

# Is the family really an outdated institution in Italy as well as in Europe? Findings from the European Values Study

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**Abstract.** *The concept of institution, one of the main issues in the social sciences, has been developed in a number of anthropological, economical, juridical, political, and sociological institutional theories. There is no overarching theory, however, to explain what institutions are for; how they are formed and why they change. This contribution takes into account, in particular, the institution of the family as a fundamental institution of society, not only because it ensures reproduction over time but because it shapes the personal and social identity through socialization of new generations, and will verify whether the family is still considered valid as an institution. In particular, the research questions to be addressed are: is the (marriage-based) family still considered a valid institution by Italians and Europeans? Is it possible to identify specific elements linked to a strong idea of the family? Which elements? Using data from the European Values Study (EVS) 2008–2009, an index was devised to measure the (high, medium, low) importance attributed to the family as a social institution, and its structural and cultural characteristics in both Italy and Europe (with a total of 28 countries considered), as well as with clusters correlated to it.*

**Key words:** *family, institution, marriage, Italy, EVS.*

## 1. Family and Institution: a complex relationship

Institutions are the focal points of social organisations that are common to all societies; they address the basic problems of an ordered social life, to which the differentiation of the major institutional spheres or activities corresponds: family and kinship, education, economy, politics, cultural institutions, social stratification. The concept of institution, a main issue in the social sciences, has been developed in a number of anthropological, economical, juridical, political, and sociological institutional theories (Bumpass 1990). There is no overarching theory, however, to explain what institutions are for, how they are formed and why they change<sup>1</sup> (Colozzi 2009, Maccarini and Bortolini 2005).

<sup>1</sup> A. Maccarini (1998) examines institutions as connected to the social order; in particular, he tackles the issue of how institutions can be conceived of, described and defined in the sociological sense, as well as how they are generated and transformed. This analytical sequence (definition, genesis, change) is neither casual nor merely chronological: rather, it takes into account the nexus between social ontology, explicative methodology and practical theory (Archer 1995).

Here we take into account, in particular, the institution of the family as a fundamental institution of society, not only because it ensures reproduction over time but because it shapes personal and social identity through socialization (Colozzi 2009).

Lévi–Strauss (1967) observed that the lasting, socially approved union of a man and a woman and their children is a phenomenon present in every society. As a fully reciprocal relationship between man, woman and generations, the family is thus an evolutionary universal, i.e., it is present in any society that is both capable of evolving and bound to last (Donati 2006, Blankenhorn *et al.* 1990, Coontz 2000).

In the last decades, however, some of the greatest sociologists have highlighted, in a variety of ways (Giddens 1991, 1992, 1999, Beck 1997, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996, 2001, Bauman 2001, 2005, 2006), the fact that with the disappearance of a shared values reference system the individual can only turn to him/herself as the sole choice criterion; family bonds too lose any reference to tradition and the forms they assume are only justified by the individual's reasons; self-fulfilment becomes the individual's primary goal and any bonds that may be established are instrumental to that goal. This weakens the value of family bonds, as these are considered out-dated.

Recent sociological literature presents diverse perspectives on the couple relationship and the extent of its formalisation as relating to the two different levels of structure and agency<sup>2</sup>. Structural research has concentrated on the resilience of marriage, defined as a clear way to sanction and institutionalise the couple relationship within society. US literature, in particular, connects existing theories to two macro-perspectives (Amato *et al.* 2007): the *Marital-Divorce Perspective* (Waite and Gallagher 2000, Whitehead 1996, Wilson 2002) on the progressive weakening of marriage, due to growing individualism<sup>3</sup>, and the *Marital-Resilience Perspective* (Bengtson *et al.* 2002, Coontz 2000, Hackstaff 1999, Scanzoni 2001), on the actual transformations undergone by the marriage institution<sup>4</sup>. Agency theories differ as to the importance they attribute to the institutional and relational aspects of the actual couple relationship (Table 1).

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<sup>2</sup> This term is always used by Archer (2000, 2003) in connection with *structure*. Archer views the history of sociology and the *querelle* between holists and individualists as the opposition between, respectively, *structural* and *agency* theories.

