

Building Resilience: Empowering Young Families and Reproductive Wellness for Europe's Future (BuildRes)

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WP4 Survey Findings Cumulative Report

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This report is a comparative analysis of the questionnaire findings from the survey responses of 172 respondents across five participating countries: Cyprus, Greece, Poland, and Romania. The aim of this survey was to investigate the factors that influence the family planning decisions (namely fertility stances) of contemporary households. The survey focused on family planning, barriers, knowledge, and policy priorities.

This report is intended for use by researchers, civil society organisations, and policymakers working in the fields of demographic resilience, social policy, and family support.

Executive Summary

This report is a synthesis of the results of the **WP4 questionnaire** conducted across five participating countries: **Cyprus** (two separate reports offered by two participating organisations, Cross Culture International Foundation and ADAPTORA LTD), **Greece** (offered by the University of Thessaly), **Romania** (offered by the youth organisation Fundatia Judeteana Pentru Tineret Timis), **France** (offered by the organisation Hexagonale) and **Poland** (offered by the small and medium sized enterprise DANMAR COMPUTERS SP ZOO). In total, **172 respondents** took part in the survey during 2025. The questionnaire explored demographic characteristics, family planning ideals and outcomes, barriers to family formation, fertility knowledge, and policy priorities.

Key Findings:

- **Respondent Profile:** The participants' sample was predominantly **urban, highly educated, and in their thirties**. Women represented the majority in Cyprus, France, Greece, and Romania, while the Polish respondents offered a male majority with greater educational diversity.
- **Family Planning:** Across all countries, appeared a cultural normal of considering the **ideal family size to be two children**. Actual fertility was consistently lower, with high shares of childless respondents in Romania and Poland, and an exceptional 50% childlessness rate in the French sample. In Cyprus (ADAPTORA), half of the respondents still expressed intentions to have more children.
- **Barriers to Family Formation:** The most commonly reported barriers were **financial insecurity, high housing costs, limited childcare options, and insufficient public support**. Respondents across all countries described work–family reconciliation as difficult.
- **Fertility Knowledge:** Awareness of certain issues (such as the impact of age and smoking on fertility) was relatively high. However, **misconceptions remain widespread**, especially regarding male fertility and the belief that lifestyle alone guarantees reproductive capacity. Knowledge gaps were particularly visible in Greece and Cyprus, while in France misconceptions persisted regarding lifestyle and overweight, despite strong awareness of age-related decline.
- **Policy Priorities:** Respondents consistently prioritised **extended paid parental leave, increased child allowances, more flexible childcare, and tax advantages for families**. **Romania** pinpointed the need

for **housing support**, while **Poland** highlighted **tax incentives and employer-related measures**. **France** placed **financial support** and **affordable childcare** at the top of its priorities.

The cumulative analysis reveals a clear gap between **desired and achieved fertility** across the surveyed countries due to **structural and financial barriers**. Respondents perceive that the lack of adequate public support is decisive to this gap. Furthermore, knowledge gaps and persistent misconceptions highlight the need for **targeted fertility education**. Overall, the results demonstrate the need for an **integrated approach to family policy** that combines:

- **Financial measures** (allowances, tax benefits, housing support),
- **Childcare infrastructure** (affordable, flexible, accessible), and
- **Educational campaigns** addressing fertility knowledge and misconceptions.

Such measures are essential to bridging the gap between **fertility ideals and actual outcomes**, supporting young adults in family formation, and addressing broader demographic challenges in Europe.

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1. Introduction

This report combines and analyses the findings of the **BuildRes Work Package 4 questionnaire**, implemented in 2025 and responded by 146 individuals from **Cyprus, Greece, Romania, France and Poland**.

The questionnaire aimed to touch upon a broad spectrum of issues linked to **family formation, fertility intentions, barriers and enablers, gender roles, and knowledge about reproductive health**. It comprised **57 questions**, organised into thematic clusters on demographics, family planning, family life and policies, gender attitudes, and fertility knowledge.

This report has three main objectives:

1. To provide a **comparative overview** of questionnaire findings across the four national contexts.
2. To identify **common patterns or/and deviations** in attitudes and experiences regarding family formation in Europe.
3. To highlight **policy-relevant insights** that may guide national and EU-level strategies for supporting families and addressing demographic challenges.

The comprehensive analysis of the individual national reports identifies both common concerns and distinct socio-cultural characteristics across borders. It is important to note that despite the lack of representation of the respondents' sample, yet the findings provide rich statistical data from a core demographic of **urban and highly educated respondents in their thirties**.

