

# BBVA Foundation Study European Mindset



**European Mindset** is an international study examining the connection and identification with Europe of citizens in 14 European countries and the existence or otherwise of shared values in mainly public domains, like politics and the economy, and in other, more private areas like religion or ethics.

The study is structured around three main axes:

**Connection with Europe and European identity**



- Interest in news items about different areas
- Connection/personal experience with Europe (networks, mobility)
- Local/national/European identity
- Attitudes to European construction

**The public space: political and economic values**



- Values that characterise Europe
- Views on the market economy
- Views on the role of the state
- Attitudes to the link between state and religion

**The private space: religion and ethics**



- Level of religiosity
- Link between religion and ethics
- Acceptance of the display of religious symbols
- Views on ethical principles
- Acceptability of situations touching on moral beliefs

➡ **Geographical scope of the study:** 12 European Union countries (Belgium, Bulgaria, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, United Kingdom), Switzerland and Turkey

➡ **Sample size and fieldwork period:** 1,500 interviews per country among the population aged 15 or over, conducted in November-December 2009. Approximately 21,000 cases

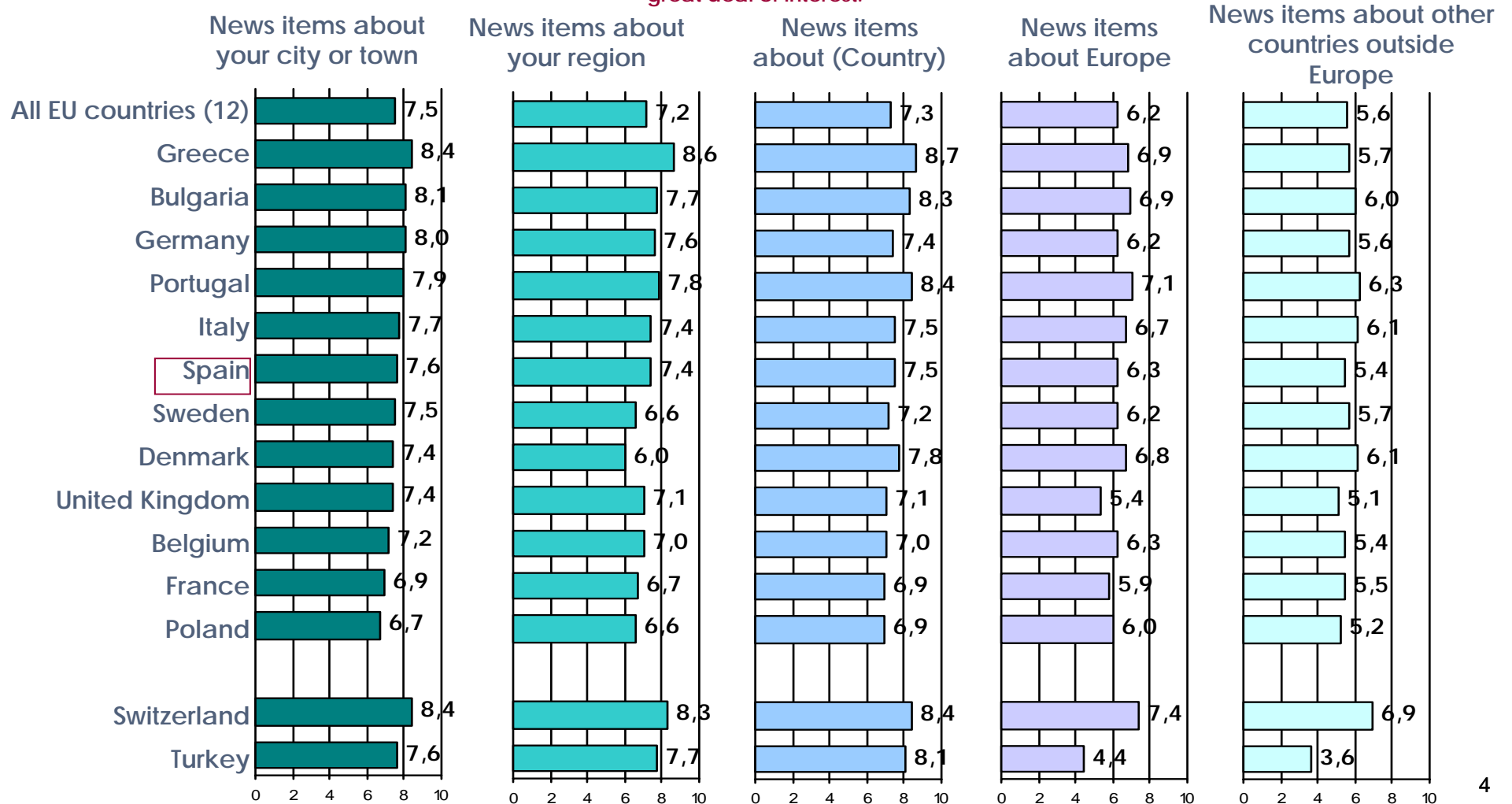
## Connection with Europe and European identity



- Interest in news items about different areas
- Connection/personal experience with Europe (networks, mobility)
- Local/national/European identity
- Attitudes to European construction

- News on issues closer to home meets with more interest than European news and much more interest than news about other countries outside Europe. That said, interest in news about Europe stands in the medium-high range and only lags behind in the United Kingdom and, especially, Turkey.
- Spaniards' interest in news items about Europe is near to the European average

Now I would like you to tell me how interested you are in each of the topics I am going to read out to **YOU**. Base: all cases. Average on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means that you have absolutely no interest and 10 means that you have a great deal of interest.

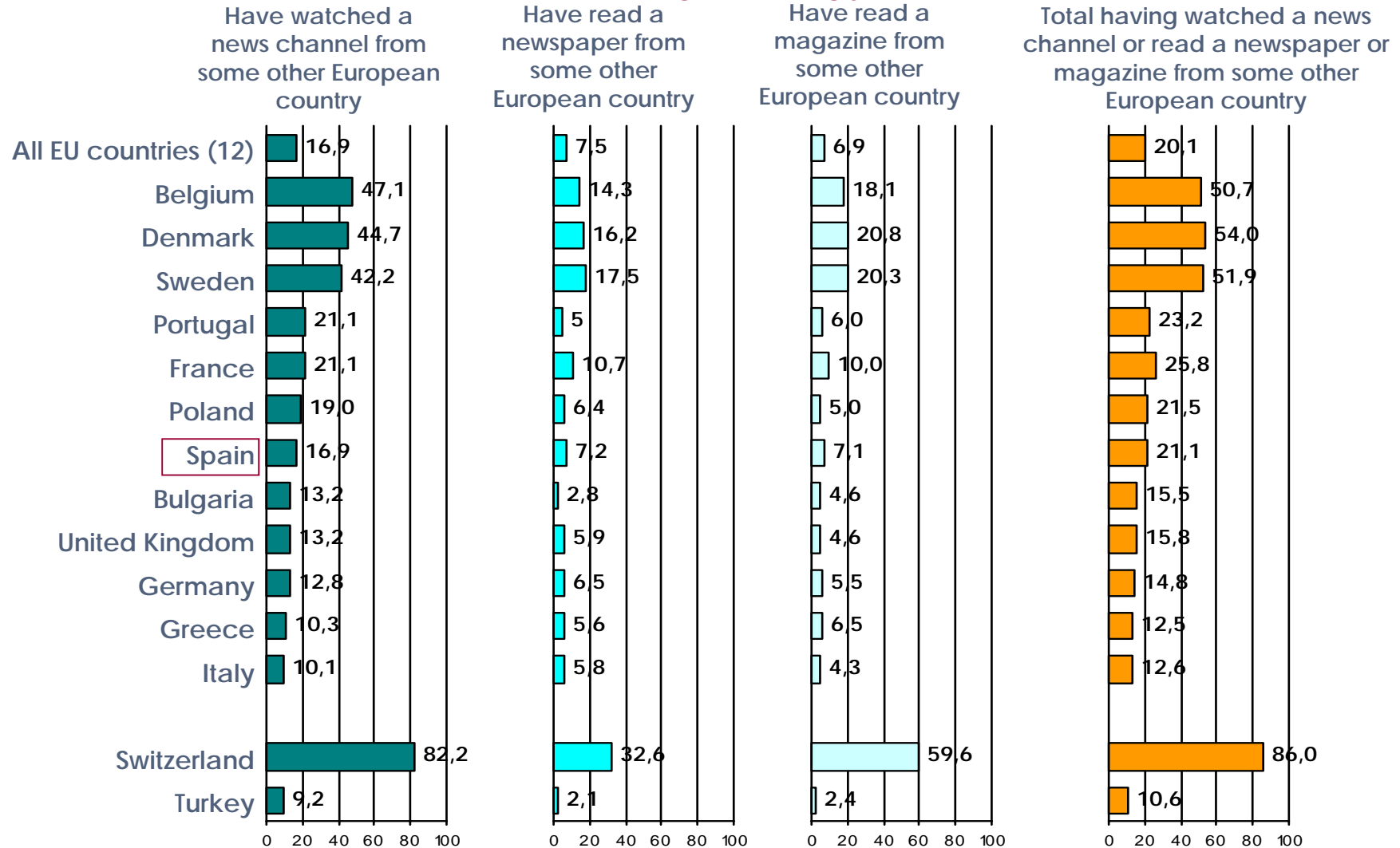


**EXPOSURE TO MEDIA OF OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

- Scant consumption of communication media from other European countries. Exposure to news channels from other European countries is greater than exposure to newspapers or magazines.
- Exposure levels are uneven: clearly higher in Switzerland, followed by Denmark, Sweden and Belgium. Low in Spain, close to the European average.

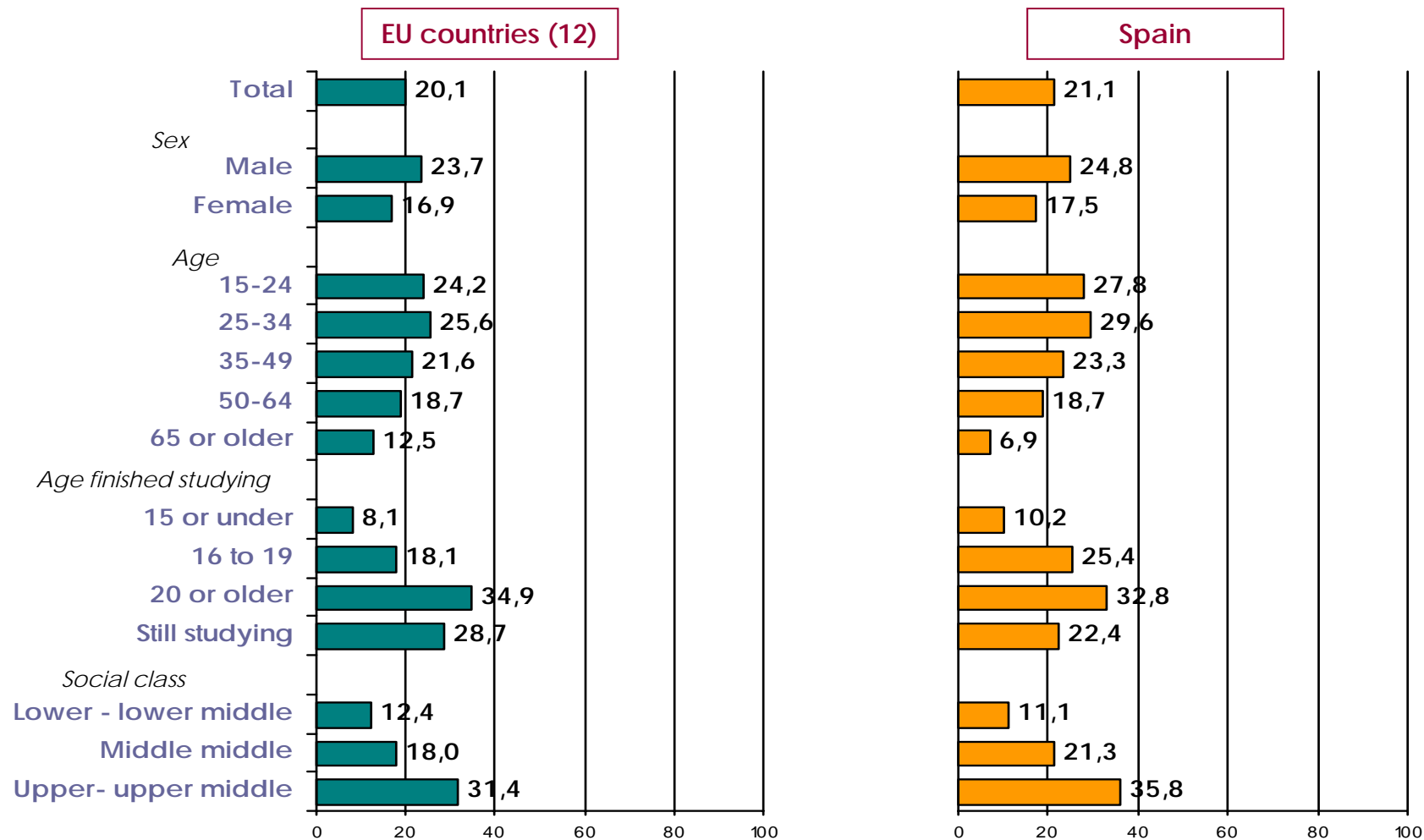
In the last month, have you done any of the following things? Base: all cases

Percentage answering yes



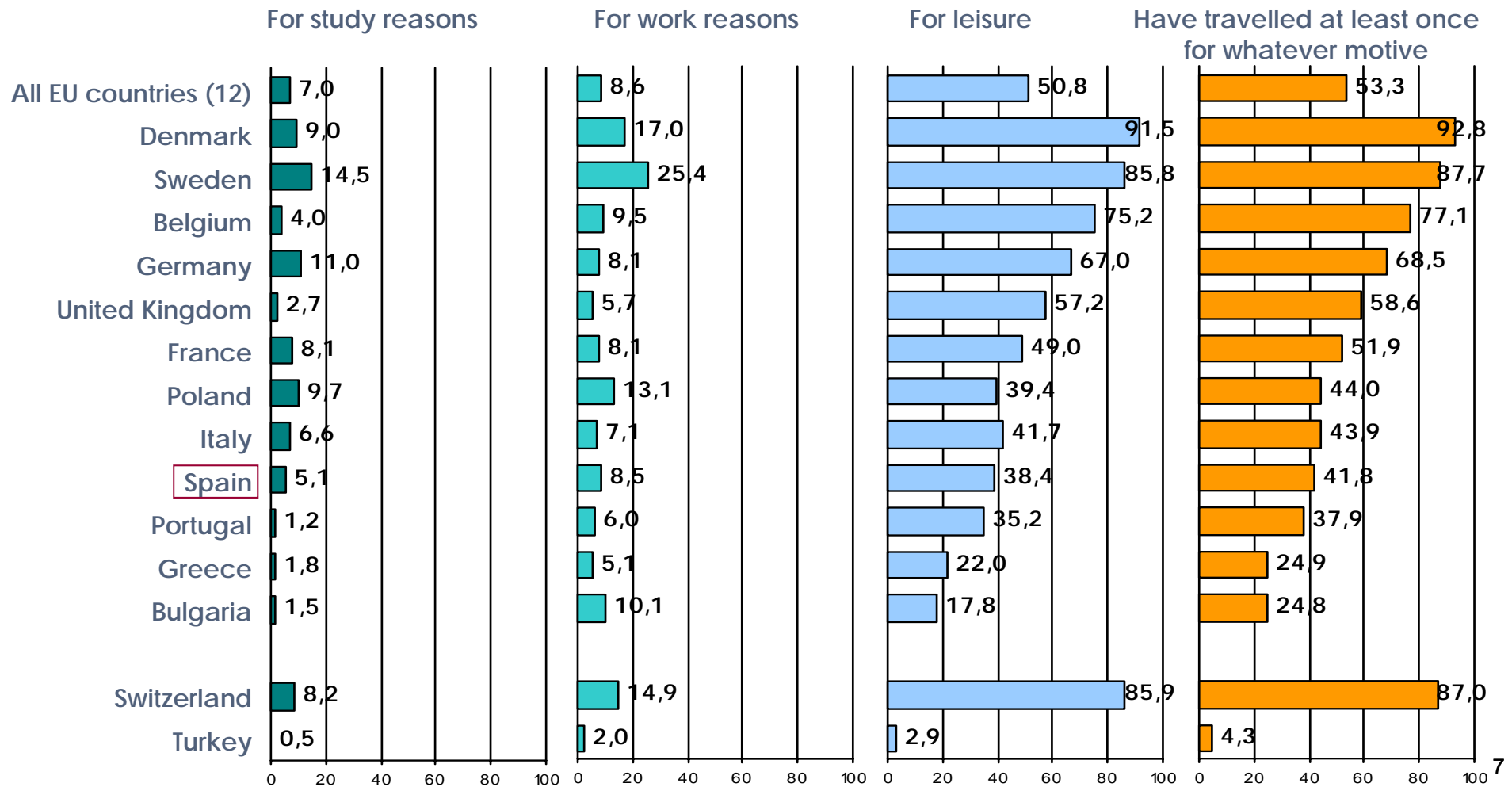
- Degree of exposure to communication media of other European countries varies within each country: it is higher among men and young adults, and rises significantly in line with educational level (age when finished studying) and among the upper-middle and upper social classes
- In Spain, these factors induce even greater differences in levels of exposure

Percentage that have read a newspaper or magazine or watched a news channel from some other European country in the last month. Base: all cases



- Mobility between European countries is mainly for leisure purposes. It varies widely and is tied in closely with the economic conditions of each country.
- The most widely travelled, the Danes, Swedes and Swiss. The least widely travelled, the Turks, Bulgarians and Greeks. 4 out of every 10 Spaniards have travelled to another European country in the past few years, locating Spain below the European average

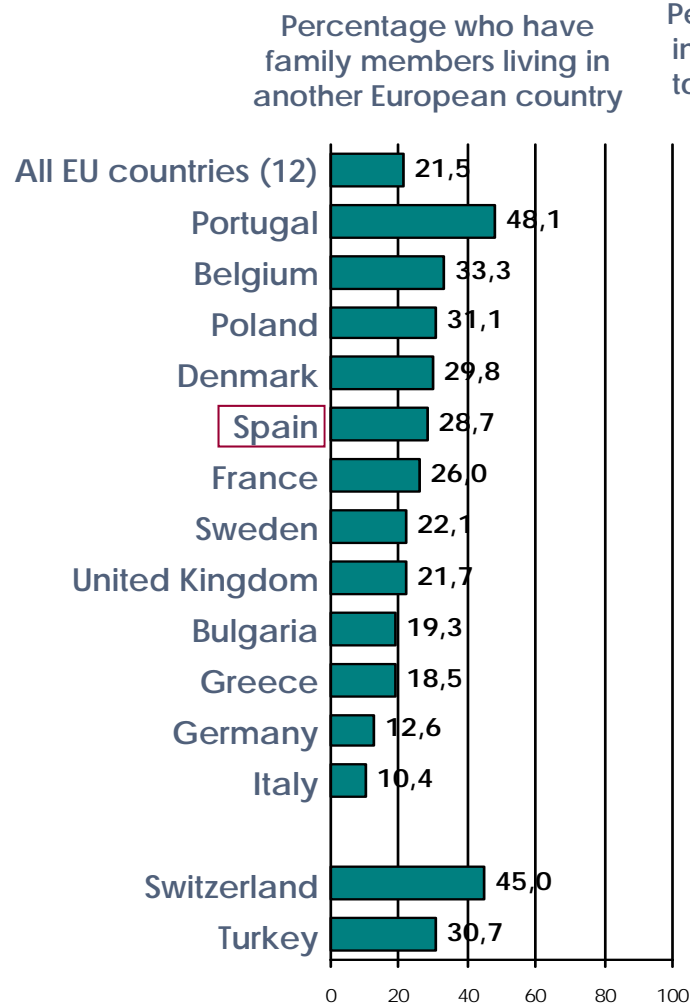
In the last 5 years, have you travelled to another European country? Base: all cases  
Percentage answering yes