<sup>3</sup> The progressive weakening of marriage due to increasingly widespread individualism (Glenn 1996) has negative consequences on adults, children, and society in general, namely: poverty, crime, violence, substance abuse, erosion of the sense of community and neighbourliness; the permanence of marriage, on the contrary, has positive effects, such as: a higher standard of living compared with that of the singles (Hirschl *et al.* 2003); physical and psychological health, (Williams 2003), financial security for adults (Williams 2003) and children (Amato and Booth 1997); the institution of marriage must, therefore, be strengthened by means of special paths, such as *public education programs* focused on promoting awareness of the value of marriage, the development of relational and conflict-management skills, pre-marriage education and marriage counselling.

<sup>4</sup> This perspective acknowledges a change in the institution of marriage (Coontz 2000, Bengtson *et al.* 2002) that carries few negative consequences on adults, children and society in general. According to these scholars, it is necessary to support all family types, not just married heterosexual couples with children. Amato *et al.* (2007) have found no satisfactory empirical support to these theories, which, on the contrary, present complex, contradictory factors; thus they propose the integration of the above theoretical strands in: *The Marital Decline and Marital Resilience Perspectives Revisited*.

Table 1. Main theoretical perspective on couple relationship

Main authors	Key concepts
Berger and Kellner (1969)	Social construction of marriage
Alberoni (1979)	Falling in love as starting a collective movement of two persons
Cavell (1981)	Semantics of love as a conversation
Luhmann (1985)	Pure communicating couple
De Singly (2009)	Démariage
Giddens (1991, 1992, 1999)	Pure relationship
Kaufmann (1993, 1999, 2007)	Institutional and compositional factors as couple-specific, resulting from different types and shared symbols.
Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1996)	Normal chaos of love
Cherlin (2004)	Declining companionate marriage
Bauman (2006)	Liquid love
Attali and Bonvicini (2008)	Polyamory
Widmer and Jallinoja (2008)	Couple in a network (Family as configurations)

Following this theorisation, Western culture has today come to affirm that the family no longer exists but also that there are as many and as different families as there are forms of living arrangements with or without marriage, between different genders or between individuals of the same gender (Donati 2006). So the family may change its form and identity, implying that the individuals involved, bound by relationships, may choose the type they prefer (Donati 2013).

Following the deep changes in the family, it is logical to wonder whether the family is an institution of the past or one which still has a future (Bengtson *et al.* 2002, Bramlet and Mosher 2002, Casper and Bianchi 2002, Donati 2010, 2013, 2014).

In the attempt to answer this question, some scholars who reject individualisation as an interpretative criterion have tried to sketch a more thorough and sophisticated way of conceptualising and representing family life and, at the same time, find new ways to capture the multidimensionality of relationships by valuing the concept of *relationality* as opposed to the dominant individualistic interpretation (Smart 2007, Morgan 1996, Finch and Mason 1993, 2000, Carsten 2000, 2004, Gillis 1996, 2004, Chapman and Hockey 1999, Miller 1998, Donati 2011a).

Among these theorisations, Relational Sociology, particularly Donati's (2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2013), argues that, despite today's changing scenario, the family remains an institution (Donati 2006).

From a sociological viewpoint, in fact, the family's development and dynamics can be fully grasped with reference to social morphogenesis theories. These illustrate the ongoing differentiation processes in contemporary societies, such as the attempt to set one's living arrangements (*morphostasis*), though these must always be examined in the light of criteria confirming that a *morphogenesis* is taking place (Donati 2006, 2011a, 2011b, 2013, 2014). The relational hypothesis is that the family has a pattern, a latent structure consisting of father-mother-child, an unchanging nucleus without which it would lose its identity. This pattern is what

Donati calls “the family genome”, as its unique characteristics (like, broadly speaking, those of the biological genome) connect genders, generations and ancestries. The multiplication of living arrangements does not reveal a morphogenesis of the original structural pattern (family genome) or, in fact, a disappearance of the family as an institution; rather, it can be said that the new different lifestyles recall, more or less directly, the same family pattern.

Relational Sociology considers the family as a relationship with its own identity and able to connect and articulate, according to the different forms assumed by the couple bond (marriage, cohabitation, LAT), a number of factors, such as sexuality, generative tension, reciprocity in the exchanges, and a spirit of donation<sup>5</sup> (Donati 2013). The family relationship is therefore, inseparable from the intergenerational relationship, as it creates a network of horizontal bonds, vertical bonds and generative factors. Wherever a bond is formed, in fact, the persons’ histories are modified and something new is created. This becomes visible when considering not just the individuals but also their relationship.

