

report on the
**Evolution of the
FAMILY**
in **EUROPE**
2007



Institute
for family
Policies



www.ipfe.org

INTRODUCTION

One year ago, the Institute for Family Policies (IPF) presented its first report on the evolution of the family in Europe to the European Parliament. Since then, two new countries have joined the European Union and both indicators and family policies have undergone changes. In view of this, we present a new and updated report on the “Evolution of the Family in Europe 2007” drawn up by a multi-disciplinary team of experts in the field, which sets out and analyses the most significant indicators relating to the family, based on information provided by various international institutions.

As a result of this analysis, the Institute for Family Policies (IPF) proposes a set of social, economic and cultural measures, among others, that it considers vital for the gradual implementation in European policy of a genuinely “family-oriented” approach.

INTRODUCTION

The social, economic and demographic crises of recent decades have emphasised the role of the family unit as a highly effective cushion against problems such as unemployment, illness, housing, drug addiction and social exclusion. Nowadays the family is seen as a principal support element within society, representing far more than merely a legal, social and economic entity, as above all, the family represents a community built on love and support.

In order to help families fulfil their unreplaceable task it is essential that the different institutions and organisations support them, as well as the Member States, the local authorities and even public services and businesses, according to the recent recommendations of the European Economic and Social Committee.

Lola Velarde
President of the European Network
Institute for Family Policies (IPF)
May 2007

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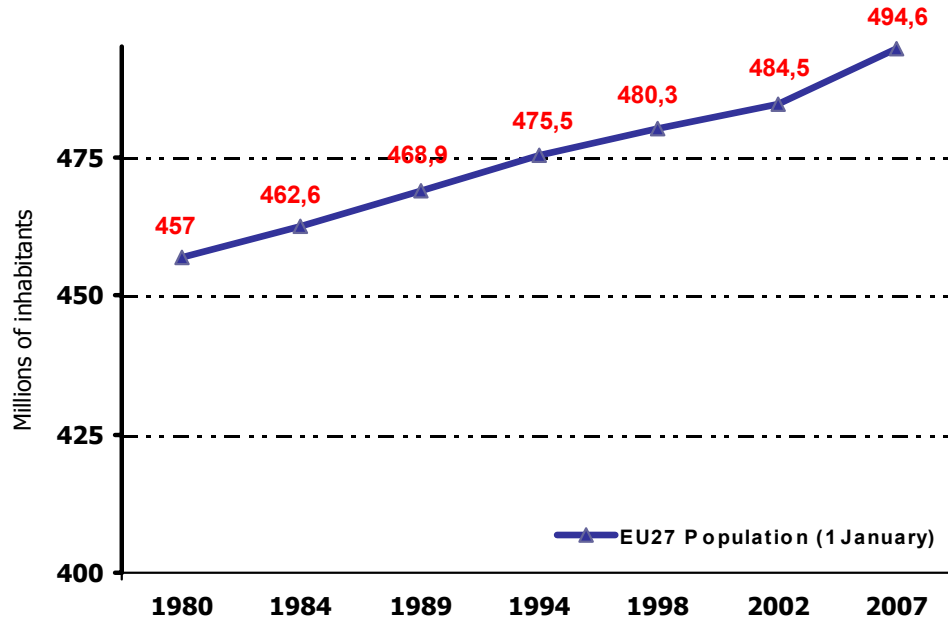
01. POPULATION growth
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01. Population Growth



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Slow growth of the European population...



Source: drawn from EUROSTAT data

Over 27 years (1980-2007), the population of the EU27 has increased by over 37.6 million, a growth of 8.2%.

Over 13 years (1994-2007), the population of the EU27 has increased by 19.1 million, a growth of 4%.

...although slightly faster over the last five years...

Over the last 5 years (2002- 2007), the population has increased by 10.1 million, a growth of 2.1%

...and the population of the EU27 now totals almost 500 million (494.6) inhabitants



... but very unequally distributed...

Populations of countries in the enlarged EU have decreased by 1.2 million compared to 1996 levels...

With the exception of Cyprus and Malta, the populations of the remaining EU enlargement countries have either remained static (Slovenia and Slovakia) or have decreased (Latvia, Lithuania, Czech Republic, Poland, Hungary and Estonia, and also Romania and Bulgaria).

...with 103.4 million inhabitants (2006), one fifth of the EU27

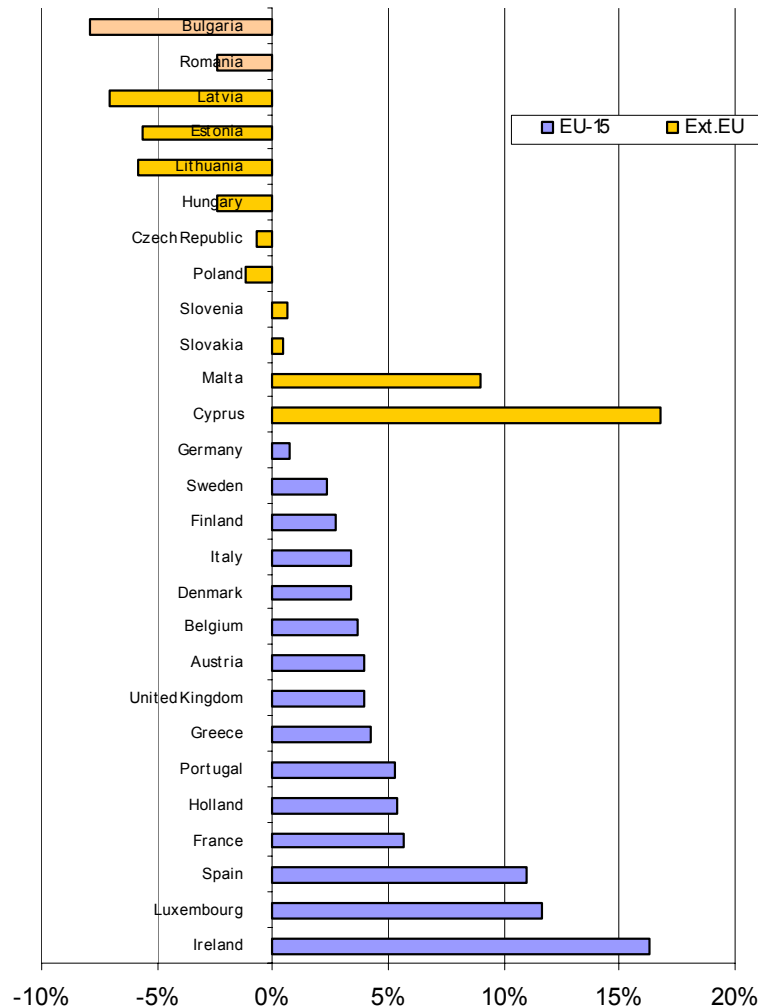
The population of Romania has decreased by 2.36% and Bulgaria's by 7.94%

By contrast, the populations of the EU15 are increasing, although also unequally

Ireland (16.3% growth), Luxembourg (11.6%) and Spain (11.0%) are the countries with the greatest growth

Germany, with growth of only 0.8%, Sweden (2.4%) and Finland (2.7%) are the EU15 countries with lowest growth

Population Growth 1996-2006 (%)



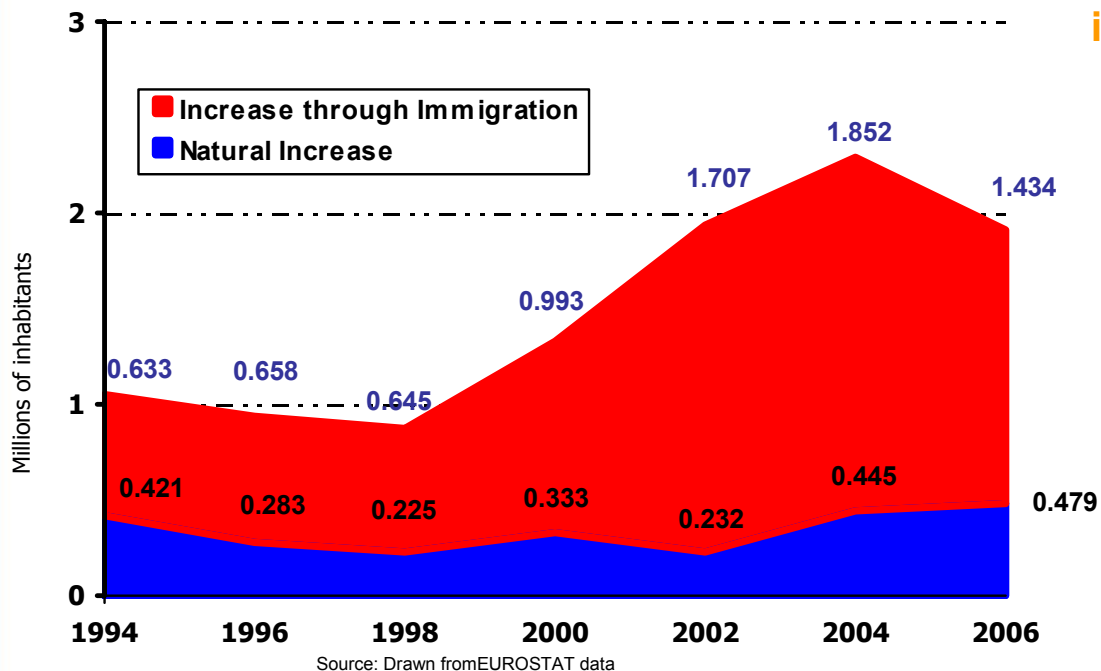
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Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data



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...and basically due to immigration...



75% of population growth in 2006 is the result of immigration...

... And 80% of population growth between 1994 – 2006 has been the result of immigration...

Of the increase by 19 million in the EU27 between 1994-2006, almost 15 million is the result of immigration (79%)...

This disproportion has increased over recent years. Between 2000 and 2006, 83% of population growth (10.9 million) was the result of immigration.

... EU immigration is now 50% greater than the figures for the USA (but comparable in terms of % of population)

... And not of Natural Increase

Stagnation of Natural Increase...

Natural Increase has remained static over recent years (around only 310,000 persons/year),

... Significantly lower than USA figures

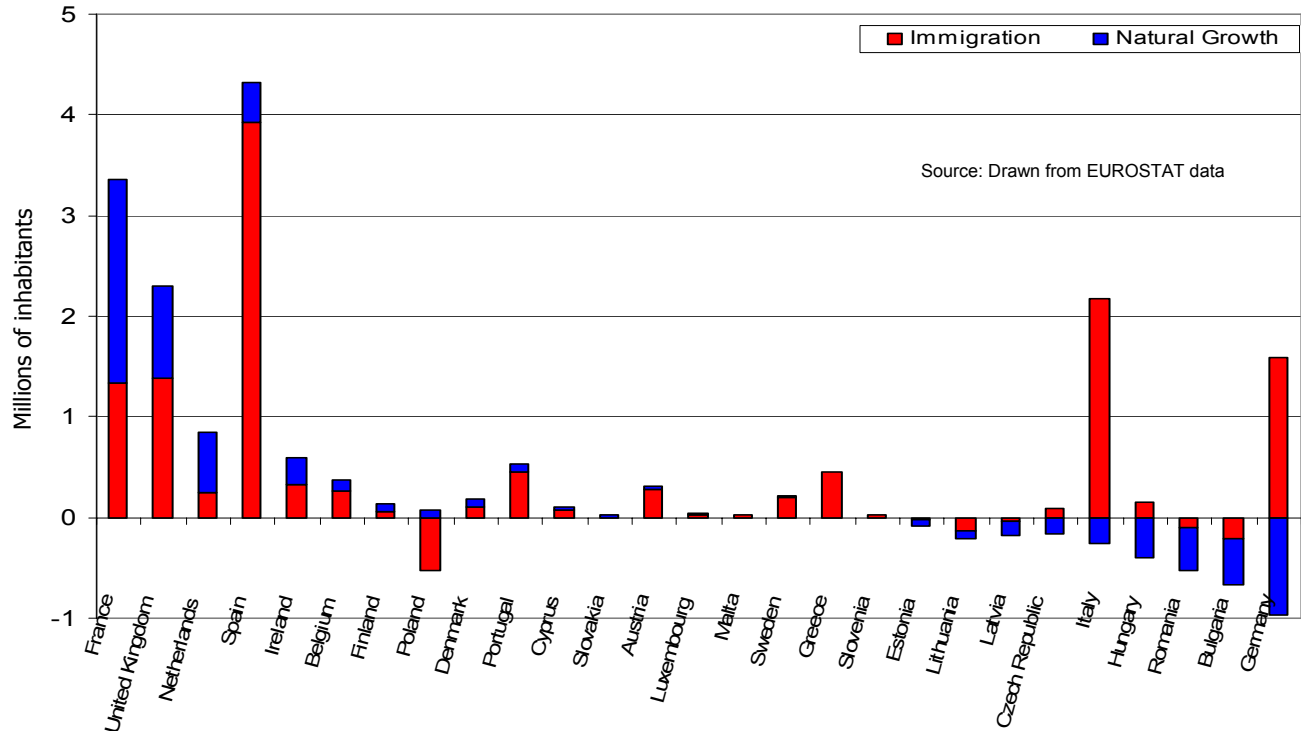
Natural Increase in the USA (% population) is 12 times greater than in the EU.



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...And has become the basis of population growth in almost all European countries

Growth in period by origin (1996-2006)



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data

Only France and Holland have natural increase rates higher than their immigration rates.

