ATTITUDES TOWARDS UNMARRIED COHABITATION IN EUROPE

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Introduction

The transformation of partnership form is one of the key changes that have taken place in the demographic behaviour in Europe: marriage has lost its exclusiveness, the practice and the idea of indissoluble marriage has been replaced by the appearance and diffusion of divorce and different forms of cohabitation (cf. Heuveline— Timberlake, 2004, Kiernan, 2000, Sobotka—Toulemon, 2008, Pongrácz—Spéder 2008). Unmarried cohabitation takes a variety of forms and there are considerable inter-country differences their dispersion, in their position in the life course and in the relationship between cohabitation and marriage – whether they can be regarded as complementary institutions or rivals. Considering that the content and the degree of institutionalisation of unmarried cohabitation may differ from country to country (eg. Heuveline—Timberlake 2004), the diverseness of partnership forms continues to increase and the diffusion of unmarital cohabitation may also transform the institution of marriage. Most papers direct attention to the fact that we cannot talk about convergence, despite the growing popularity of cohabitation and the decreasing attractiveness of marriage in most European countries.

Several papers enumerate the factors that the choice of first union type and the marriage decision of cohabiting couples depend on (eg. Liefbroer, 1991, Bukodi, 2003). Results indicate that certain social situations, socialisation experiences, demographic events and attitudes affect what type of cohabitation is chosen by whom and when. However, only few studies examine the reasons for inter-country variation in the popularity of consensual unions. Only the theory of second demographic transition offers some points of departure, treating the spread of cohabitation as a manifestation of second demographic transition.

In the present paper, our aim is to identify some country-specific measures to explain cross-country differences in the approval or disapproval of unmarried cohabitation. This problem is closely related to the above-mentioned demographic changes; however, it is of different nature. We do not analyse partnership behaviour – who lives in cohabitation or marriage – but the attitude towards partnership behaviour. In other words, we examine to what extent the acceptance of consensual unions depends on country-specific factors and individual characteristics.

Hypotheses

We formulated three hypotheses regarding the factors influencing country-level differences in the attitude towards cohabitation. Since literature offers no explicit assumptions regarding inter-country differences in partnership and family attitudes, we base our hypotheses on general social theoretical considerations and approaches from micro-analyses.

1. Diffusion Hypothesis

Evidently, partnership attitudes are closely related to the popularity of cohabitation and marriage in a country. However, it is difficult to establish a cause-and-effect relationship among them: a more permissive attitude towards unmarried cohabitation may be the result of the diffusion of consensual unions, or the other way around, tolerance towards partnerships may make the spread of cohabitation easier. Presumably, both mechanisms are at work. However, we can be reasonably suppose that a tolerant attitude towards cohabitation is positively related to the popularity of unmarried unions.

One of the main assumptions of the second demographic transition theory is that the appearance of new types of partnership behaviour can be linked to the spread of divorce (Lesthaeghe, 1996). The prevalence of divorce clearly indicates that the meaning of partnerships has begun to transform in a society and the idea of "eternal marriage" is losing ground. Analyses of the role of socialisation also often find that children who experience parental divorce in the family of origin have higher chance to choose cohabitation as a first union (Thornton, 1991). Consequently, we believe that divorce rates of a country play an important role in the questioning of the institution of marriage and the degree of approval of cohabitation.

2. Hypothesis of Increasing Insecurity

The research of Hans-Peter Blossfeld and his colleagues establish a link between globalisation, increasing insecurity and the transformation of many aspects of family life (Mills—Blossfeld, 2005). Their results indicate that the level of commitment is lower in unmarried unions, thus this partnership form is best suited to a system of relations where labour market is difficult to enter and the level of career insecurity is high. Unmarried union is a more flexible partnership form and makes the adaptation to uncertainties of other life spheres more feasible than marriage. However, globalisation does not affect all societies in the same way. On the one hand, welfare state mediates and partially absorbs the effects of globalisation, and since there are diverse welfare systems in Europe, we may suppose that insecurities are experienced differently in different

countries. On the other hand, the level of economic insecurity is somewhat lower in countries in the centre of European economy than in countries on the periphery. Taking the path dependency of welfare regimes into account, we can also suppose that institutional differences between countries persist. Based on all these, we hypothesise that there are enduring differences in the perceived level of "globalisation insecurity" in Europe, and it may affect the acceptance of unmarried cohabitation – the partnership form that is presumed to be the most compatible with insecure conditions[1].