The term “relationship” derives from the Latin *re-ligo* (“to set a link between”), referring to an interactive bond between two or more subjects, with the dual connotation of *tie* and *resource*. It also echoes the term *re-latum* (“referred to”), indicating that an interactive bond carries a shared symbolical baggage, i.e., a sort of memory connecting it with history and with other bonds that make it meaningful (Rossi and Bramanti 2012). In other words, there is an exchange between subjects carrying a cultural heritage which they represent from within the bond. The family is the encounter between two inevitable histories, as each subject constitutes a node in a generational fabric (Cigoli and Scabini 2006, Prandini 2013). To conclude, the family can be defined as a social mediation relationship, as the mediations between the sexes, between the generations and between individual and society take place in it. Within the family, each individual is defined by both gender and position in the generational sequence (parent and/or child) and lifecycle (age).

## 2. Research questions and hypotheses

Within this theoretical and sociological context, this contribution intends to verify whether the family could still be considered valid as an institution. Even though this topic is no novelty in the scientific and public debate, it is still quite relevant for tackling some related trends in the current discourse, such as homosexual couples, single-parent families, stepfamilies, and childless couples, among others.

In particular, this paper is aimed to verify the relevance and persistence of the family as an institution based on marriage and consisting of both spouses in the orientation of Italians and Europeans. This idea of the family, as said above, is founded on its definition given by Relational Sociology (Donati 2006).

The research questions to be addressed are:

1. Is the (marriage-based) family still considered important by Italians and Europeans?
2. Is it possible to identify specific factors linked to a strong idea of the family? Which factors?

The research hypotheses prompted by these questions are the following:

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<sup>5</sup> Different couple patterns emerge from different combinations of these factors.

1. We expect the (marriage-based) family to be still considered a valid institution by Italians and Europeans;
2. In the light of Relational Sociology, specific structural and cultural factors associated with a strong idea of the family can be identified. In particular, and consistently with a number of earlier findings (Glenn 1996, Bengtson *et al.* 2002, Coontz 2000, Hackstaff 1999, Scanzoni 2001, Stacey 1990), we expect the presence of children and the stability of the marriage bond experienced in the family of origin to be the decisive structural factors, with strong religiosity and value attributed to the couple relationship (as opposed to individual satisfaction) as the crucial cultural factors.

### **3. Data**

To answer this question, we have used data from European Values Study fourth wave 2008-2009. The European Values Study (EVS) is a large-scale, cross-national, and longitudinal survey research program started in 1981 on basic human values, i.e., deep-set criteria for individual and collective actions referring to what is ultimately considered true and fair, good or bad, desirable or undesirable, rather than considering prejudices, stereotypes and unconscious beliefs.

Values coincide with cultural judgements expressing what is worth believing, thinking and acting by, according to the reflexivity distinguishing the human subject as such.

It is a unique research project on life, family, work, religion, politics and society; it provides insights into the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe.

The EVS' fourth wave (2008) considered here covers 47 European Countries/Regions. It is based on representative multi-stage or stratified random samples of the population of over 18 year olds of each country, totalling 67,492 interviewees. The Italian sample includes 1,519 people: this is a probabilistic, stratified, proportional, two-stage sample, based on the Italian 18+ population as emerging from the electoral rolls.

In this contribution, we have adopted a European perspective, focusing on 28 countries: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, Holland, the United Kingdom, Denmark, Ireland, Greece, Portugal, Spain, Austria, Sweden, Finland, Cyprus, Malta, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria, and Croatia.

### **4. Methodology and data analysis**

To measure the (high, medium, low) importance attributed to the family as a social institution, and its structural and cultural characteristics in both Italy and Europe, an index (Table 2) was devised, as well as clusters correlated to it. The index was based on the following variables:

- How important is the Family? (mode: very important)
- Do you agree or disagree with the following statement: “marriage is an outdated institution?” (mode: disagree)
- Do you agree or disagree with those who say that, in order to grow into a happy adult, a child needs a family with both parents? (mode: tend to agree)<sup>6</sup>.

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<sup>6</sup> A greater weight is attributed to some answer modes (Family: very important; marriage is an outdated institution: disagree; child needs a family with both parents: tend to agree); the average scoring is calculated

Table 2. *Importance of the Family as Institution INDEX (ITA and EU)*

Index (ITA)	No.	%	Index(EU)	No.	%
high	997	65.6	high	21576	51.6
medium	126	8.3	medium	4429	10.6
low	396	26.1	low	15797	37.8
			missing	4	
<b>Total</b>	<b>1519</b>	100.0	<b>Total</b>	<b>41806</b>	100.0

The factors discriminating between the groups have been analysed by bounded cluster analysis<sup>7</sup> according to just the HIGH and LOW modes in the index, for both Italy and Europe.