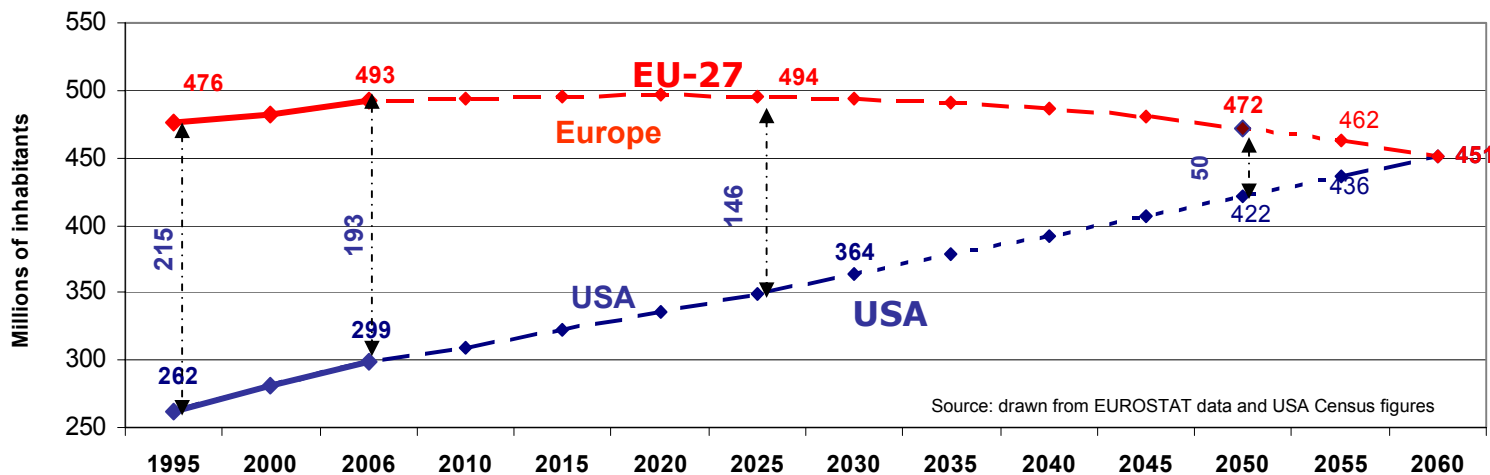
Finland, Slovakia and Lithuania have similar rates.

Germany and Italy offset their natural decrease figures with immigration
 The populations of Hungary, Czech Republic and Latvia are decreasing, with low immigration rates.
 Romania and Bulgaria with emigration
 The populations of Poland and Lithuania are decreasing through emigration
 Rates of immigration in Spain are 10 times higher than the country's natural increase rate



... Which causes concern for future population growth:

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... The population of Europe will become static and then start to decline...

According to population prediction figures, they will reach a peak in 2025 and then begin to decline.

... Whilst the USA will continue to grow

The USA has grown 4 times more than the EU since 1994.

The entry of Romania and Bulgaria to the EU will not solve the problem of population decrease, but rather will aggravate it...

Romania's population will decrease from 21.7 million in 2005 to 17.1 in 2050

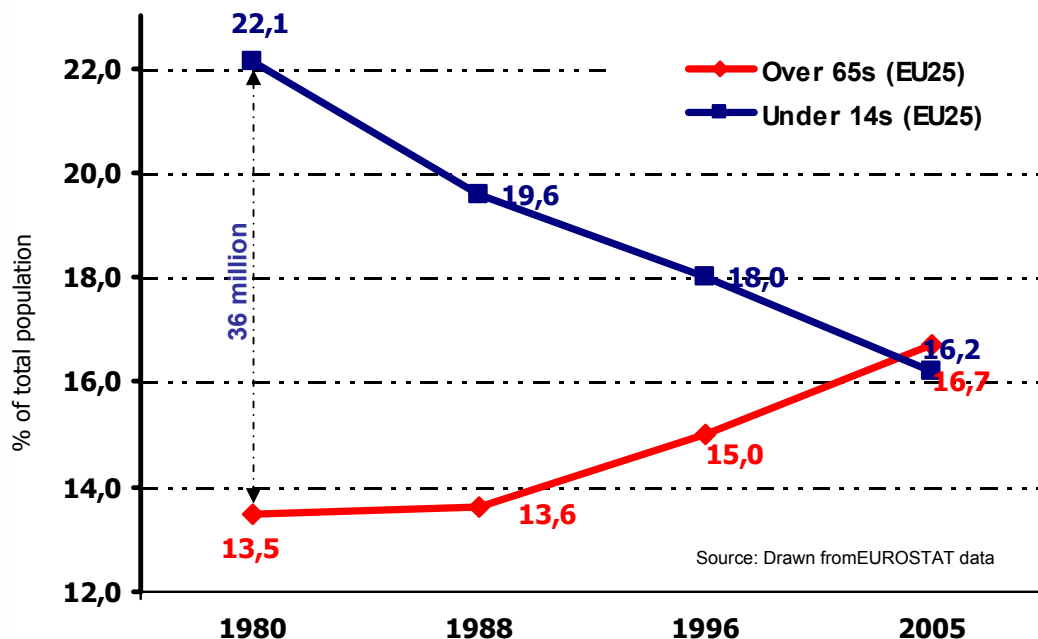
Bulgaria's population will decrease from 7.7 million in 2005 to 5.1 in 2050

... And figures will meet by 2060

At this rate, by 2060 the USA and the EU will have the same population figures (some 454 million inhabitants).



The European population has aged...



The young population in Bulgaria is lower in percentage terms (13.8%) than its over-65s population (17.1%).

By contrast, Romania still has a larger young population (15.9%) than over-65s population (14.7%)

There are already more elderly individuals than children...

Whilst in 1980 there were 36 million more children than elderly individuals, by 2004 there were more elderly individuals than under 14s

... due to a reduction in the young population by over 23 million (over 25 years)

- Representing a reduction of 21%. 10% over the last 10 years.
- The under-14 population now only represents 16.2% of the population (80 million in the EU27).

...and increase of the elderly population by over 18 million (over 25 years)

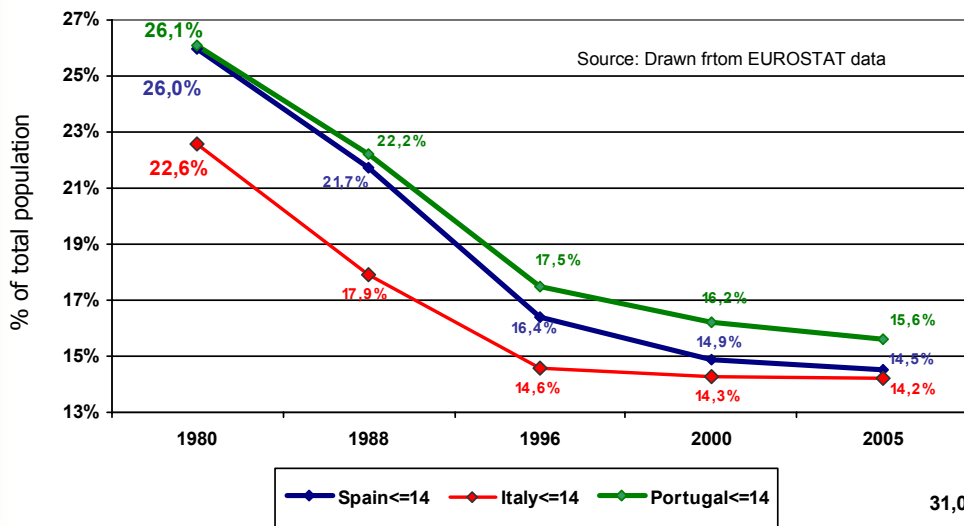
Representing an increase of 29%. 15% over the last ten years.

The 81.7 million over-65s now account for one sixth of the population (16.6 %).

- The over-80s have increased by 84% from 10.2 to 18.8 million (one out of every 25 Community members).



Italy has the fewest young people...1 out of every 7 Italians (14.2%)



...but it is the young population of Spain that has experienced the sharpest decrease over this period, 44% (1980-2005)

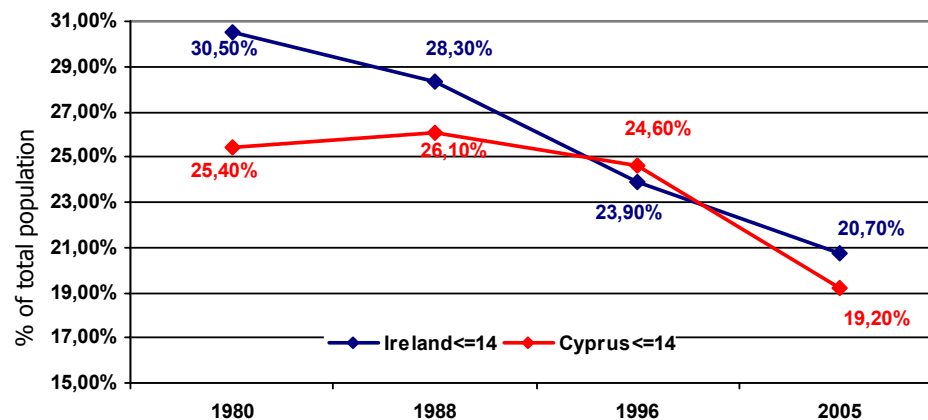
...going from 26% in 1980 to 16.4% in 2005,

Spain (44% decrease), Portugal (40%), and Italy (37%) are the countries where the number of young people (under 14) has decreased most over this period...

And Ireland has the most...1 out of every 5 (20.7%)

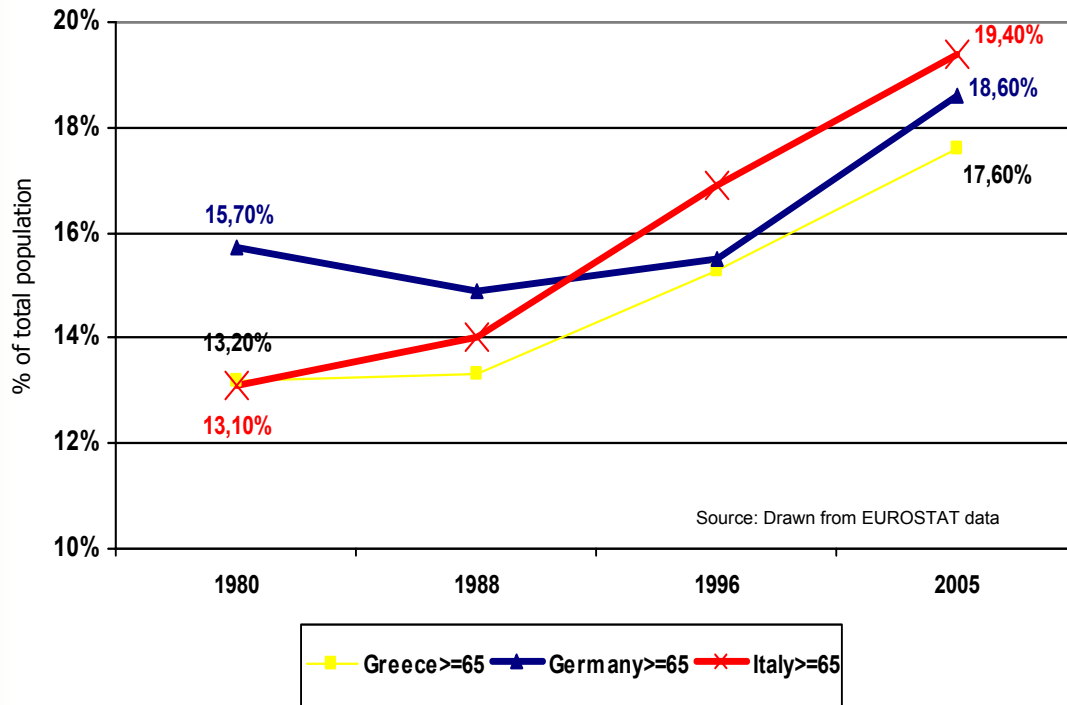
Ireland and Cyprus are the EU27 countries with the highest percentage of young people in their population, over 20% and significantly above the European average...

...And Denmark is the country which has experienced the lowest decrease in the young population (10%)



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Italy is also the country with the highest proportion of elderly inhabitants... ... One out of every 5 Italians is over 65



...Equivalent to almost 20% of the population (19.2%)

Italy, Germany and Greece are the countries with the largest elderly populations.

By 2005, Germany's over-65 population had reached 18.6% of total population.

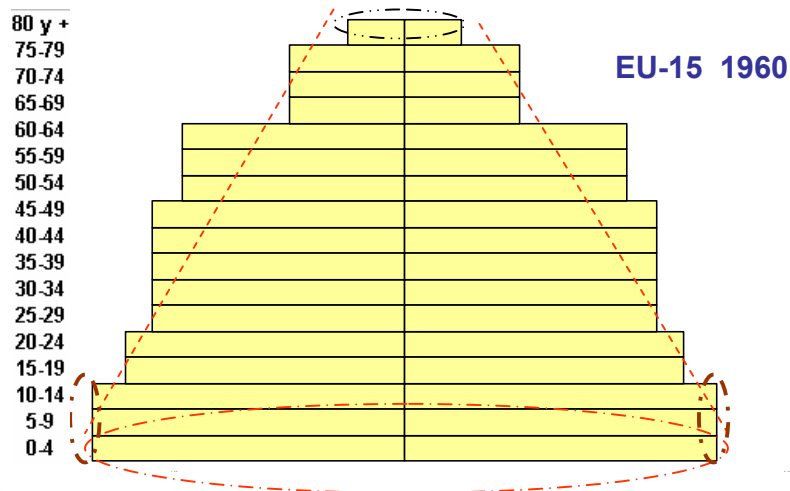
...but it is the elderly population in Spain which has increased the most over this period, by 56% (1980-2005), from 10.8% in 1980 to 16.8% in 2005,

...And although Germany occupies second position in countries with the largest elderly population, the growth of the sector over this period has been small, but more rapid in recent times.