3. Individualisation and Secularisation Hypothesis

There is a wide-spread assumption that the spread of individualised life-styles makes cohabitation a more desirable partnership form than marriage. There are several aspects of marriage that involves stronger commitment than cohabitation. Married couples take on their long-term relationship in front of each other and the community (relatives, relationship networks, settlement communities) and they regard the institution and the ritual of marriage as a value.

The theory of second demographic transition is linked to the theory of individualisation and modernisation, and we may suppose that different countries can be characterised by varying levels of individualisation and secularisation. This level is not easy to measure. In our analysis, two indicators are used: religiousness and GDP per capita.

The level of religiosity in each country can be regarded as a measure of individualisation. Religious prescriptions and proscriptions may limit individual behaviour and religiousness describes the level of community commitment. We also suppose that the variability of opportunities and life-style options is indispensable for individualisation and these factors are unrealisable without a high level of welfare. At the same time, we believe that the very general and comprehensive development indicator of GDP per capita incorporates the effect of several other factors. Further analysis is needed to assess whether GDP can be used as a country-level indicator of the individualisation hypothesis and what other, possibly relevant relationships this indicator conceals. One possibility is that high welfare makes a variety of opportunities available, it increases general tolerance, and general tolerance manifests in attitudes towards cohabitation as well. According to another line of thought, new ways of life spread like trends do. Affluence helps trends to diffuse, and new ways of life spread from countries where welfare is higher to less affluent ones.

[1] The institutional differences of welfare regimes are not taken into consideration in the present analysis due to measurement difficulties; however, they may moderate the effect of labour market insecurity.

Data, Measurement and Methods

The 3rd round of the European Social Survey (2006)[2] is used in the present analysis, containing comparable data on 25 European countries. Beside the core sections, the questionnaire included a rotating module on the timing of life. It was a split ballot: questions about the construction of the life course of men and women were randomly assigned to respondents, so they either had to answer questions regarding boys and men or girls and women.

1. The Dependent Variable

The question we use as the dependent variable of the forthcoming analysis is as follows: "How much do you approve or disapprove if a woman / a man lives with a partner without being married to him / her?" The answer categories are: 1 – strongly disapprove, 2 – disapprove, 3 – neither approve nor disapprove, 4 – approve, 5 – strongly approve. The variable is treated as continuous in the analysis, and higher values mean higher approval of cohabitation.

2. Individual-Level Independent Variables

Individual-level control variables include gender of the respondent, split ballot information, age and completed years of education. Interaction between gender and split ballot information is included, and a squared term of education is entered to test for non-linearity.

The effect of education on attitudes towards cohabitation may differ across countries. Unmarried unions became firstly popular among the highly-educated in France or Sweden (Hoem, 1986, Toulemon, 1997, Villeneuve-Gokalp, 1991), while in other countries (like the US, UK or Hungary) cohabitation was more frequent among people with lower level of educational attainment at first (Bumpass—Sweet, 1989, Kiernan, 2002, Spéder, 2005). However, it does not necessarily mean that opinions about partnership forms have similar differences, since we suppose that the highly educated are more likely to be tolerant towards non-average behaviour in every country. Analysis indicated that the effect of education is not the same in every country in our data set; however, the focus of the present analysis is not the educational differentials of attitudes but cross-country differences, so education will be treated as fixed in our models.