Concerning Italy, factors describing those with a high index and those with a low index are clearly evident (see appendix, for extended tables).

Table 3. *High index vs. Low index in Italy (bounded cluster analysis)*

High	Low
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Married</b></li> <li>• <b>Religious</b></li> <li>• Age: 66+</li> <li>• Females</li> <li>• Not in paid employment</li> <li>• <b>Adult children (34+)</b></li> <li>• Low education level</li> <li>• Importance of religion, children, fidelity</li> <li>• No to cohabitation</li> <li>• No to abortion</li> <li>• No to divorce</li> <li>• High life satisfaction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Divorced, Cohabiting, Unmarried</b></li> <li>• <b>Not Religious</b></li> <li>• In paid employment</li> <li>• <b>No children</b></li> <li>• Age: 35+</li> <li>• Males</li> <li>• Medium education level</li> <li>• Importance of sexual chemistry, time for friends and hobbies</li> <li>• Yes to cohabitation</li> <li>• Yes to abortion</li> <li>• Yes to divorce</li> <li>• Low life and work satisfaction</li> </ul>

- The *LOW level* of importance attributed to the family as an institution was given by: the unmarried, the divorced, the cohabiters; the males; usually without children; the 35+ with medium level of education and currently employed. These people also tend to justify divorce and cohabitation. They are usually non-religious persons or devoted atheists.

They believe that for a marriage to be successful it is especially important to have time for friends and hobbies, as well as good sexual chemistry and, to a lesser degree, fidelity; conversely, children or shared religious ideas are considered irrelevant.

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according to the answers given, then the score is re-coded on three levels. The analysis shows low correlation between the importance attributed to the family and the presence of both parents (Pearson's correlation EU = .056 and Ita = .058, yet a significant one: sig. .000). An analysis of the main components confirms that the three variables considered are correlated with the same factor.

<sup>7</sup> On bounded cluster analysis, see Lanzetti (1996). The values in the tables refer to % total: percentage of subjects giving similar answers; and to % group/category GRP/CAT: percentage of subjects within the group giving similar answers.

These people display an over-average tendency not to be satisfied with their work and their life in general (in their current situation they say they are not happy at all).

- people expressing a HIGH index level are especially the married, the women, the 66+, with a low education level and currently not employed (they are, in fact, pensioners or housewives), with grown-up children.

This cluster tends not to agree with divorce and cohabitation. These people are strongly religious and consider marriage important. They think a good marriage is based on: shared religious ideas, the presence of children, fidelity; whilst having time for friends or for oneself is definitely less relevant. The satisfaction reported by this cluster is definitely high.

The two groups are clearly connoted and distinguished by structural (age, gender and stability of marriage bond) as well as cultural elements (religiosity and the importance attributed to the marriage and stable relationship). The emerging differences concerning important factors for a good marriage are particularly interesting: if those with a high index highlight the relevance of religious faith, procreative dimension and fidelity – so valuing the relational, generational and cultural dimension, those with a low index prioritize individual and immediately fulfilling elements. Moreover, our initial hypothesis concerning the impact of family origin marriage stability can not be confirmed from our data. In Europe the Index was calculated for all the 28 countries considered.

Table 4 shows the high and low indices of the importance of the family as a social institution, in the different EU countries, in percentage order.

*Table 4. Index in EU<sup>8</sup>*

<b>High</b>	<b>Low</b>
Malta	Sweden
Hungary	Portugal
Greece	Denmark
Cyprus	Great Britain
Slovak Republic	Spain
<b>Italy</b>	Netherlands
Poland	Belgium
Romania	Finland
Bulgaria	Luxembourg
Estonia	France
Slovenia	Ireland
Czech Republic	Lithuania
Germany (West)	Austria
	Germany (East)

<sup>8</sup> Latvia and Poland present a medium score of the index.

As far as Europe is concerned (28 countries), in bounded cluster analysis there are no significant differences compared with Italy (see extended tables in appendix). Listed are the factors describing the 2 groups in Europe (Table 5): also in this case clusters are clearly distinguished by both structural (age, gender, stable marriage bond, presence of children, educational level and working condition), and cultural factors (religiosity and the importance attributed to the marriage and stable relationship).