2. Methodology

The cumulative report is based on the WP4 questionnaire, which was carried out in the countries of the consortium partners' countries. Cyprus is represented by two organisations, one non-governmental organisation from Pafos, the Cross Culture International Foundation (CCIF) and one small and medium size enterprise from Limassol, the ADAPTORA LTD. Greece is represented by the University of Thessaly. Romania is represented by the youth organisation Fundatia Judeteana Pentru Tineret Timis. Poland is represented by the small and medium sized enterprise DANMAR COMPUTERS SP ZOO. The questionnaire included **57**

questions covering topics such as family formation, drivers and barriers to having children, work–life balance, gender roles, and fertility knowledge. The full list of questions can be found in Annex A.

Each partner organisation distributed the questionnaire mainly online through their networks. Participation was voluntary and anonymous. In total, **172 respondents** took part in the survey during 2025: 25 in Cyprus (CCIF), 26 in Cyprus (ADAPTORA), 27 in Greece, 43 in Romania, 26 in France and 25 in Poland.

The respondents were mostly in their late 20s to early 40s, with women somewhat more represented. Many had university-level education and most lived in urban areas. While this is not a representative sample of each country, the results give useful insights into how young adults in different contexts see family formation, fertility, and policy support.

Each partner produced a short country report. This cumulative report brings them together, highlighting both common themes and differences between countries.

All visualisations in this report were generated using AI-assisted tools. The guidance, interpretation, and underlying analysis were provided by the authors, with AI used exclusively for image generation.

3. Results & Analysis

3.1 Demographics (Q1 – Q7)

Most respondents were between **30 and 40 years old**, the most critical time for making decisions on family formation. Younger respondents (under 30) were rare, while few participants were above 45. In specific, **a 5-6%** of the total sample mainly from **France, Cyprus and Romania** were **under 30**, while approximately 3% of the total sample was above 45 from Poland, France and Greece.

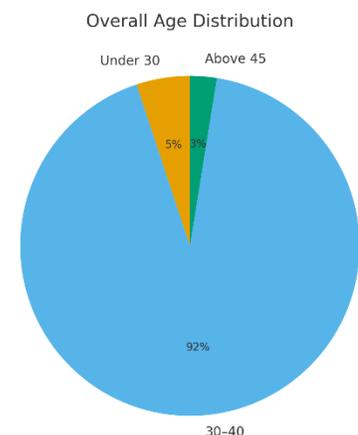
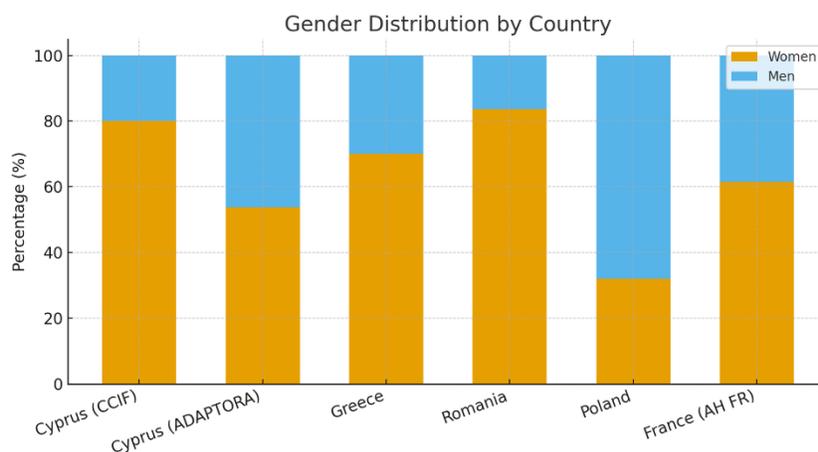
Across the whole sample, respondents were **65,7% women (113 respondents)** and **34,3% men (59 respondents)**. However, there were important national differences:

- **Cyprus (CCIF, 25 respondents):** (approx.) 80% women, 20% men.
- **Cyprus (ADAPTORA, 26 respondents):** 53,8% women, 46,2% men.
- **Greece (27 respondents):** (approx.) 70% women, 30% men.
- **Romania (43 respondents):** 83,7% women, 16,3% men.
- **Poland (25 respondents):** 32% women, 68% men
- **France (26 respondents):** 61,5% women, 38,5% men

This distribution shows a strong **female-majority** in most countries, with Romania to keep a balance, and **Poland to stand out as the only male-majority sample**, hence reflecting the higher engagement of women in discussions around family and fertility.

The educational background of all the respondents was **consistently high** across all countries. Master’s degrees and PhDs holders were common in Greece, France Poland and Cyprus. However, in specific, the sample coming from Adaptors small and medium size enterprise based in Limassol, presented the percentage of 15.4% to have only completed lower secondary school.