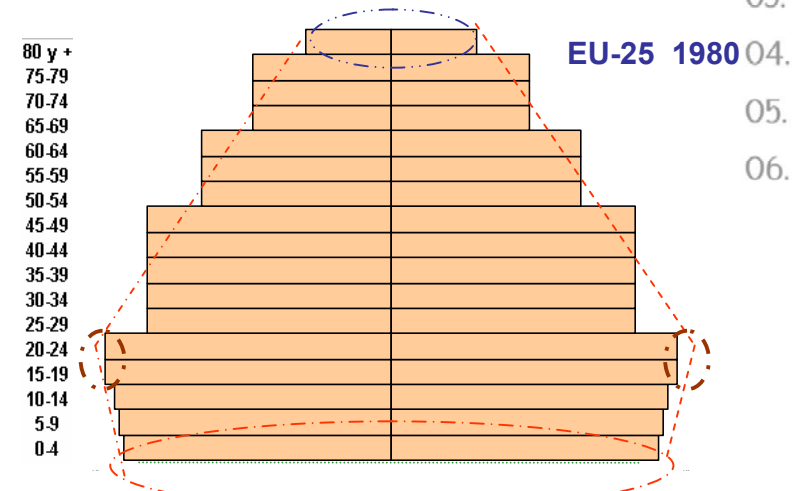


... with the age pyramid becoming an “age rhombus”

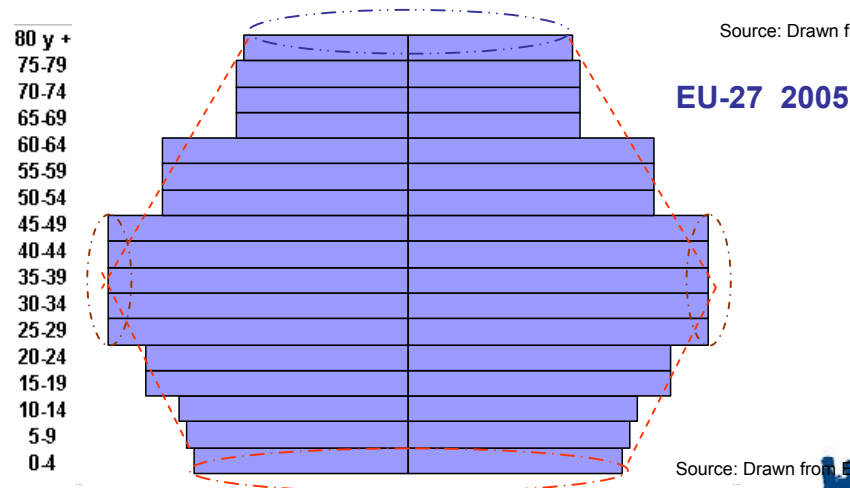
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Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data



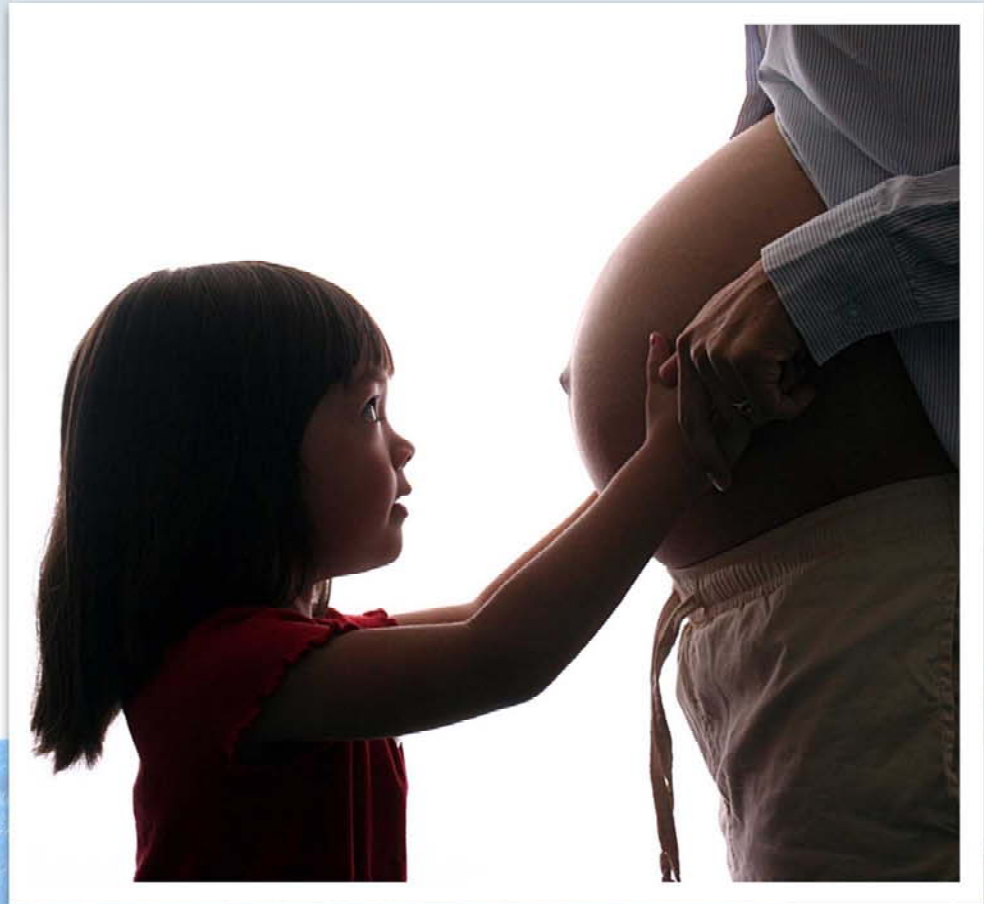
Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data

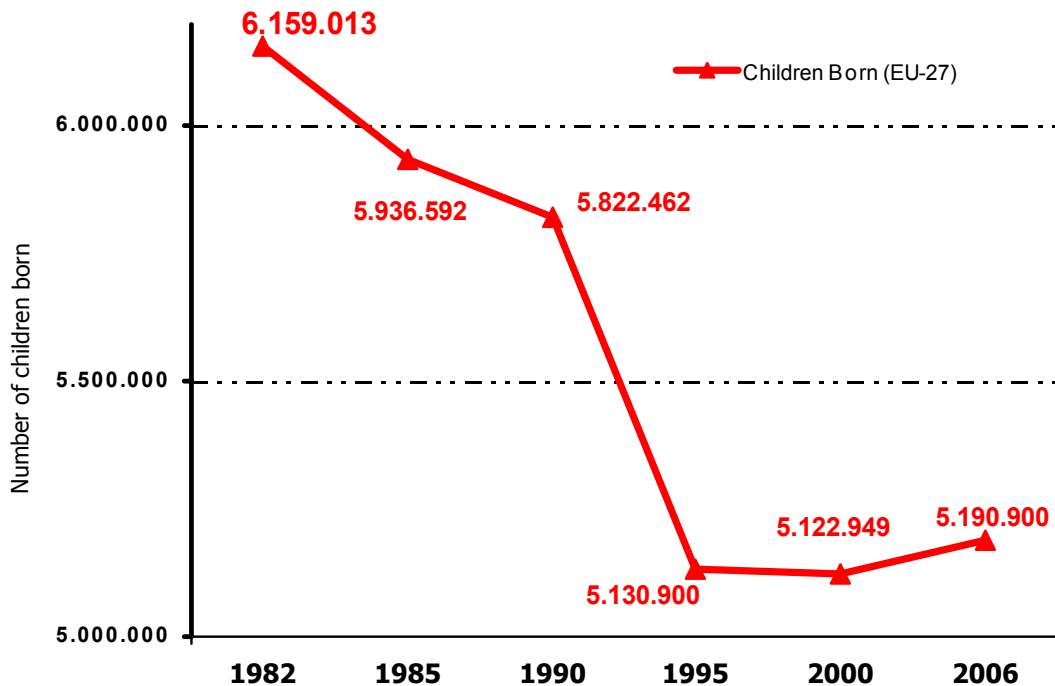


02. Evolution of BIRTH RATES



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Fewer children are born... The figure barely reaching 5.1 million births (2006)...



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data

In 2006, there were 1 million fewer births (1,024,352) in the EU27 than in 1982, representing a decrease of 16.6%.

Between 1990 and 1995 there was a dramatic decrease in the number of children born, the figure falling by 691,562 in the EU27

And birth rate has remained static over the last 11 years (1995-2006).

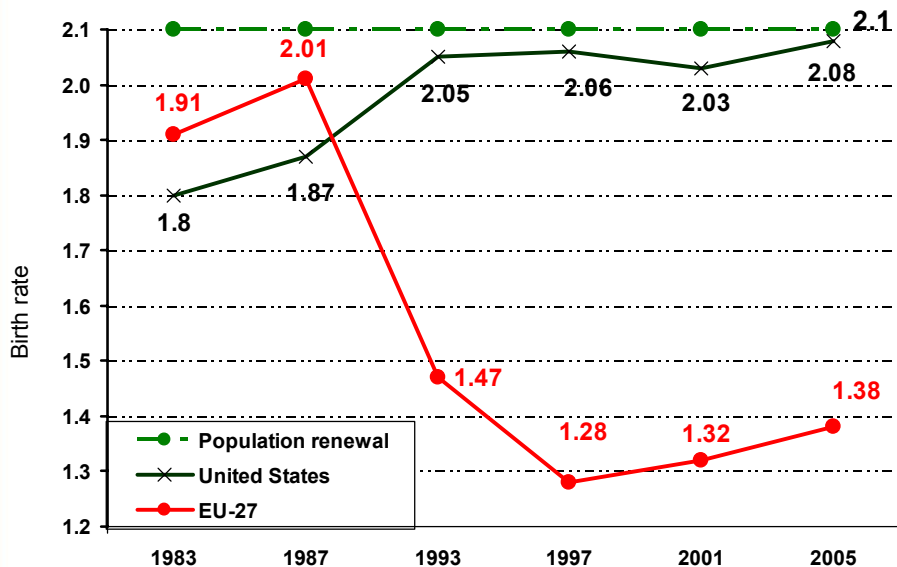
Over the last year (2005-2006), the birth rate has increased by only 1.1%

...but there is a population increase

Over this period population increased by 32 million



...Which indicates a very low birth rate in EU27 (1.38) ...



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT data and other sources

...And significantly lower than European citizens' expectations (2.3 children)

...a long way off the level required for population renewal...

In 2005 the birth rate was 1.38 / female (EU27), which is far below the Population Renewal Level (2.1 children/female).

...and also considerably lower than the USA rate (2.09 in 2006), which is almost at the level of population renewal...

...With some countries recovering from the birth rate crisis

Ireland (1.88) and France (1.94) are the EU27 countries with the highest birth rate, followed by Finland (1.80), Denmark (1.80), Sweden (1.77) and the United Kingdom (1.80).

...with the birth rates in some European countries at a critical level.

Greece (1.28), Spain (1.34) and Italy (1.34) are EU15 countries where birth rates are at a critical level.

None of the EU enlargement countries – except Cyprus – has a birth rate of over 1.3



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In Europe (EU-27) there is one abortion every 25 seconds...

... equal to more than one million two hundred thousand (1,235,517) abortions annually (2004)...

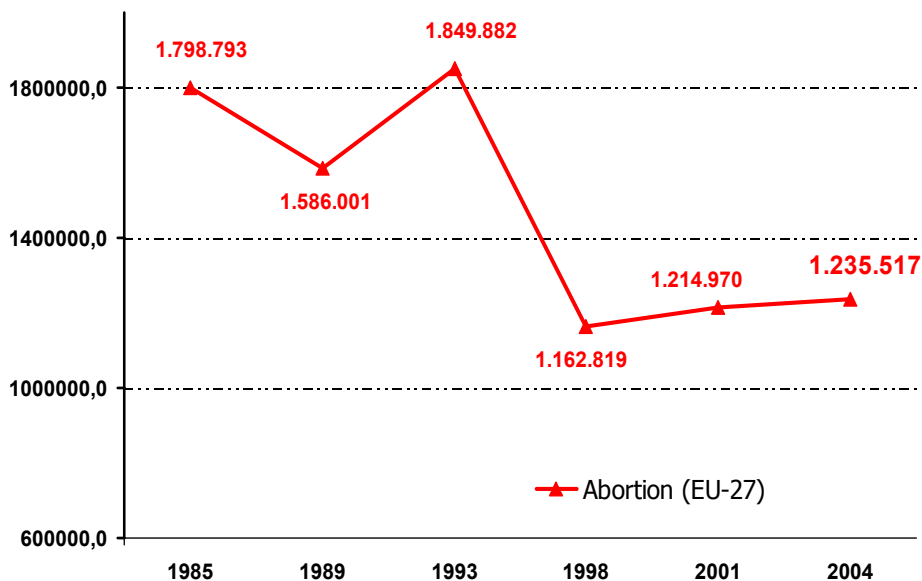
Each day in Europe (EU27), 3385 children are not born, a figure representing 141 abortions every hour.

Each day in Europe, three schools are closed due to insufficient numbers of children

So 1 out of every 5 pregnancies (19.4%) in Europe ends in termination

of 6,352,499 pregnancies in 2004, 1,235,517 were terminated, representing 19.44% of pregnancies.

France (210,669), United Kingdom (194,353), Italy (136,715), Germany (129,650), Romania (191,038) and Spain (84,985) are the six EU27 countries with the highest abortion rates, and represent 77% of total abortions in the EU27 in 2004.



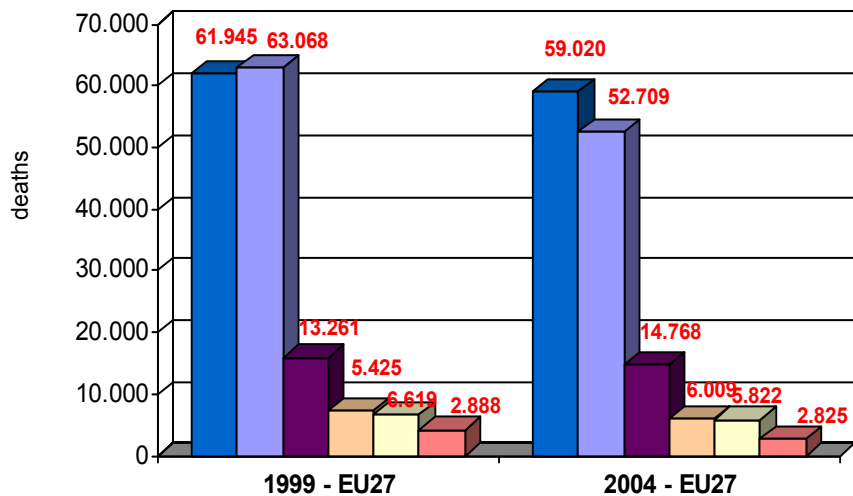
Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and UNECE data

Spain is the country with the highest increase in abortion rates over the last ten years **with a 75% increase**, followed by **Belgium with 50%** and **Holland with 45%**.

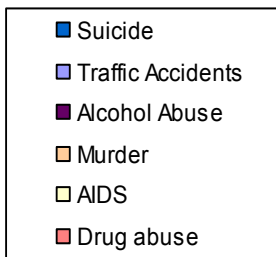


... Which means that abortion is the main cause of death in Europe ...

