to provide better care services (such as temporary leave to care of elderly family members) are so important. The creation of such conditions is the second most

important measure in the Czech Republic and Poland, and the third most important measure in Lithuania and Germany.

Design of the infrastructure (buildings, paths, creating meeting places) to be more suitable for the elderly is of little significance.

Assessment of possible policy measures for elderly people (most important measure, in %)								
Policy measures	Belgium	Czech Republic	Estonia	Germany	Lithuania	Poland	Romania	Slovenia
Make it possible to work during retirement	18,5	17,5	57,4	18,9	27,4	16,3	38,4	-
Make buildings and paths accessible to the elderly	5,4	5,1	3,2	5,3	0,6	3,2	5,0	7,0
Increase the number of places where elderly persons can socialise	2,9	5,1	9,0	7,2	9,0	5,0	12,5	12,7
Develop health services	17,9	24,5	13,5	27,9	31,0	32,6	22,5	22,2
Develop home care services	29,7	11,1	7,2	12,1	6,5	11,0	12,0	23,9
Increase the number of institutions for the elderly	12,3	13,9	4,0	10,8	5,4	9,6	3,3	17,8
Introduce regulations permitting family members to take (temporary) care for elderly persons	13,3	22,8	5,7	17,8	20,1	22,3	6,3	16,7

When to retire? – Expected and preferred retirement age

Early retirement preferred

Respondents in all countries prefer to retire before 60. The differences between the countries are relatively pronounced on this issue. The lowest desired retirement ages are found in Slovenia and Poland, at 52.3 and 53.5 years respectively. In general terms, the preferred retirement age is lower in the former Socialist countries than in the “Western” countries. It is

lowest in Romania, Lithuania and the Czech Republic, with values around 55. The highest preferred retirement age is to be found in Germany and the Netherlands. Eastern Germans prefer to retire at 59.3 on average, and western Germans at 59.0. A similar value can be found in the Netherlands (59.1).

Virtually no one would like to work after the age of 65

Only few respondents prefer to continue working after 65. The highest value, at 5.0 %, was found for the Netherlands. The lowest value was 0.7 % in Slovenia.

Expected to retire later

The actual age at which it is expected to become a pensioner is admittedly higher in all countries than the preferred age. Once more, it reaches the highest values in Germany, at 64.3 and 64.2

respectively. It is also higher than 60 in Finland, Lithuania and the Netherlands. It is just under 60 in the other PPAS countries. The greatest difference between preferred and expected age is to be found in Lithuania, at 7.2 years, and the lowest in the Netherlands.

Preferred and expected age at retirement (in %, median age)

Age at retirement	Austria	Czech Republic	Germany (E)	Germany (W)	Finland	Lithuania	The Netherl.	Poland	Romania	Slovenia
	Expected age at retirement									
Up to 55 years	10,1	9,9	1,9	3,8	6,6	9,4	8,3	31,1	38,9	22,1
56 to 60 years	43,8	49,9	22,5	23,1	36,3	42,2	28,6	44,0	38,2	39,6
61 to 65 years	36,6	33,5	66,8	62,5	52,8	42,0	55,8	24,2	20,9	36,1
Older than 65 years	9,4	6,7	8,8	10,5	4,4	6,4	7,2	0,6	2,0	2,3
Median age	59,9	59,7	64,3	64,2	62,1	60,0	61,6	59,4	59,0	59,5
	Preferred age at retirement									
Up to 55 years	46,0	49,0	25,4	28,6	34,0	52,5	34,0	65,7	70,5	73,8
56 to 60 years	43,3	39,6	55,7	49,8	48,8	38,3	43,0	27,9	23,6	20,3
61 to 65 years	8,0	9,1	17,1	18,9	14,4	7,0	18,0	5,7	4,8	4,9
Older than 65 years	2,7	2,3	1,8	2,7	2,8	2,2	5,0	0,7	1,0	1,0
Median age	57,0	55,4	59,4	59,3	59,0	54,9	59,1	53,5	54,2	52,3

How to safeguard pensions? – Accepted measures

There is a willingness to pay higher social insurance contributions

In six out of ten countries, an increase in the taxes or contributions to pension insurance is most frequently named as a measure enabling the State to safeguard the pension systems. These include Finland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

Important to abolish early retirement programmes

The abolition of the early retirement programmes takes first place in the other four countries (Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Germany). This is particularly frequently favoured in Belgium, with 45.2 % approval.