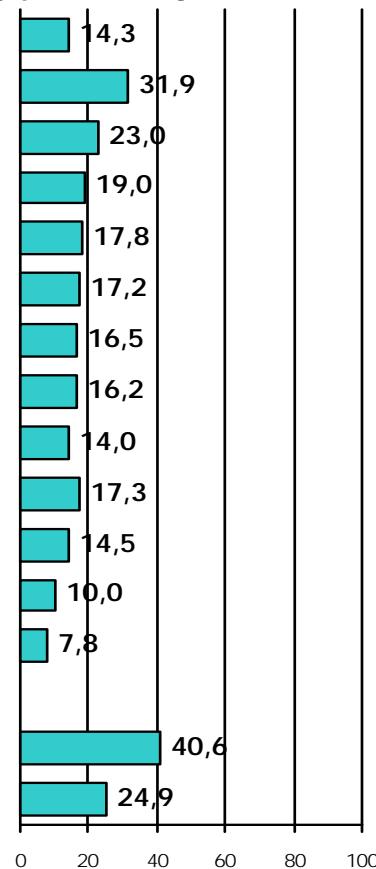
- The proportion of Europeans with family members living in other European countries is small and highly variable across countries. The Portuguese and Swiss are those with most family members elsewhere in Europe while Italians and Germans are those with fewest. Nearly 3 of every 10 Spaniards have family members living in another European country, ahead of the European average

**Do you have any family members living in another country? How often do you contact them or visit them?**

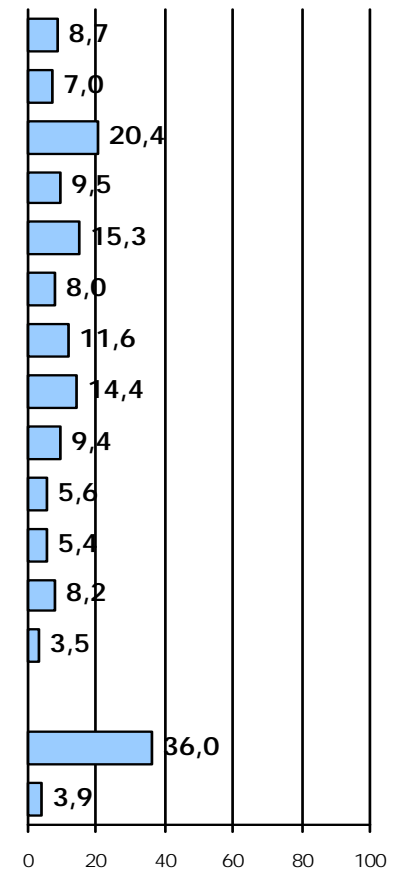
Base: all cases



Percentage who have family members living in another European country and who get in touch with them at least every 2 or 3 months by phone or by email



Percentage who have family members living in another European country and who visit them at least every 2 or 3 years





- Proportionally more Europeans have friends than family members living in another European country, though the percentage again varies widely. Those who have most friends in this situation and keep most closely in touch with them are the Swiss, Swedes and Danes. The percentage of Spaniards with friends living in another European country stands some way above the European average.

Do you have any friends living in another European country? How often do you contact them or visit them?

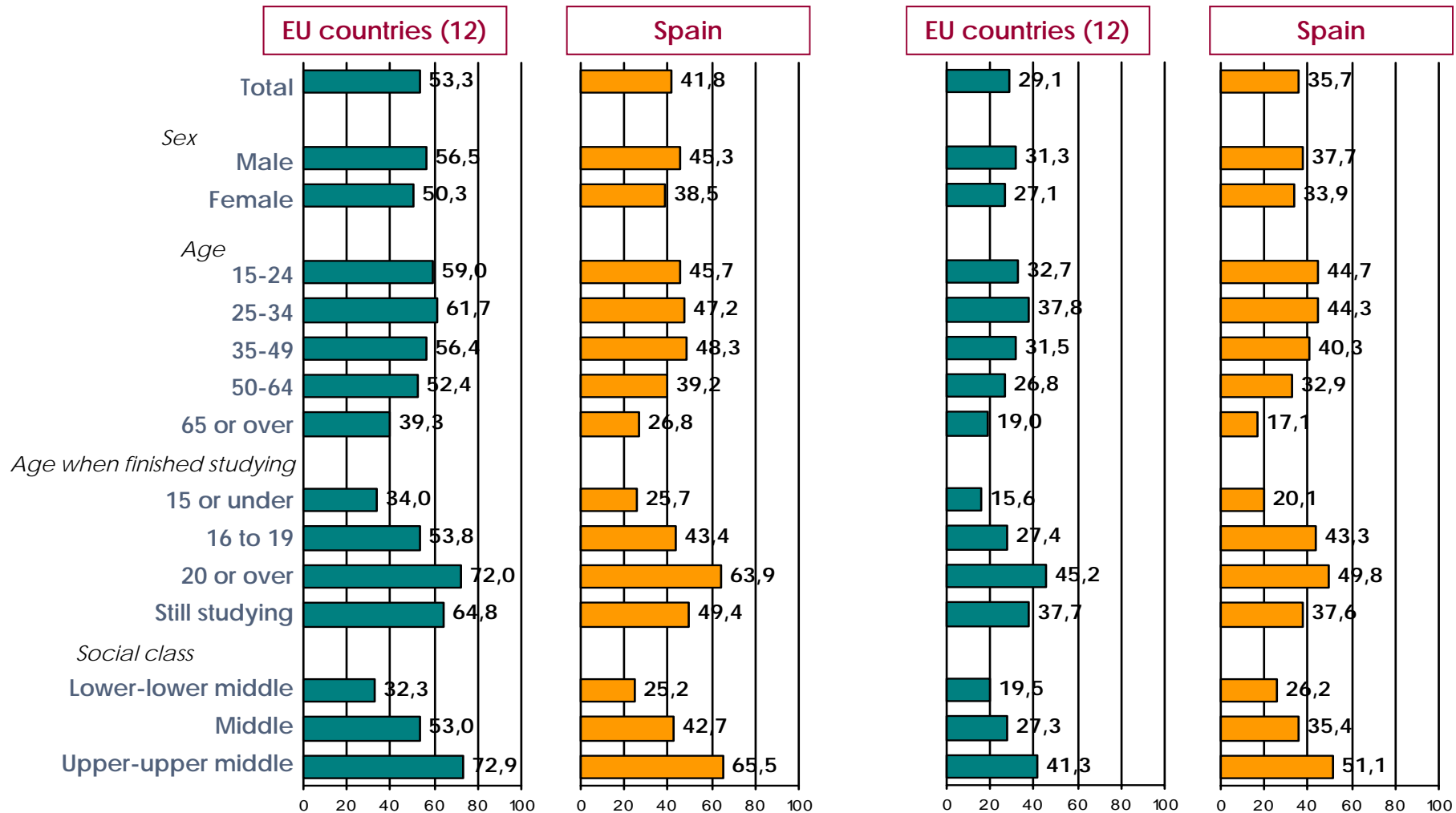
Base: all cases



- Contact with the rest of Europe (through travel or friends in other European countries) follows a similar pattern within each country: increasing significantly along with educational level and social class. It is also greater among men and young adults.
- In Spain too these variables differentiate strongly for connection with Europe.

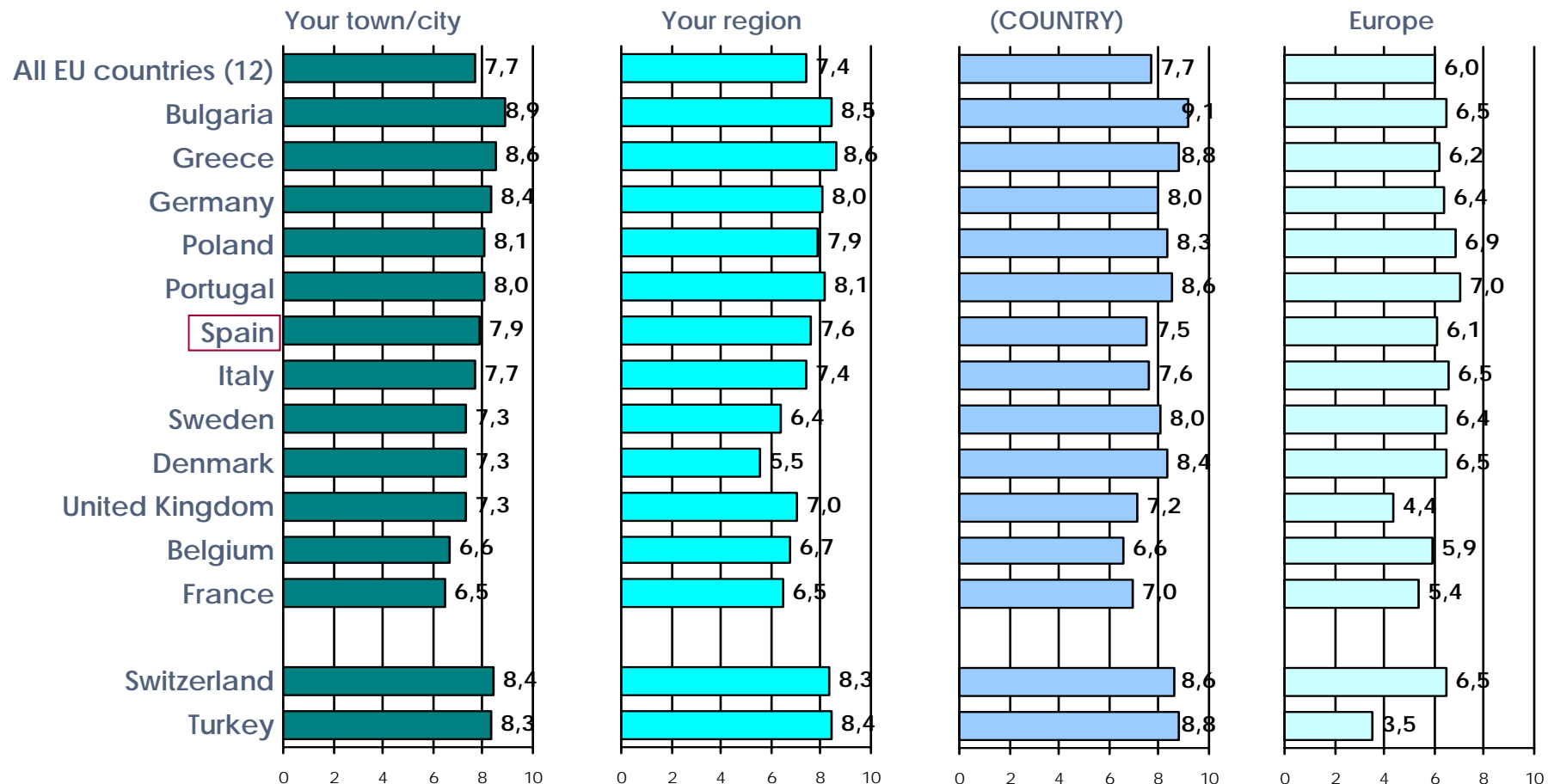
Percentage that have travelled to another European country at least once in the last 5 years. Base: all cases

Percentage with friends living in another European country. Base: all cases



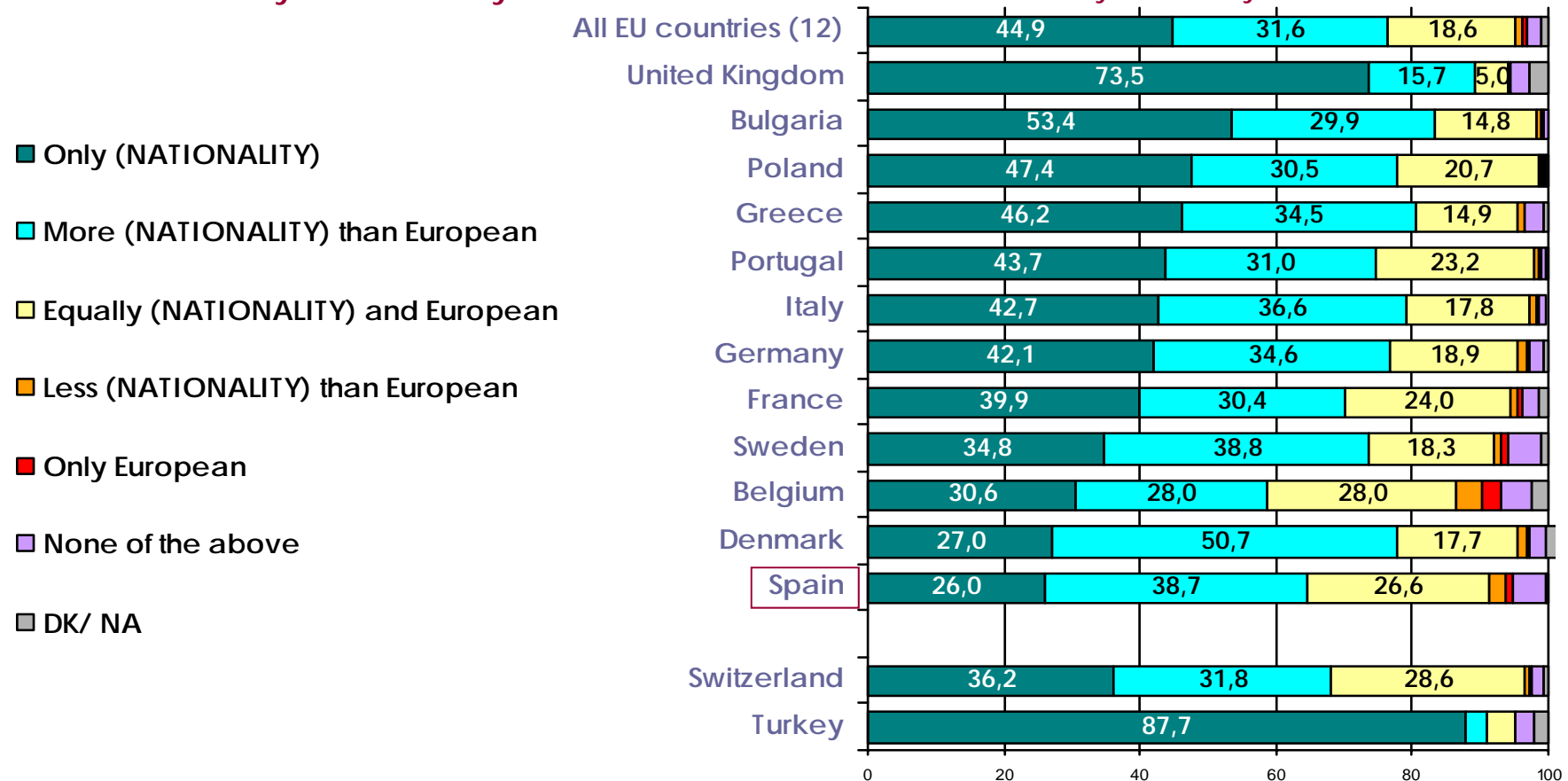
- Identification with different geographical areas coexists at high levels. People place local, regional and national identities above European identity, although the latter lies in the medium to high range. The United Kingdom and, to a greater extent, Turkey stand apart from the rest in their low identification with Europe. The value Spaniards place on each geographical identity is very similar to the average

People may feel attached to or feel part of different places, from their town or region to their country or Europe. Could you tell me how attached you feel to...? Mean on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that you do not feel at all attached and 10 means that you feel very attached to that place. Base: All cases.



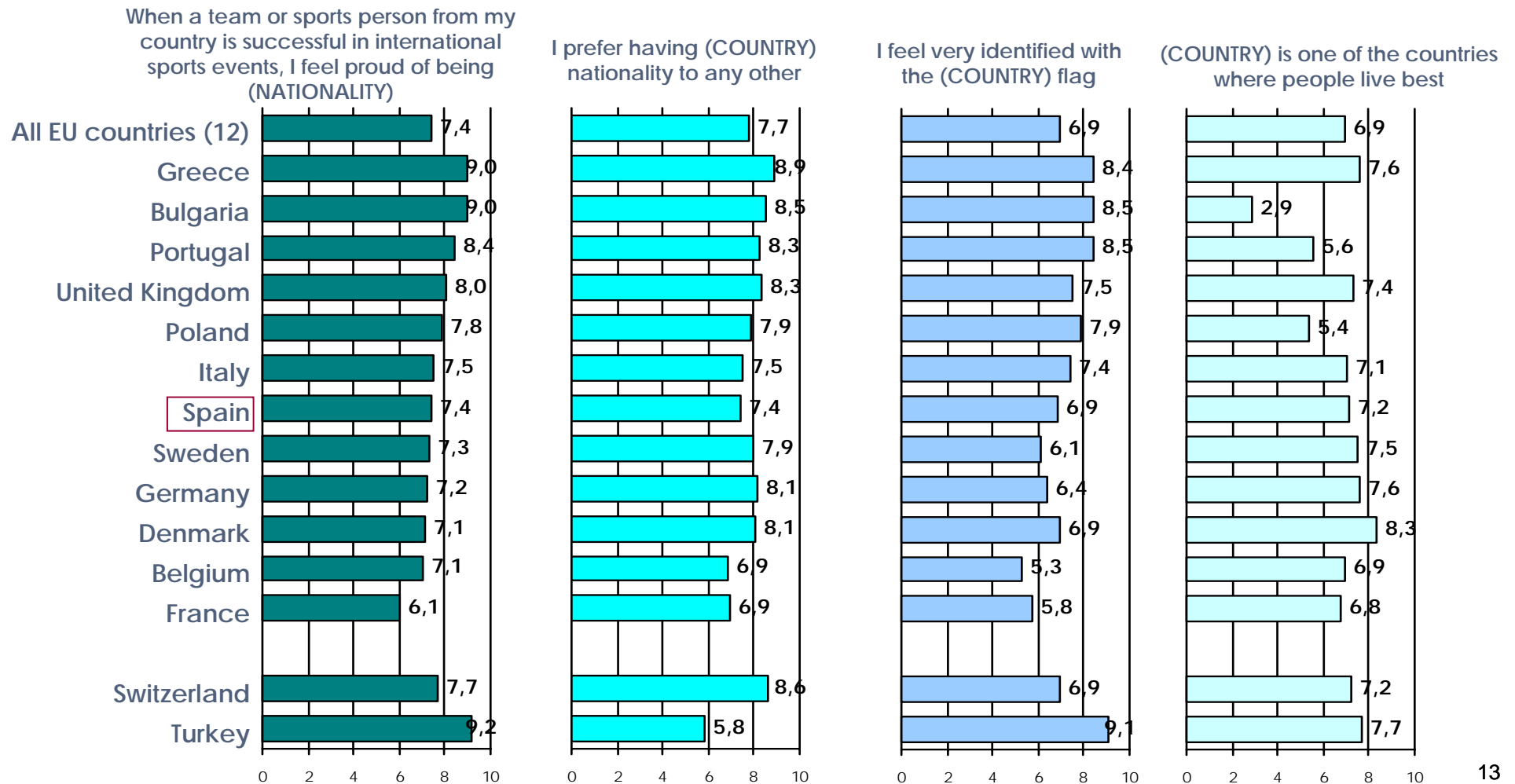
- Taking an overall look at feelings of national and/or European identity, citizens are divided between those who feel exclusively of their own nationality and those who feel of their own nationality and European albeit with differing intensity (generally more of their own nationality than European). Turkey and the United Kingdom stand at a clear distance from the rest with a large majority identifying solely with their own nationality.
- In Spain, the proportion identifying solely with their own nationality is well below the average, with a majority feeling themselves both Spanish and European. Along with Belgium and Switzerland, Spain has the highest percentage of respondents feeling both of their own nationality and European.

