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THE ATLAS OF EUROPEAN VALUES PROJECT: POSSIBILITIES OF MAPPING THE VALUES OF EUROPEANS AND CHALLENGES FOR GEOGRAPHY

*Avrupa Değerler Atlası Projesi: Avrupa Değerlerini Haritalama İmkânları ve
Coğrafya Açısından Tartışmalar*

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Öz

Avrupa Değerler Araştırması (ADA), temel insani değerler hakkında, 1970'lerin sonlarında başlatılan, geniş ölçekli, ülkelerarası ve boylamsal bir araştırma programıdır. Bu araştırmanın bir ürünü, Hollanda'daki Tilburg Üniversitesi tarafından ikinci kez basılan Avrupa Değerler Atlası'dır. Avrupa Değerler Atlası, 46 Avrupa ülkesindeki nüfusun görüşleri hakkında haritalar ve genel bilgiler sunmaktadır. Avrupa, aile, iş yaşamı, din, politika, toplum ve memnuniyet hakkındaki bölümlerde, değerlerin örüntüsündeki benzerlik ve farklılıklar gösterilmektedir. Avrupa Değerler Araştırması'nın haritalarına internette erişilebilmektedir. Bunun yanı sıra, söz konusu web sayfası, coğrafyacılar ve coğrafya öğretmenleri için çok yararlı bir bilgi kaynağı olan, çeşitli harita araçları, videolar, genel bilgiler ve öğretim materyalleri de sunmaktadır.

Araştırmanın bize gösterdiği değerler örüntüsünü açıklayabilecek en önemli kuramlar modernleşme kuramlarıdır. Bu makalede, değerler hakkındaki bulgular, kuramsal çerçeve ile ilişkisi bakımından açıklanmakta ve özellikle Türkiye üzerinden bazı örnekler verilmektedir. Bulgular, coğrafya ve diğer bilimler için, Avrupalıların değerlerinin haritalanmasının ne derecede mümkün olduğunu tartışmaya açmaktadır. Bu tartışmalardan ikisi, verinin bölgeselleştirilmesi ve ülkeler arası farkların açıklanmasında "bağlam"ın araştırılmasıdır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Avrupa, Değerler, Atlas, Coğrafya, Eğitim

Abstract

The European Values Study (EVS) is a large-scale, cross-national and longitudinal research programme on basic human values, initiated in the late 1970s. A product of this research is the Atlas of European Values (AoEV), published by the University of Tilburg in the Netherlands for the second time. The Atlas of European Values offers maps and background information on the opinions of the population in 46 European countries. In chapters about Europe, family, work, religion, politics, society and well-being, diversity and similarities in values patterns are shown. On the website www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu maps of the European Values Study are accessible for free. In addition, the website offers different map tools, videos, background information and other teaching materials that are very useful sources of information for geographers and geography teachers.

The most important theories to explain the value patterns that the research shows us are modernization theories. In this article, the basic findings on values are explained with respect to the theoretical frame and some examples with a special focus on Turkey are given. The findings challenge geography and other sciences, to what extent mapping the values of Europeans is possible. Two of these challenges are regionalizing the data and exploring the “context” for explaining the differences among countries.

Keywords: Europe, Values, Atlas, Geography, Education

From the European Values Study to the Atlas of European Values

The origins of the European Values Study go back to the late seventies when social scientists from the universities of Tilburg and Leuven realised that societies in Western European countries were changing in a very rapid way. They were interested in questions such as the following ones:

- Do Europeans share common values?
- Are values changing in Europe and, if so, in which directions?
- What are the implications of European unity?

In order to answer these questions, a survey was planned and in 1981 interviews were conducted in 10 European countries. To explore the dynamics of how values were changing in 1990 and 1999/2000 new surveys were held in an increasing number of countries. From 2008 to 2010, a new wave of the European Values Study took place. It was the fourth one in a row and covered 46 European Countries: from Iceland to Malta, from Ireland to Georgia – a very broad definition of Europe. Large efforts were taken to guarantee high quality fieldwork. In every country one institute or university was responsible for the data collection. The questions in the questionnaire were discussed in a theory group of scientists and standardised between waves and between countries. Furthermore a rich set of socio-demographic background variables was added to the questionnaire, facilitating research on the determinants of values. And finally the translation process was closely monitored to make sure that the same questions were asked in each country. This resulted in a questionnaire in different languages and adjusted to different social contexts,

as for example, a Russian questionnaire for Latvia or an Albanian questionnaire for Kosovo.

To reach a broader public Tilburg University decided to publish the survey results in an ‘Atlas of European Values’ (Halman, 2005), which got an enthusiastic response. The survey results, which were normally presented in many tables and interpretations by sociologists, were edited in colourful maps and background articles and easy-to-read and understand interviews. Because of its success also the results of the 4th survey from 2008 are published in an Atlas of European Values: Trends and Traditions at the turn of the Century (Halman *et al.*, 2011).