Increase in the retirement age is accepted

In some countries, an increase in the retirement age was also more strongly concurred with as a measure (second place in Estonia, Finland and Romania, third place in the Netherlands and Poland).

A reduction in the amount of pension or making the children support their aged parents financially is hardly accepted.

Taking children more into account in the amount of pensions

Making the pension amount dependent on the number of children was mentioned as the second most important measure to safeguard pensions in Germany and Lithuania, and as the third most

important measure Poland and in Belgium, the Czech Republic, Estonia and Slovenia.

Political conclusions:

Increasing the retirement age and abolishing early retirement are regarded as effective measures to safeguard pensions in most European countries. On the other hand, the personally preferred retirement age is below 60 in all countries. The expected age is however above 60 as a rule. One may conclude from this that the population is realistic about this issue, and that people accept that they will have to work longer in their lifetimes, even if it does not correspond to the personal wish to retire earlier.

Preferred measures by which the state could safeguard the pension system in future (in %)

Policy measures	Belgium	Czech Republic	Estonia	Finland	Germany	Lithuania	The Netherl.	Poland	Romania	Slovenia
Raise retirement age	9,2	12,2	21,9	27,9	15,0	9,6	16,3	9,3	26,1	10,9
Abolish early retirement programmes	45,2	30,9	25,6	15,2	33,6	24,3	35,4	20,3	16,4	
Raise the monthly taxes or social insurance contributions	26,5	26,6	18,2	39,3	12,0	28,7	37,1	38,9	30,0	38,7
Lower the monthly pension	5,3	2,6	3,4	5,9	8,8	2,0	5,0	2,7	4,2	5,3
Force children to support their aged parents financially	3,2	6,5	9,6	3,9	2,7	7,6	1,2	7,8	12,0	2,6
Amount of the pension depends on the number of children	10,7	21,1	21,2	7,9	20,8	27,7	5,0	21,0	11,4	18,3

What should governments take care of? – Expectations and attributions

The State is primarily considered to be responsible for providing adequate health care for all

The State was most frequently regarded in all countries as being particularly responsible for health care. An exception is Romania, where the creation of jobs for young people was regarded as being even more important.

The second most frequent responsibility is attributed to the State for providing jobs for young people

This area is placed second in Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Lithuania, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Slovenia.

Care and assistance for elderly people also tends to be regarded as being a major task for the State

This however does not apply to all countries to the same degree. In the Czech Republic and Finland, the social area “Looking after the elderly” is the second most important task attributed to the State, after health care. It was categorised as the third most important task in Belgium, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania and Cyprus.

Important role of the State in some countries in individual areas of life

For respondents in Finland, the provision of adequate housing is to a great degree the responsibility of the State (third place). Improved reconcilability conditions of family and work for women play a major role in Germany and Lithuania, and the promotion of labour force participation of women is considered important in Hungary and Slovenia.

The degree of attributed responsibility differs greatly

The call for the State to act is louder in Belgium, Germany, Hungary, Romania and Cyprus than in the Czech Republic, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

Government's responsibility for different areas (completely responsible, in %)

Measures	Belgium	Czech Republic	Finland	Germany	Hungary	Lithuania	The Netherl.	Poland	Romania	Slovenia	Cyprus
Looking after the elderly	41,7	24,8	24,6	41,1	24,5	26,2	13,5	19,4	51,0	11,6	27,9
Adequate housing for all	-	15,8	24,1	32,2	21,8	22,6	-	14,8	44,2	10,2	23,4
Promotion of work for women	-	16,7	8,2	35,9	32,2	15,7	3,5	18,4	40,8	12,2	21,4
Providing opportunities for women to reconcile out-of-house work and child-raising	35,6	17,8	12,6	41,8	30,5	30,8	5,8	17,3	40,7	9,1	24,9
Providing opportunities for men to reconcile out-of-house work and child-raising	20,2	8,5	10,7	31,3	18,9	19,6	5,4	10,8	30,9	7,5	14,7
Supporting young people to find a job	59,6	18,9	18,6	66,6	53,8	45,2	15,1	28,6	70,4	20,0	42,4
Adequate health care for all	60,8	45,0	55,4	69,3	79,0	54,7	48,4	40,1	66,3	25,0	63,0

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