Do you consider yourself ...? Base: Citizens born in the country where they were interviewed



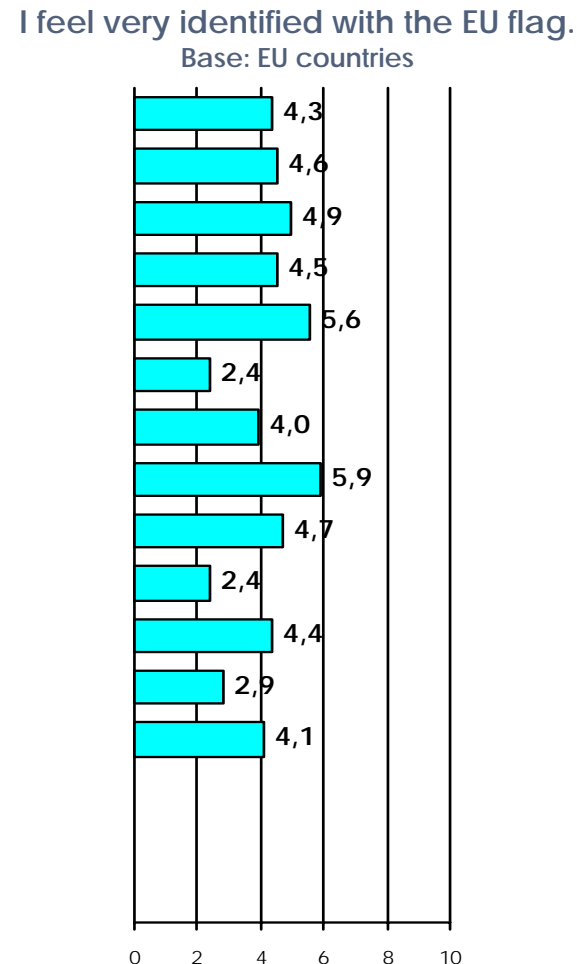
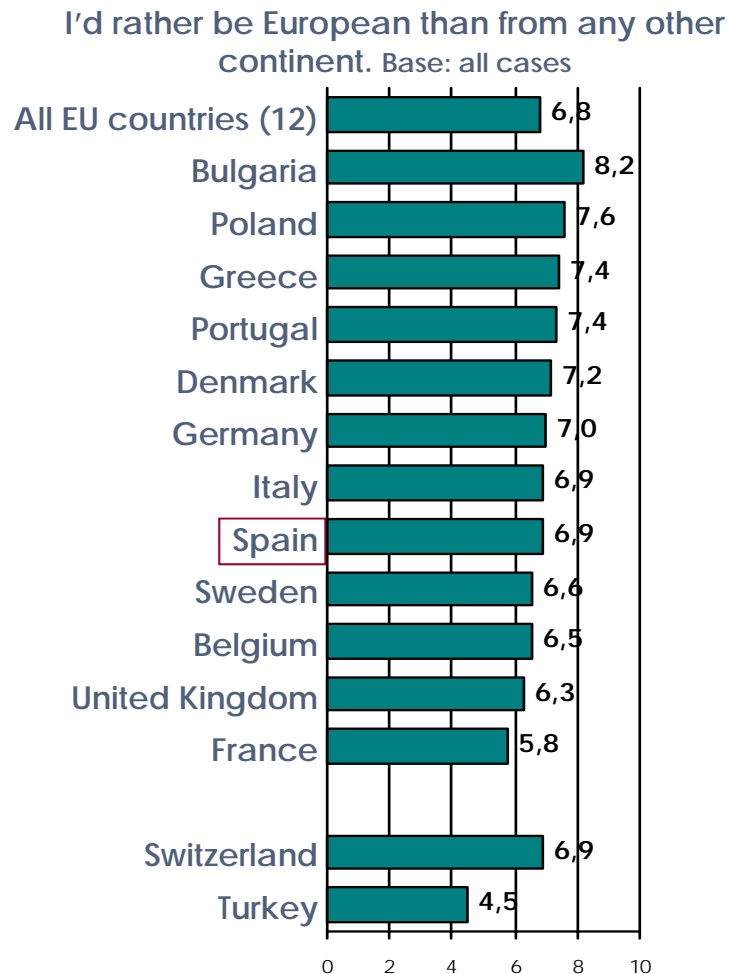
- Europeans express a high level of national identity and pride. Perceptions are more mixed regarding whether their country is where people live best, a question that combines national sentiment with economic reality: citizens answer most affirmatively in Denmark and most negatively in Bulgaria.
- Spain scores close to the European average in all these questions

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following sentences? Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 means you totally agree. Base: Citizens having the nationality of the country where they were interviewed.



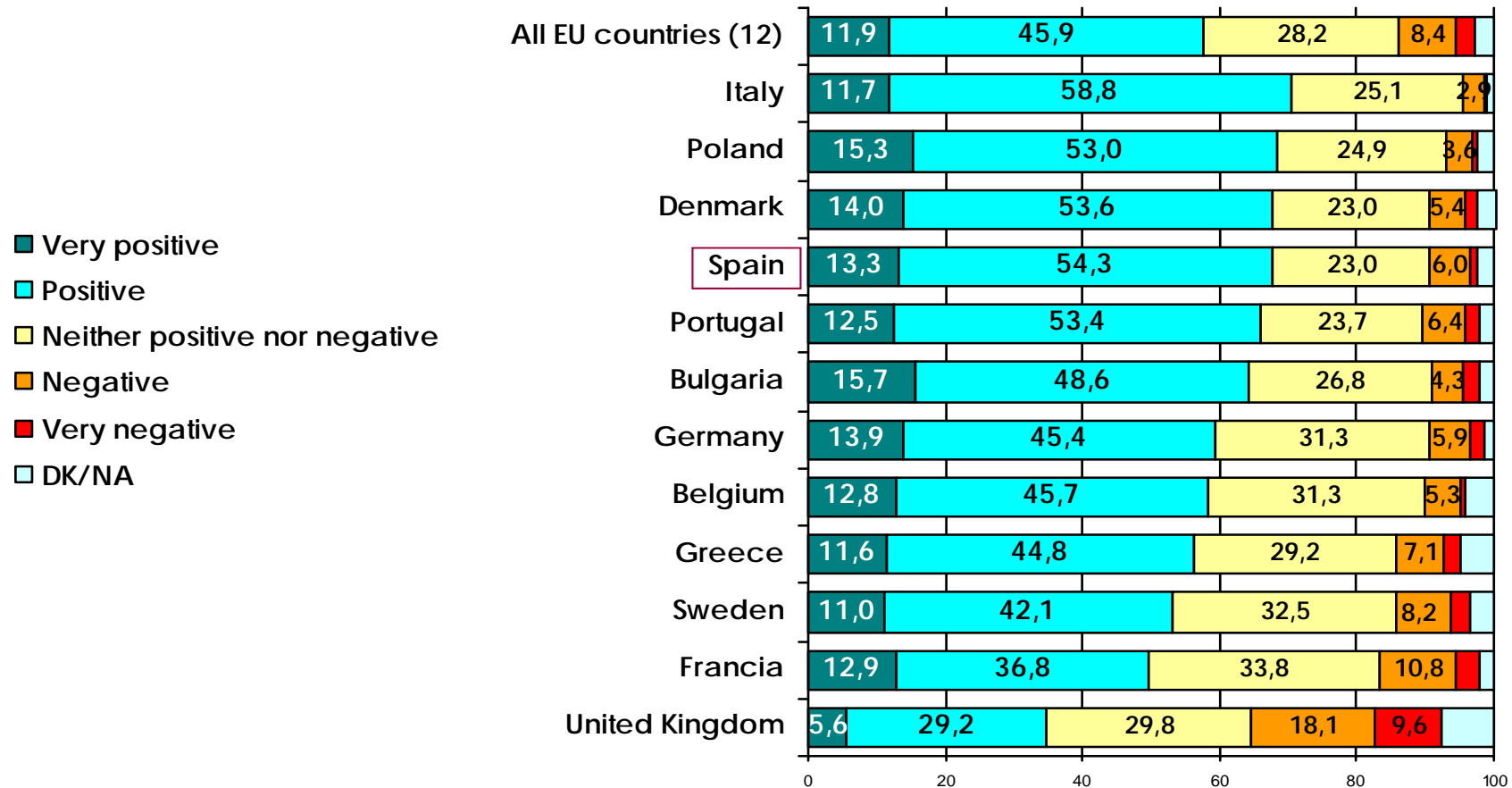
- Strong national identities do not prevent most respondents from preferring Europe over any other continent, an idea accentuated in Bulgaria, attenuated in France and reversed in Turkey.
- The EU flag does not function as a symbol of identity except in Italy and Portugal.
- Spaniards stand close to the average in their preference for being European, and though identification with the EU flag is low, it stands above the sample average

I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following sentences. Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you completely agree and 10 means you completely disagree.



- There is a shared sense of the benefits of being part of the European Union, which is especially strong in Italy, Poland, Denmark, Spain, Portugal and Bulgaria. In Spain, this positive view stands 10 points above the European average.
- The United Kingdom stands apart from the rest with opinion split on whether membership is positive or negative.

In general, would you say that (COUNTRY'S) membership of the European Union is...? Base: All cases in EU countries



- Consensus around the view that EU institutions are distant from citizens and that the EU is more of an economic than a political community. Spain scores just under the European average
- The idea that all countries have the same influence in the European Union is rejected everywhere except Italy and Poland. Spain is the country disagreeing most strongly with this view

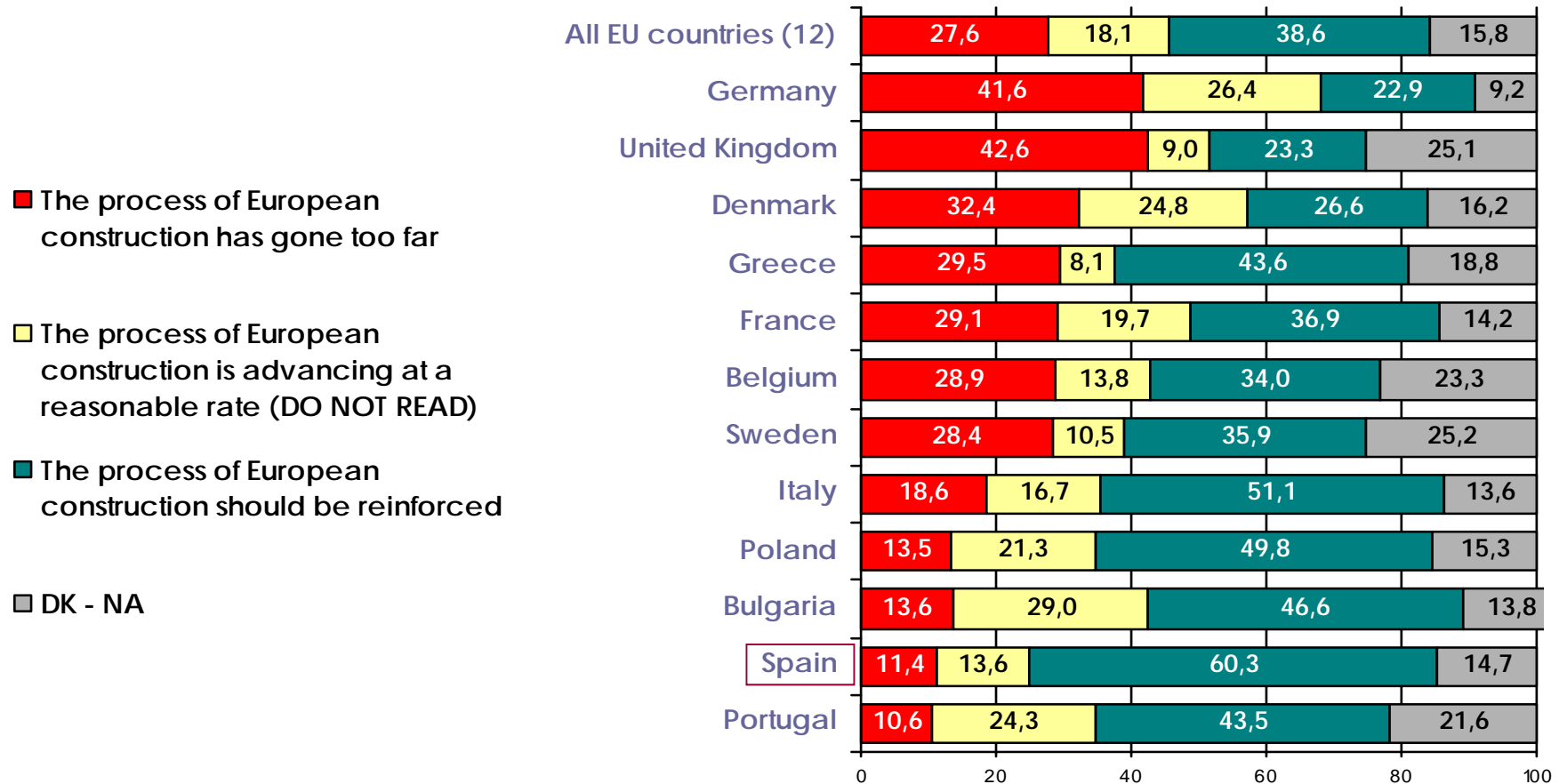
I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about the European Union. Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. You may of course give any score between 0 and 10. Base: All cases in EU countries





- Opinions are divided regarding the progress of European construction, though a majority feel it should be reinforced. This feeling is strongest in Spain and, at a distance, Italy and Poland.
- The view that it has gone too far is strongest in Germany and the United Kingdom.

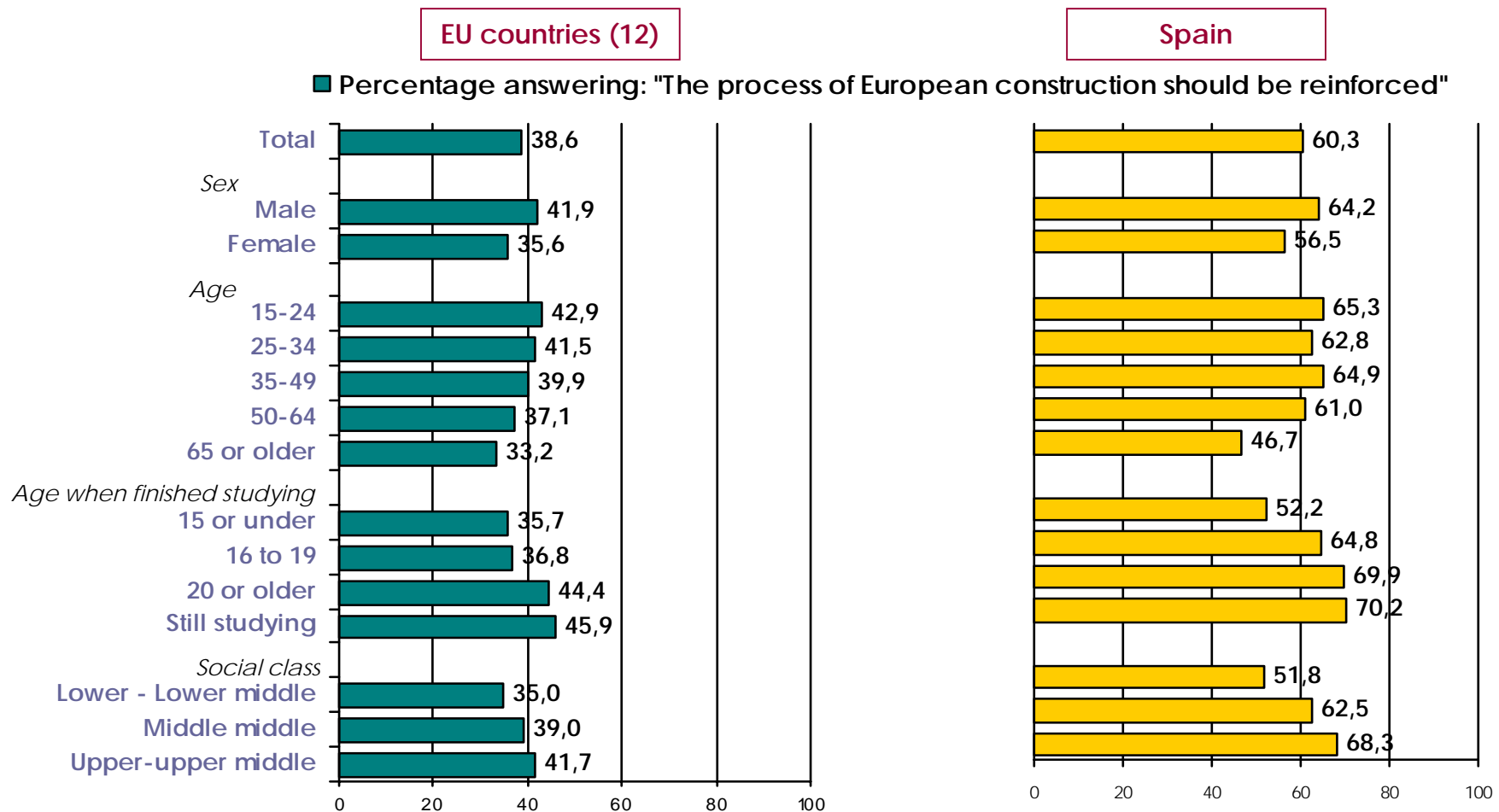
Some people think that process of European construction has gone too far, while others believe that European construction should be given more encouragement. Which of these two opinions do you agree with more? Base: all cases in EU countries



- In all countries, the preference for reinforcing the European construction process is greater among men, young adults, those with a higher educational level and those belonging to the upper middle or upper classes.
- The idea of reinforcing European construction finds more support in Spain, with preferences varying even more widely by sociodemographic segment,

Some people think that the process of European construction has gone too far, while others believe that European construction should be reinforced. Which of these two opinions do you agree with more?