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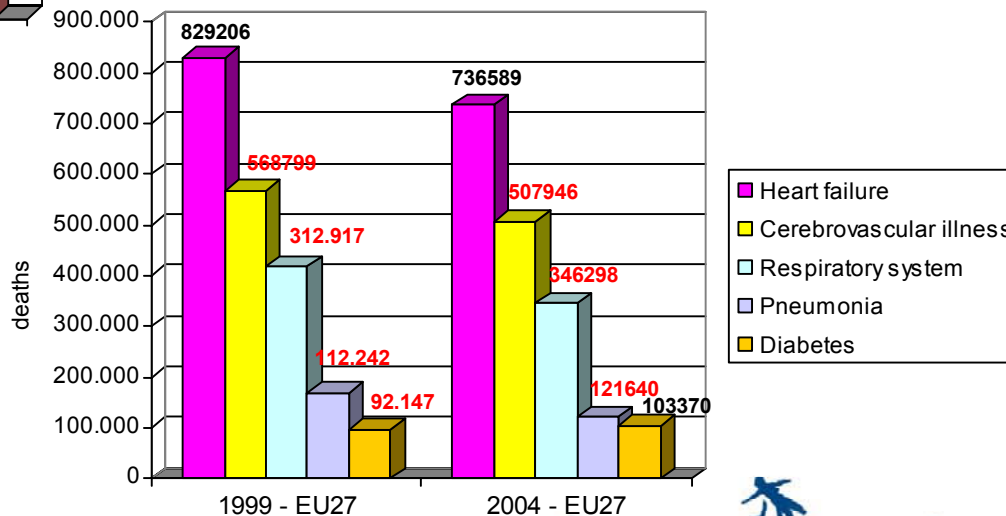


Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and WHO data



...Far exceeding other 'external' causes of death, such as suicide, traffic accidents, drug and alcohol abuse, AIDS, etc.

And also exceeding deaths through illness



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and WHO data

... And increasing the difference



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Europeans start having children later....

The average age at maternity has increased to almost 30 years...

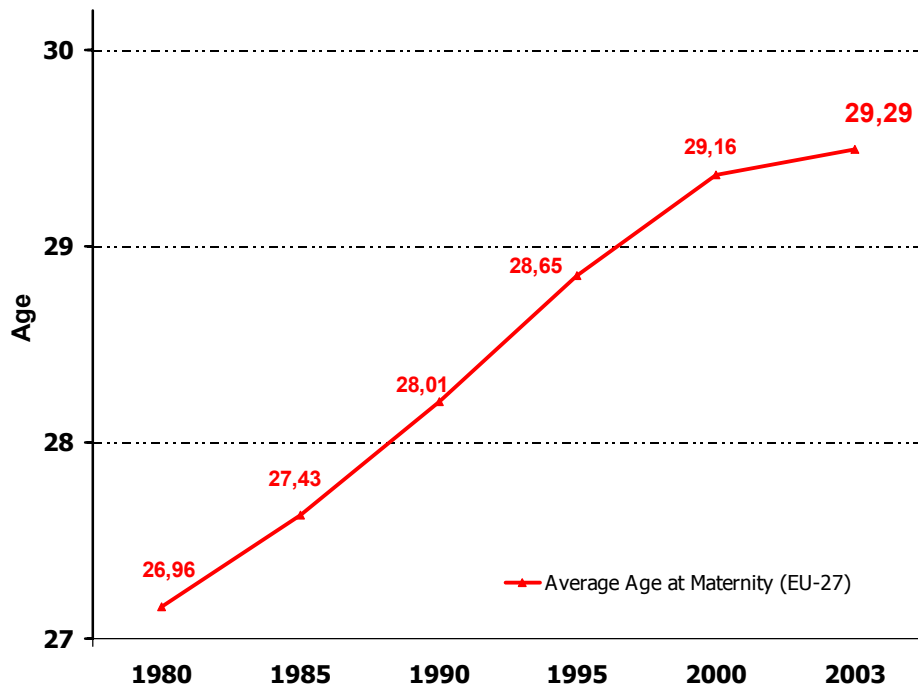
Age at maternity has increased by 2.4 years over the last 23 years.

...Spain being the country with the highest average age at maternity in Europe (30.84 years)

Spanish women have children latest (30.84 years), followed by the Irish (30.6), Dutch (30.4) and Danish (30.1 years)...

... And Lithuania being the country with the youngest average age at maternity (27.1 years)

By contrast, in EU enlargement countries it is Lithuania (27.1 years), Latvia (27.2), Slovakia (27.3) and Poland (27.9) where women have their first child at a younger age.



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and UNECE data

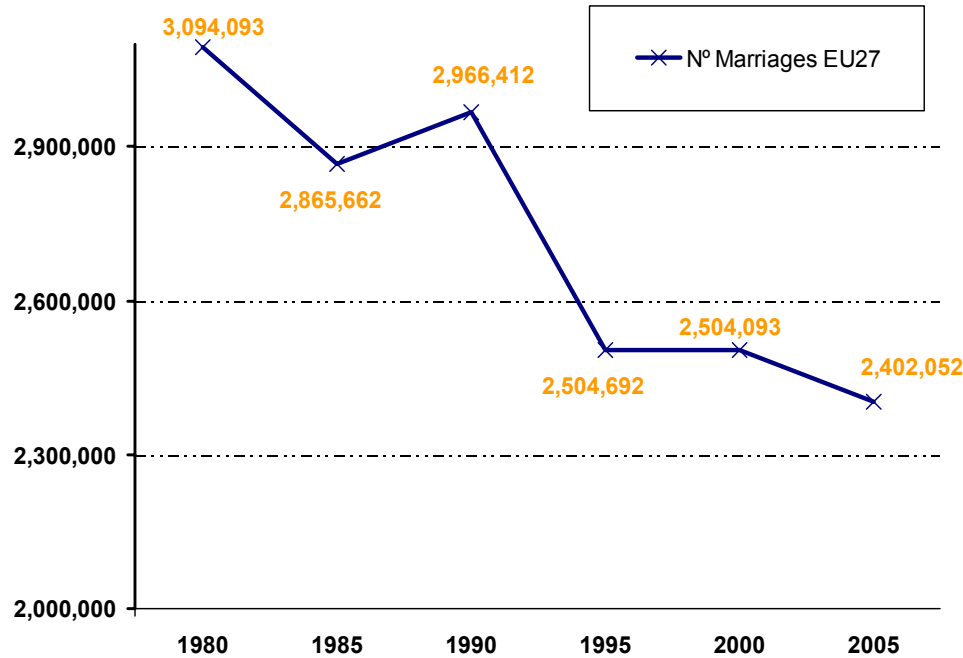


03. Evolution de les MARRIAGES



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There are fewer marriages...



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and UNECE data

...690,000 fewer marriages, i.e. a reduction of 22.3%...

Over 25 years (1980-2005), the number of marriages in the EU27 has decreased by more than 692,000, equivalent to 22.3%.

Dramatic fall in marriage rate

Falling from 6.75 in 1980 to 4.88 in 2005

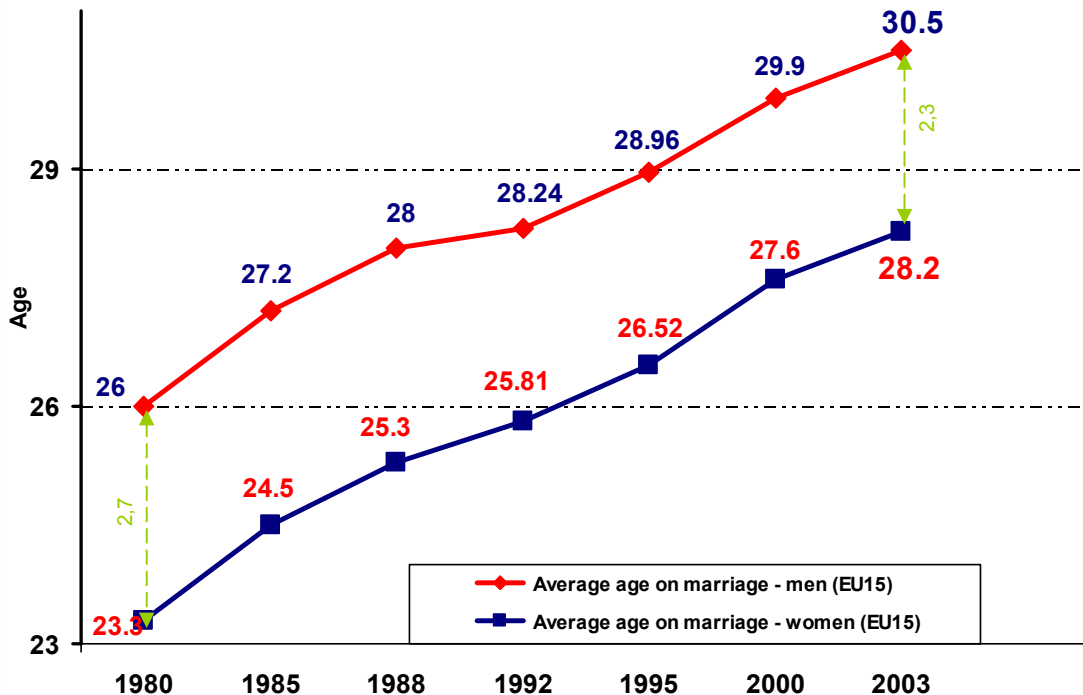
...In spite of a population increase of more than 33 million

...In spite of the fact that the EU27 population increased by 33.8 million over the same period (1980-2005)



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... And people marrying at a later age...



Source: drawn from EUROSTAT and UNECE data

In the space of a mere 23 years, the age at which Europeans have children has increased by almost 5 years (4.9 years for women and 4.5 years for men), over 30 years old for men and 28 years old for women

(EU-15) (2003)

Males: 30.5 years

Females: 28.2 years

EU-25 (2003)

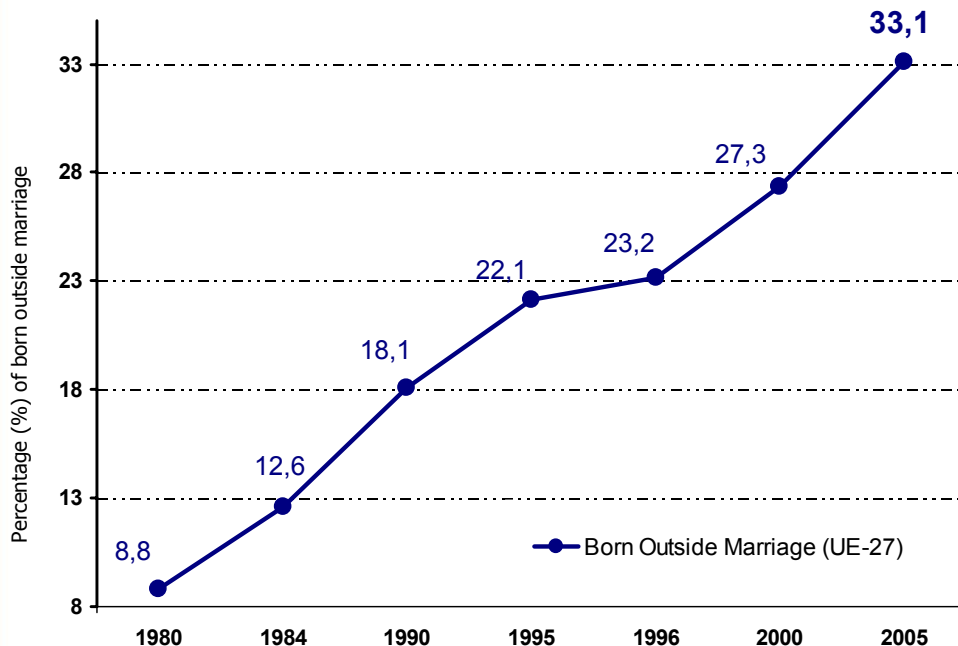
Males: 30 years

Females: 27.7 years



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Almost two million children are born outside marriage every year...



Source: drawn from EUROSTAT and UNECE data

One out of every three children (33.1% in EU27) is born outside marriage

This means that more than 1,893,000 children were born outside marriage in 2005 (EU27)

In some countries, half of all children are born outside marriage

Sweden (55.4%), Bulgaria (49.04%), Denmark (45.4%), France (45.2%) and United Kingdom (42.3%)

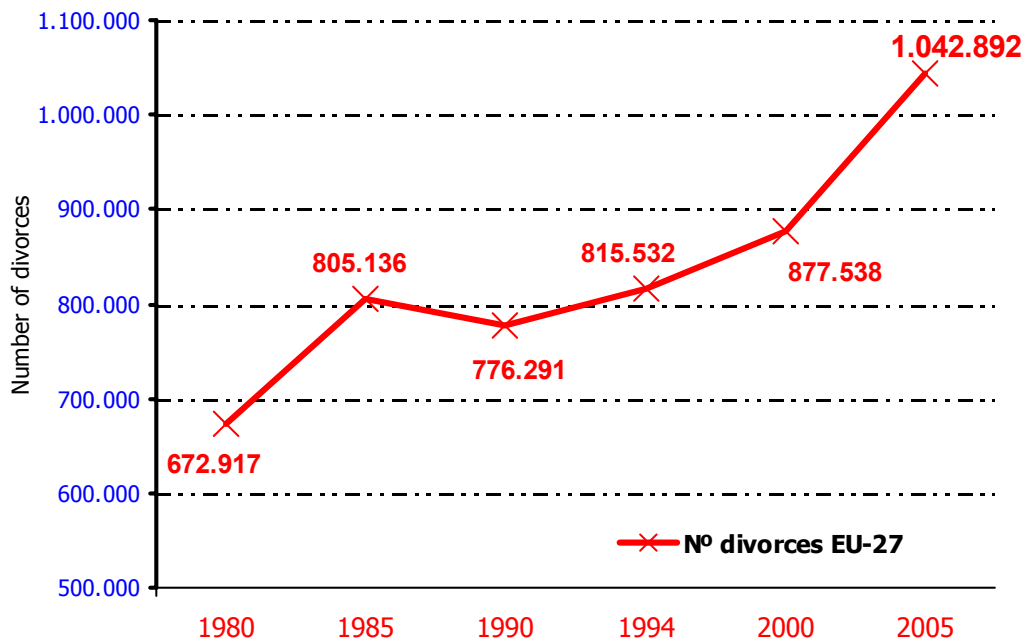
Greece (4.9%), Cyprus (3.3%), Italy (14.9%) and Switzerland (13.3%) are the countries with the lowest number of births outside marriage



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There are over one million divorces...

... equivalent to one marital breakdown every 30 seconds...



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, UNECE and national sources

Marital breakdown has increased by 369,365 in 25 years (1980-2005), a percentage increase of 55%.

Spain, with an increase of 183%, is the European country where marital breakdown has increased the most over the last ten years (1995-2005), followed by **Portugal (89%)** and **Italy (62%)**.

...and over 13.5 million marriages have ended over 15 years (EU27)

Over just 15 years (1990-2005) in Europe (EU27), over 13.5 million marriages have ended (13,753,000)...