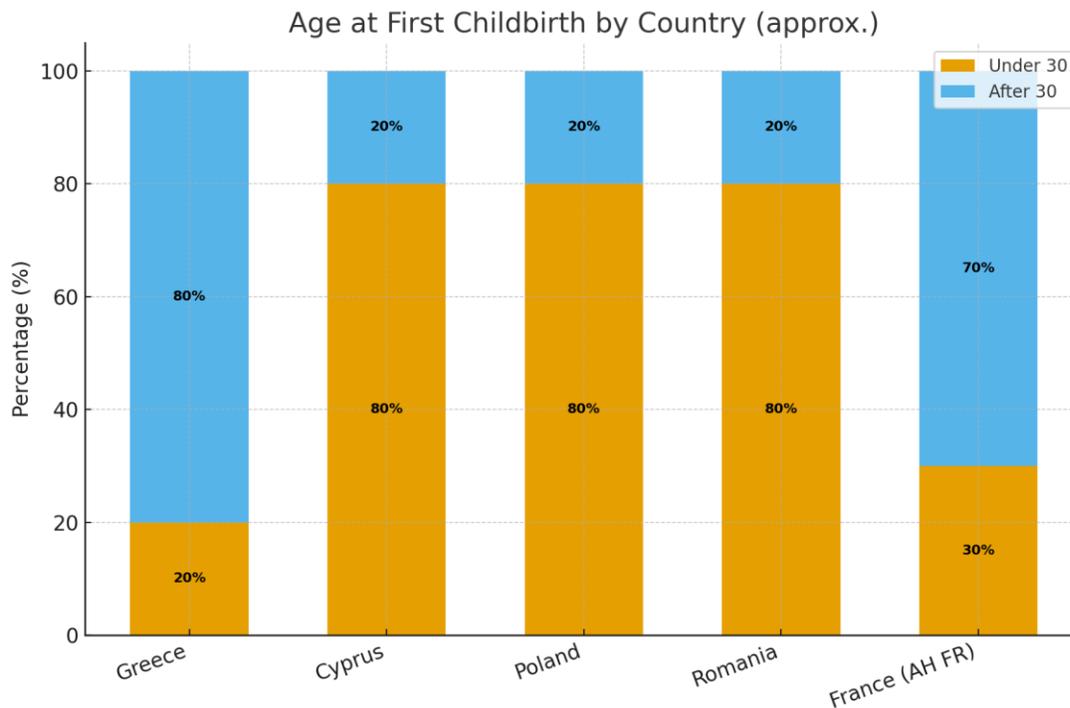
Almost all respondents were **urban-based**, concentrated in larger cities. Exception is France where the sample was mostly living in urban centres, yet smaller cities (76,9%). Rural representation was very limited.



3.2 Family Formation & Timing (Q8 – Q13)

Across most countries, respondents aspired to have **two children** (confirming the cultural norm in Europe), but most achieved fewer. However, the **French** sample **diverged sharply**, with half declaring no desire for children, overall intentions averaging below one child per respondent, while most achieved more than what they wanted. **Childbirth after 30** was the norm in **Greece** and **France**, with many to express that **in retrospect, earlier timing would have been preferable**. In contrary, **childbirth under 30** was the norm in **Cyprus, Poland** and **Romania**, ranging from 19 – 30 years old, with the majority to express in retrospect that **timing was about right**.

Intentions for more children were generally low, approximately arranging from 25 – 35% between countries' respondents. The **most limited aspirations** (only about half of respondents considered even one more child) come from **France**. In contrary, **Romania** though stands out with the respondents to express the **intent for further children**, with 31,8% of them to still wish to have one more child and 27,3% would like to have two more children.

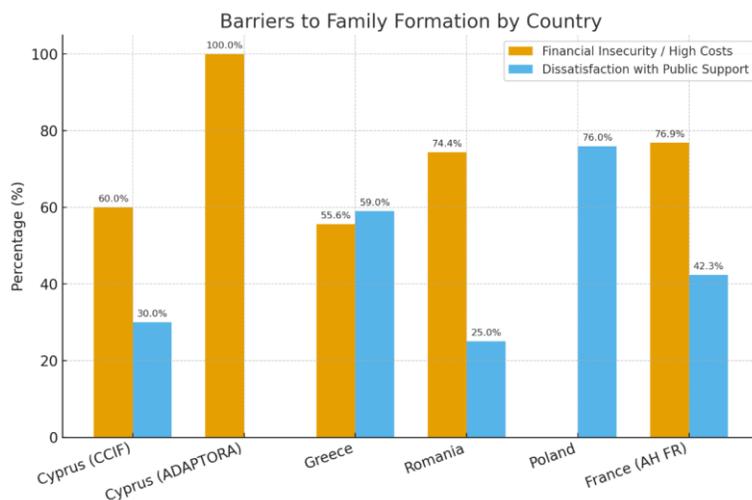


Additionally, it becomes clear that **despite many respondents reported that they had all the children they wished, yet when combining the rest of the answers (referring to timing and financial limitations), a significantly large share expressed unmet desires or barriers to having more children**, especially in Romania and Greece. For example, in Romania, only 33.3% of respondents stated that they had all the children they wished for, whereas 23.8% still intend to have children, 14.3% could not find the right moment, and 9.5% mentioned the high costs.