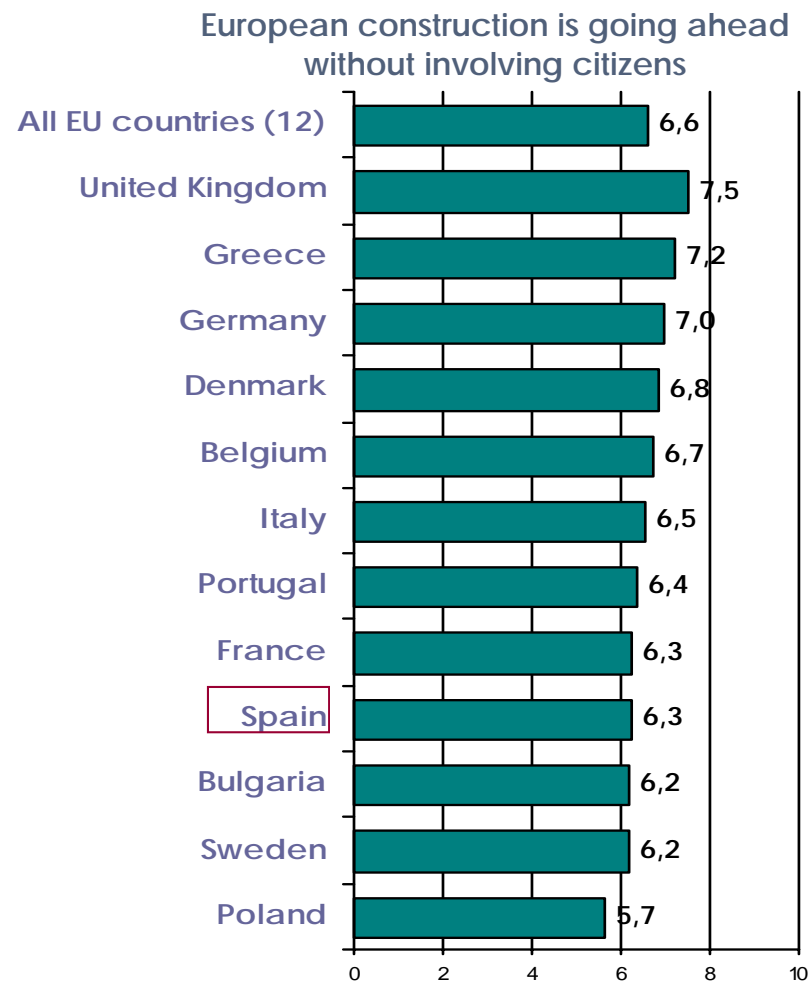
Base: all cases in EU countries



- Consensus in all countries that European construction is going ahead without involving citizens.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement regarding European construction?

Mean on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: All cases in EU countries



***Personal experience in and of other European countries is limited as well as notably unequal between countries***

- Connection with Europe is weak as well as significantly variable: in most countries, consumption of communication media from elsewhere in Europe, mobility towards other European countries and the population segment with family and social networks in Europe are limited only.

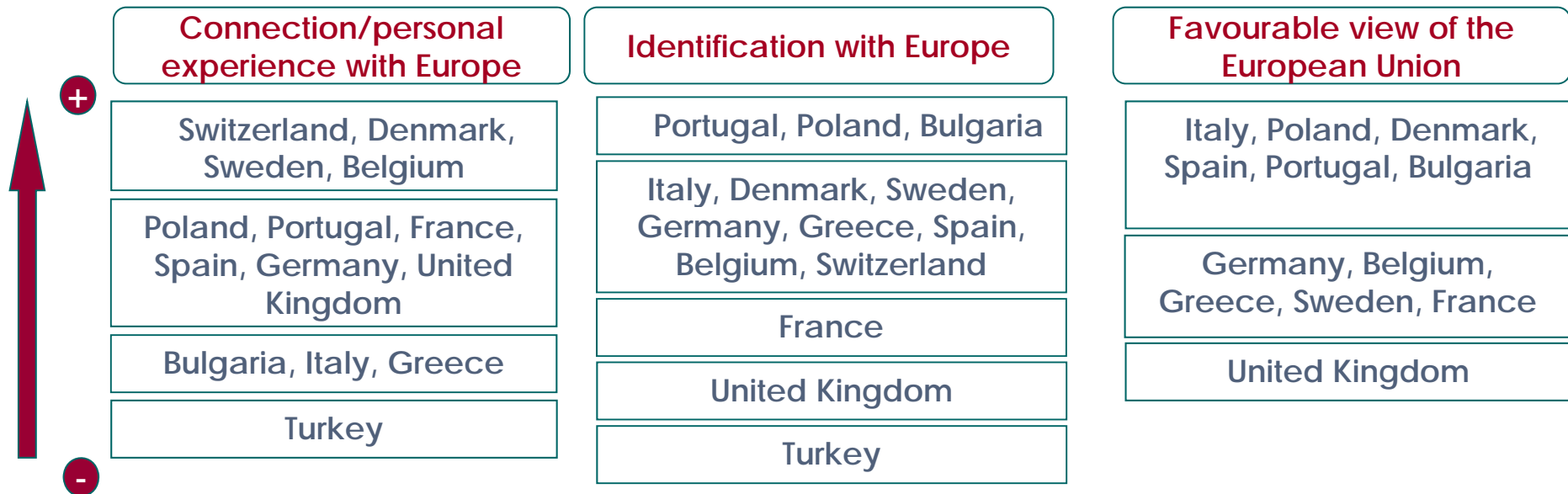
***Local and national identities are stronger than the European identity. However, they are not mutually exclusive but coexist at high levels***

- Identification with Europe stands in the medium-high range and is not built at the cost of local or national identity. On the contrary, local and national identities are still placed above the European identity, although they coexist without contradiction.

***Citizens do not feel truly involved in European construction***

- Membership of the European Union is positively rated, though most see it as an economic rather than political community. In many countries the idea predominates that European construction should be reinforced, although it is seen as something remote from citizens. EU institutions are also seen as distant from citizens.

CONNECTION AND IDENTIFICATION WITH EUROPE



***The Spaniards and Europe***

- Spaniards occupy an intermediate position in their connection with Europe. Mobility towards other European countries is somewhat below the European average, while Spaniards' social and family networks in other European countries are not particularly large, but exceed the sample average
- Spain stands apart from remaining countries in that a majority feel both Spanish and European (though more the former), rather than solely of their own nationality.
- Spain is one of the strongest adherents of European Union membership and also the country most in favour of reinforcing the European construction process. This is not say that it does not see European construction as a remote process

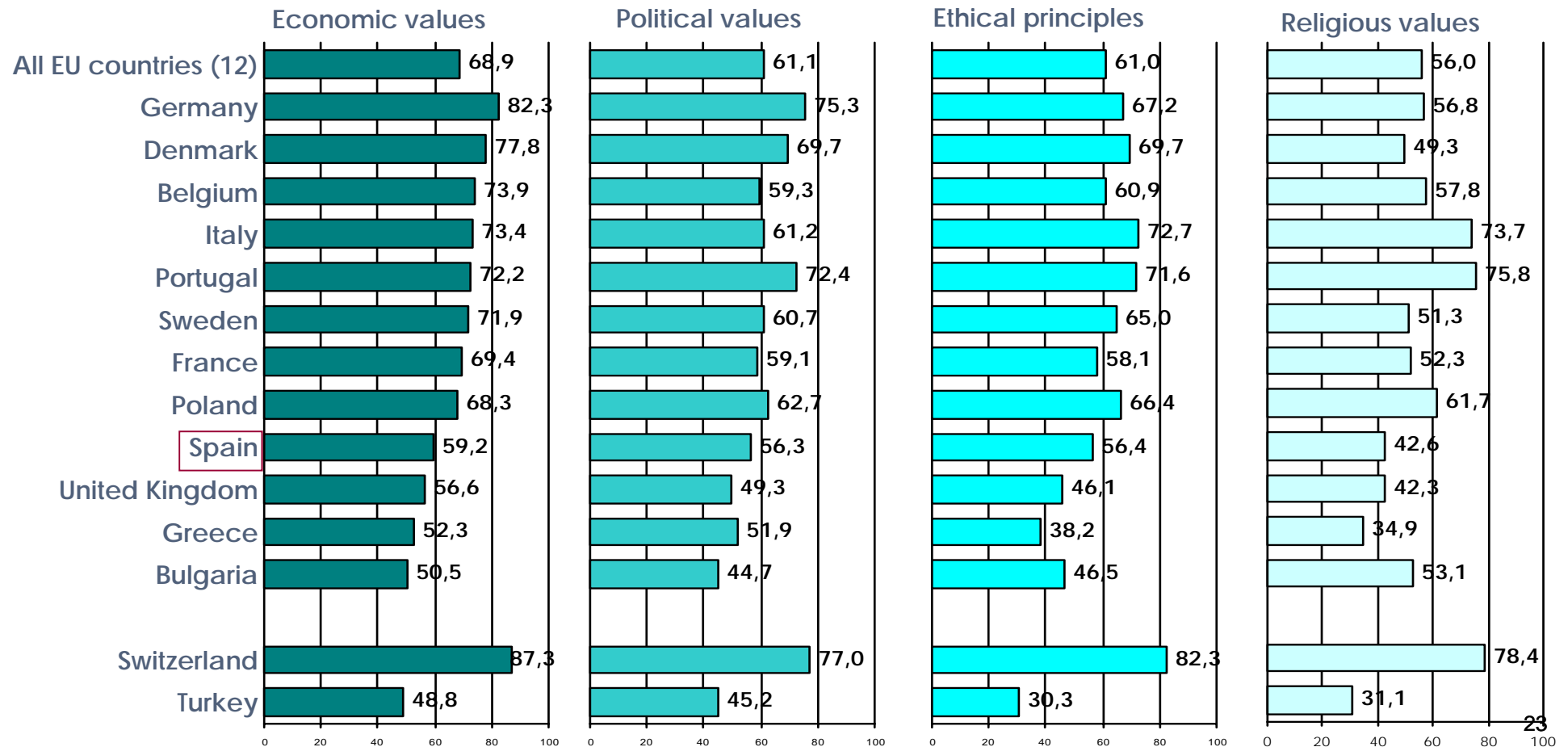
## The public space Political and economic values



- Values that characterise Europe
- Views on the market economy
- Views on the role of the state
- Attitudes to the link between the state and religion

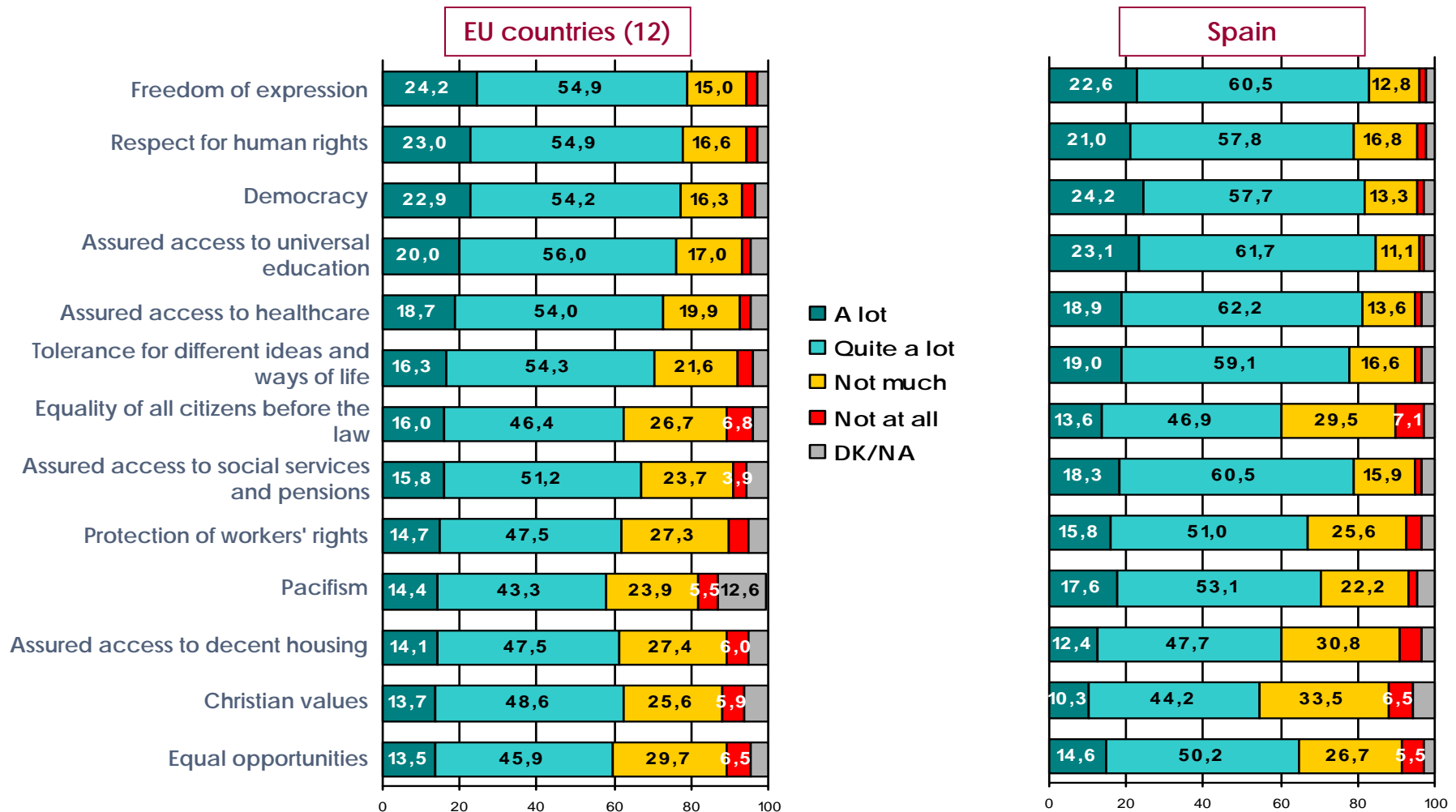
- A majority of citizens see Europe as a community sharing economic and political values, ethical principles and, to a lesser extent, also religious values.
- Those least convinced by this convergence of values are the Turks, Bulgarians, Greeks and British. Spaniards also express below-average conviction of this convergence, especially as regards religious values.

Would you say that (COUNTRY) shares the following traits or elements with the remaining European countries to a large extent, to quite a large extent, not much or not at all? Base: all cases  
Percentage answering "Completely + Quite a large extent"



- For its citizens, Europe is characterised by traits and values like democracy, respect for human rights, tolerance, Christian values, pacifism and the attributes of the welfare state (access to education, healthcare, social services, etc.).
- Spaniards express an above-average conviction that Europe is characterised by pacifism and access to social services and a lower-than-average conviction that it is guided by Christian values.

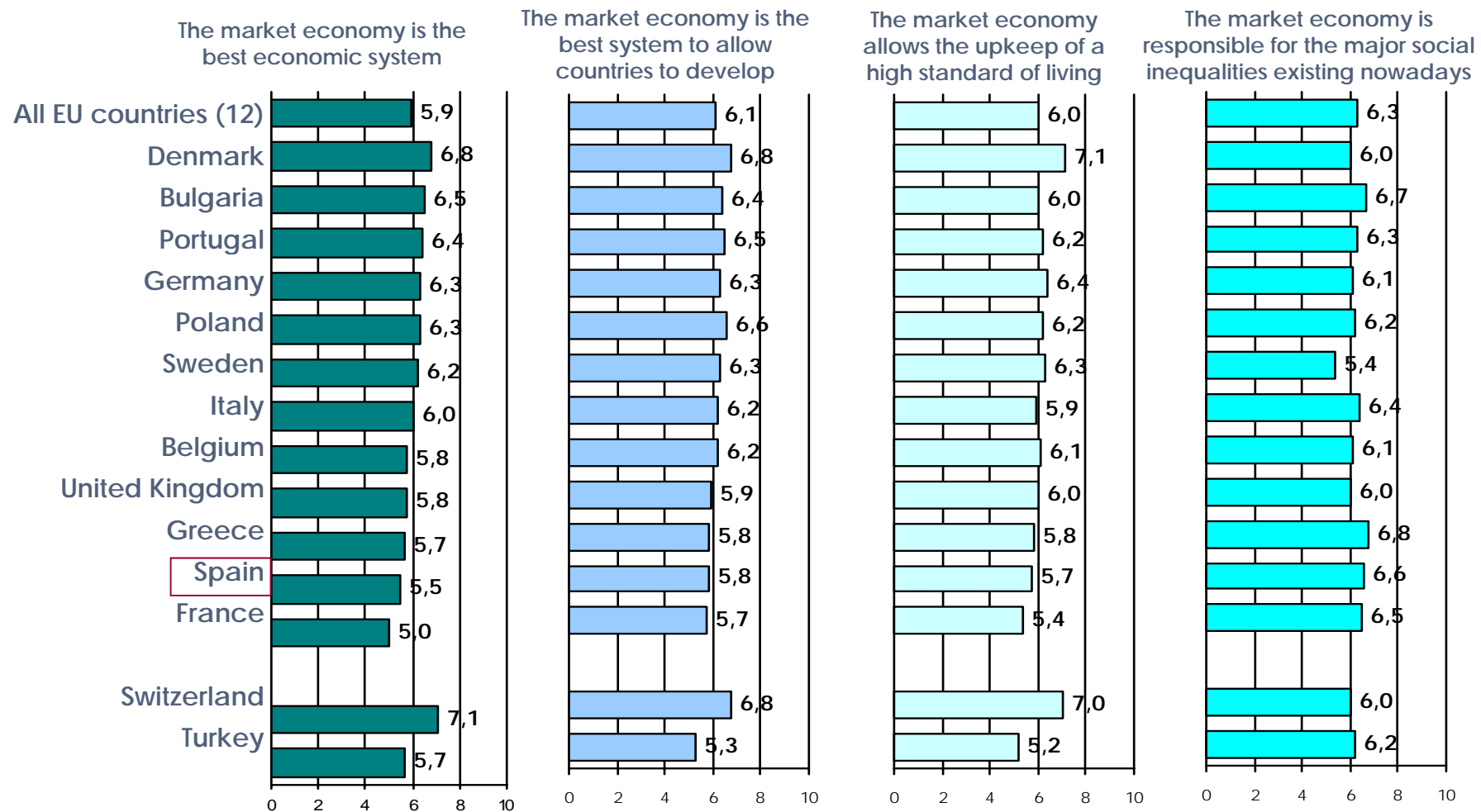
I am now going to read out a series of qualities. And I would like you to tell me to what extent you think each of these qualities defines Europe. Do you believe they define it a lot, quite a lot, not much or not at all? Base: all cases