[2] European Social Survey Round 3 Data (2006/2007). Data file edition 3.2. Norwegian Social Science Data Services, Norway – Data Archive and distributor of ESS data. Available: http://ess.nsd.uib.no

Other individual independent variables include partnership and (un)employment experiences, subjective household income[3], position on a left-right scale[4] and religiosity. We suppose that people who experienced less stable life situation (cohabitaton, divorce, unemployment, low income) have more favourable attitudes towards cohabitation. Right-wing political attitudes and religion are usually in favour of marriage and traditional family forms, so we assume that rightist and religious people disapprove of cohabitation more than leftists and non-religious respondents do.

Religiosity is constructed as the main component of three variables: self-defined level of religiousness, frequency of attending religious services and frequency of pray. Higher values mean higher religiousness. Since preliminary analysis indicated that the real difference is between very religious people and all the others, religiosity is used as a categorical variable with four categories: more than one standard deviation (SD) below and above the mean, as well as less than one SD below and above the mean.

Partnership experience is a three-value variable with the following categories: ever lived in unmarried cohabitation for at least three months (also may have lived in marriage), never lived in unmarried cohabitation but in marriage, and never cohabited with a partner or spouse for at least three months. Divorce experience is also taken into consideration with the following categories: ever divorced, never divorced but ever married, never married. Labour force experience is captured by a variable with three categories: ever unemployed for at least three months, ever had a paid work but never unemployed for at least three months, and never in paid work or paid apprenticeship of 20 hours or more for at least three months. The likeliness to become unemployed within 12 months is also included. Current employment and marital status are not used as independent variables because we assume that the current situation of respondents matters less than their cumulative life course experiences[5].

3. Country-Level Independent Variables

Country-level variables that are used in our models to account for cross-country differences in the attitudes towards unmarried cohabitation are summarised in Table 1. There are two variables for

[3] Question wording: "Which of the descriptions on this card comes closest to how you feel about your household's income nowadays? 1 – living comfortably on present income, 2 – coping on present income, 3 – finding it difficult on present income, 4 – finding it very difficult on present income.

[4] Question wording: "In politics people sometimes talk of 'left' and 'right'. Using this card, where would you place yourself on this scale, where 0 means the left and 10 means the right?"

[5] A comparison of the explanatory power of individual-level regression models with either set of variables proved this assumption (results not shown).

each hypothesis, one is aggregated from ESS data to the country level, the other one is from an external source.

Table 1. Description of country-level variables

Hypothesis	Variable name	Variable description	Source
1. Diffusion	COHAB	Percentage of cohabiting respondents aged 25-39 among those who live either in marriage or in cohabitation	ESS 2006
2. Insecurity	YUNEMP	Youth unemployment rate in 2006 (aged 15-24)	ILO
	FEAR	Percentage of respondents in paid work who think they are (very) likely to become unemployed in one year	ESS 2006
3. Secularisation	RELIG	Mean level of religiosity (main component of three variables)	ESS 2006
4. GDP	GDP	GDP per capita in 1,000,000 USD, purchasing power parity	OECD

The percentage of ever married young adults measures the popularity of marriage, while total divorce rate captures the instability of marriages and the prevalence of the idea that marriage is not an eternal bond. The value of total divorce rate for year 1990 is included because we suppose that divorces have a delayed effect on the general attitudes of a country and indirectly on the tolerance towards cohabitation. According to the first hypothesis, countries where divorce was widespread and where most young adult do not marry would display a higher approval of cohabitation.

Insecurity of the labour market is measured by one objective and one subjective indicator. Youth unemployment rate is indicative of the difficulty to find employment at the early stage of the career, when important partnership decisions are made. The percentage of people in paid work who think unemployment is a real danger for them is positively related to the level of unemployment in the given country. However, youth unemployment rate is higher by about 30% in the post-communist countries than in the other nations in the sample[6], while the feeling of job insecurity is two time higher in the Eastern part of Europe. This difference may be due to a composition effect or unemployment may carry different meaning and may seem more threatening in societies where it is a relatively new phenomenon. All in all, we decided to keep both the objective and the subjective measure of employment insecurity in the models. Based on the second hypothesis, we expect that more insecure labour market situation makes cohabitation more acceptable.