3.3 Drivers & Barriers to Having Children (Q14–Q27)

The respondents’ sample reported a mixture of motivating drivers and structural barriers that determine their family formation decisions. **Economic insecurity and limited support** were decisive factors **preventing many from reaching the ideal number of children they wished**.

Overall, **satisfaction with family life was relatively high** in some cases (e.g. Poland and Romania, where approximately 76% were “very” or “fairly” satisfied, in sum), but satisfaction with public support measures was consistently low, with majorities in **all countries highlighting weak or insufficient state provision**. The strongest barriers to family formation were **financial insecurity, housing problems, and limited childcare support**, with **French** respondents particularly emphasising **financial constraints** (nearly **85%** rated them as decisive).



Across all countries, respondents stressed that without stronger structural and financial policies, family aspirations cannot be realised. It is worth mentioning that the **Polish** sample mentioned that one of the top challenges that families with children have to face is the **insufficient support from employers (62,5%)**. The same issue was also highlighted in the Greek sample (37%).

In specific:

- **partner support** was almost universally valued as **one of the strongest enablers with approximately 90%** across the whole sample to rate it “very important” or “fairly important”. Despite this, the **unequal sharing of household tasks** was still **noted** as a difficulty in **Romania** and **Greece** (34,9% and 18,5% respectively), while **France** noted it only to a **very low extent** (3,8%).
- **the mother’s health and employment conditions** were repeatedly highlighted as **highly relevant**; in Poland, 88% rated the mother’s health “very important,” while job security and flexibility were stressed in Greece and France, with the statistics to jump at about 70-75% of importance in shaping family decisions, and in Romania and Cyprus to be around 60%.
- **Housing conditions** were also rated critical: 80% of Polish and Romanian respondents saw them as “very important,” and majorities in Cyprus (52–62%), Poland (62,5%) and Romania (41.9%) identified high costs as a major difficulty.
- **Parental leave and childcare availability** is seen as **essential** (between 66% - 79% across the whole sample), directly impacting parents’ ability to balance employment with child-rearing.
- **Weak public support** was widely criticised: approx. 59% in Greece, 27% in France, 30% in Cyprus and 25% in Romania mentioned insufficient public support to families, while in Poland, 76% were dissatisfied with public support overall.
- **Financial insecurity and the high cost of raising children** were the leading barriers, with 74.4% of Romanians, 60% of Cypriots (CCIF), and 100% of Cypriots (ADAPTORA),

55,6% Greeks explicitly citing them, and 76.9% of French respondents identified the cost of child education and maintenance as a primary difficulty.

In sum, while family aspirations remain strong, respondents across all countries emphasised that **structural barriers (financial, housing, childcare, and insufficient public support) continue to weigh heavily on decisions about having children**. All the while, health and partner support are valued as highly important. This confirms that **economic security and public support** stands out as **the most critical condition across contexts**.

3.4 Work–Family Balance (Q28–Q29)

Work – Family Balance is reported as a major challenge across all respondents of the sample. The most frequently chosen options are both parents working full-time, or one parent working full-time and the other part-time. This indicates that households largely depend on dual incomes, while also recognising the need for flexible arrangements to balance care and work.

More specifically:

- **Cyprus:** Around **55% of respondents** reported finding it difficult to reconcile work and family responsibilities and 58% “both parents working full time”.
- **Greece:** A similar picture appeared, with **70–80%** mentioning difficulties.
- **Romania:** About **60% of respondents** reported challenges.
- **Poland:** Reported the highest difficulty, with **96%** stating that balancing work and family was hard.
- **France:** All respondents (**100%**) indicated difficulties in reconciling work and family life, most often due to the cost and availability of babysitters, economic pressures and lack of time, while dual income was also perceived as necessary.

Therefore, balancing professional obligations and family life is one of the most pressing challenges highlighted across the countries' survey. The answers revealed both perceived difficulty of reconciliation and the recognition of dual income necessity for households.