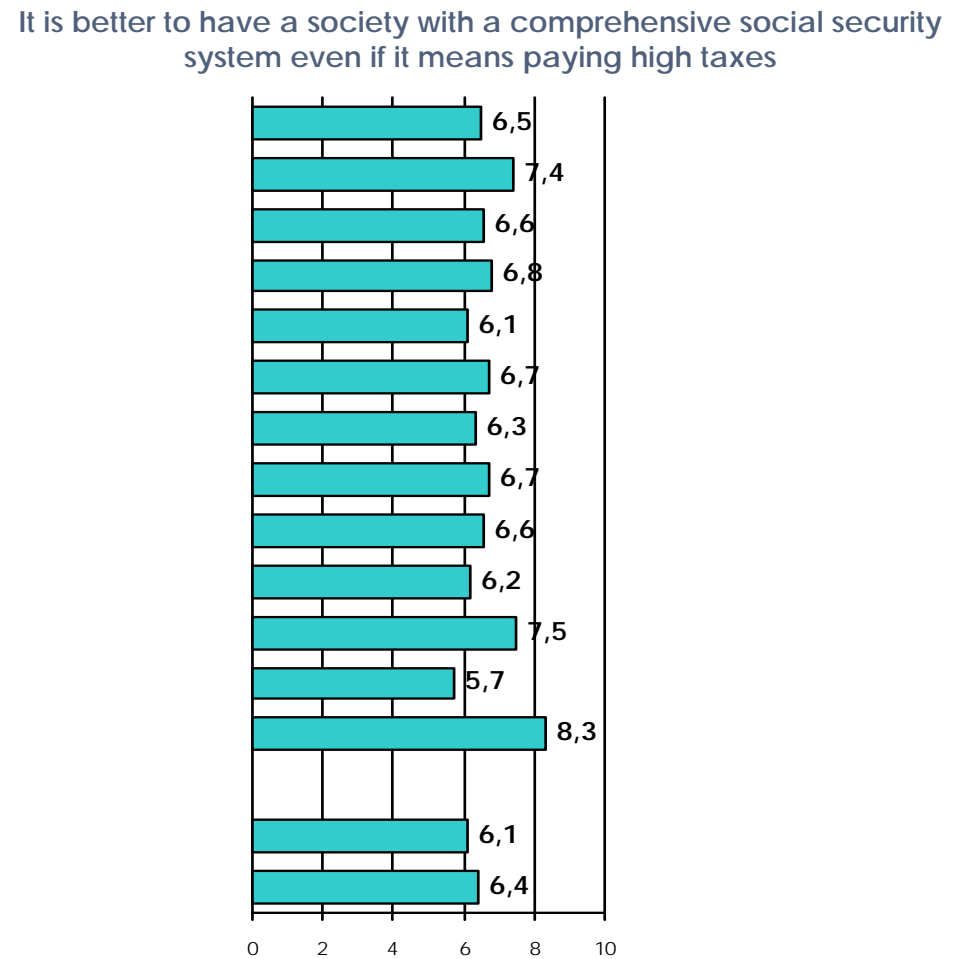
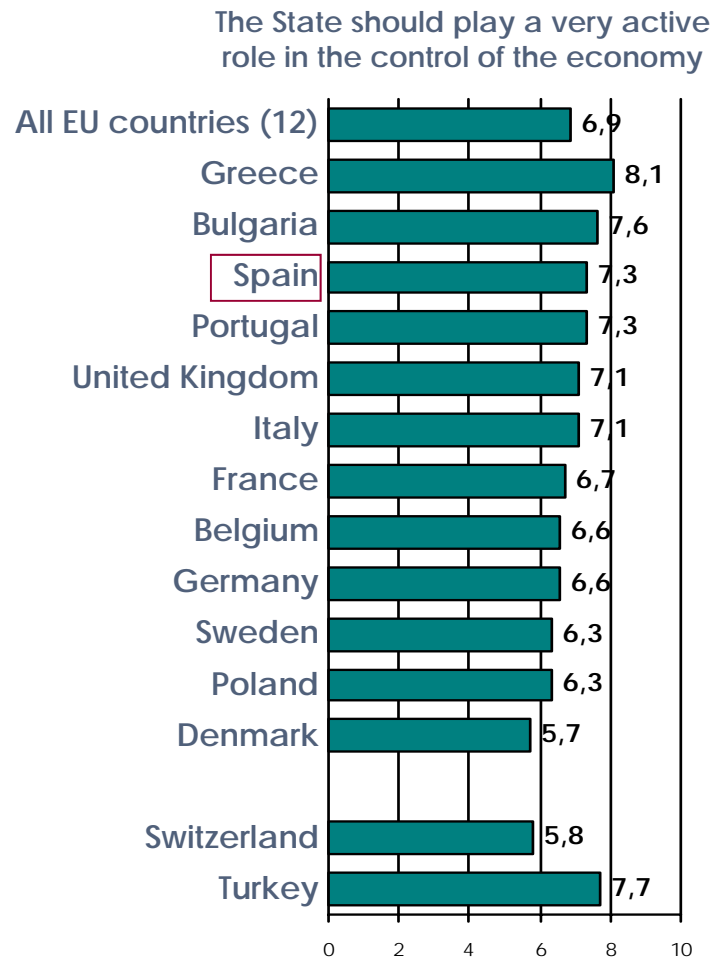
- Consensus that the market economy is the best economic system. Respondents nevertheless see it as combining positive traits (favouring countries' development, upkeep of a high standard of living) with negative ones (responsible for social inequalities). The Spaniards, along with the French, stand out for their more critical view of the market economy.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following sentences? Mean on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: All cases



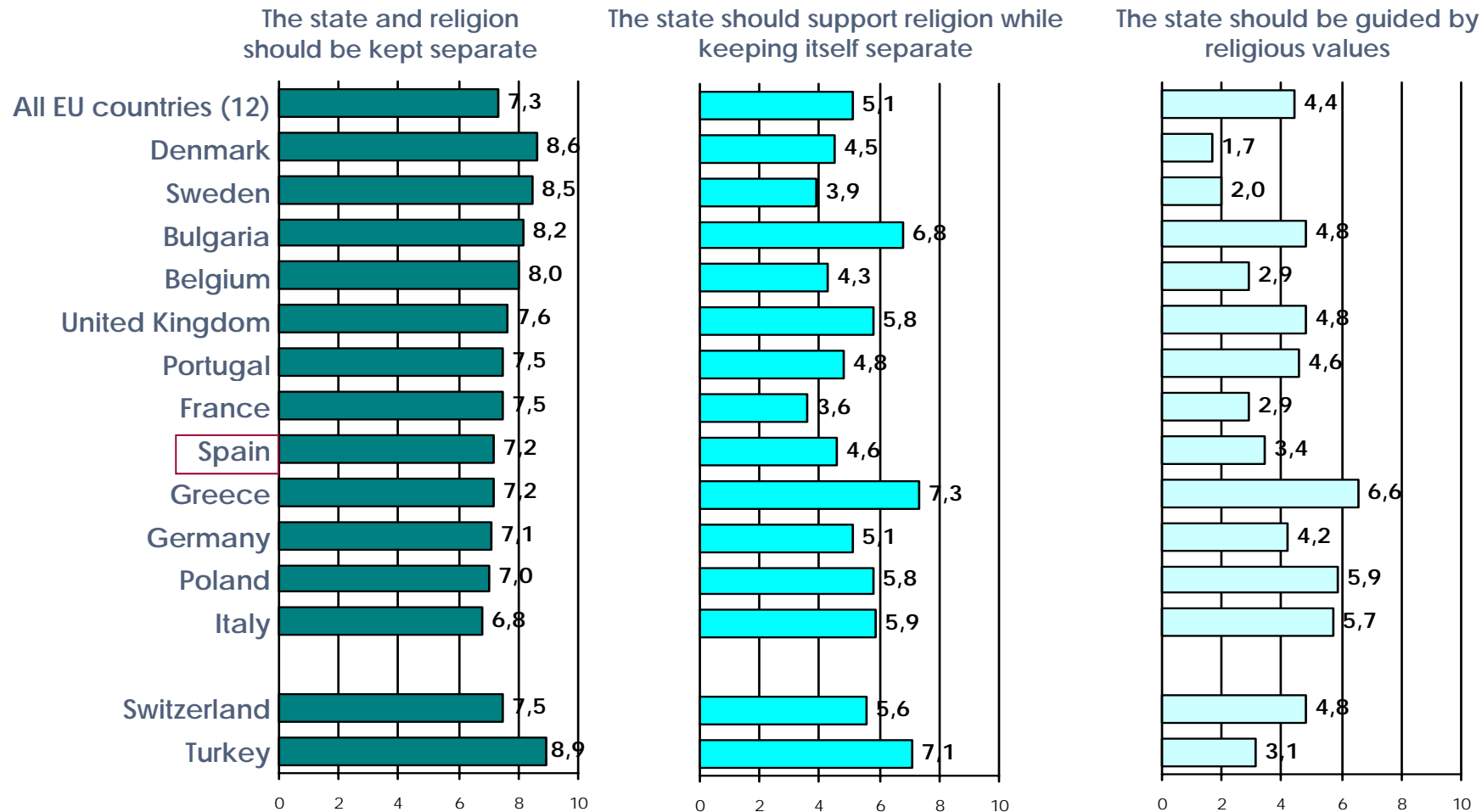
- The preference for a market economy coincides with a broad consensus that the state should play a highly active role in controlling the economy and that it is better to have a comprehensive social security system even if it means paying high taxes.
- Spain stands a little above the European average in its support for an active state presence in the economy and the welfare state model.

How much you agree or disagree with each of the sentences I am now going to read to you. Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: all cases



- Cross-sample consensus on the need for separation between the state and religion, though the link between the two (in terms of support or guidance) is viewed very differently:
- In Bulgaria, Greece, Italy and Poland, the dominant idea is that the state should support religion. In Greece, Poland and Italy a majority agree that the state should be guided by religious values
- Spain, the Scandinavian countries, Belgium and France are the most opposed to a close link between state and religion

How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: all cases.



*The values citizens see as characterising Europe are similar to those stated in the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights*

- For its citizens, Europe is characterised by values linked to freedom of expression, respect for human rights, democracy, tolerance, Christian values, pacifism and the attributes of the welfare state (access to education, healthcare, social services and pensions, etc.)

*The convergence of political and economic values is a reality in Europe*

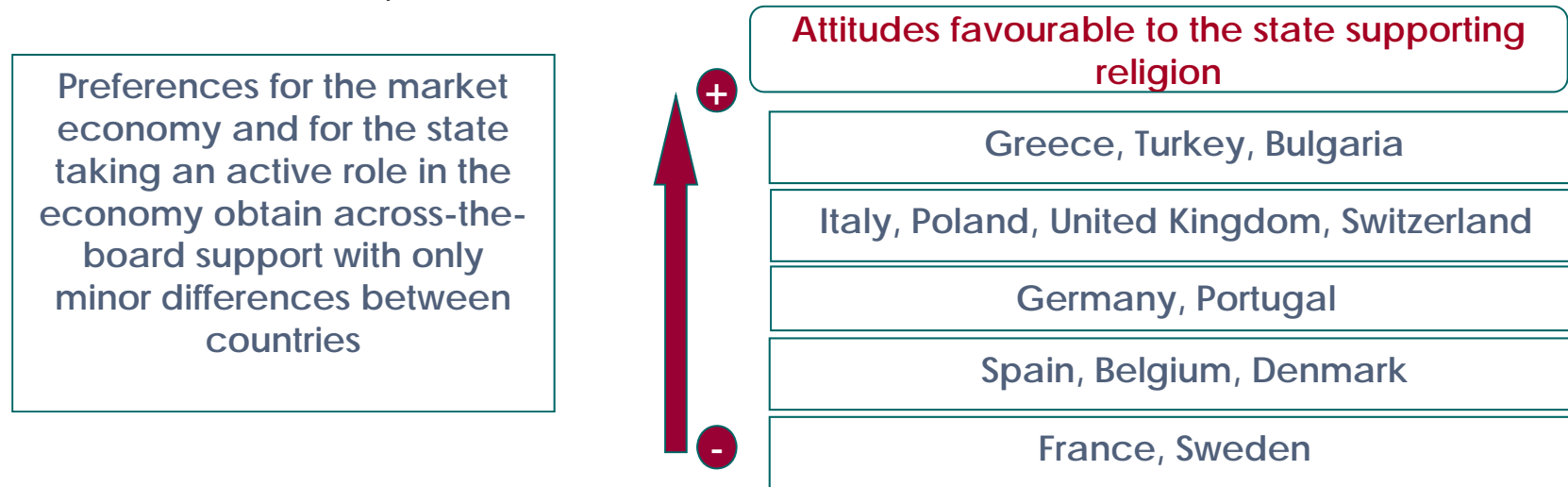
- Citizens feel that they share political and economic values with other member countries, and the data confirm that they concur in their views on key issues like the market or the role of the state

*Europeans express a shared preference for the market economy but also a strong state presence in the economy*

- This preference squares with their decided support for the welfare state model

*The separation between state and religion is a keystone of Europe's institutional architecture, which meets with the firm acceptance of its citizens*

- Europeans are firmly in agreement about the need for the state and religion to be kept separate. However, countries differ on whether or not the state should support religion, and whether it should be guided by religious values



### *The Spaniards and Europe*

- Spaniards are less inclined than the average to believe that their country shares religious values with the rest of Europe. They are also the citizens that least tend to characterise Europe by reference to its Christian values
- They express the strongest disagreement with the need for the state to support religion or to be guided by religious values, along with citizens of the Scandinavian countries, Belgium and France
- Spaniards are readier than the average to see Europe as characterised by pacifism and access to social services
- Despite expressing a preference for the market economy, Spaniards are, along with the French, the most inclined to take a critical view
- Spain scores above the European average in preferring the state to take an active role in the control of the economy and in its support for the welfare state

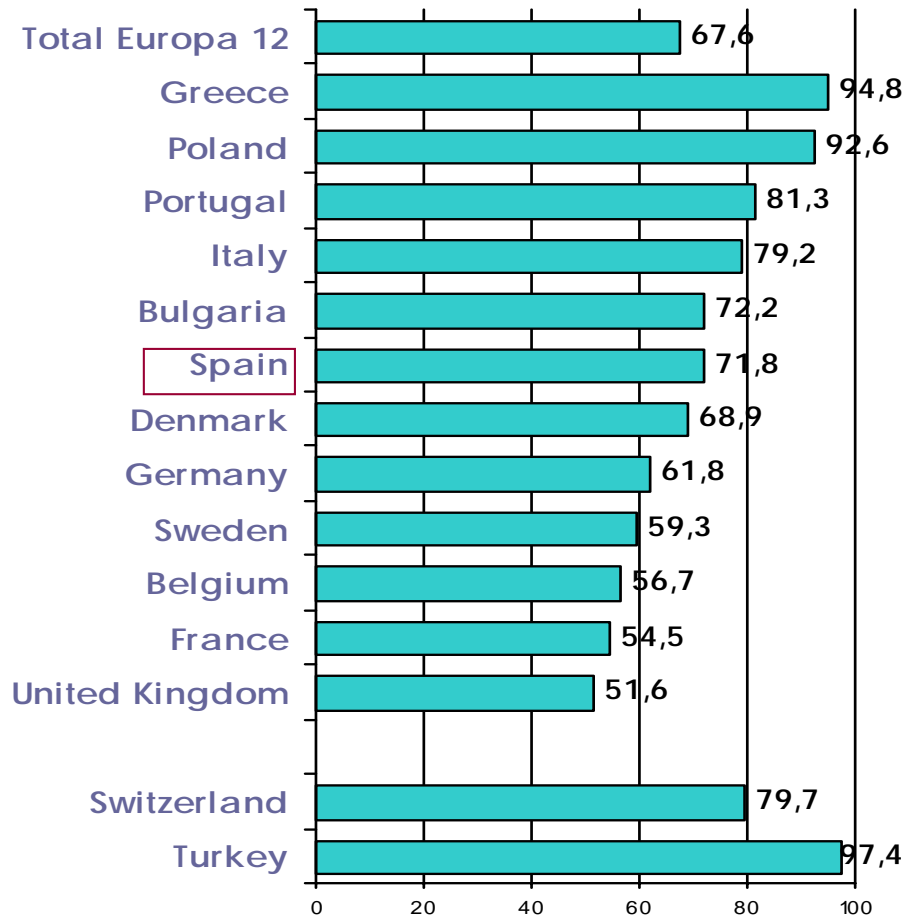
## Religion and ethics



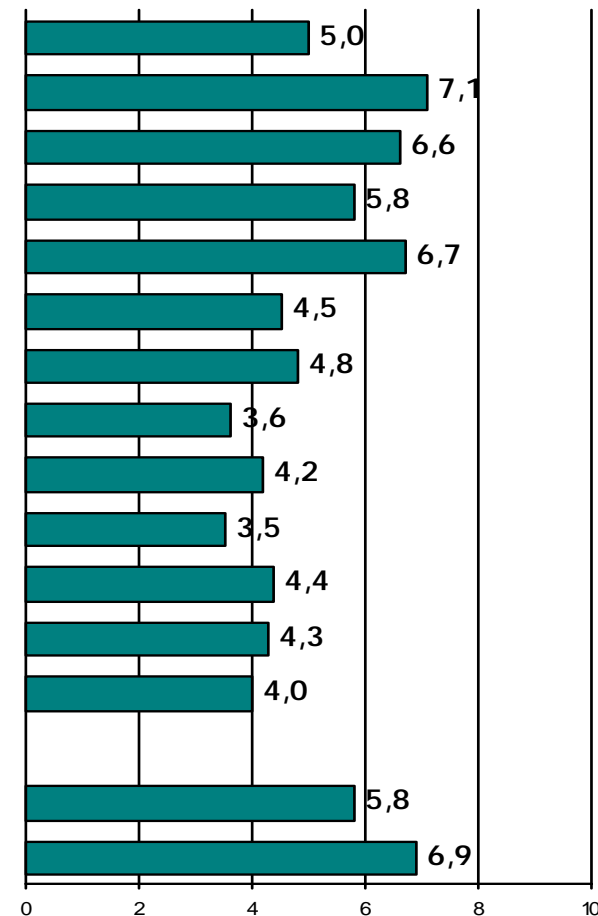
- Religiosity and importance of religion
- Link between religion and ethics
- Acceptance of the display of religious symbols
- Views on ethical principles
- Acceptability of situations touching on moral beliefs

- Although most respondents belong to a religion, to a greater or lesser extent, the level of religiosity is notably uneven: with the highest levels corresponding to Greeks, Italians, Poles and Turks; and the lowest to the Swedes, Danes and Britons. In Spain, religiosity is in the medium-low interval, although 7 out of every 10 Spaniards say they are a member of some religion.

Do you belong to a religion?  
Responding affirmatively  
Base: all cases

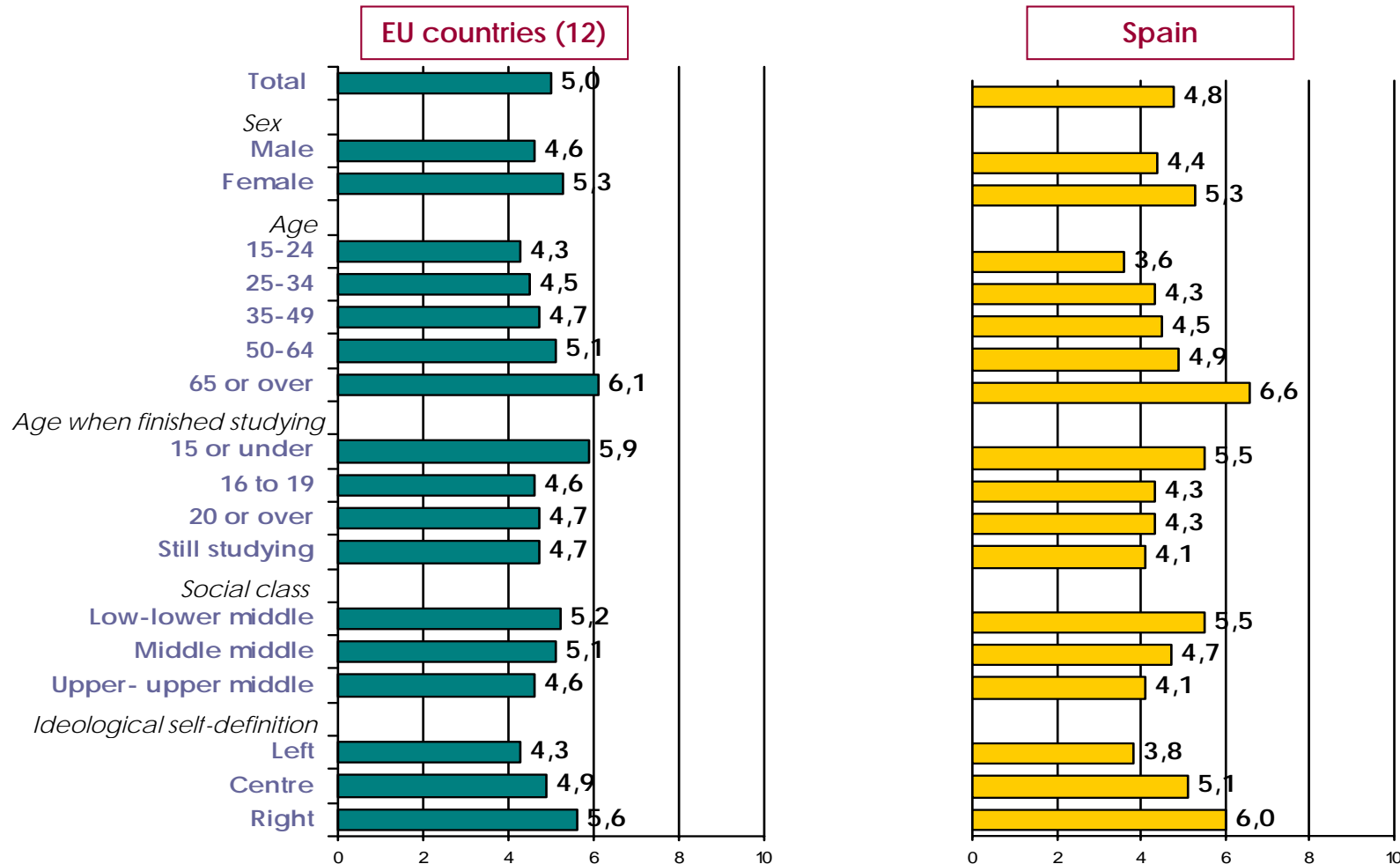


Whether or not you consider yourself a member of some religion, how would you describe yourself?  
Mean on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means that you are "not religious at all" and 10 means that you are "very religious".  
Base: all cases



- Religiosity is higher among women and, most notably, among the population aged 65 and over, those who finished their studies aged 15 or under, the lower and lower-middle classes and those defining themselves as on the right. In Spain, these sociodemographic and ideological characteristics are an even stronger determinant of religiosity.