[6] The same difference would apply if unemployment rate at working age were used instead of youth unemployment rate.

Secularisation is measured by the mean level of religiosity in a country, and welfare is measured by GDP per capita. According to the third hypothesis, unmarried cohabitation is more acceptable in less religious countries and higher welfare contributes to the diffusion of individualisation and the approval of alternative partnership forms.

4. Analysis Strategy

In the following chapter, first the descriptive results of the dependent and independent variables (Table 2 and Tables A to C in the Appendix) then hierarchical regression model estimations are presented (Tables 3-4). We start with an intercept-only model in order to study the variance at the individual and the country level (Model A). In model B individual-level control variables are added. Models C, E and G additionally include country-level independent variables for the three hypotheses respectively. In Models D, F and H cross-level interactions are added, because we expect that individual characteristics of respondents moderate the effect of country-level factors.

We use random intercept models with two levels (level one is the individual, level two is the country), since the primary aim of the analysis is to assess the effect of country-level variables on cross-country differences in the attitude towards cohabitation. Due to the same reason, no separate models are estimated for opinion about women and men. All continuous independent variables are grand-mean centred and maximum likelihood estimation is applied.

Results

1. Descriptive Analysis

There are considerable differences in the attitude towards unmarried cohabitation across Europe (Table 2; see also Table A in the Appendix). Nordic countries are the most approving, together with the Netherlands and Belgium. Most countries have an average above 3, meaning that they have rather positive than negative attitudes towards cohabitation. Eastern countries like Ukraine, Romania, Russia, Estonia and Slovakia have the lowest level of approval. In the Nordic and the Benelux countries, Slovenia and Spain, more than half of the respondents approve of cohabitation, while more than half of them disapprove only in Ukraine. In countries like Germany, Switzerland, the UK, Ireland or Estonia, more than half of respondents neither approve nor disapprove of unmarried cohabitation, in other words, they either have a liberal attitude or they do not have a definitive opinion on the question.

Opinion about women and men do not differ considerably, even though attitudes are somewhat more approving regarding women in 12 countries, they are less approving in only 4 countries and there is no difference in 9 countries.

Table 2. Mean and standard deviation of approval of unmarried cohabitation by country

	Ask about women		Ask about men		Total
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	N
DK	4,48	0,83	4,52	0,77	1373
NO	4,28	0,95	4,20	0,90	1613
FL	3,99	0,98	3,91	0,98	1743
NL	3,93	1,13	3,93	1,03	1770
BE	3,92	1,00	3,86	1,00	1663
SE	3,91	0,92	3,70	0,85	1761
FR	3,62	1,03	3,50	1,09	1873
ES	3,56	1,02	3,55	1,04	1636
SI	3,53	0,95	3,38	0,93	1203
PT	3,40	0,89	3,43	0,83	1851
CH	3,37	0,87	3,38	0,84	1664
HU	3,31	0,84	3,24	0,83	1354
DE	3,21	0,73	3,19	0,73	2594
GB	3,17	0,85	3,11	0,79	2168
LV	3,11	0,97	3,07	0,94	1397
IE	3,06	0,91	3,02	0,82	1413
PL	3,00	1,11	3,05	1,07	1511
BG	2,99	1,35	3,03	1,36	1143
CY	2,94	1,09	3,19	1,09	887
SK	2,88	0,97	2,84	0,95	1511
EE	2,85	0,77	2,79	0,76	1339
RU	2,76	1,00	2,68	0,96	1976
RO	2,61	0,97	2,67	0,95	1667
UA	2,37	1,15	2,34	1,15	1607
Total	3,35	1,10	3,33	1,07	38718

2. Regression Models

The intercept-only model indicates that 21.4% of the variance of the dependent variable is at the country level (0.249/(0.249+0.915=0.214), which justifies the use of multilevel analysis for the data set (Table 3). When individual-level control variables are included, within-country variance drops by 17% and cross-country variance decreases by 25%, so a considerable part of the differences between countries was the result of the different composition of the respective societies. The value of -2log likelihood decreases significantly, consequently, Model B fits better than Model A.