3.5 Policy Priorities (Q30 – Q35)

Across all countries, respondents consistently prioritised **longer paid parental leave, increased child allowances, and affordable childcare** as the most important policy measures. **Romania** put special emphasis on **more flexible childcare arrangements (93% high priority)**, while **Poland** stressed **tax incentives and employer-driven measures (82% combined high and medium priority)**, **France** pinpointed **financial support to families** as top priority (**84.6%**)

Paid parental leave was top priority across all countries, however incentives for fathers to take leave were slightly lower (presented as medium priority) than other measures, suggesting recognition of the importance of shared parental roles but limited confidence in current uptake.

Easier access to part-time work was seen as important for reconciling work and childcare across all the countries. Combined with the **highest rates of access to flexible childcare arrangements** (93% in Romania, 61,5% in France, 78% in Greece, 48% medium priority in Poland and in the sample from ADAPTORA of Cyprus, 72% in CCIF sample of Cyprus), it is reflecting the difficulties of adapting childcare provision to parents' working schedules.

Around **70–85%** of the respondents across all countries demanded **higher child allowances**. **Tax incentives for families** was strongly supported across all countries in **about 80%**.

In sum, the need for **flexible arrangements** and **institutional support**, which was prevailing in all four countries as key factors for the family to combine work and childcare, suggests that the **public policies lack to provide flexible work conditions**, such as telework or parental leave sharing.

Policy Priorities by Country (Qualitative Assessment)

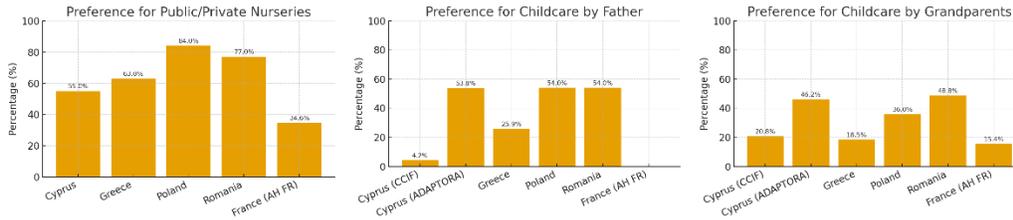
| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|-------------------|--------|-----------|-----------|----------------|
| Longer paid parental leave | Top | Top | Top | Top | Top | High |
| Higher child allowances | Top | Top | Top | Top | Top | Top |
| Affordable childcare | Top | Top | Top | Top | Top | Top |
| Flexible childcare arrangements | High | Medium | High | Very High | Medium | Medium |
| Tax incentives | High | High | High | High | Very High | Medium |
| Easier access to part-time work | High | High | High | High | High | Medium |
| Incentives for fathers to take leave | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium | Medium |
| | Cyprus (CCIF) | Cyprus (ADAPTORA) | Greece | Romania | Poland | France (AH FR) |

3.6 Childcare Preferences (Q36)

Respondents were asked about their preferred forms of childcare support. Across countries, there was strong demand for affordable, accessible, and flexible childcare arrangements for the family to be more effecting with balancing work and family responsibilities.

Public or private day nurseries were the most frequently chosen option among all countries (55% Cyprus, 63% Greece, 84% Poland, 77% Romania, 34,6% France), indicating the demand for institutional childcare. Besides, **Greek preferences leaned towards certified childminders, care by parents and by grandparents**, reflect the practical mix many families rely on. Interestingly, the two samples from **Cyprus** suggest different opinions on whether **childcare by father** is a solution for the family, with the CCIF sample to rate **extremely low** at 4,2%, **whereas** ADAPTORA sample to rate it significantly important at 53,8%, a rate that is common to all the rest of the countries' sample, except of **Greece that keeps it quiet low to 25,9%** and **France that no one opted** for this. Another highlight is **Romania's high reliance on childcare by grandparents**. All countries' responded opted for this solution, but Romania had higher rate (48,8%) than in other