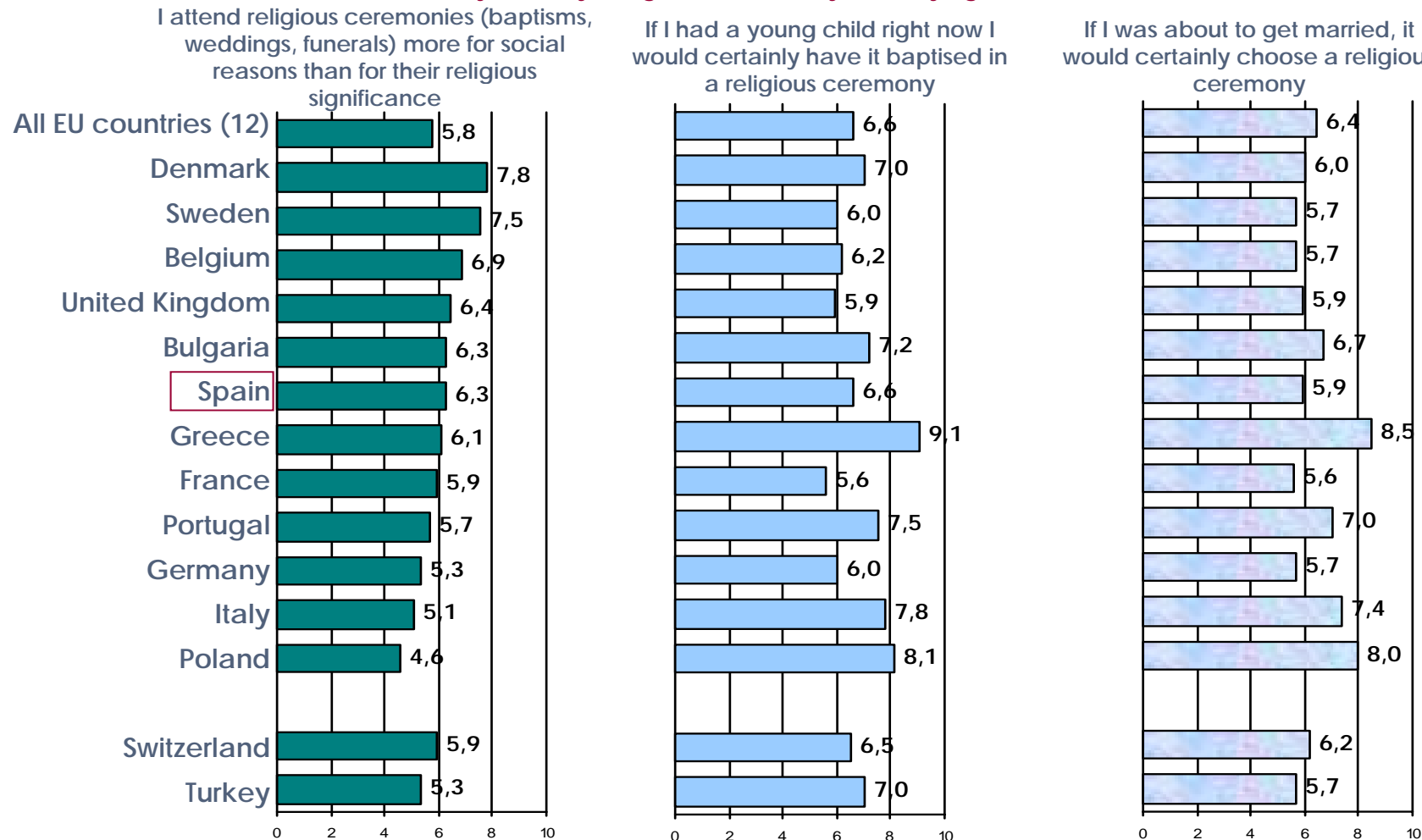
Whether or not you consider yourself a member of some religion, how would you describe yourself? Average on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means that you are “not religious at all” and 10 means that you are “very religious”. Base: all cases.





- Majority of people say they attend religious ceremonies more for social reasons than for their religious significance, except for the Poles. The Scandinavian countries are those most frequently stating the social motive.
- A majority would still choose to celebrate births or marriages through a religious ceremony, with this preference especially strong in Greece, Poland, Italy and Portugal. Spaniards occupy an intermediate position in relation to the sample.

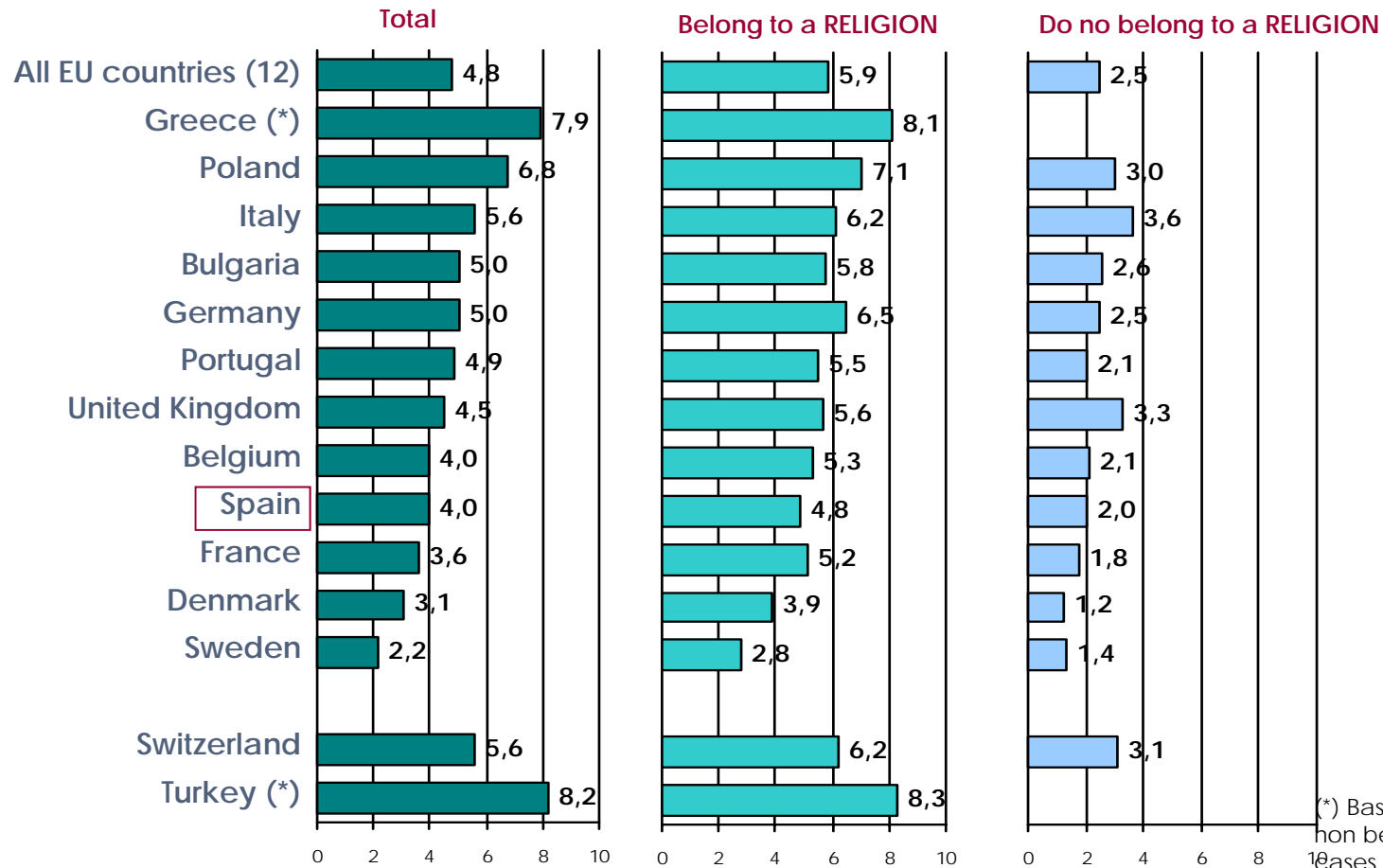
To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following sentences. Average on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 means that you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: All cases.



- Division in Europe around the link between ethics and religion. The idea that you have to believe in a religion to have values and act in an ethical way finds majority support in Turkey, Greece and Poland and minority support only in countries like Sweden, Denmark, France, Spain and Belgium.
- Except in Sweden, Denmark and Spain, those who are members of a religion perceive a positive link between ethics and religion. Conversely, those not belonging to any religion see no such link.

I will now read you a series of sentences and I would like you to tell me how much you agree or disagree with each. Average on a scale from 0 to 10 where 0 means you totally disagree and 10 that you totally agree. Base: all cases

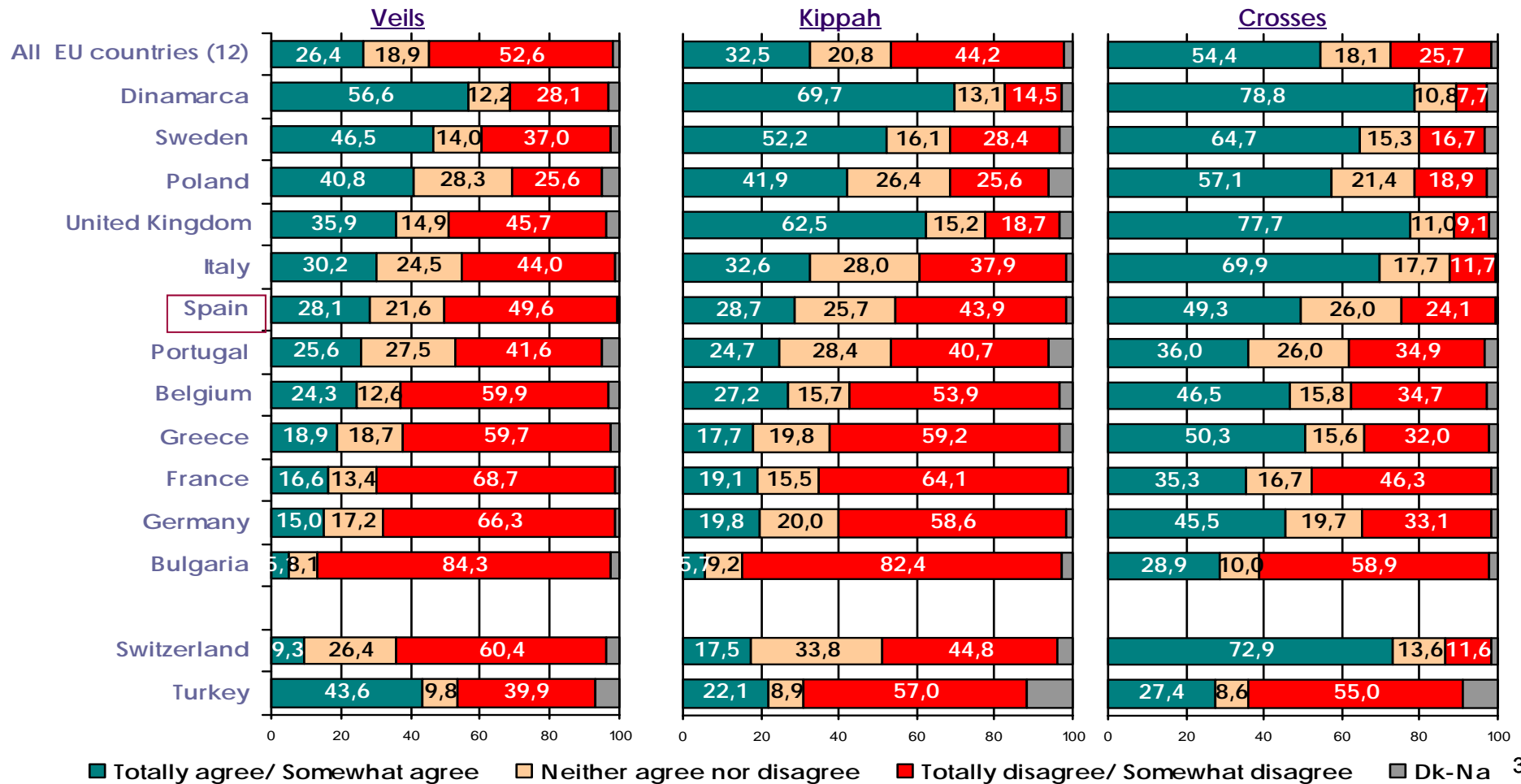
It is necessary to believe in a religion to have values and act in an ethical way



(\*) Base: insufficient sample of non believers, fewer than 100 cases

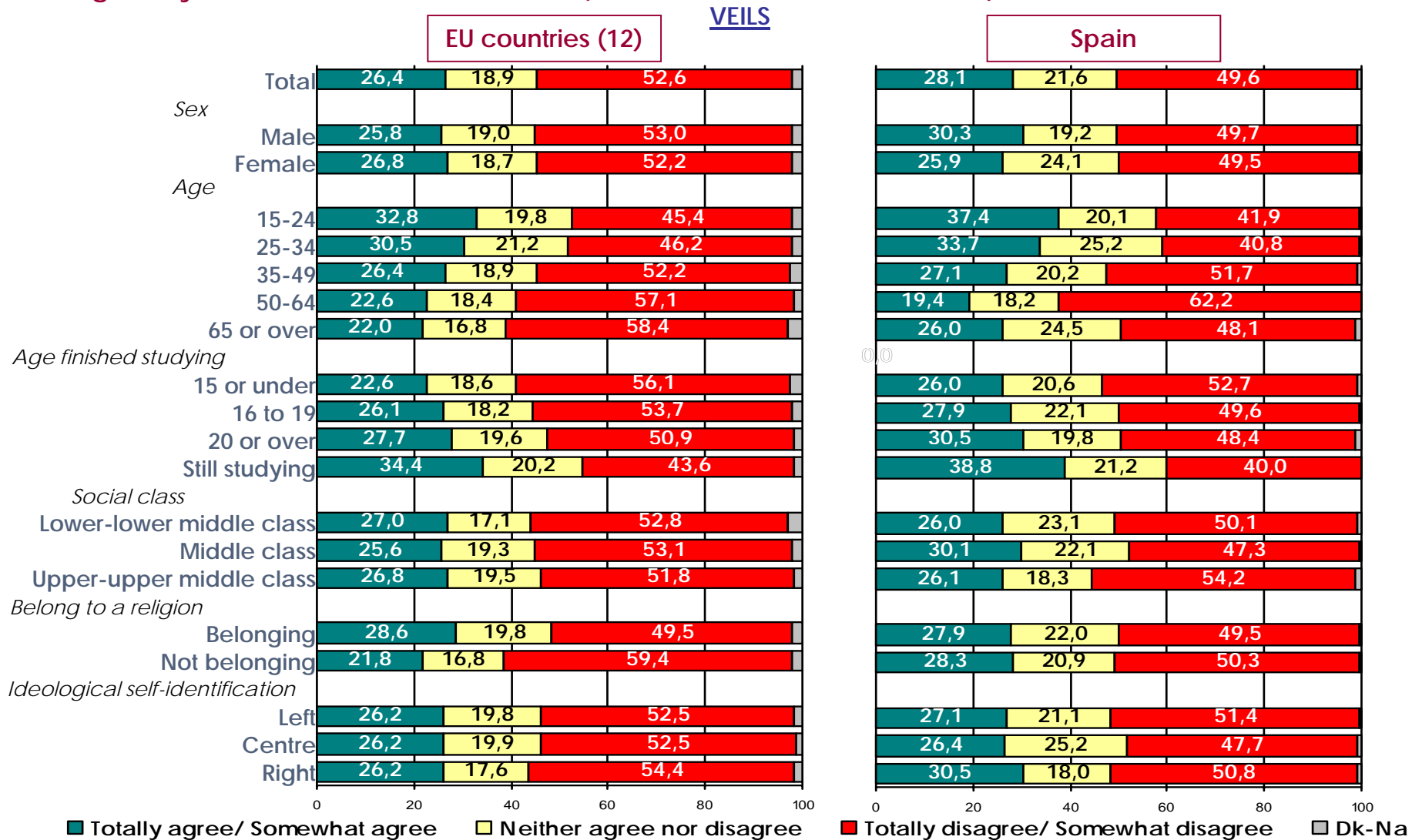
- The display of Christian religious symbols arouses little controversy in Europe, unlike the display or wearing of Islamic or Jewish symbols (veil or kippah respectively).
- Although rejection predominates in the case of the veil, attitudes vary widely from acceptance in Denmark to widespread rejection in Bulgaria, France, Germany, Greece and Belgium. Spain is around the mid-way point, scoring close to the average.