Except for the perceived likelihood of becoming unemployed, all the individual-level independent variables have significant effects. Men usually approve of unmarried cohabitation less than women and opinions about men are more negative than about women. The attitudes of men about men are the least favourable, even if we take into consideration the interaction effect (-0.116-0.080+0.059=-0.137), and the opinion of women about women is the most favourable. The older the respondents are, the less they approve of cohabitation. The relationship is almost linear, although the difference between the age group 60-69 and the age group 70-85 is higher than if we compare other age categories. In line with our expectations, higher education is related to higher approval of cohabitation. The relationship has the shape of a reversed U, and the curve reaches its maximum at the value of 15 years of completed education. It means that people who completed some form of higher education but not university approve the most of unmarried cohabitation, and people with university degree or higher qualifications are more conservative in this sense.

Table 3. Results of individual-level models

	Model A			**Model B**		
	estimate		**SE**	**estimate**		**SE**
intercept	3,339	***	0,100	2,674	***	0,091
male respondent (ref: female)				-0,116	***	0,013
ask about men (ref: ask about women)				-0,080	***	0,013
male * about men				0,059	**	0,019
age: 18-24 (ref: aged 70-85)				0,438	***	0,024
age: 25-34				0,381	***	0,021
age: 35-44				0,308	***	0,019
age: 45-59				0,250	***	0,017
age: 60-69				0,120	***	0,019
education (in years)				0,030	***	0,005
education^2				-0,001	***	0,000
experienced unmarried cohabitation (ref: never partnered)				0,293	***	0,019
not experienced unmarried cohab.				0,064	**	0,023
ever divorced (ref: never married)				-0,019		0,020
ever married and never divorced				-0,181	***	0,018
difficult to live on hh. income				-0,064	***	0,007
ever unemployed for at least 3 months (ref: never worked)				0,132	***	0,019
ever worked and never ever unemployed for at least 3 months				0,091	***	0,017
left-right scale				-0,014	***	0,002
very low religiosity (ref: very high)				0,610	***	0,016
low religiosity				0,494	***	0,014
high religiosity				0,362	***	0,014
within-country variance	*0,915*	***	*0,006*	*0,762*	***	*0,006*
cross-country variance	*0,249*	***	*0,071*	*0,188*	***	*0,053*
-2 log likelihood	*119063*			*90949*		
N	*43675*			*32652*		

Note: † p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

People who have ever lived in unmarried cohabitation are more favourable towards it than those who have only experienced marriage or have never partnered. Divorce itself has no effect, however, respondent who married and have not divorced are less in favour of cohabitation than those who have never married.

If the household has difficulties to live on their income, respondents are less favourable towards cohabitation. Employment and unemployment experience are both related to a more positive attitude, compared to people who have never worked for pay[7]. People with right-wing political sympathy approve of cohabitation less than left-wing ones. Religiosity and approval of cohabitation is negatively related, and the effect of religiosity is the highest for the most religious people.

The three hypotheses regarding inter-country differences in the attitude towards cohabitation are tested in Models C to H (Table 4). The direction and magnitude of individual-level effects are basically the same in these models than in Model B, so their coefficients are not repeated here.

The popularity of marriage among people aged 25-39 is negatively related to the approval of unmarital cohabitation. Total divorce rate in 1990 has no significant effect, either whether entered into the model together with the variable MAR or alone. Cross-country interactions indicate that total divorce rate in 1990 has a positive effect only if the respondent is or was married and has never divorced and the prevalence of marriage has a stronger negative effect for people who have lived only in marriage but not in cohabitation.