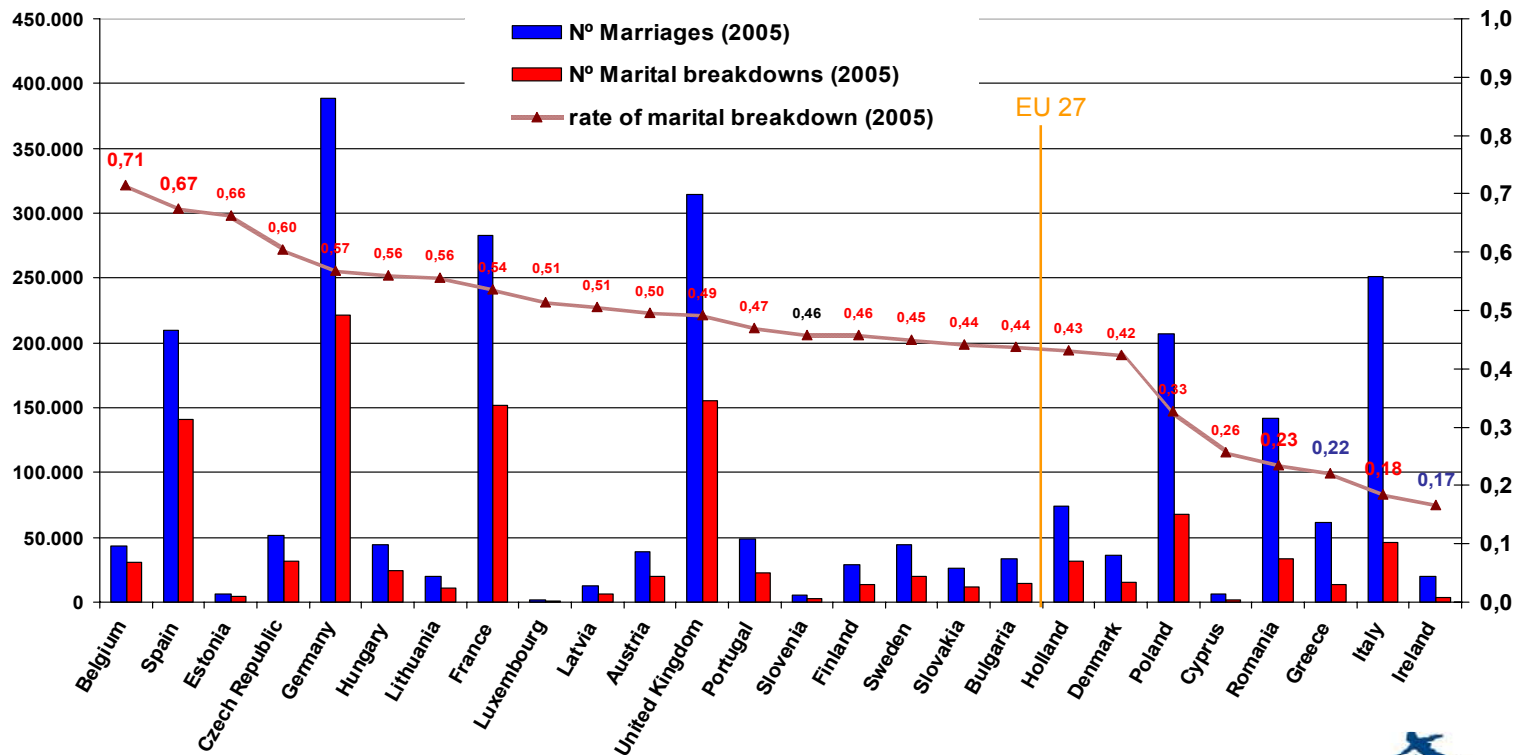
...affecting over 21 million children



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... Germany, United Kingdom, France and Spain are the countries with the highest number of marital breakdowns....

... But Belgium and Spain are the EU27 countries with the highest rate of marital breakdown...

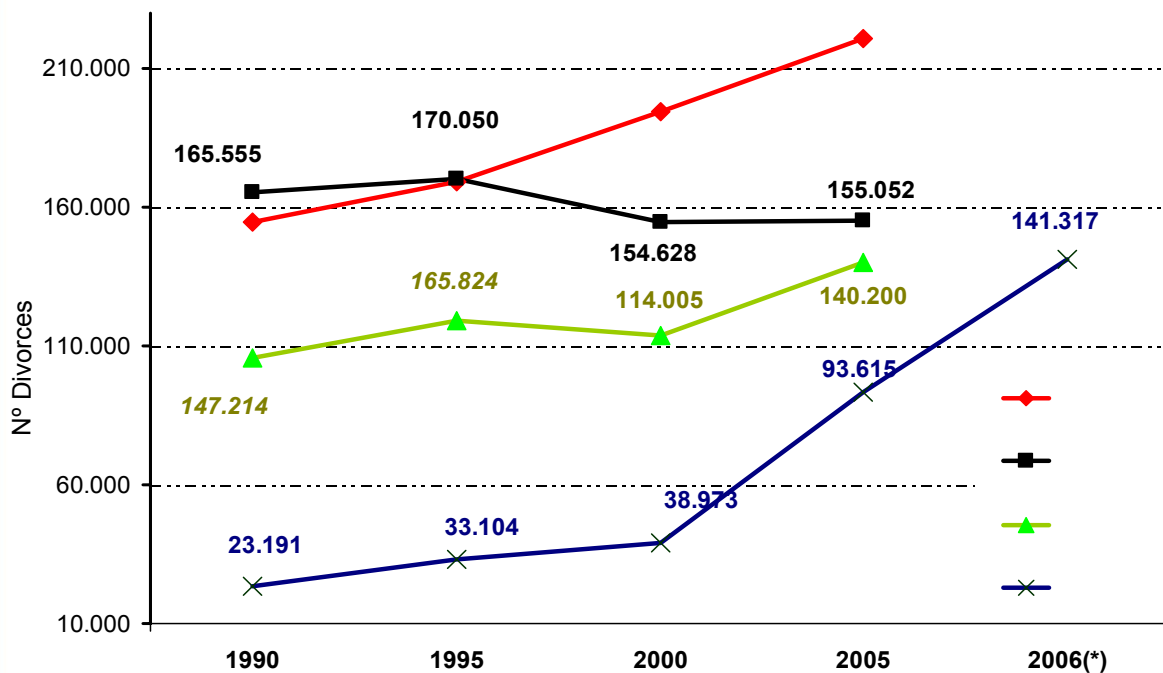


Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, NIS and national sources



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... Spain being the EU country with the greatest increase (326% over just 11 years)...



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and national sources

But it is Spain, and markedly so, which has seen the greatest growth in number of divorces over the last 11 years (1995-2006) (rate tripled (326%)...

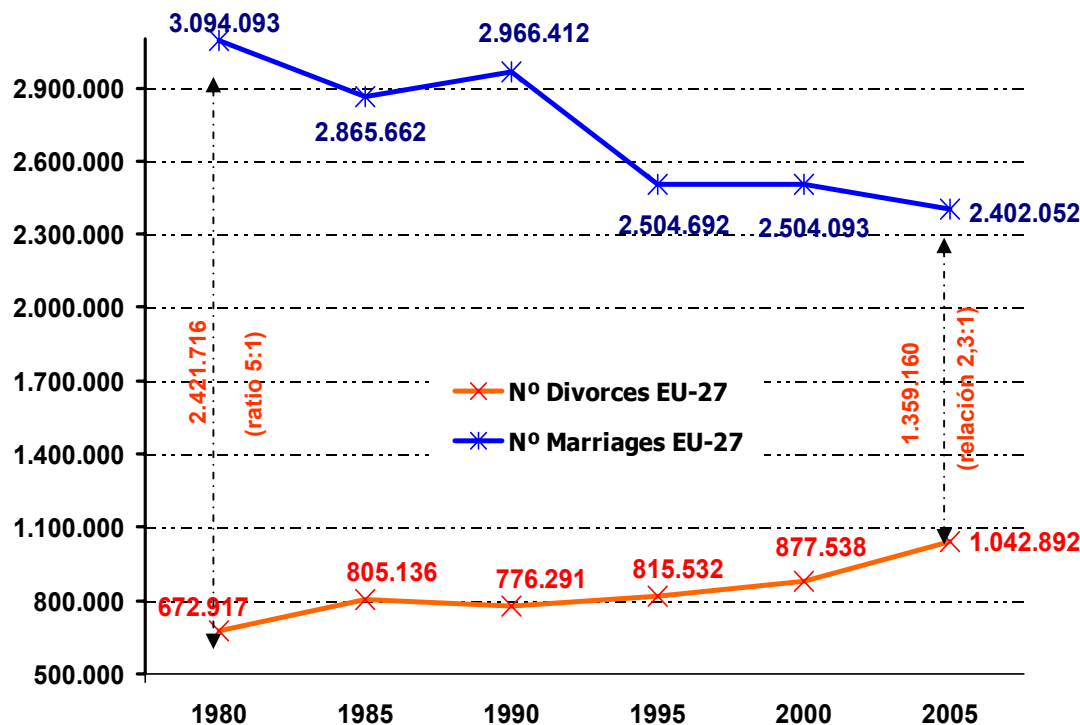
... and the increase has been spectacular over the last 6 years (226%)

... And by 2006 Spain was the country with the second highest number of divorces in Europe, following Germany.



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For every two marriages entered into, there is one divorce



The ratio of marriage to divorce has halved...

In 1980, the difference between marriages entered into and divorces was 2,421,716
 In 2005, the difference was only 1,359,000

The ratio has gone from almost 5:1 in 1980 (for every 4.6 marriages there was 1 divorce) ... to a ratio of 2:1 in 2005 (for every 2.3 marriages there is 1 divorce).

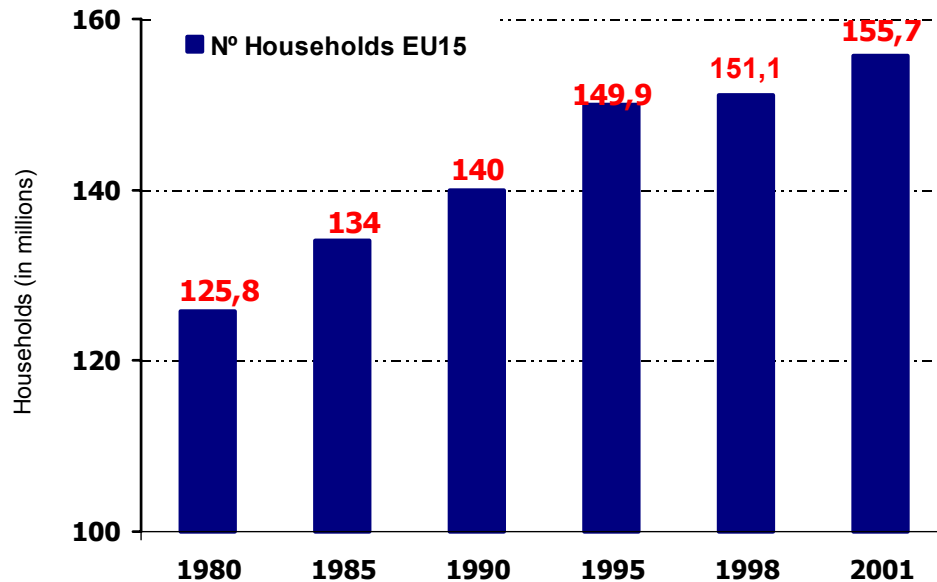
Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, UNECE and national data



04. Evolution of HOUSEHOLDS



Increase in number of households in Europe



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, European Environment Agency and national data

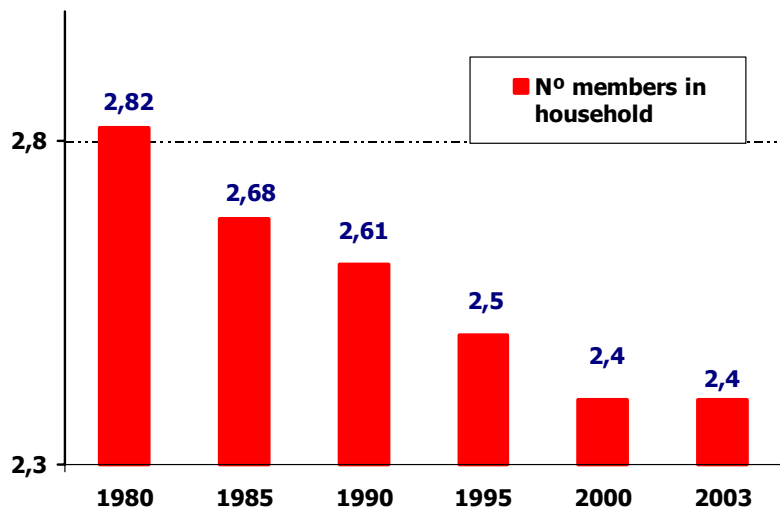
Growth in number of households in Europe...

Over barely 21 years (1980-2001), there has been an increase of almost 30 million in the number of households (29.9 million), equivalent to a 23.8% increase



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But the size of European households is decreasing...



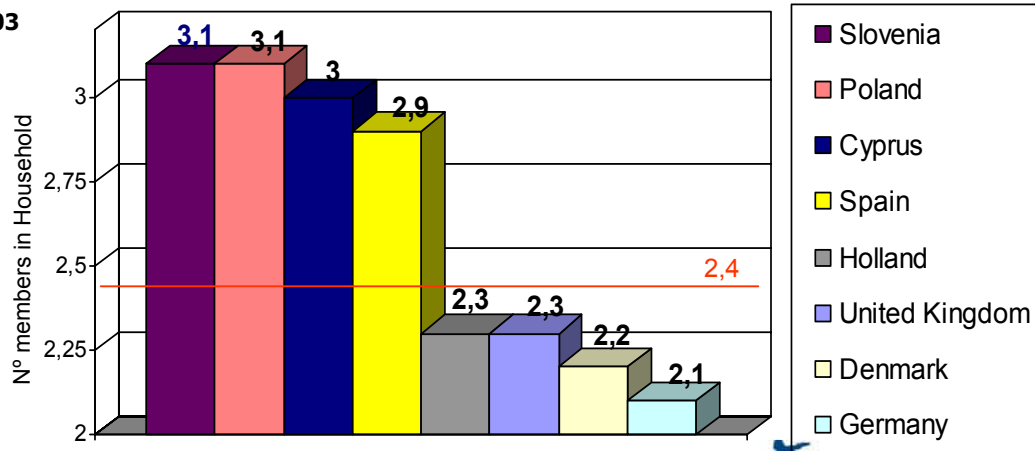
Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, European Environment Agency and national data

...since the number of members per household is declining...