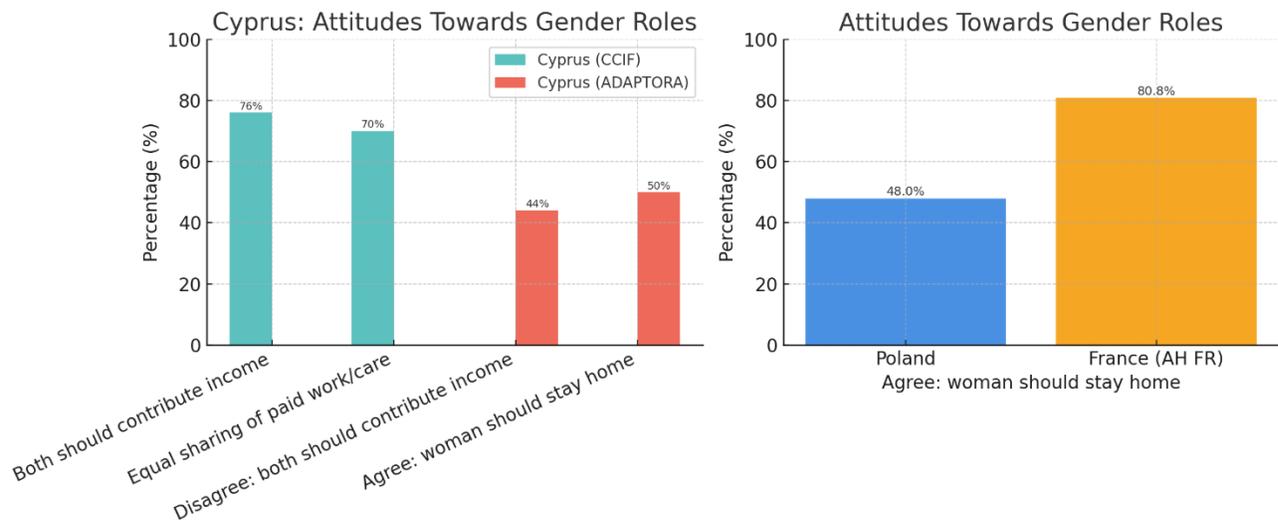
countries.



3.7 Attitudes on Gender and Work (Q37–Q42)

Respondents were asked about their views on gender roles in work and family life. Results **endorse gender equality**, but **traditional caregiving expectations persist**.

Especially in the case of **Cyprus**, the results highlight a **striking divide** between the Limassol and Pafos samples. While the CCIF respondents' sample, with 64% holding a master's degree, strongly supports gender equality (e.g. 76% totally agree that both men and women should contribute to the household income and 70% endorse equal sharing of paid work and family care), the ADAPTORA respondents' sample, where 31% have only upper secondary education, leans towards more traditional views, with 44% disagreeing that both partners should contribute financially and 50% tending to agree that the woman should stay at home while the man goes out to work. This contrast shows how education and local context shape attitudes toward gender roles in family life."



In the **rest of the countries**, the answers are quite similar. Most respondents agreed that a working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a non-working mother, reflecting **strong support for maternal employment**. Opinions were mixed, however, regarding pre-school children; some believed that children may suffer if their mother works, while others rejected this traditional view. A share of respondents also felt that family life suffers when women work full-time, though many disagreed. This **ambivalence shows how perceptions of conflict between women's careers and family life persist alongside shifts toward equality**. At the same time, there was overwhelming agreement that both men and women should contribute to the household income, indicating **strong support for dual-earner households**. The **traditional ideal of the woman at home and man at work** received only **limited support**, as most rejected strict gendered divisions of labour. **Exception here is Poland and France** that **48%** and **80,8%** respectively **tended to agree** that women should ideally stay home. Importantly, many also recognised that family life suffers when men concentrate too much on work, underlining that **overwork and imbalance are seen as challenges for both genders**.

3.8 Household Situation and Attitude (Q43–Q44)

Respondents were asked about their current household situation and their outlook for the future. Across countries, the results show a shared sense of **financial anxiety** and **uncertainty about long-term security**, despite relatively high levels of education and employment. Optimistic views about **their household's long-term conditions** remained **low** to all the countries, with the **exception of Romania** that reached the rate of 58,1% of optimism. Greece, France, Cyprus and Poland ranged from 20-30% of optimist respondents. Also most of the respondents commonly across countries (60 – 70%) see their current household situation as sufficient or stable but pressured.

3.9 Fertility Knowledge (Q45–Q57)

This section was comprised of 13 questions aiming to assess **knowledge about age and fertility decline, lifestyle and health factors in fertility, threshold for infertility, and reproductive health knowledge.**

Half respondents from the **Cyprus** sample said is correct that women in their 40s have similar chances as in their 30s, whereas the other half replied at the same statement as false. Also the respondents were not sure whether the healthy lifestyle makes someone fertile (61,5% replied “true” and 44% replied false”. Also in specific question regarding a woman’s menstruation, **44% answered “Don’t know/Didn’t give”** in the statement “a woman who never menstruates is still fertile”. The same stands for the question if STDs reduce fertility, where the most common answer ‘**Don’t know/Didn’t give**’ reached **37.5%**.

These are all characteristic examples that show significant gaps in awareness.

The **Greek** findings show solid awareness that **female fertility declines after 36, smoking reduces fertility, and healthy lifestyle helps**, alongside **misconceptions about women at 40 vs 30, amenorrhea, and male fertility proxies** (sperm production / erection). Knowledge of **mumps after puberty** and **STDs** is weaker than for age/smoking.