The level of youth unemployment has only very limited effect in Models E and F and only in interaction with personal unemployment experience: it is positively related to the approval of cohabitation, and the relationship is weaker for people who have ever worked and never been unemployed. The higher the proportion of people in paid work in a country who think they are likely to become unemployed, the more negative the attitude towards unmarried cohabitation is. This effect is less strong for respondents who have actually had paid work, irrespective of their unemployment experience.

[7] 40% of respondents who have never been in paid work are aged 18-24, most of whom are still in education. 17% is retired and 19% is a homemaker.

Table 4. Results of multi-level models

	Hypothesis 1				Hypothesis 2				Hypothesis 3			
	Model C		Model D		Model E		Model F		Model G		Model H	
	estimate	SE	estimate	SE	estimate	SE	estimate	SE	estimate	SE	estimate	SE
intercept	2,642 ***	0,078	2,673 ***	0,078	2,680 ***	0,068	2,689 ***	0,068	0,268 ***	0,071	2,667 ***	0,071
DIVR	0,007	0,556	-0,183	0,559								
MAR	-0,023 **	0,007	-0,022 **	0,007								
DIVR*ever married and never divorced			0,308 ***	0,088								
MAR*not experienced cohab.			-0,003 *	0,001								
YUNEMP					0,019	0,013	0,023 †	0,013				
LUNEMP					-0,054 ***	0,012	-0,059 ***	0,012				
YUNEMP*ever worked, never unemp.							-0,005 †	0,003				
LUNEMP*ever unemployed							0,006 *	0,003				
LUNEMP*ever worked, never unemp.							0,006 **	0,002				
GDP									0,025 ***	0,006	0,026 ***	0,006
RELIG									-0,010	0,169	0,045	0,171
RELIG*low religiosity											-0,065 †	0,038
RELIG*high religiosity											-0,117 **	0,034
within-country variance	*0,762 *****	*0,006*	*0,761 *****	*0,006*	*0,759 *****	*0,006*	*0,759 *****	*0,006*	*0,762 *****	*0,006*	*0,761 *****	*0,006*
cross-country variance	*0,132 *****	*0,038*	*0,132 *****	*0,038*	*0,097 *****	*0,027*	*0,097 *****	*0,028*	*0,106 *****	*0,030*	*0,106 *****	*0,030*
-2 log likelihood	*90940*		*90915*		*88538*		*88513*		*90935*		*90919*	

Notes: † p<0.10, * p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001. Only significant interaction terms and only individual-level independent variables that are in interaction are shown. Capital letters indicate country-level variables (see Table 1 for definitions)

The attitude towards cohabitation is more positive in countries with higher GDP. The level of average religiosity has no direct effect, even if we leave GDP out of Model G. However, if somebody is relatively religious or relatively non-religious – as opposed to people with very high and very low level of religiosity –, the average religiousness of the country has a negative effect on the dependent variable.

All the level-two models can explain more of the cross-country variance of the dependent variable than the level-one models did, moreover, cross-level interactions also improve model fit. Comparing the values of cross-country variance and -2 log likelihood across Models D, F and H, the explanatory power of model F is the highest. In other words, all the hypotheses are proved to work; however, insecurity seem to have the strongest (but contrary-to- expectation) effect.

Discussion

The attitude towards unmarried cohabitation differs considerably across Europe, and 21% of its variation is at the country level. While it is widely approved of in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands and Belgium, lot of people disapprove of it in Eastern Europe, and people either do not have a definitive opinion or are acceptive of all family forms in the rest of the countries.

Regarding the individual-level determinants of the attitude towards unmarried unions, women, younger people and respondents with education higher than secondary school but lower than university are the most approving. As expected, cohabitation experience results in a more positive attitude towards cohabitation, while people who married and never divorced hold more negative views about cohabitation. Both selection and adaptation processes may be at work here. Low income results in a less favourable attitude towards cohabitation, but insecure labour market position seems to have no effect on the individual level. Left-right political sympathy and religiosity have the expected effect.