In barely 23 years (1980-2003), the average size of the household has decreased from almost 3 (2.82) to 2.4 members

Slovenia (3.1), Poland (3.1), Cyprus (3) and Spain (2.9) are the countries with the greatest number of members per household
 United Kingdom (2.3), Finland (2.2),

Denmark (2.2) and Germany (2.1) are the countries with the lowest number of members per household



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT, European Environment Agency and national data



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The difficulties faced by families in Europe have become more acute over recent years



05. Evolution of FAMILY POLICIES



Despite the fact that the European Union is aware of the problems faced by the families...

Article 33 of the Charter of Fundamental Rights legitimises the European Union's involvement in the debate on family policy...

... even if it is clear that, for reasons of efficiency and subsidiarity, the practical definition and implementation of policies must lie with the Member States, the local authorities and even public services and businesses.

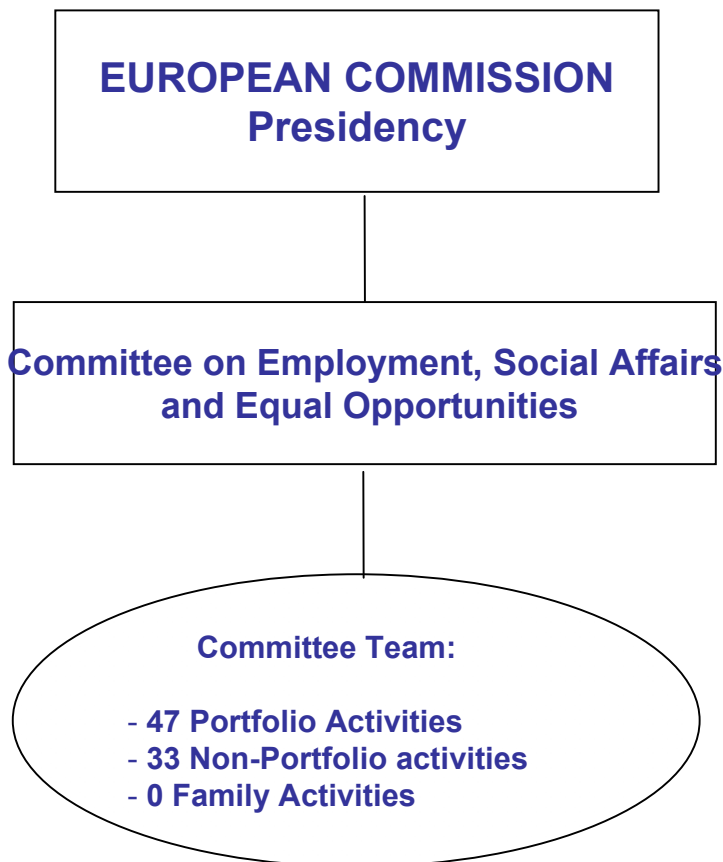
The Economic and Social Committee recommends the European Union ...

... encourage the Member States to incorporate the family dimension in its economic and social policies (Opinion CESE 423/2007).



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However, the European Commission ...



... Does not have a Committee for Family Policies

Although there are 5 Vice-presidencies and 21 Committees within the European Commission, none of them covers the Family...

... Family matters being dealt with by the Committee on Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities...



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The European Commission nor does it have a Family Observatory...

In 1989 the Observatory on National Family Policies was created.

In 1999 it was renamed the European Observatory on Family Matters. Later it became the European Observatory on the Social Situation, Demography and Family,

In 2004 it closed, and was replaced by the Observatory on Demography and the Social Situation

...Or a Green Paper on the Family...

Of the 95 Green Papers written since 1984, none has been on the Family.



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Differing levels of family matters awareness by Governments

Some European countries have begun to recognise the Family as an institution...



Department of Social and Family Affairs

An Roinn Gnóthaí Sóisialacha agus Teaghlaigh

**Department of Social and Family Affairs
Ireland**



Bundesministerium für Familie, Senioren, Frauen und Jugend

**Department of Family, Elderly, Women's and Youth Affairs
Germany**



**Department of Health, the Family and Youth
Austria**



REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA

**Department of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
Slovenia**



**Ministry of Labour, Family and Equality of Opportunity
Romania**



**LE GOUVERNEMENT
du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg**

**Department of the Family and Social Cohesion
Luxembourg**



**Department of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
Slovakia**



**Ministry of Family Policy
Italy**



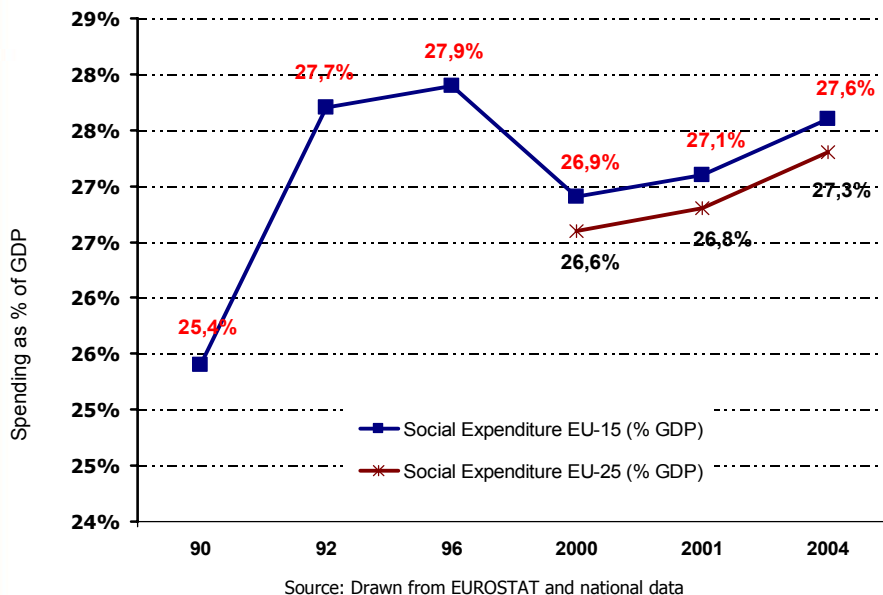
**Ministry for the Family and Social Cohesion
Malta**

... But others give far less significance to the Family



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Of every 13 euros Europe sets aside for Social Expenditure, only 1 euro is set aside for the Family

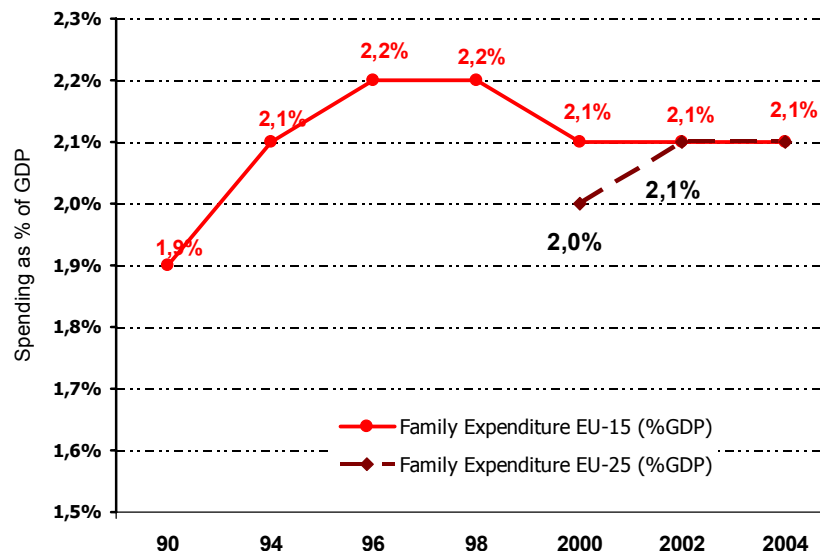


...But by contrast only spends 2.1% of GDP on the Family

...which represents a mere 7.5% of Social Expenditure (2004)

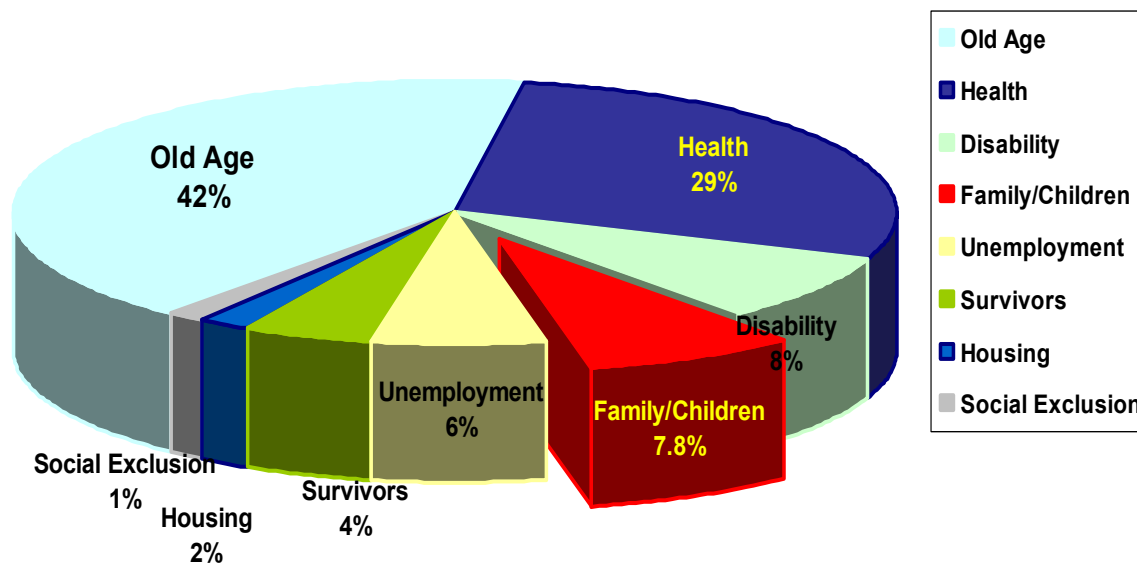
Europe's average spending on Social Expenditure is 27% of GDP... With significant differences between countries:

Sweden sets aside 33% of GDP, more than double that of Estonia and Latvia which set aside only around 13% of GDP for Social Expenditure:



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Of every 13 euros Europe sets aside for Social Expenditure, only 1 euro is set aside for the Family (and less, proportionally)



Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and national data. (2004 figures)

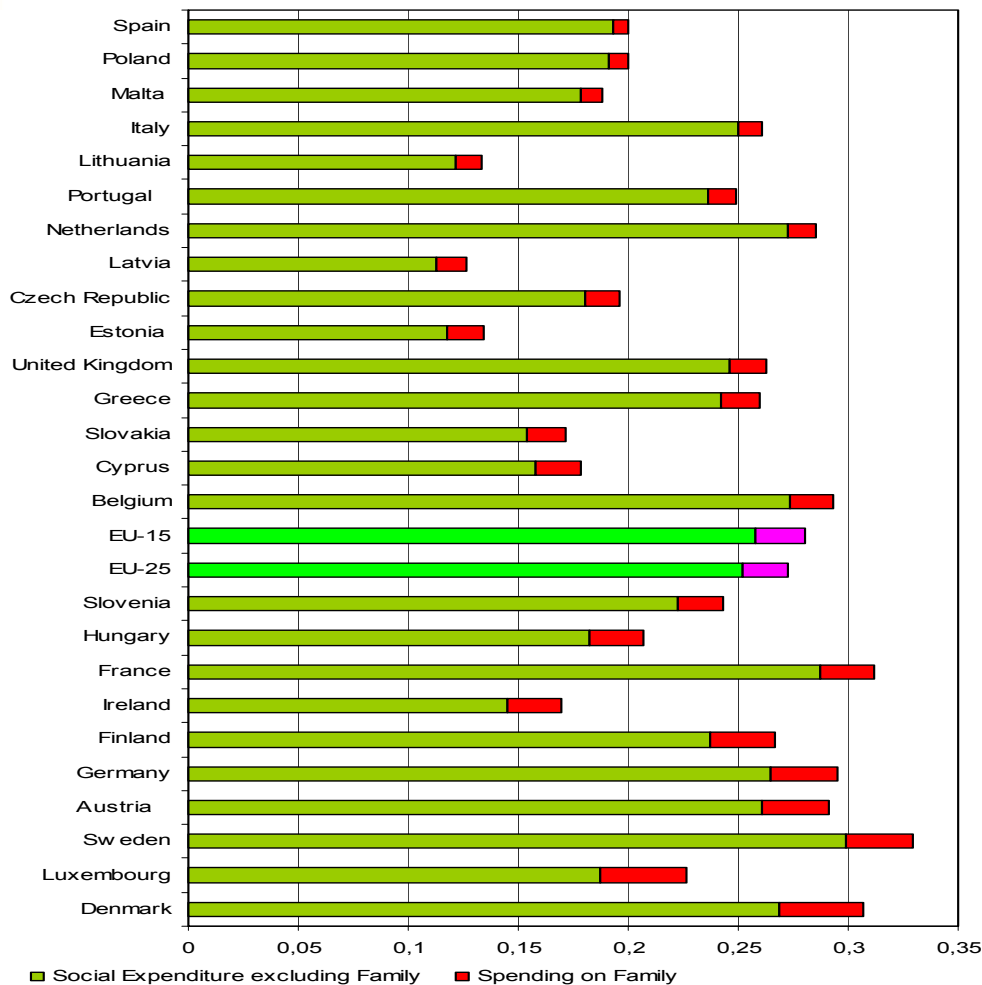
Whilst spending on other areas such as Old Age and Health continues to increase...

The Family is still not, therefore, considered a priority



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...and furthermore with huge differences between countries...