*Table 5. High index vs. Low index in EU (bounded cluster analysis)*

High Index (EU)	Lox (EU)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Married</li> <li>• Religious</li> <li>• age: 66+, 51–65</li> <li>• Females</li> <li>• Not working</li> <li>• Adult children (34+ and 18–34)</li> <li>• Low education level</li> <li>• Importance of religion; children; fidelity; discussing problems</li> <li>• No cohabitation</li> <li>• No abortion</li> <li>• Generally no divorce</li> <li>• High satisfaction with life</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divorced, Cohabiting, Unmarried</li> <li>• Non-religious</li> <li>• In paid employment</li> <li>• No children</li> <li>• Age: 35+</li> <li>• Males</li> <li>• Medium education level</li> <li>• Importance of sexual chemistry and time for friends and hobbies</li> <li>• Yes to cohabitation</li> <li>• Yes to abortion</li> <li>• Yes to divorce</li> <li>• Low satisfaction with life and work</li> </ul>

Compared to the Italians, the Europeans attributing a high index value to the family as a social institution are younger and have younger children. Unlike their Italian counterparts, the Europeans consider relevant to a successful marriage also discussing problems with their respective partners

## **5. Which factors impact on high/low family as institution index?**

### **Logistic regression**

To find out whether there exists a significant association between the importance attributed to the family as a social institution and the above presented group characteristics, we have used a Maximum Likelihood Estimation (MLE), a logistic regression showing all other attributes controlled for in the model being equal, the odds ratio that a certain result (dependent variable) may take place, depending on the independent variables. The high and low indices were used as dependent variables; conversely, age (in 4 brackets), gender, presence of employment, self-definition as to being (or not being) religious, and couple paths<sup>9</sup> were used as independent variables.

The logistic regression thus calculates the possibility of a high/low index as to the importance of the family as a social institution<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Paths considered are: married, cohabiting, divorced, unmarried, LAT – i.e., Living Apart Together.

<sup>10</sup> The data shown here are relative to Italy, where differences are numerically more marked; the EU, however, shows similar results.



The results highlight that perceiving family as an institution tends to be the view of people who regard themselves as religious, those who are married and those aged over 66.

The regression confirms the results of the cluster analysis, showing that other things being equal, the most significant independent variable appears to be religiosity.

Data from Europe show a similar trend.

*Table 6. Logistic regression (Italy, dependent variable: High and Low index)*

<b>ITA Logistic Regression (dependent variable: High Index)</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Exp(B) Odds-ratio</b>
Year 18–34	.005	
Year 35–50	.131	.771
Year 51–65	.150	.768
Year 66 +	.072	1.404
<b>MARRIED</b>	.000	<b>2.377</b>
WOMAN	.601	1.065
WORKING	.813	1.033
<b>RELIGIOUS</b>	.000	<b>4.712</b>
Constant	.000	.347
<b>ITA Logistic Regression (dependent variable: Low Index)</b>		
Year 18–34	.012	
Year 35–50	.400	.868
Year 51–65	.617	.916
Year 66 +	.001	.523
<b>COHABITING</b>	.000	<b>2.821</b>
WOMAN	.712	1.049
WORKING	.660	1.066
RELIGIOUS	.000	.222
Constant	.277	1.237
<b>ITA Logistic Regression (dependent variable: Low Index)</b>		
Year 18–34	.004	
Year 35–50	.232	.817
Year 51–65	.156	.776
Year 66 +	.000	.478
<b>DIVORCED</b>	.000	<b>4.449</b>
WOMAN	.812	1.031
WORKING	.797	1.039
RELIGIOUS	.000	.207
Constant	.084	1.400

How can the results be interpreted? Considering the importance of being married as a predictor of judgment about the family as an institution we can see how behaviour has a strong impact on

the value judgment. This leads us to the complex relationship between value orientations and behaviours already highlighted by relevant scholars (Allport 1961, Halman 1995).

Regarding the favourable influence of religiosity on the view of the family being an institution, the expectation we formulated is confirmed. This relationship, however, is more complex and could be better highlighted by different studies underlining the importance of religiosity for the couple bonds in terms of increased marital satisfaction (Hünler and Genc,öz 2005, Margaret et al. 1990, Orathinkal and Vansteewegen 2006) commitment (Sullivan 2001) and stability (Call and Heaton 1997). In addition, as highlighted by Fincham, the sharing of religious faith enforces marital relationships: praying together is a potentially important vehicle for enhancing relationship outcomes (Fincham, and Beach 2014), increasing forgiveness and relationship satisfaction (Braithwaite, Selby and Fincham 2011).