Similarly **the Romanians** share a broad recognition of **age-related decline** and **smoking effects**, but **mixed knowledge** on the **1-year infertility definition, healthy lifestyle, and male-fertility misconceptions.**

In contrary, **Polish** respondents have a strong knowledge on some risks (e.g., **STDs reduce fertility: 92%; healthy lifestyle helps: 60%; overweight affects fertility: 60%**), but present **gaps on male fertility** (only **28%** correctly knew sperm production isn’t equal to fertility; only **20%** knew erection is **not** a reliable indicator). Similarly, **40%** incorrectly believed a woman who never menstruates can be fertile.

The **French** findings point that respondents generally recognised that fertility declines after the age of 36 and that smoking has a negative effect, but important misconceptions remained. For example, a majority believed that healthy lifestyle directly ensures fertility (73%), and more than

half (53.8%) incorrectly thought that overweight does not affect fertility. Nearly one third also did not know whether STDs reduce fertility. These answers underline persistent gaps in awareness, even where general knowledge on age-related fertility decline exists.

Fertility Knowledge Themes (Qualitative Assessment)

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|--------|---------|--------|----------------|
| Age-related fertility decline | Mixed | Strong | Strong | Strong | Strong |
| Smoking reduces fertility | Strong | Strong | Strong | Strong | Strong |
| Healthy lifestyle & fertility | Mixed | Strong | Mixed | Strong | Mixed |
| Male fertility (sperm/erection myths) | Mixed | Mixed | Mixed | Weak | Mixed |
| STDs reduce fertility | Uncertain | Weak | Mixed | Strong | Mixed |
| Amenorrhea (no menstruation) | Uncertain | Weak | Mixed | Weak | Strong |
| Infertility definition (1 year) | Mixed | Mixed | Mixed | Mixed | Mixed |
| | Cyprus | Greece | Romania | Poland | France (AH FR) |
| | Country | | | | |

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

This cumulative analysis brings in the forefront shared themes to be under scrutiny across the five countries. Consistently the respondents from Cyprus, Greece, Romania, Poland and France highlight **financial insecurity, high housing costs, and insufficient childcare provision as the most pressing barriers to family formation. Satisfaction with family life** tends to be **high**, but **satisfaction with public support systems is low**. Furthermore, this analysis identifies a **common need for stronger structural measures**. Expanded and affordable childcare, extended and better-compensated parental leave with incentives for fathers, increased family allowances and tax benefits, and flexible work arrangements are only some of them. When the discussion turns into **gender attitudes**, there is an **inconsistency between theory and practice**. While people widely agree that responsibilities should be shared between genders, this belief hasn't fully translated

into consistent actions or policies. Hence, it is revealed a fertility challenge across all five countries that can be understood as a ‘crisis triangle’ of economic barriers, work–life balance pressures, and policy–cultural disconnects. These interconnected factors consistently discourage family formation, despite widespread recognition of the importance of gender equality and strong support for family life.

According to the various characteristics of each national context, this report highlights also interesting distinctions between the countries. **Cyprus** combines **policy demands with a strong focus on fertility knowledge gaps**. **Greece** underlines **systemic pressures on work–life reconciliation**. **Romania** brings attention to **unequal household task-sharing alongside financial barriers**. **Poland** highlights **evolving gender roles and employer limitations**. **France** underscores the **burden of educational and childcare costs** as central obstacles, coupled with ambivalence on work–family balance and persisting fertility knowledge misconceptions. More broadly, the French findings **point to a systemic misalignment between family policies and contemporary needs, suggesting that incremental policy adjustments may be insufficient.**”

Overall, the cumulative findings demonstrate both the persistence of shared structural challenges across Europe and the importance of addressing country-specific needs. They point to the **urgency of comprehensive family policies** at the European level that integrate **generous and gender-equal parental leave, universal, affordable childcare provision, robust financial support** through allowances and tax measures, **workplace reforms** to enable flexible arrangements, and **public awareness campaigns** to address persistent fertility misconceptions and promote gender equality.

Shared **policy priorities** are identified to be common across the participating countries:

- **Parental leave:** Extend the duration and improve the compensation of parental leave, with **specific incentives for fathers** to take leave.
- **Child allowances and tax benefits:** Increase direct allowances and expand targeted tax relief for families.
- **Childcare provision:** Expand **affordable, high-quality childcare facilities**, ensuring flexible

hours to accommodate working parents.

- **Work-life balance:** Promote **flexible work arrangements** (part-time options, teleworking) to make reconciliation of family and employment more feasible.