... since the divergence is more than double in spending on the Family than on other areas of Social Expenditure

Average Social Expenditure in the EU (excluding Family) is 25.2%, varying between 12.3% in Estonia and 29.3% in Sweden

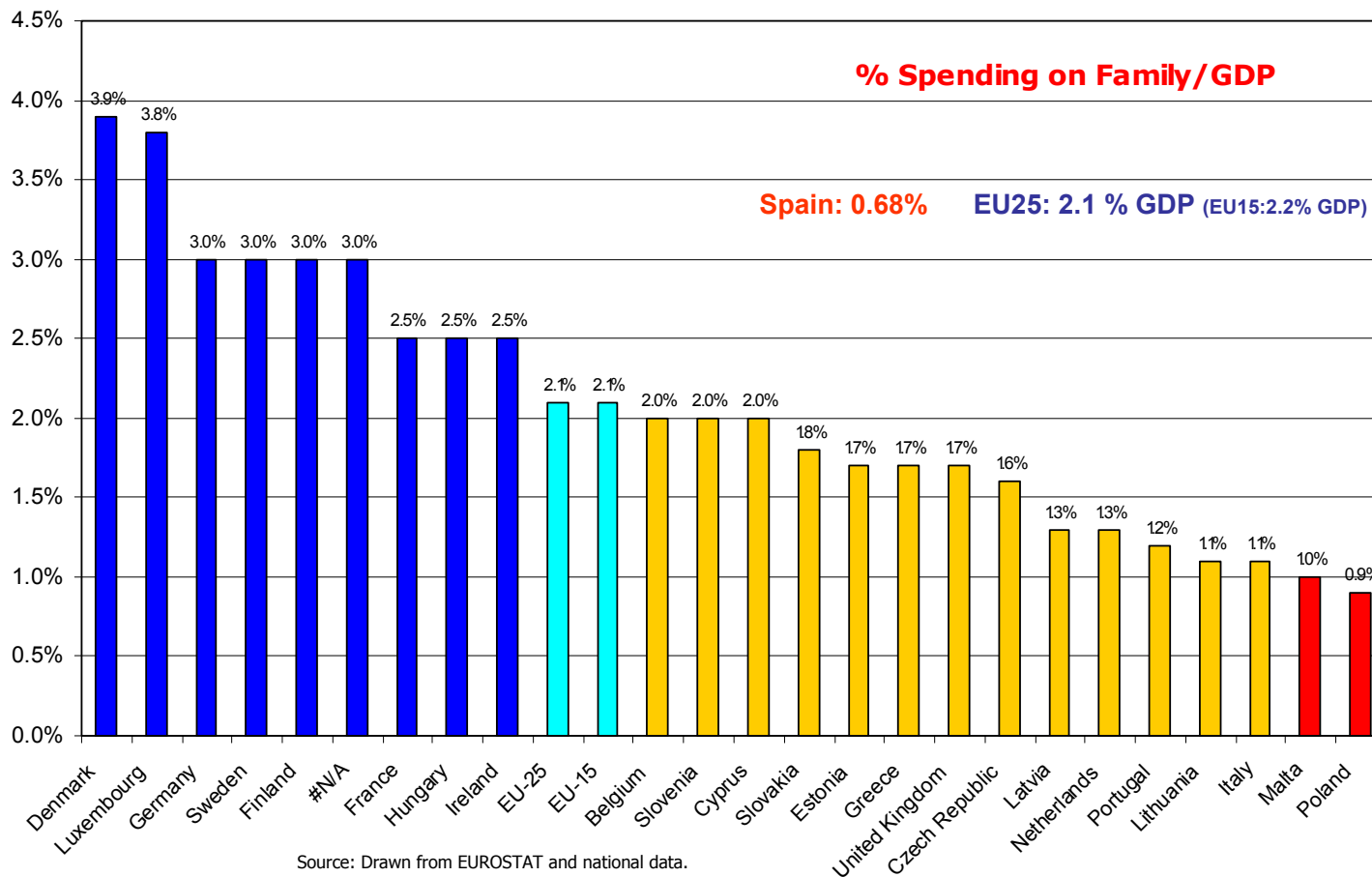
...by contrast, EU spending on the Family (average 2.1% GDP) varies more widely, Denmark and Luxembourg setting aside 3.9% whilst Spain and Poland set aside less than 1%.

...which is leading to major inequalities in terms of social provision



...With Spain and Poland being the only EU countries where not even 1% of GDP is spent on the Family

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Source: Drawn from EUROSTAT and national data.



Europe sets aside less than 500 euros (per person) per year for Family Policies ...



And there is a gulf between countries

Luxembourg, Denmark, Sweden and Ireland, on the one hand, set aside an average figure of 1400 euros per person/per year (3 times the European average)...

... Whilst Poland, Lithuania, Latvia and Spain set aside an average figure of 82 euros for Family Policies (less than 18% of the European average).

Spain, Italy, Portugal and Greece are the EU15 countries with the lowest levels of assistance to the Family

Leading to the creation of first and second class countries



Benefits per child in Europe vary in terms of amount, number of children and limits depending on age and income...

Benefits per Dependent Child 2006 (Euros)

Benefits per child 1/01/06	1st child	2nd child	3rd child	4th child	Income limit	Age limit
Germany	154	154	154	179	UNIVERSAL	18-27 years
Austria	129	142	229	191	UNIVERSAL	18-26 years
Belgium	91	156	232	232	UNIVERSAL	18-25 years
Denmark	122	122	122	122	UNIVERSAL	18 years
Spain	24	24	24	24	9.091,99 €/year	18 years
Finland	100	111	131	152	UNIVERSAL	17 years
France	Sist.APJE	137	307	437	UNIVERSAL	20 years
Greece	8	25	55	67	UNIVERSAL	18-22 years
Ireland	142	142	177	177	UNIVERSAL	16-19 years
Italy	72	72	72	72	47.065,41 €/year	18 years
Luxembourg	216	471	833	1.195	UNIVERSAL	18-27 years
Netherlands	73	73	73	73	UNIVERSAL	17 years
Portugal	25	25	25	25	24.500 €/year	16-24 years
United Kingdom	107	72	72	72	UNIVERSAL	16-19 years
Sweden	112	112	161	204	UNIVERSAL	16-23 years
Czech Republic	20	20	20	20	11.400 €/year	15-26 years
Estonia	19	19	19	19	UNIVERSAL	16-19 years
Cyprus	37	87	244	468	UNIVERSAL	18-25 years
Latvia	9	10	14	16	UNIVERSAL	15-20 years
Lithuania	20	20	40	19	UNIVERSAL	7 years (18-24 si >=3 childs)
Hungary	44	50	71	55	UNIVERSAL	16-23 years
Malta	40	59	78	96	23.923 €/year	16-21 years
Poland	11	11	14	17	4.899 €/year	18-21 years
Slovenia	29	35	41	41	16.293 €/year	18-26 years
Slovakia	14	14	14	14	UNIVERSAL	16-25 years

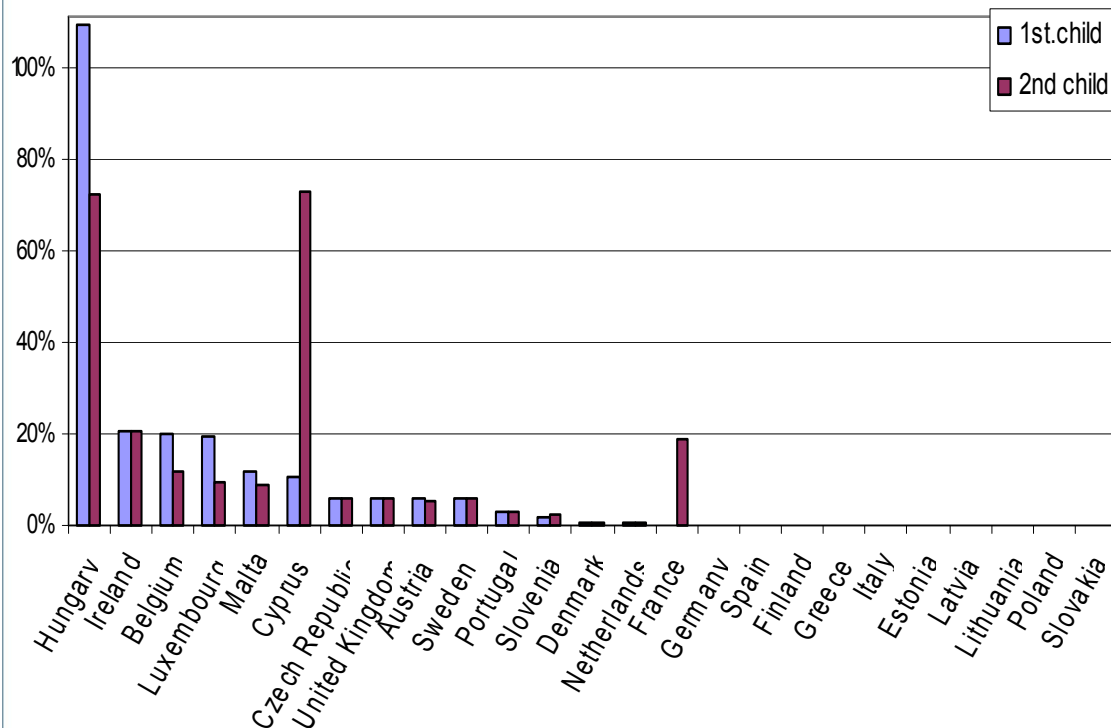
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And almost half of European countries did not increase benefits for the first or second child in 2006... Which is widening the gap between European families

Variation in benefits/Child 2006/05



Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)

Almost half (44%) of countries did not increase benefits for the first child. A further 8% did increase benefits, but below the inflation rate, and another 44% increased it above the inflation rate. (Hungary more than doubled its child benefit amount).
The average increase was 3.2%.

For the second child, 40% of countries did not increase benefits. A further 8% increased benefits but below the inflation rate, and 52% increased benefits above the inflation rate. (Hungary and Cyprus by over 70%).
The average increase in benefits was 6%.



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Leading to significant differences between countries...

Families with 2 children (2006)

Countries	€/month
Luxembourg	687
Germany	308
Ireland	283
Austria	271
Belgium	247
United Kingdom	245
Denmark	244
Czech Republic	41
Lithuania	40
Estonia	38
Greece	33
Slovakia	28
Poland	22
Latvia	19

Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)

A family with two children in Luxembourg would be entitled to 687€/month benefit, in Germany 308€/month, in Ireland 283€ month, and in Austria 271€/month etc.

By contrast, the same family in Slovakia would receive – and with strict income-dependent limits - 28€/month, in Poland 22€/month, and in Latvia 19€ month. And restrictions to entitlement based on income are so severe that the majority of families in countries such as Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Portugal, Spain and the Czech Republic would not receive any benefit.

A family with three children in Luxembourg would be entitled to 1521 €/month, in Germany to 462 €/month, in Belgium 479 €/month and in Austria 500€/month etc.

By contrast, the same family would receive – and with numerous income-related restrictions - 42 €/month in Slovakia, 36€/month in Poland, and 33€/ month in Latvia. And restrictions to entitlement based on income are so severe that the majority of families in countries such as Italy, Malta, Slovenia, Portugal, Spain and the Czech Republic would not receive any benefit.

Families with 3 children (2006)

Countries	€/month
Luxembourg	1.521
Austria	500
Belgium	479
Germany	462
Ireland	461
France	444
Sweden	385
Portugal	74
Spain	73
Czech Republic	61
Estonia	58
Slovakia	42
Poland	36
Latvia	33

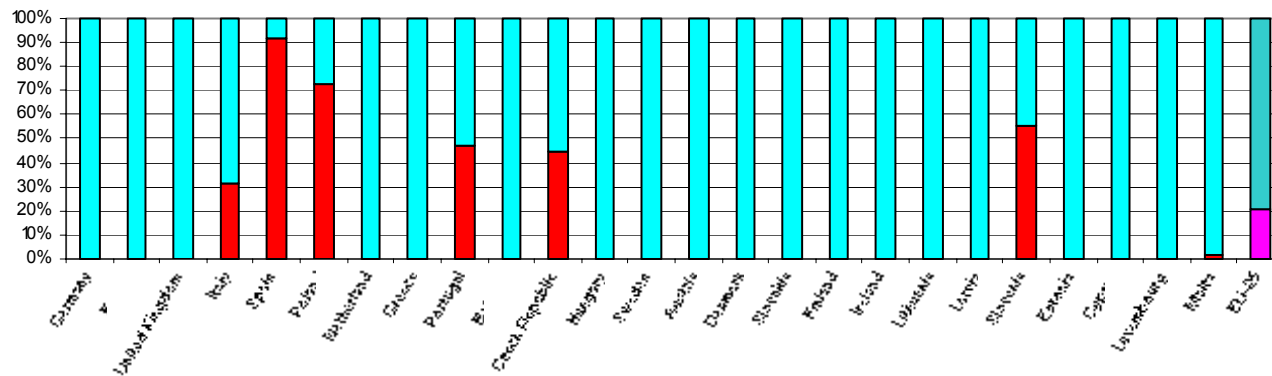
Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)



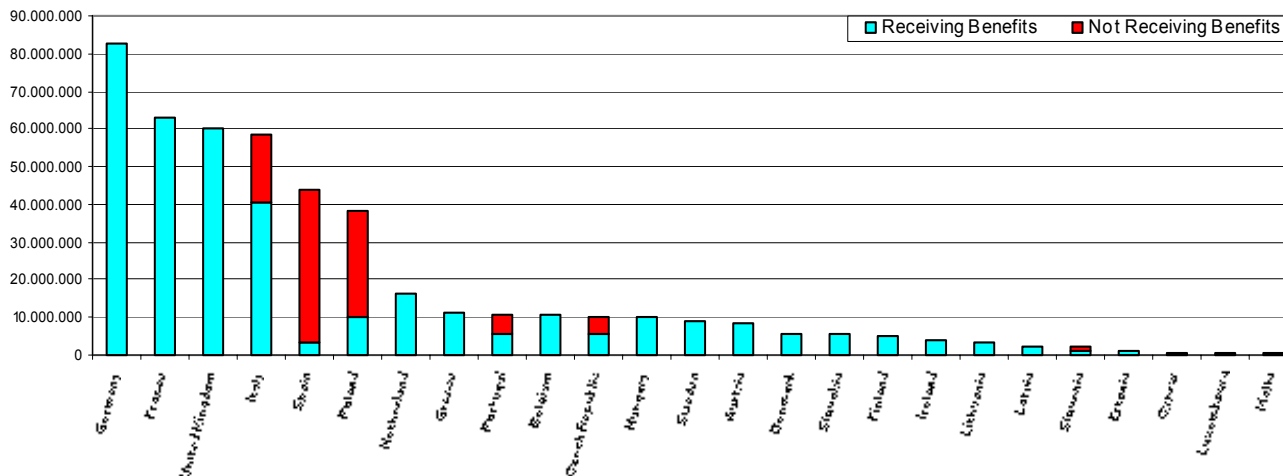
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8 out of 10 European countries (EU25) give benefits universally

% European families with and without family benefit



80% of EU15 countries provide benefits universally, only 1 (Spain) providing benefits with some limits.