Four out of six country-level variables have the expected effect, and the hypotheses of diffusion and individualisation/secularisation are proved to be true. Labour market insecurity seem to have the highest explanatory power in the present analysis but in the opposite direction as expected.

Societies are less tolerant towards cohabitation if the prevalence of marriage among younger people is high, indicating that the institution is marriage is still relatively strong. For people who have experienced marriage but not cohabitation or divorce, the general attitude of

the society matters more. Total divorce rate in 1990 has a positive effect only if the respondent is or was married and has never divorced.

The levels of individualisation, secularisation and welfare of a society have the expected effects. Less religious and more affluent societies have more positive attitude towards cohabitation, even though the average level of religiosity has an effect only if the person is neither very religious nor an atheist.

The most interesting results emerged from testing the insecurity hypothesis. Contrary to the expectations, the higher the proportion of people in paid work in a country who think unemployment is a realistic threat to them, the more negative the attitude towards unmarried cohabitation is. In other words, insecure unemployment conditions do not involve more positive attitudes towards partnership forms that require less commitment. The relationship is the other way around: the institution of marriage may serve as a stable point under insecure labour market conditions and the very fundamental institution of marriage may reduce and compensate for insecurity in the public domains of life.

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Appendix

Table A. Approval or disapproval of unmarried cohabitation by country (%)

		Strongly disapprove	Disapprove	Neither approve nor disapprove	Approve	Strongly approve	Total
Ask about women	BE	2,4	6,6	20,3	38,3	32,4	100,0
	BG	18,4	18,9	25,0	20,2	17,5	100,0
	CH	1,9	7,9	53,6	24,1	12,5	100,0
	CY	11,7	22,7	28,7	33,1	3,7	100,0
	DE	2,1	6,9	64,7	20,8	5,5	100,0
	DK	1,6	3,6	1,6	31,8	61,3	100,0
	EE	4,2	23,4	57,6	12,9	2,0	100,0
	ES	3,3	12,0	28,7	37,7	18,3	100,0
	FI	3,2	3,7	18,2	41,3	33,6	100,0
	FR	3,4	4,6	45,8	19,3	26,9	100,0
	GB	4,3	8,3	61,4	18,0	8,1	100,0
	HU	3,0	9,7	46,5	34,7	6,0	100,0
	IE	6,9	12,8	52,8	22,5	4,9	100,0
	LV	6,4	17,0	42,1	28,4	6,1	100,0
	NL	6,5	5,9	10,9	42,1	34,7	100,0
	NO	1,6	5,9	7,8	31,8	52,9	100,0
	PL	9,5	28,0	19,7	38,2	4,6	100,0
	PT	3,0	10,8	37,0	41,6	7,7	100,0
	RO	14,1	30,9	37,1	16,4	1,6	100,0
	RU	12,5	24,8	39,2	21,1	2,4	100,0
	SE	1,0	2,0	35,1	29,2	32,7	100,0
	SI	3,6	13,5	17,6	56,6	8,7	100,0
	SK	8,2	25,6	39,0	23,8	3,4	100,0
	UA	31,0	21,3	31,1	13,2	3,4	100,0
	Total	6,5	13,0	35,8	28,5	16,2	100,0
Ask about men	BE	2,6	5,6	25,1	36,2	30,5	100,0
	BG	17,9	18,6	25,6	18,6	19,3	100,0
	CH	2,2	6,3	52,6	28,7	10,2	100,0
	CY	9,1	15,8	30,7	36,2	8,2	100,0
	DE	1,8	8,3	64,4	20,1	5,5	100,0
	DK	0,9	2,8	3,1	29,3	63,9	100,0
	EE	5,3	24,7	56,8	12,2	1,1	100,0
	ES	4,0	12,1	26,8	39,6	17,6	100,0
	FI	2,5	5,9	19,8	41,5	30,4	100,0
	FR	4,9	7,3	45,4	17,2	25,2	100,0
	GB	4,2	9,3	62,0	20,1	4,4	100,0
	HU	4,0	9,7	48,4	34,5	3,5	100,0
	IE	5,3	13,2	59,2	18,8	3,6	100,0
	LV	5,3	21,2	39,4	30,0	4,3	100,0
	NL	3,8	7,0	12,6	45,5	31,1	100,0
	NO	1,4	4,1	12,4	37,5	44,8	100,0
	PL	9,3	24,3	21,3	42,2	2,9	100,0
	PT	1,7	9,4	40,8	40,8	7,3	100,0
	RO	13,0	27,1	40,3	18,9	0,8	100,0
	RU	13,5	26,1	40,2	19,4	0,9	100,0
	SE	0,7	1,9	46,2	29,5	21,8	100,0
	SI	3,1	16,3	25,1	50,2	5,3	100,0
	SK	8,7	25,7	40,8	22,5	2,3	100,0
	UA	30,8	25,3	25,5	15,8	2,6	100,0
	Total	6,2	13,2	37,2	29,0	14,5	100,0