These results broaden this perspective by highlighting the relevance of religion not only on couple satisfaction or functioning but also on the personal judgment regarding the importance of the family for the society.

## 6. Conclusions

The original hypotheses have been confirmed for both Italy and Europe: the family as an institution (based on marriage and including both partners) is highly relevant to the majority of the interviewees (H1).

The data concerning people's perception about the family as an institution seem thus to confirm ISTAT findings (2014a, 2014b) about the presence of a progressive de-institutionalisation of the family in favour of a growing individualism, as claimed by several authors (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1990, 1993, Giddens 1991, 1992, 1999, Baumann 2000, 2003).

Beside these trends, moreover, a generative orientation valuing the family as the foundation of society can be found; it is also possible to identify some structural and cultural factors significantly affecting the importance attributed to the family as an institution (Hp2): particularly religiosity, marital status and age.

The clusters analysis with high and low index, in fact, suggest that the differences are linked to these different variables. As confirmed by logistic regressions, other things being equal, the most significant independent variable appears to be religiosity.

Such interesting results, however, demand further reflection.

Will the family become more uncommon and less appealing as a life choice? Why? What (pushing or pulling) personal, family and social factors will affect this trend?

Wondering about continuity and change of perception about the family as an institution in Italy, where relevant structural transformations are present, we can see that the family as an institution persists at least with a strong link to religiosity and marriage. This raises questions about the process of secularization outcomes in Italy: data here presented seem to suggest to us that with a decrease in religiosity also the importance of the family as an institution could fall.

These processes also need to be examined by longitudinal survey research as well as by qualitative and narrative methodologies; these would encompass the subject's decisional and reflexive processes demanded by the family choice, to view it within personal/family history and in the self-construction process (Archer 2007).

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## APPENDIX: cluster analysis tables

### ITALY. Family and marriage as outdated (Low Index, 26%)

VARIABLES	CATEGORIES	%	%	%	T.
		TOTAL	CAT/GRP	GRP/CAT	VALUE
<i>Path</i>	Divorced/separated	4.7	<b>10.3</b>	57.2	5.7
	Cohabiting with same/ other partner	4.6	<b>10.1</b>	56.4	5.4
	Unmarried	27.1	<b>37</b>	35.6	5
<i>Sex</i>	Male	47.9	<b>51.7</b>	28.1	1.7
<i>Age</i>	18–24	7.4	<b>10</b>	36.7	2.5
	25–34	15.5	<b>17.8</b>	30	1.5
	35–50	30.1	<b>32.6</b>	28.2	1.2
	51–65	22.8	<b>24.9</b>	27.6	1.2
<i>Education level</i>	Medium	43	<b>50.4</b>	30.5	3.4
<i>In paid employment</i>	Yes	53.4	<b>61.1</b>	29.8	3.5
<i>Work status</i>	< 30 hrs per week; Student	7,4; 5,3	<b>10;7.6</b>	35.1; 37.1	2,2; 2,1
<i>Parents' divorced</i>	Yes	2.8	<b>5.1</b>	46.2	2.7
<i>Lives with children (adopted or partner's) within family</i>	No	50.1	<b>54.6</b>	28.4	2
<i>Justifies divorce</i>	Yes	40.3	<b>60.8</b>	39.3	9.55
<i>Justifies cohabitation outside marriage</i>	Yes, definitely	15.7	<b>30.6</b>	50.7	8.9
	Yes	36.8	<b>47.5%</b>	33.6	5
<i>Describes self as religious You say you are:</i>	No	18	<b>39.2</b>	56.7	11.9
	A convinced atheist	4.4	<b>12.5</b>	73	8.1
	Not a religious person	8.8	<b>18.2</b>	53.8	7.1
<i>Religious ritual important to marriage</i>	No	17.6	<b>41.6</b>	61.6	13.7
<i>Factors contributing to a successful marriage:</i>					
<i>Same religious ideas</i>	Not very important	37.7	<b>51.7</b>	35.7	6.6
<i>Having children</i>	Not very important	8.9	<b>17.6</b>	51.1	6.6
<i>Fidelity</i>	Rather important	10.3	<b>18.5</b>	46.4	5.7
<i>Time for friends and hobbies</i>	Very important	35.1	<b>45.5</b>	33.7	4.9
<i>Sexual chemistry</i>	Very important	62.1	<b>67</b>	28.1	2.4
<i>Justifies abortion</i>	Yes	24	<b>42.2</b>	45.7	9.4
<i>Justifies women who want children outside stable relationships</i>	Yes	30.7	<b>49.5</b>	41.9	9.1
<i>A woman must have children to be fulfilled</i>	Not necessarily	39.8	<b>51.6</b>	34.1	5.6
<i>Work is the best way for a woman to be independent</i>	Agree strongly	21.6	<b>28.7</b>	34.5	3.8
<i>Satisfied with own work</i>	Not very satisfied	3.2	<b>5.2</b>	41.8	2.4
	Rather satisfied	19.9	<b>23.2</b>	30.2	1.8
<i>Current happiness level</i>	Not happy at all	2.7	<b>4.6</b>	44	2.2

