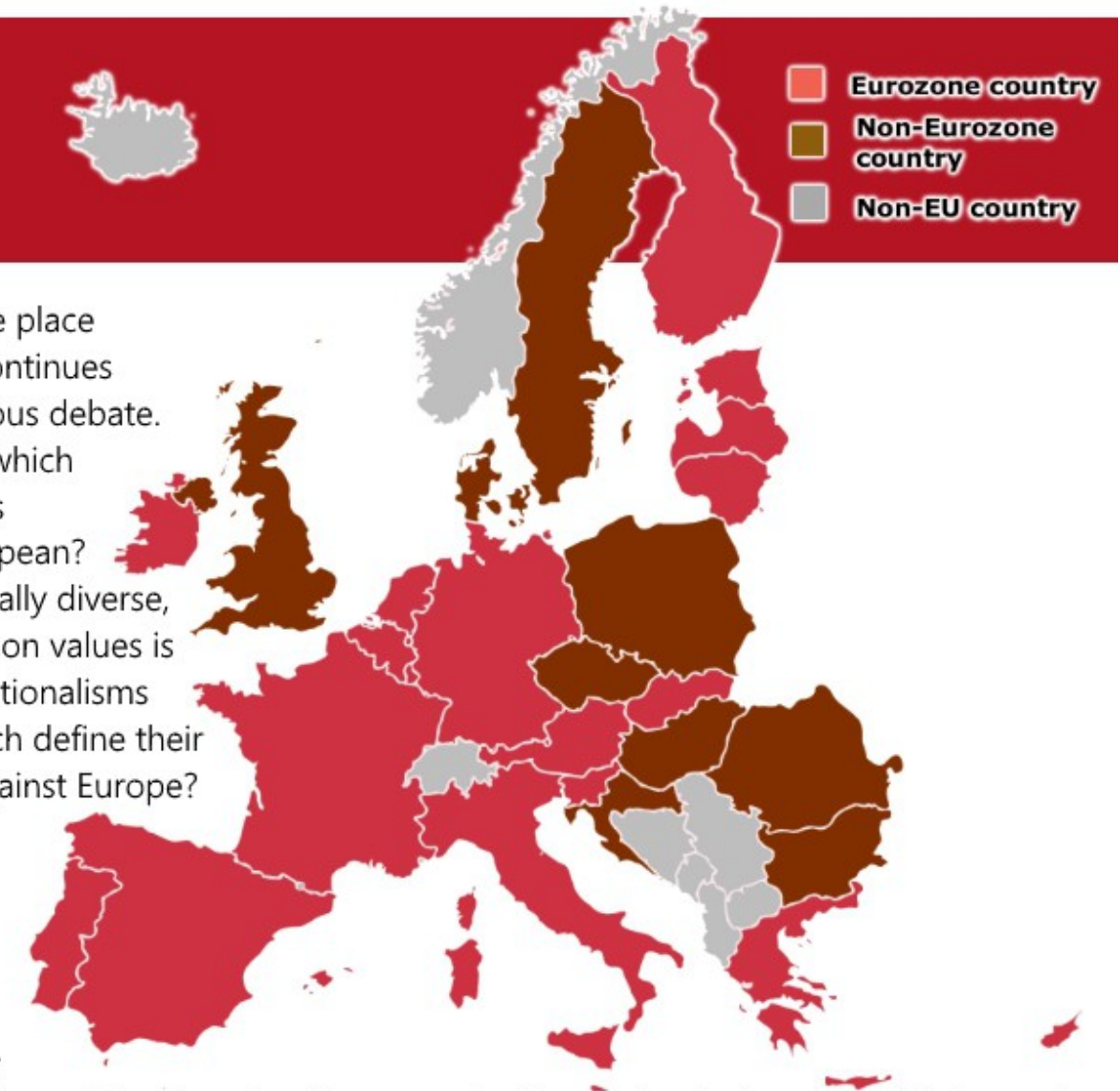


CURIOSITY

the voice of Youth Party

The Values of Europe: Family, Work, Society and Religion



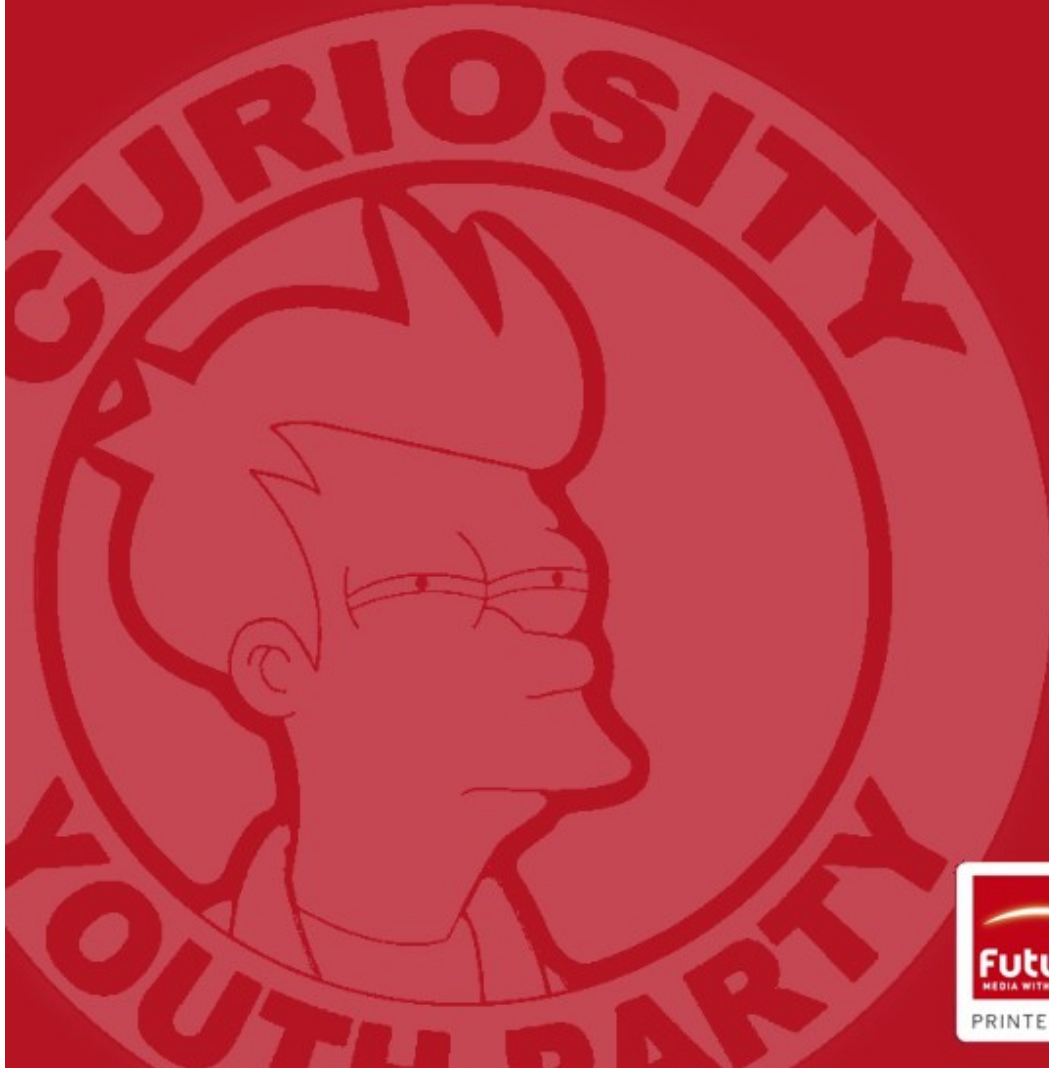
The importance of the place of values in Europe continues to be a matter of furious debate. Are there any values which might be described as characteristically European? Or is Europe so culturally diverse, that any talk of common values is to fly in the face of nationalisms and regionalisms which define their identities over and against Europe?

Family

The family is one of the domains where the greatest changes have taken place over recent generations. The traditional nuclear European family consisted of a married father and mother with a several children but today this is only one option among many. Declining marriage rates, an increased number of divorces, the wide acceptance of co-habitation, the legalization of same-sex marriage and dropping fertility rates have caused the size of the average household within the European Union to drop to 2.4 people. The roles of men and women have changed, with women in most European countries enjoying broadly the same educational and employment opportunities as men. Have these changes in family composition and roles resulted in a dramatic change of values? Yes and no. The data from the EVS does not support the claim that there has been a revolutionary transformation in family values. The results indicate that the demise of traditional values has been exaggerated. Family remains of the utmost importance to people. 84% of Europeans say that family is very important, almost twice as many as those who find friends very important .

Family: Missional Reflection

That today's Europeans continue to value family ahead of friends, work, leisure time, politics and religion as the most important thing in their lives, should make us stop and think. Despite the increased orientation of life values towards the individual the family is still hugely important



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to most people. Mission innovation over the last decade has focussed on developing networks and communities that can meet the consumerist tendencies of contemporary society. Perhaps it is time to consider again what "mission to families" might mean in 21st Century Europe.

Work

58 per cent of Europeans say that work is very important in their life, only surpassed in significance by the importance of family. However, the importance of work is often inversely correlated to wealth: in the wealthier countries, work is considered of less importance, a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

Society

There is a North-West/South-East divide in regard to the trust that Europeans have in other people. Norway, Denmark, Iceland and the Netherlands show the highest levels of mutual trust, whereas the most distrusting people live in Cyprus and Turkey. Francis Fukuyama observed that economic development and government performance were linked with levels of trust and this appears to be borne out in the EVS: the most trusting Europeans tend to live in prosperous countries. However, there are exceptions. Austria, Luxembourg and Belgium show lower levels of trust than their wealth would suggest.

For many years Europe has been a magnet for immigration. It is estimated that there may be as many as 70 million immigrants across the whole of Europe.