To what extent do you agree with the idea that people in (COUNTRY) should be able to display or wear religious symbols in public buildings such as...? Base: all cases



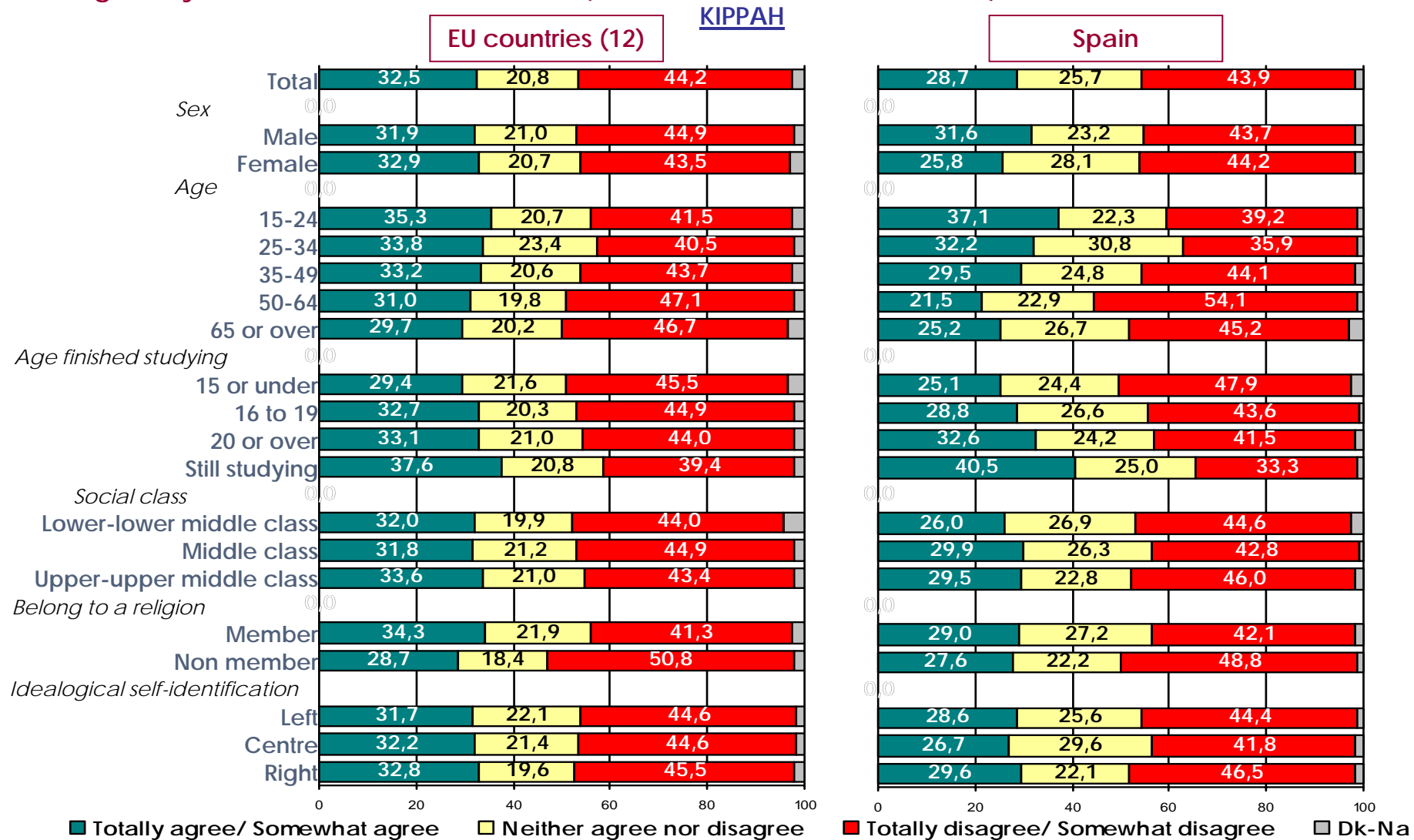
- In Europe, the use of the veil meets with the strongest rejection among older adults, those with a lower educational level and those not belonging to any religion. In Spain, religion and ideology do not materially influence attitudes

To what extent do you agree with the idea that people in (COUNTRY) should be able to display or wear religious symbols in educational centres (schools, universities and others) in the case of... ? Base: all cases



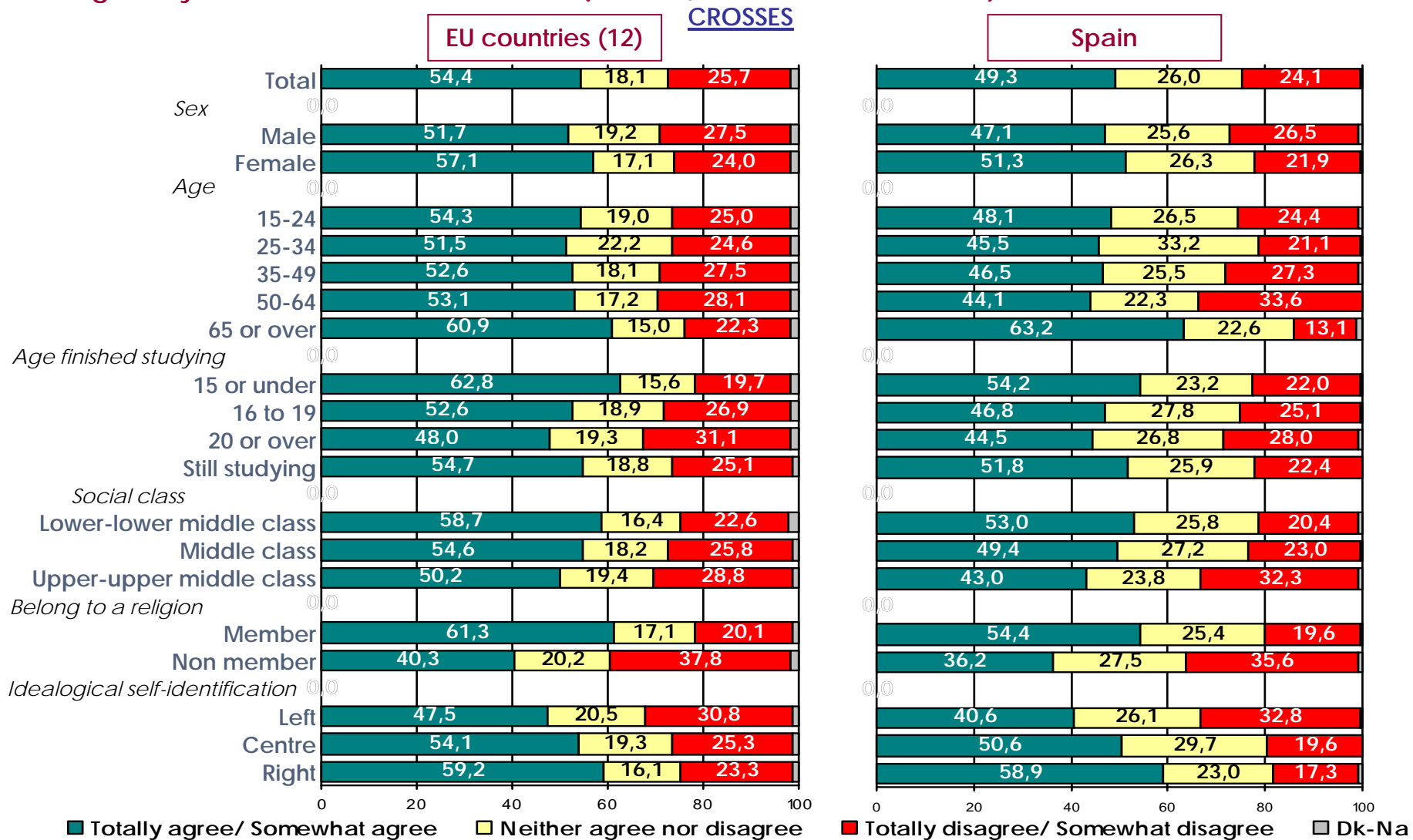
- The possibility of wearing the kippah in educational centres meets with the strongest rejection among older adults, those with a lower educational level and those not belonging to any religion

To what extent do you agree with the idea that people in (COUNTRY) should be able to display or wear religious symbols in educational centres (schools, universities and others) in the case of... ? Base: all cases



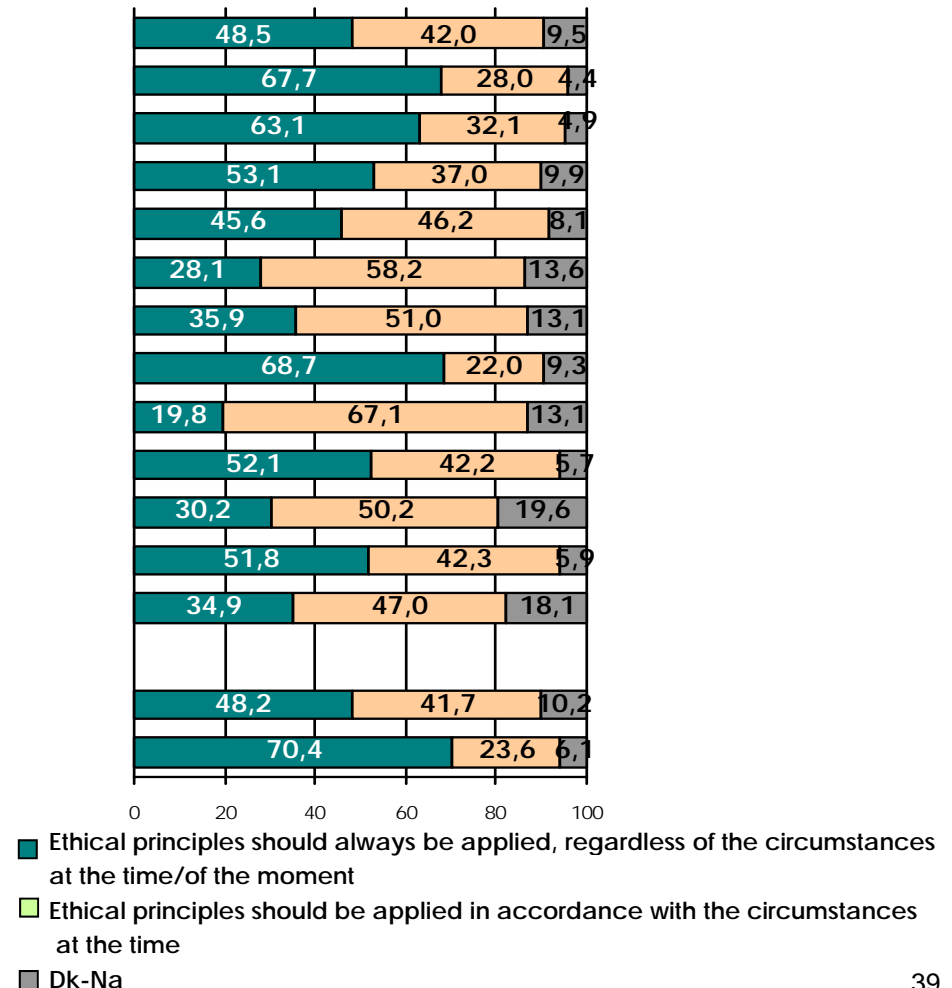
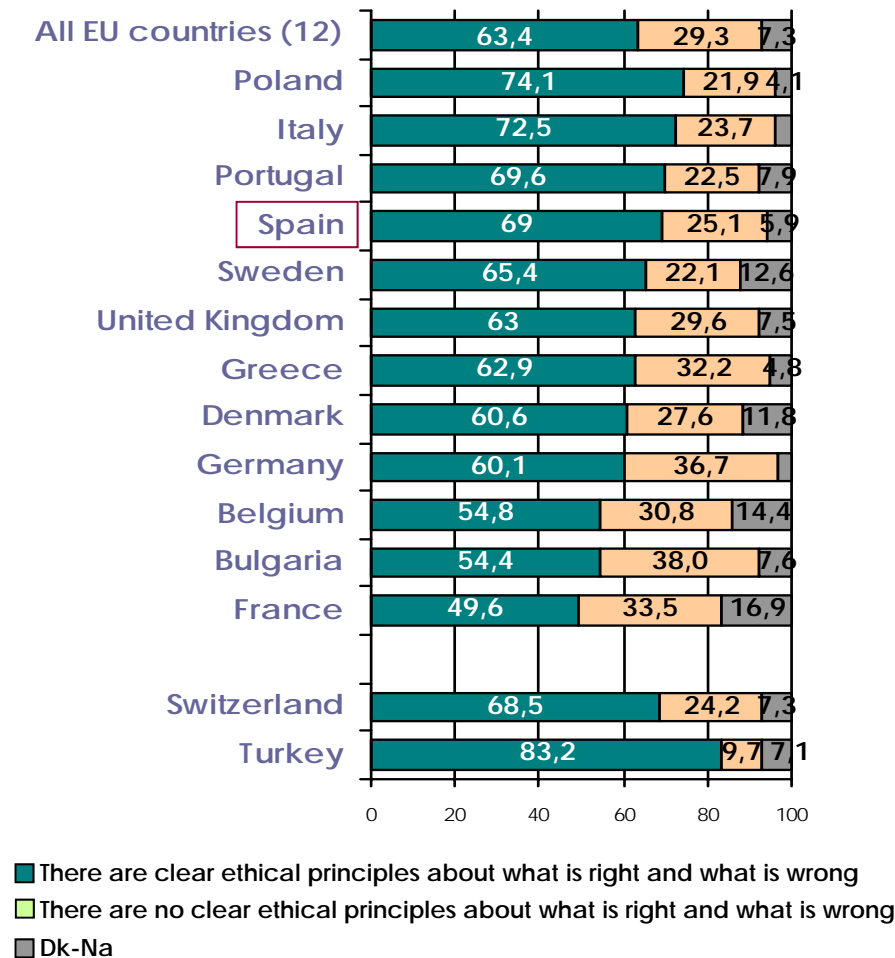
- Acceptance of the display of crosses in educational centres increases among the elderly, those with a lower educational level, members of the lower or lower-middle classes, members of a religion and those defining themselves as on the right

To what extent do you agree with the idea that people in (COUNTRY) should be able to display or wear religious symbols in educational centres (schools, universities and others) in the case of... ? Base: all cases



- Consensus in almost all countries that there are clear principles about what is right and what is wrong. More divided opinions about whether they should always be applied or applied in accordance with the circumstances, although the first view predominates. Prominent among those saying they should always be applied are Turks, Poles and Greeks, while Danes and Swedes are the most inclined to say they should be applied according to the circumstances of the moment.
- Opinion in Spain is especially divided regarding the applicability of these principles.

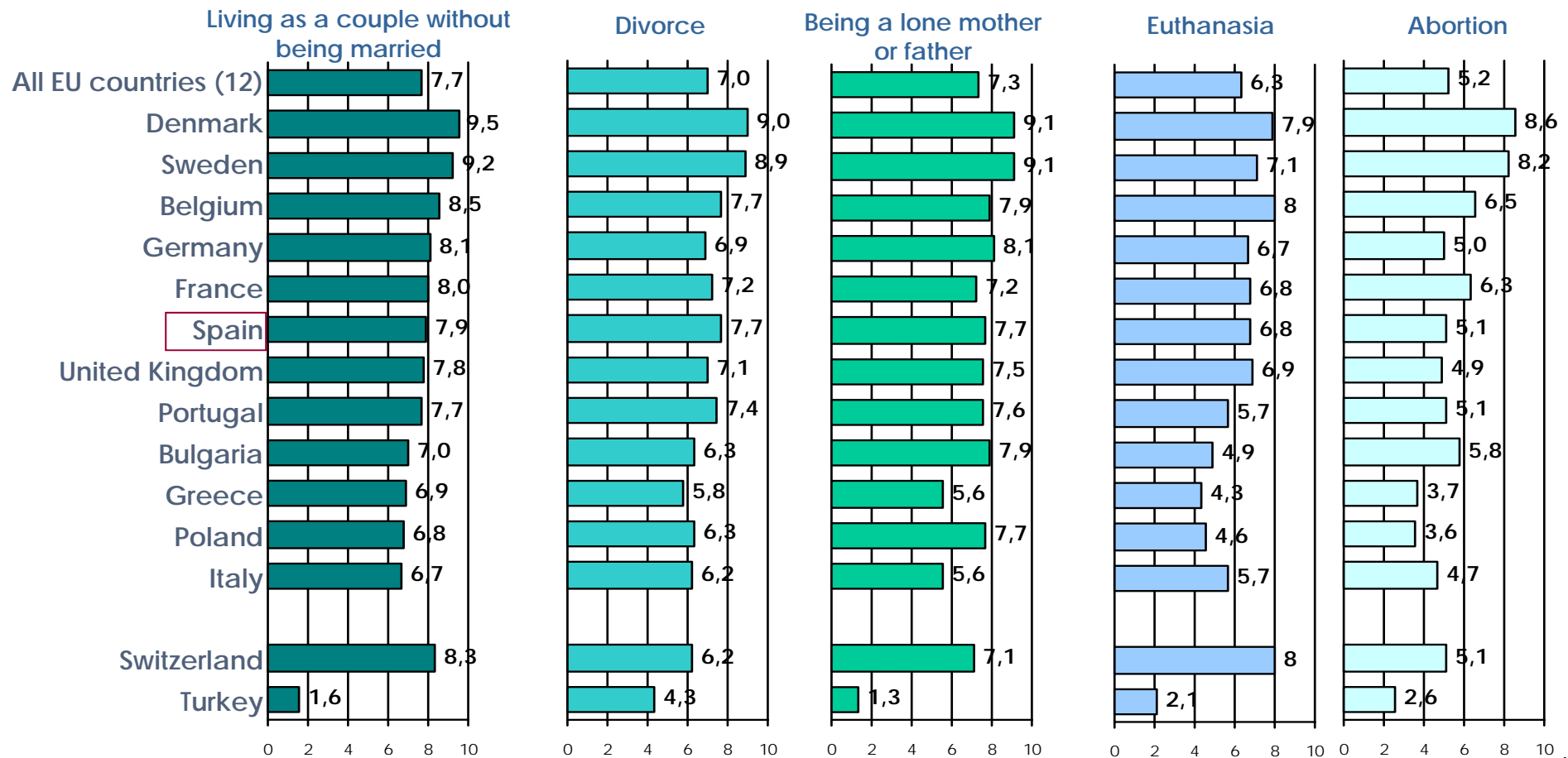
Which of the following two opinions do you tend to agree with more? ... Base: all cases



**Acceptance and rejection of contemporary social practices:**

- In the clear acceptance zone: living as a couple without being married, divorce and being a lone parent.
- Although there is majority acceptance for euthanasia and, thinly, for abortion, both questions find Europeans more divided, with rejection strongest in Poland, Greece and Turkey and acceptance strongest in Denmark, Sweden and Belgium. In Spain, acceptance of euthanasia stands clearly above the European average, while abortion meets with more mixed opinions.

Can you please tell me if you think each of the situations and behaviours I am going to read out is acceptable or not? Average on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you think the situation or behaviour is totally unacceptable and 10 means you think it is totally acceptable. Base: all cases.