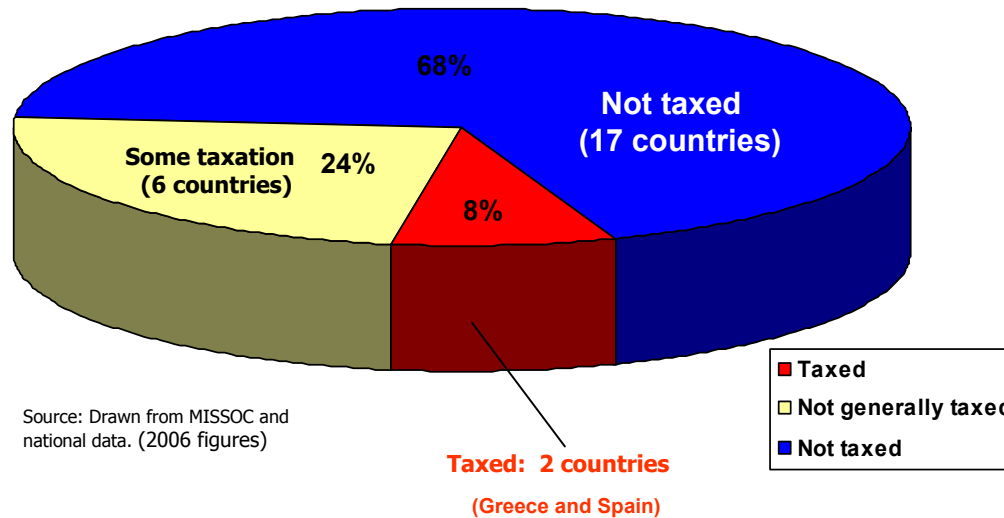
60% of enlargement countries provide benefits to all families.

Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)



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These benefits are not taxable in most European countries...



In the majority of countries (17), family benefits are not subject to any tax

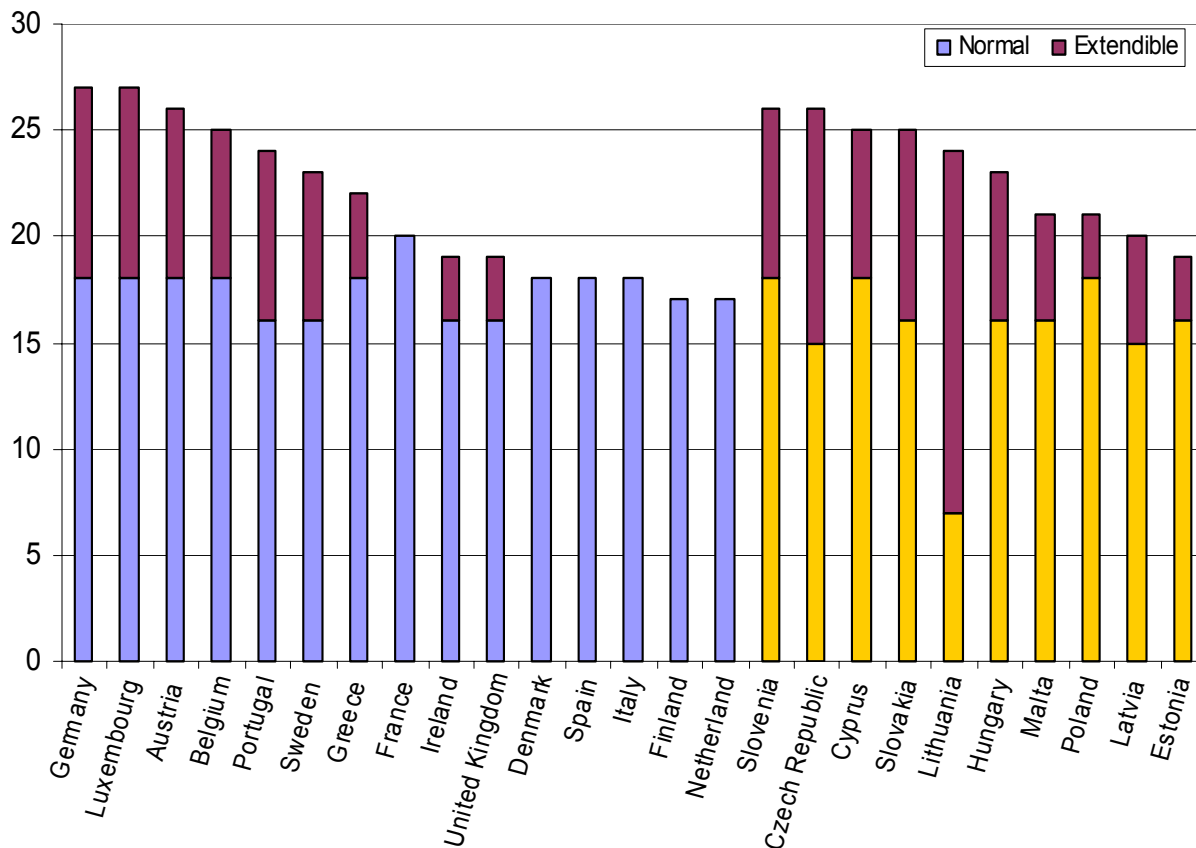
6 countries (Finland, Luxembourg, Estonia, Lithuania Hungary and Slovakia) impose taxes on some benefits, although the majority are not taxable.

Only 2 countries (Spain and Greece) make these benefits subject to tax



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Duration and flexibility of these benefits varies:



Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)

Although the average age limit for benefits is 17, most countries will extend them if the child is studying or unemployed. Average age limit for extension is 22.

Only 6 countries (24%): **Holland, Finland, Italy, Spain, Denmark and France** do not permit extension to the age limit for child benefit.

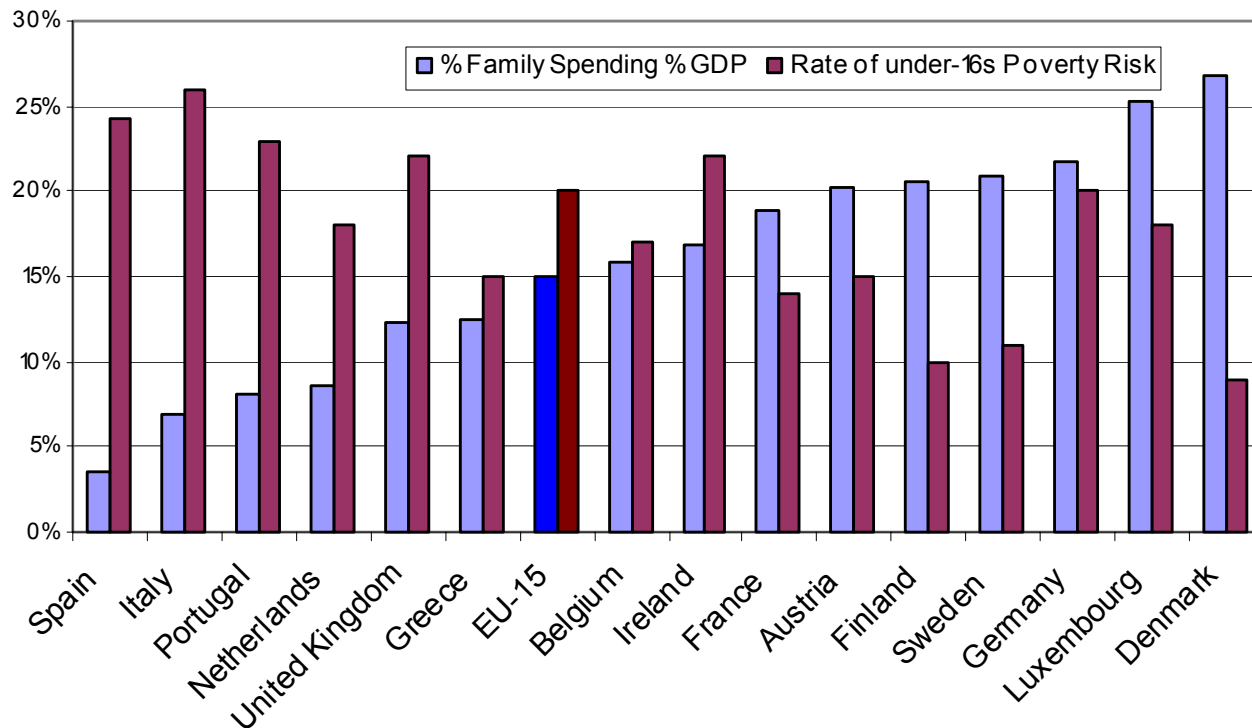
Lithuania sets the age limit at 7 for families with 1 or 2 children, and 18 to 24 for large families.



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In general, there is a link between social expenditure on the family and the rate of child poverty

Link Social expenditure on the family-Rate of child poverty



The higher the level of family benefits, the lower the likelihood of child poverty

The impact of Family Benefits not only enables families to exercise their right to have the number of children they want, but also has a decisive effect on the children's situation.

Source: Drawn from MISSOC and national data. (2006 figures)



Most countries make no provision for the problems of family conflict, crisis or breakdown...

... in spite of the fact that the Council of Europe has been urging for this be put in place for many years

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. RECOMMENDATION OF 2 SEPTEMBER 1974

“This organisation recommends that Member States establish Family Guidance Centres to offer comprehensive assistance to families, and that these centres should be State funded even where they are privately run”.

COUNCIL OF EUROPE. RECOMMENDATION OF 27 JUNE 1980

Recommends that Member State governments:

- Recognise the importance of organisations dedicated to family guidance in order to improve emotional, individual and family harmony, and
- Promote the development of such organisations through adequate funding.
- Study the possibility of using the media, particularly radio and television, to reinforce family culture and education.



06. IPF PROPOSALS



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AIM:

**To promote the development in Europe of
“family-oriented” government policies and
to implement genuine, effective,
comprehensive and universal Family
Policies...**



Built around the following Axes:

- Giving the Family status as a policy priority
- Making the “Family-oriented” approach an integral part of all measures put in place by the European Union
- Recognise and promote family rights in all areas, particularly the priority of child care and education.
- Promoting convergence between national family policies to avoid differences between countries
- Pushing for equality of opportunity for all European families, to avoid discrimination based on number of children, income levels, income distribution, etc.



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And doing so by means of...

... Appropriate bodies

... Budgetary provision

... Plans, measures and legislation



Following action plans that...

- Promote the Family as an institution,
- Encourage a universal concept of the Family and also a culture and environment that allows the Family to manage its day-to-day existence,
- Help parents to have the children they want,
- Include, in a genuinely constructive and humane fashion, the different areas of professional, family and personal development,
- Provide assistance during cases of family crisis,
- Recognise the fundamental right of parents to educate their children,
- Promote the active participation of parents and family associations
- And, through specific measures, take account of families with particular needs.



I. ...which promote the Family as an institution...

1. **By creating the Commission for the Family** to promote the Family as a policy priority in European Union countries, and to ensure that all European legislation considers the Family as a social base with rights and roles that must be respected and promoted
2. **By urging EU member states to set up a Ministry for the Family** with sufficient organisational and budgetary capacity to develop Family promotion and protection measures in Europe
3. **By drafting a Green Paper on the Family in Europe** which analyses the problems faced by the Family along with their causes and consequences, and sets out solutions and alternatives
4. **By promoting a European Pact for the Family** between political parties, social agents and family institutions, following the recommendations of the European Economic and Social Committee (Opinion CESE 423/2007).



II ...which promotes a Family-oriented culture, encouraging an environment which favours it...

5. **By re-establishing the Family Policy Observatory**, with social involvement, to analyse the situation and development of the Family in Europe and to advise on, manage and oversee policy measures affecting it, and to ensure that public policy measures are drawn up to take account of the Family.
6. **By running campaigns to increase awareness within society** and to promote an environment and culture that favours the Family, placing value on childhood and maternity.
7. **By incorporating into European Directives on communication media** the criteria of respect for and promotion of the Family, in addition to the creation of Independent Audiovisual Councils one of whose objectives is the protection of minors and the Family.



III ...which assist families in the management of their day-to-day existence, helping parents to have the children they want...

8. **By urging governments to adopt a more equal distribution of benefits aimed at the Family – currently accounting for 8% of total social benefits – gradually increasing their amount.**

9. **By promoting the establishment of gradual convergence between family protection measures in different European countries, so that:**

* In 5 years time, every country set aside at least 1,5% GDP to social family expenditure.

* In 5 years time, all countries are promoting universal family assistance practices or at least, as the first step towards achieving this, are establishing limits (per capita) which include 90% of families.

* Countries establish tax convergence objectives for tax exemption on family benefits.

* Countries put in place measures ensuring that family benefits increase in line with inflation.



III ...which assist families in the management of their day-to-day existence, helping parents to have the children they want...

10. By adopting measures of support for pregnancy and maternity

- Reducing by 50% the VAT payable on a series of essential infant products (baby hygiene items such as nappies, soap, moisturising creams, wet wipes, feeding products such as formula milk, containers and feeding bottles, cereal and food preparations and baby furniture items such as cots, chairs and prams, baby carriers, car seats etc.).
- Setting up Care Centres for Pregnant Women to help for all mothers, married or single, with their pregnancies, with particular attention for immigrant mothers.

11. By increasing tax convergence in Europe to make it Family-oriented



IV ... Which include, in a genuinely constructive and humane fashion, the different areas of professional, family and personal development, providing assistance for cases of family crisis...

- 12. By insisting on paternity leave of 4-6 weeks in EU countries, on the same terms as maternity leave.**
- 13. By insisting on a statutory wage for those fathers/mothers who request extended leave for child care.**
- 14. By insisting on universal assistance for families caring for elderly relatives in their home**
- 15. By insisting on preventive measures to assist in cases of family crisis (following Council of Europe recommendations) to reduce instances of family breakdown in Europe.**
 - Updating and modernisation of Council of Europe recommendations (1974-1980)
 - Urging EU countries to draw up a Law for Preventive Measures and Family Mediation



V ...Which recognise the right of parents to educate their children...

16. By recognising Education as a Fundamental Family Right (not as a public service)

- Making the education costs met by families (text books, schools etc.) income tax-deductible.
- Increasing the number of parent representatives on School Councils.

VI ...and promoting the active involvement of families and family associations...

17. By creating Internet Portal “InfoFamilias” with information on services for European families.



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report on the
**Evolution of the
FAMILY**
in **EUROPE**
2007



Institute
for family
Policies



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