Table B. Descriptive statistics of individual-level independent variables

	%	n	mean	SD	min.	max.
Gender						
male	46,2	17 888				
female	53,8	20 830				
Split ballot						
ask about girls, women	50,2	19 444				
ask about boys, men	49,8	19 274				
Age in years		38 718	47,57	17,11	18	85
Years of education completed		38 718	12,23	4,07	0	30
Difficulty to live on household income		38 718	2,10	0,90	1	4
Cohabitation experience						
experienced only marriage	44,6	17 256				
experienced only cohabitation	11,3	4 385				
experienced both marriage and cohabitation	24,0	9 293				
experienced marriage, no data on cohabitation	6,0	2 311				
never partnered	14,1	5 473				
Divorce experience						
ever married and never divorced	61,7	23 875				
ever divorced	12,9	4 985				
never married	25,5	9 858				
Unemployment experience						
ever unemployed for at least 3 months	25,3	9 777				
never unemployed for at least 3 months and ever worked	63,2	24 456				
never worked or missing	11,6	4 485				
Possibility of unemployment						
likely to become unemployed in one year	7,1	2 754				
not likely to become unemployed in one year	43,3	16 760				
not in paid work or missing	49,6	19 204				
Level of religiosity		38 718	0,00	1,00	-1,41	2,33
Left-right scale						
left	27,1	10 493				
center	28,1	10 890				
right	30,0	11 627				
missing	14,7	5 707				

Table C. Means of country-level variables by country

	COHAB	YUNEMP	FEAR	RELIG	GDP
BE	35,4	20,5	9,9	-0,191	33,6
BG	18,3	19,5	26,4	-0,173	10,3
CH	21,2	7,7	9,0	0,170	38,1
CY	6,5	10,0	12,1	0,839	25,9
DE	30,5	13,7	11,5	-0,208	32,8
DK	40,8	7,7	8,4	-0,342	34,9
EE	35,6	12,0	17,1	-0,464	18,8
ES	25,8	17,9	11,7	-0,026	29,5
FI	37,2	18,7	10,2	-0,038	32,6
FR	41,3	21,3	14,8	-0,438	30,9
GB	30,5	14,0	10,8	-0,278	34,1
HU	28,4	19,1	19,7	-0,175	18,0
IE	25,9	8,6	8,9	0,602	41,8
LV	20,9	13,1	26,6	-0,191	15,4
NL	37,3	5,3	6,1	-0,146	37,1
NO	42,6	8,3	4,7	-0,381	52,1
PL	7,6	29,8	26,1	0,945	14,8
PT	18,8	16,2	16,2	0,455	21,7
RO	8,15	21,4	25,4	0,838	10,5
RU	9,4	16,5	19,3	-0,306	13,2
SE	55,2	21,5	8,9	-0,502	34,5
SI	48,1	13,9	15,1	-0,032	25,4
SK	15,9	26,6	23,0	0,399	18,0
UA	1,6	15,2	22,7	0,416	7,2
Total	27,2	15,6	14,8	0,007	26,8