Many Europeans believe that immigrants take jobs away from native people. Only the Scandinavians and Luxembourgers disagree with this view. People living in Western Europe and Scandinavia generally feel that immigrants should assimilate, that is, they should adopt the customs of their new home country.

Religion

More than 90% of the people in Albania, Cyprus, Belarus, Georgia and Kosovo

claim to be religious, but even in supposedly secularized countries like Netherlands and Denmark, the majority of people say the same. The majority of Europeans continue to consider themselves members of a church and conversely atheism is strikingly rare. France has the most atheists but even then it only represents 18% of the population.

The idea that there is only one true religion can only count on a majority of support in the Muslim countries of Turkey and Armenia. In Turkey and Malta belief in heaven and hell is unquestioned, but in Denmark and Sweden and also in Spain and Portugal scepticism about their existence prevails. All over Europe, more people believe in heaven than in hell.

Belief in lucky charms and talismans prevails in Romania, Greece and Moldova, whereas in Finland, Norway, Denmark, Netherlands and surprisingly Italy, the people are much more sceptical about the efficacy of such things.

- H.K. - F.G. -

Traveling with a Turkey

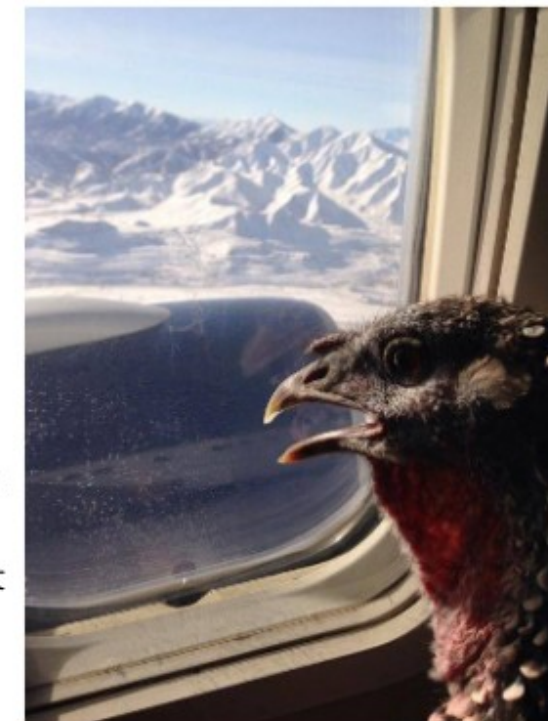
Turkey on a plane woman reveals bizarre reason why she travelled with bird for 'emotional support'

Jodie Smalley flew with her 'emotional support' turkey, Easter, from her home in Seattle, Washington state, to her relatives' house in Salt Lake City, Utah

The Easter Turkey Files/Facebook In good spirits: Jodie Smalley, from Seattle, Washington state, beams alongside her pet turkey, Easter, on the Delta Air Lines flight. A woman who took a live turkey on a Delta Air Lines flight was bringing the 'emotional support' animal to her family's home for Christmas.

Jodie Smalley, from Seattle, Washington state, was spotted using her yellow-beaked bird, Easter, as a 'therapy' pet during her two-hour flight to Salt Lake City in Utah.

After the plane touched down, she lovingly pushed the feathered creature through the airport in a wheelchair, before taking it to her brother's house for festive celebrations. But despite the time of year, she says that she didn't eat the turkey - instead, taking it on a



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return flight home with her a few days later, Mirror Online can reveal.

This is because, Ms Smalley says, Easter offers her comfort - and reminds her on a daily basis that 'there is a reason to smile and to care, no matter how bad things are'.

- A. A. -



EUROZONE

What you can imagine if you hear about Eurozone? - M. S. -

The eurozone, officially called the euro area, is a monetary union of 19 of the 28 European Union (EU) member states which have adopted the euro as their

common currency and sole legal tender. The other nine members of the European Union continue to use their own national currencies.

The eurozone consists of Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain. Other EU states (except for Denmark and the United Kingdom) are obliged to join once they meet the criteria to do so. No state has left, and there are no provisions to do so or to be expelled. Andorra, Monaco, San Marino, and Vatican City have formal agreements with the EU to use the euro as their official currency and issue their own coins. Kosovo and Montenegro have adopted the euro unilaterally, but these countries do not officially form part of the eurozone and do not have representation in the European Central Bank (ECB) or in the Eurogroup.

The ECB, which is governed by a president and a board of the heads of national central banks, sets the monetary policy of the zone. The principal task of the ECB is to keep inflation under control. Though there is no common representation, governance or fiscal policy for the currency union, some co-operation does take place through the Eurogroup, which makes political decisions regarding the eurozone and the euro. The Eurogroup is composed of the finance ministers of eurozone states, but in emergencies, national leaders also form the Eurogroup.

Since the financial crisis of 2007–08, the eurozone has established and used provisions for granting emergency loans to member states in return for the enactment of economic reforms.

The eurozone has also enacted some limited fiscal integration, for example in peer review of each other's national budgets. The issue is political and in a state of flux in terms of what further provisions will be agreed for eurozone reform.



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