Yet, this report identifies also country - specific emphasis

- **Cyprus:**
 - Address **fertility knowledge gaps** with evidence-based **awareness campaigns**.
 - Improve childcare accessibility and expand financial support measures.
- **Greece:**
 - Urgent need to **expand childcare capacity** and ensure affordability.
 - Strengthen parental leave policies, with particular attention to fathers.
 - Develop public campaigns to combat **fertility misconceptions**.
- **Romania:**
 - Extend **paid parental leave** and improve conditions for families with young children.
 - Enhance access to **public or private nurseries**.
 - Promote **gender equality in caregiving** by addressing unequal task-sharing.
- **Poland:**
 - Increase **tax benefits** for families and strengthen employer-driven support measures.
 - Support **nurseries and full-time childcare options**, since most families view dual full-time employment as necessary.
 - Continue encouraging evolving **gender roles** but tackle persistent cultural expectations that mothers stay home part-time.
- **France:**

- Substantially reduce economic barriers through **stronger financial and housing support**
- Mandate **workplace flexibility** and **family-friendly arrangements**
- Expand and **diversify childcare** and **community-based family services**
- **Recognise diverse family models** and adapt policies to contemporary needs

Last but not least, **this report** demonstrate **important gaps in fertility knowledge**, despite most of the respondents were highly educated. Misconceptions about the timing of fertility decline and reproductive health suggest a need for **better fertility education and awareness campaigns**. **Taken together, the findings underline that demographic challenges cannot be solved through fragmented measures alone, but require integrated and coordinated reforms at both national and European levels.**

ANNEX A QUESTIONNAIRE

Q1. Gender

Q2. Age (in years)

Q3. Family situation

Q4. What is your level of education completed?

Q5. What is your approximate personal net monthly income?

Q6. What area would you say you live in?

Q7. What is your current professional situation?

Q8. What would be the ideal number of children you personally would like to have / would have liked to have had?

Q9. Have you had any children? If yes, how many?

Q10. Have you had as many children as you wished you had when you started your family?

Q11. How old were you when you had your first child?

Q12. Looking back, what do you now think of the timing of your first child?

Q13. How many more children do you (still) intend to have?

Q14. The financial situation

Q15. The working situation of the mother

Q16. Housing conditions

Q17. The health of the mother

Q18. Having a supportive partner

Q19. The working situation of the father

Q20. The health of the father

- Q21. Availability of childcare provision
- Q22. The opportunity to go on parental leave or care leave
- Q23. The costs of children
- Q24. The public support for families with children
- Q25. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your family life?
- Q26. All things considered, how satisfied are you with public support for families with children?
- Q27. From the list below, what are the two main difficulties that families with children could face, in your opinion?
- Q28. Do you personally find it very difficult, fairly difficult, fairly easy or very easy to combine work and family life?
- Q29. Combining work and childcare can be organised in different ways. Out of the following possible options, which one do you believe is most practicable and realistic, taking into account the need to earn a living?
- Q30. Longer paid parental leave
- Q31. Incentives for fathers to take parental leave
- Q32. Easier access to part-time work
- Q33. Access to more flexible childcare arrangements
- Q34. Increased child allowances
- Q35. Increasing tax advantages for families with children
- Q36. Childcare for pre-school children can be organised in different ways, sometimes combining several options, sometimes relying on only one option. In your opinion, what is the best way of organising childcare for pre-school children? (you can choose multiple answers)
- Q37. A working mother can establish a just as warm and secure relationship with her children as a mother who does not work

- Q38. A pre-school child is more likely to suffer if his/her mother works
- Q39. All in all family life suffers when the woman has a full-time job
- Q40. Both men and women should contribute to the household income
- Q41. Ideally, the woman should stay at home to look after the children while the man goes out to work
- Q42. Family life often suffers when men concentrate too much on their work
- Q43. Which of the following statements best reflects your household situation?
- Q44. Do you think that in the next two years, your household situation will be...?
- Q45. A woman is less fertile after the age of 36 years.
- Q46. A couple would be classified as infertile if they did not achieve a pregnancy after 1 year of regular sexual intercourse (without using contraception).
- Q47. Smoking decreases female fertility.
- Q48. Smoking decreases male fertility.
- Q49. About 1 in 10 couples are infertile.
- Q50. If a man produces sperm he is fertile.
- Q51. These days a woman in her 40s has a similar chance of getting pregnant as a woman in her 30s.
- Q52. Having a healthy lifestyle makes you fertile.
- Q53. If a man has had mumps after puberty he is more likely to later have a fertility problem.
- Q54. A woman who never menstruates is still fertile.
- Q55. If a woman is overweight by more than 2 stones (13 kg or 28 pounds) then she may not be able to get pregnant.
- Q56. If a man can achieve an erection then it is an indication that he is fertile.

Q57. People who have had a sexually transmitted disease are likely to have reduced fertility.