**ITALY. Family and marriage still important (High Index, 65.6%)**

CATEGORIES	VARIABLES	% TOTAL	% CAT/ GRP	% GRP/ CAT	T. VALUE
<i>Path</i>	Married	57	63.9	<b>73.5</b>	7.3
<i>Sex</i>	Female	52	53.7	<b>67.7</b>	1.7
<i>Age</i>	66+	24.1	27.9	<b>76</b>	4.8
<i>Education level</i>	Low	39.6	42.2	<b>69.9</b>	2.3
<i>In paid employment</i>	No	46.6	48.6	<b>68.6</b>	2.2
<i>Employment situation</i>	Pensioner	24.9	27.9	<b>73.4</b>	3.6
<i>Parents' divorce</i>	No	94.5	95.4	<b>66.3</b>	2
<i>Lives with children (adopted or partner's) within family</i>	Yes	47.6	50.7	<b>69.9</b>	3.3
<i>Age of 1st child</i>	34+	23.2	26.6	<b>75.4</b>	4.5
<i>Justifies divorce</i>	Never	26.4	32.9	<b>81.8</b>	8.2
<i>Justifies cohabitation outside marriage</i>	Neither agree nor disagree	23.7	28.2	<b>77.9</b>	5.8
	Disagree strongly	5.8	7.7	<b>87</b>	4.7
<i>Describes self as religious</i>	Yes	80.2	89.2	<b>73</b>	11.8
<i>You say you are:</i>	Religious person	82.5	91.1	<b>72.5</b>	11.9
<i>Religious ritual important to marriage</i>	Yes	79.8	90.6	<b>74.5</b>	14
<i>Factors contributing to a successful marriage:</i>					
<i>Same religious ideas</i>	Very important	26.6	31.4	<b>77.4</b>	5.9
<i>Having children</i>	Very important	63.7	70.6	<b>72.7</b>	7.6
<i>Fidelity</i>	Very important	86.9	92.2	<b>69.7</b>	8.3
<i>Time for friends and hobbies</i>	Not very important	19	22.6	<b>78</b>	4.9
<i>Justifies abortion</i>	No	43.8	53	<b>79.5</b>	10.2
<i>Justifies women who want children outside stable relationships</i>	No	52.5	63.1	<b>78.8</b>	11.4
<i>A woman must have children to be fulfilled</i>	Yes	51.6	57.6	<b>73.3</b>	6.5
<i>A housewife can be as fulfilled as a woman who works outside the home</i>	Agree strongly	9.3	11	<b>80</b>	3.8
<i>Satisfaction with life</i>	Very satisfied	49.6	53.3	<b>70.4</b>	3.8