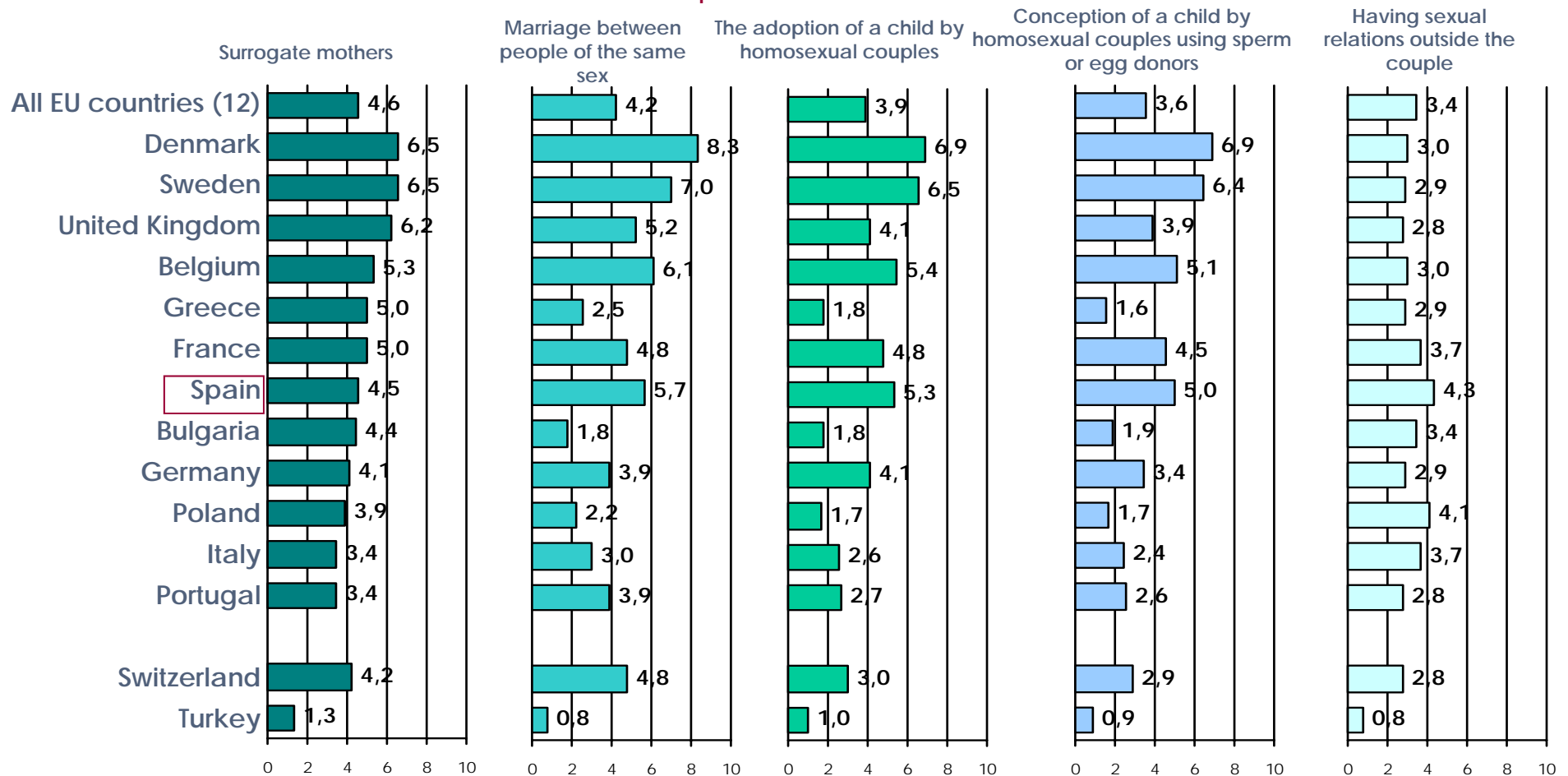


(\*) Euthanasia (the lending of medical assistance to terminally ill patients with an incurable disease who wish not to go on living)



- **In the resistance zone:** surrogate mothers, same-sex marriage, and the adoption/conception of a child by a homosexual couple. Infidelity is a conduct rejected in all countries .
- Spaniards stand at a distance from the European average in accepting same-sex marriage and adoption/conception of a child by homosexual parents, together with Danes, Swedes and Belgians.

Can you please tell me if you think each of the situations and behaviours I am going to read out is acceptable or not?  
 Mean on a scale of 0 to 10, where 0 means you think the situation or behaviour is totally unacceptable and 10 means you think it is totally acceptable. Base: all cases.

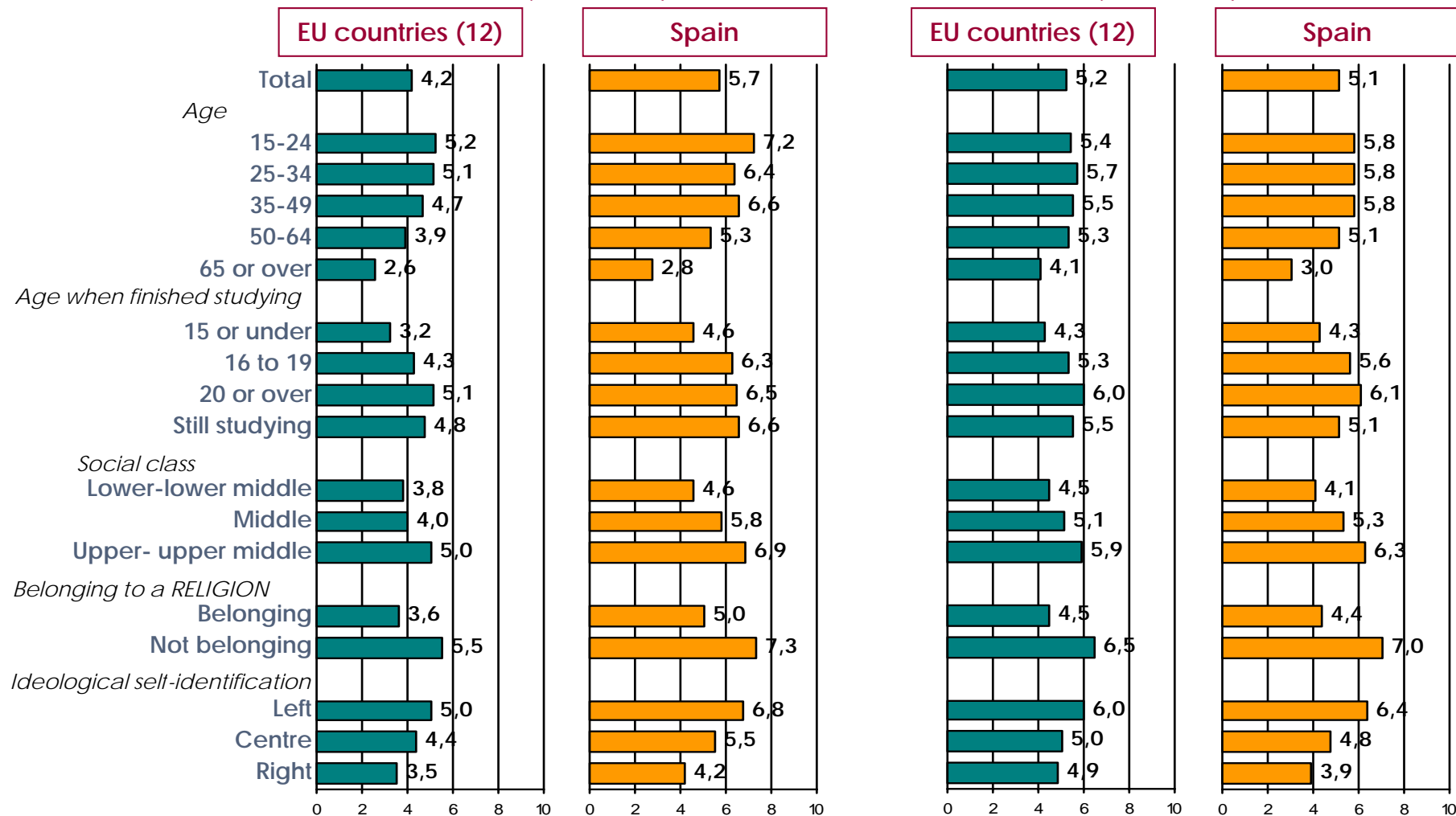


(\*) Surrogate mother, i.e. a woman who offers to carry a baby in her womb until it is born then deliver it to the couple wishing to be parents.

- Acceptance of abortion and same-sex marriage, in the sample as a whole and, more so, in Spain, decreases in the segment aged 65 or over and increases with educational level and among the upper-middle and upper classes, those not belonging to any religion and those who define themselves as on the left.

Acceptance of marriage between persons of the same sex (scale 0-10)

Acceptance of abortion (scale 0-10)



***Religion continues to be a differentiating factor in Europe***

- Aside from the Christian tradition that Europeans share, their link with religion and the importance they ascribe to religious values are by no means uniform either between or within countries. Religious values, though diverse, are still an important frame of reference for attitudes in a series of domains, including ethical principles, family structure and norms of sexual behaviour

***Religious ceremonies now have more of a social than religious connotation, but their future seems secure***

- Majority of attend religious ceremonies more for social reasons than for their religious significance. Even so, the predominant intention is to go on celebrating major life events in religious fashion

***For some Europeans, religion is no longer the main formative influence on the individual's moral character***

- The link between religion and ethics divides Europeans: while some see ethics as bound in with the profession of a given religion, others see no such link

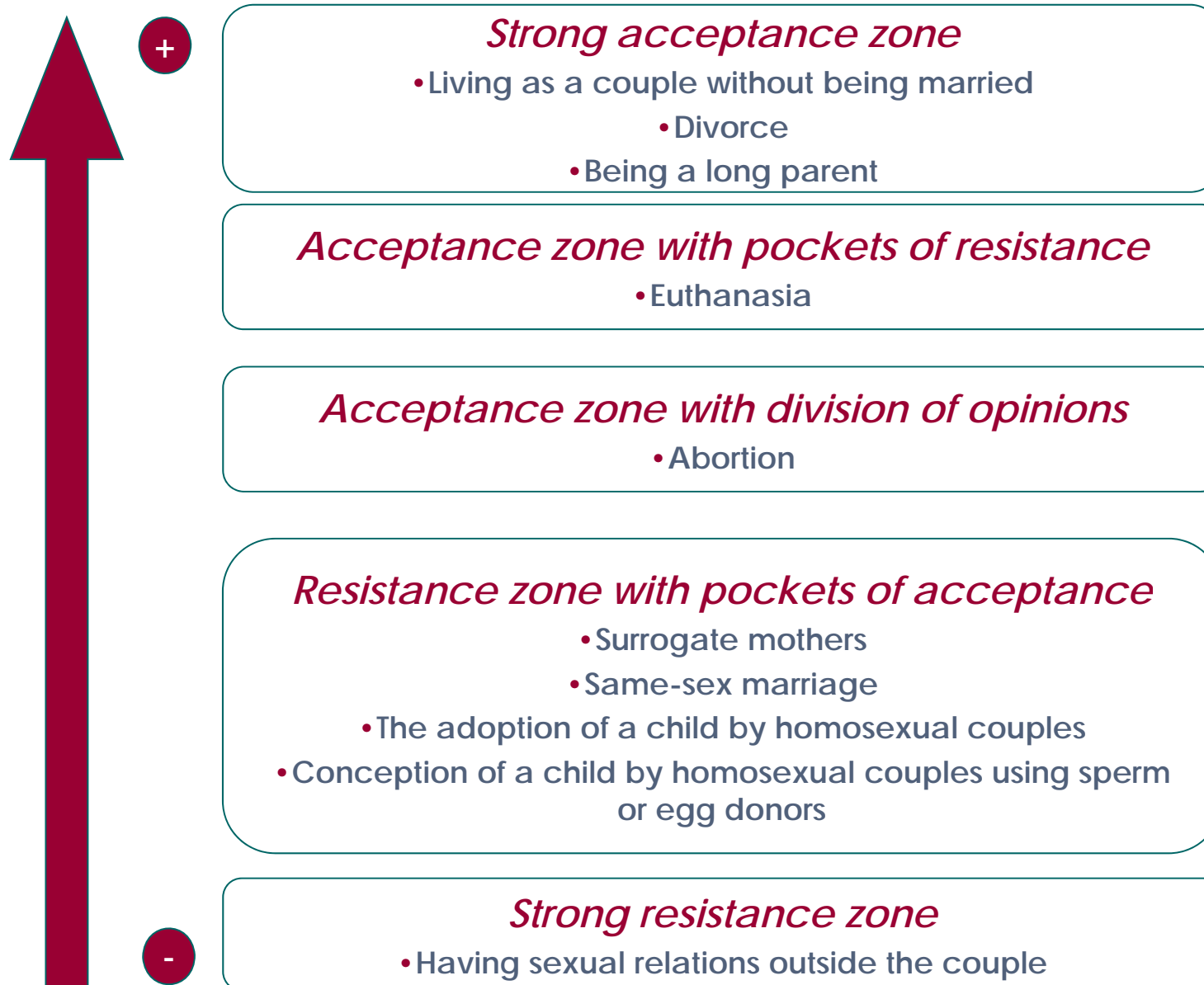
***Europeans move away from ethical relativism***

- Consensus around the existence of clear principles about what is right and what is wrong, although opinions differ as to whether they should always be applied or can be mediated by the circumstances

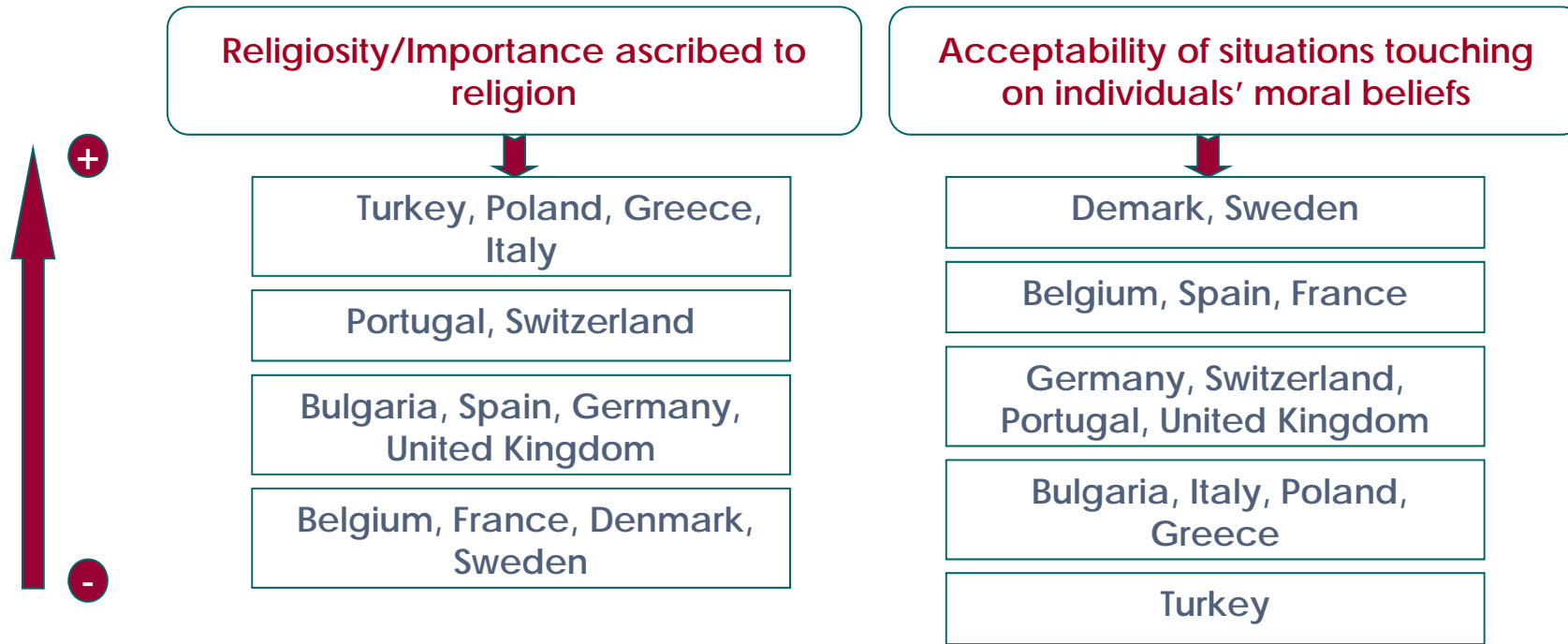
***The display or wearing of religious symbols like the veil or kippah meets with the rejection of most Europeans***

- While the display of Christian symbols (crosses) causes little controversy, most Europeans come down against the use of other symbols like veils or kippahs in education centres

## ACCEPTANCE OF PRACTICES TOUCHING ON MORAL BELIEFS



MAP OF COUNTRIES BY RELIGION AND ETHICS



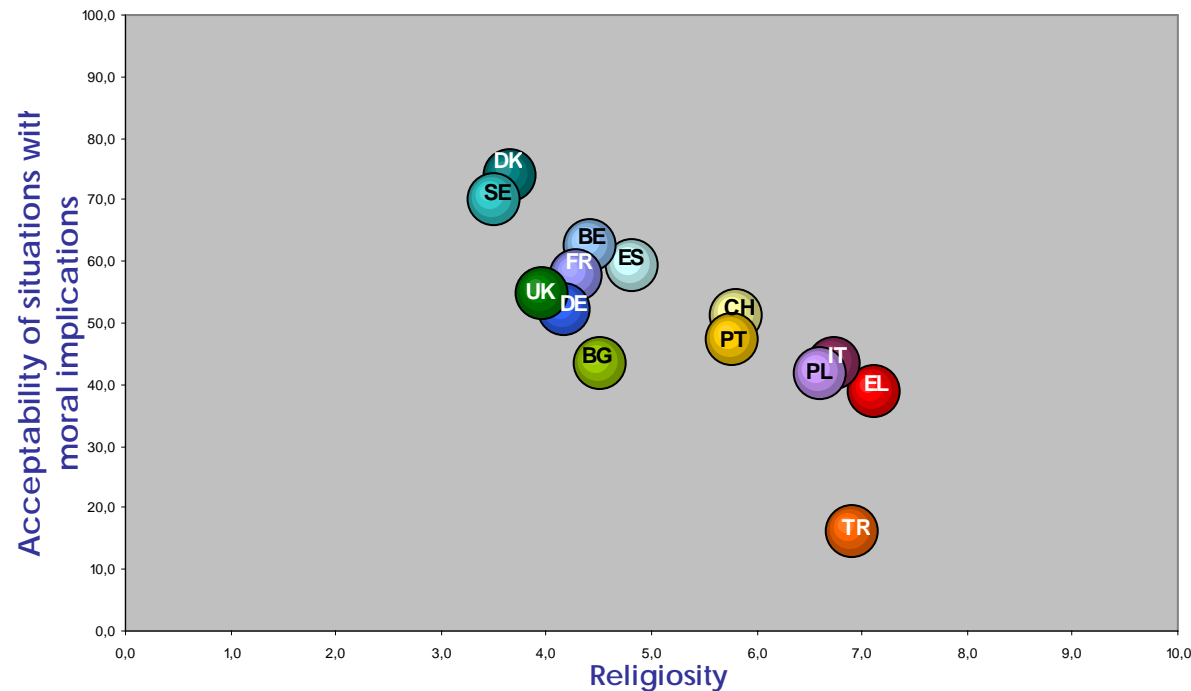
***The Spaniards and Europe***

- In matters relating to religion and ethics, Spain stands clearly apart from the countries that define themselves as more religious (Portugal, Greece, Italy and Poland) and closer to the Scandinavian countries, France and Belgium.
- Spain joins with Sweden, Denmark, France and Belgium in not linking religion to acting in an ethical way.
- It also departs from the European average and, again, closes the distance with Swedes, Danes and Belgians in accepting same-sex marriage and the rights of homosexual couples to adopt children (albeit to a significantly smaller extent than Swedes and Danes).

## MAP OF COUNTRIES ACCORDING TO RELIGIOSITY AND ACCEPTANCE OF DIVERSE PRACTICES

- The acceptability of contemporary social practices is negatively correlated with level of religiosity. Generally speaking, the countries exhibiting least religiosity are those where acceptance is greatest: the case of Denmark and Sweden.
- Countries with a higher level of religiosity express a lower degree of acceptance. Rejection is strongest of all in Turkey, followed at a distance by Greece, Poland, Italy.
- Spain is located close to Belgium and France, with low average levels of religiosity and and high average acceptance of the situations posed

Map of countries according to religiosity and acceptability of contemporary social practices



The following dimensions were used in plotting the country map:

- Declared level of religiosity
- Summated acceptance scale for the following practices: Living as a couple without being married, divorce, being a long parent, euthanasia, abortion, surrogate mothers, marriage between people of the same sex, the adoption of a child by homosexual couples, conception of a child by homosexual couples using sperm or egg donors, having sexual relations outside the couple

## TECHNICAL NOTES

**Universe:** in each country, general population aged 15 or over.

**Method:** administered face-to-face questionnaire in the interviewee's home

**Sample size and distribution:** 1,500 cases in each of the 14 countries. Multistage sample distribution stratified by region (NUTS classification or equivalent)/size of habitat, with primary units selected at random. Selection of individual respondents by the last birthday rule.

**Sampling error:** Estimated sampling error  $\pm 2.6\%$ , with a confidence level of 95.5% in the worst-case scenario ( $p=q=0.5$ ).

Survey coordinated by Ipsos. Fieldwork was conducted over November and December 2009.