**EUROPE 28: Family and marriage as outdated (Low Index, 37.8%)**

CATEGORIES	VARIABLES	% TOTAL	% CAT/GRP	% GRP/CAT	T. VALUE	
<i>Path</i>	Unmarried	26.9	36.3	50.8	33.2	
	Divorced/Separated	9.1	13.9	57.8	26.3	
	Cohabiting	7.6	10.9	55.5	20.8	
<i>Sex</i>	Male	48.2	48.2	37.8	0.2	
<i>Age</i>	18–24	10.6	13	46.4	12.4	
	25–34	18	21.2	44.4	13	
	35–50	29.3	32.3	41.6	10.3	
<i>Education level</i>	High	22.3	23.7	40.1	5.2	
<i>In paid employment</i>	Yes	55.6	60	40.8	14.2	
<i>Employment status</i>	Student	5.7	7.7	48.5	11.2	
	30+ hrs per week	44.3	47.8	40.7	10.9	
<i>Parents' divorce</i>	Yes	9.4	13.3	52.9	20.3	
<i>Justifies cohabitation outside marriage</i>	Agree strongly	33.9	49.4	54.9	51.6	
<i>Lives with children (adopted or partner's) within family</i>	No	56.6	59.3	39.6	8.6	
<i>Justifies divorce</i>	Yes	48.1	59.9	47.1	37.7	
<i>Describes self as religious You say you are:</i>	No	28.1	38	51.1	34.8	
	Not a religious person	27.9	36	48.8	28.6	
	A convinced atheist	6.6	10.8	61.4	26	
<i>Religious ritual important to marriage</i>	No	27.5	41.2	56.7	48.6	
<i>Factors contributing to a successful marriage:</i>						
	<i>Same religious ideas</i>	Not very important	43.6	53.2	46.1	30.8
	<i>Having children</i>	Important	9.5	16.1	64.2	35.4
	<i>Fidelity</i>	Not very important	14.2	19.7	52.4	24.7
<i>Time for friends and hobbies</i>	Rather important	45.6	50.3	41.7	15.4	
<i>Justifies abortion</i>	Yes	34.1	44.9	49.8	36.3	
<i>Justifies women who want children outside stable relationships</i>	Yes	48.9	63	48.6	45	
<i>A woman must have children to be fulfilled</i>	Not necessarily	45.3	58.6	48.8	42.5	
<i>Work is the best way for a woman to be independent</i>	Definitely not	9.4	11.7	46.9	12.3	
<i>Marriage/ a stable relationship is necessary to be happy</i>	Disagree	18.1	26.2	54.7	33	



**EU28: Family and marriage still important (High Index, 51.6%)**

CATEGORIES	VARIABLES	% TOTAL	% CAT/GRP	% GRP/CAT	T. VALUE
<i>Path</i>	Married	51.1	61.9	62.5	45.9
<i>Sex</i>	Female	51.8	52.8	52.6	4.5
<i>Age</i>	66+	18.7	22.7	62.8	22
	51–65	23.4	24.9	55.1	7.8
<i>Education level</i>	Low	31.6	32.6	53.2	4.4
<i>In paid employment</i>	No	43.8	46.7	54.9	11.8
<i>Employment status</i>	Pensioner	22.4	26.6	61.4	21.6
	Housewife	6.9	8.4	62.1	11.9
<i>Parents' divorce</i>	No	89.3	91.9	53.1	18.1
<i>Justifies cohabitation</i>	Disagree	8.8	12.7	73.8	28.9
	Neither agrees nor disagrees	15.2	18.9	64.1	21.8
<i>Lives with children (adopted or partner's) within family</i>	Yes	41.4	45.4	56.6	17.4
<i>Age of first child</i>	34+	23.8	28.9	62.7	25.4
	18–34	22.7	24.5	55.5	8.6
<i>Justifies divorce</i>	Never	13.9	17.8	66.1	24.1
	Occasionally	34.7	38.8	57.7	18.1
<i>Describes self as religious</i> <i>You say you are:</i> <i>Religious ritual important to marriage</i>	Yes	71.1	78.1	56.7	32.8
	Religious person	60.8	70.3	59.6	40.9
	Yes	67.9	78.1	59.3	46
<i>Factors contributing to a successful marriage:</i> <i>Same religious ideas</i> <i>Having children</i> <i>Fidelity</i> <i>Discussing problems</i>	Very important	21.7	27.3	65.1	29.2
	Very important	60.1	70.2	60.3	43.8
	Very important	83.7	89.7	55.3	34.7
	Very important	72.2	76.4	54.5	19.4
<i>Justifies abortion</i>	No	27.4	34.2	64.5	32.6
<i>Justifies women who want children outside stable relationship</i>	Disapprove	32.3	41	65.3	39.2
<i>A woman must have children to be fulfilled</i>	Yes	47.5	57.3	62.3	41.7
<i>A housewife can be as fulfilled as a woman who works outside the home</i>	Totally agree	13.9	15.9	59	12.3
<i>Current happiness level</i>	Very happy	54.1	56.9	54.3	11.9
<i>Marriage or stable relationship essential to happiness</i>	Definitely agree	22.7	30.1	68.3	37.4