The outcomes of the European Values Study are systemized in chapters about Europe, family, work, religion, politics, society and well-being, and for each chapter the basic findings will be outlined in the next section. To give a better impression of the relevance of some findings for the Turkish audience, some results concerning Turkey are highlighted. Furthermore basic theories which can be connected to the findings of the Atlas of European Values are enlightened to get a deeper understanding of the patterns offered by the maps. In another section the content and aims of the educational website www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu, which accompanies the Atlas of European Values in its striving to disseminate the results of the European Values Study are described. Finally this article tries to discuss the possibilities, difficulties and challenges of the maps of the Atlas of European Values within the frame of geography and geography education.

The State of European Values in 2008 According to the European Values Study

In its first chapter, the Atlas of European Values tries to explore the state of **European** identity. As the *Figure 1* shows, that Europeans are feeling that

they belong more to their home town, region or country than to Europe. Turkey is no exception and comparable with countries like Spain or Poland. But from research about (territorial) identity (Sen, 2006) we know that identity should not be seen as “or .. or” but as “and .. and”: identity is *multiple, layered and always context dependent*. Astonishingly Turkish people are running ahead, when it comes to solidarity with their fellow Europeans: more than 30% of the people feel very much concerned about the living conditions of other Europeans, only Swiss people, Germans and Moldavians are a bit more concerned. The Atlas of European Values offers furthermore information about national identity and opinions about the European Union. When it comes to the future of the EU, it can be said, that for most of the North-Western countries the enlargement has already gone too far, but the inhabitants of the recent EU-member states and non-EU countries (including Turkey) think, that the expansion should go on.

Another chapter in the Atlas of European Values is about **family**. Not surprisingly, because as Hofstede (2001) points out, a substantial part of our values is learned by upbringing in family. Generally speaking, family is very important, friends are only quite important. Differences on these issues between countries are quite small, and maps are giving the impression, that they are bigger than they are in reality.

However, what Europeans understand by family can differ. For example only a minority in North-Western Europe thinks that one needs a long-term stable relationship to be happy, but in South-Eastern Europe more than 75% think so. Nearly the same pattern can be seen when it comes to the freedom to choose children or the approval of living together without being married. Although the number of people who thinks, that marriage is an out-dated institution and the number of divorces increases in Europe, the concept of marriage still remains popular. And even if the majority of Europeans think, that a child should have both, a father and a mother to grow up happily, single motherhood is more and more accepted. The latter can be explained by an increasing trend towards single motherhood. As Rampell (2010) points out, about 16% of the children worldwide are living in a single-parent household. And the United

Kingdom for example, the number of children raised by single mothers increased from 5% in 1972 to nearly a quarter in 2006 (Halman *et al.*, 2011).

What values then, the parents would like their children to learn? When to have to choose out of 11 items, good manners, a feeling of responsibility and tolerance and respect for other people rank the top 3. However, differences are quite big between countries and independence and tolerance scores the lowest under the Turkish respondents: apparently other aspects seem to be more important for them.

Work remains important for Europeans and the obvious explanation is that a job is needed to provide an income but the number of countries, where people value leisure times more than work is growing: 3 countries in 1990, 11 countries in 2008. Turkey is not on that list, indeed work ethic in Turkey seems to be very high: it has the highest percentage of people who think, that work is a duty towards society (see *Figure 2*).

When asked about job qualities, the patterns differ from map to map, but the results remain very stable on a high score for nearly every aspect: pleasant people to work with, having not too much pressure, job security, good working hours, the opportunity to use initiative, doing something useful for society, having generous holidays, meeting people, feeling that you achieve something, having responsibility, meeting ones abilities, learning new skills, family friendliness, having a say in decisions and equal treatment, they all seem to be very important in the working life of Turkish people. The only aspect, which is less important is, that a job must be interesting.

However, for Europe as a whole a good pay still remains the most: we see indeed a pattern (good pay seems to be more important in the less wealthy countries), but also in the North-Western European countries a majority thinks, that a good pay is vital.

Are Europeans still **religious**? The Atlas of European Values answers this question with a “yes, but...”. Yes, in a lot of countries the majority of the inhabitants call themselves religious but in many countries it is no longer the case. This does not mean that people are becoming non-believers. Voas (2009) uses the term “*fuzzy fidelity*” to

express this development of believing in 'something'. More common in sociological terminology is to use the expression 'secularization' (Wilson, 1998), which should not be mixed up with secularism. The latter term refers to the separation between religion and the state, whereas "secularization" describes the process that religion is less and less important in people's daily lives. The Atlas of European Values shows an interesting picture of this development: Only in two countries a majority does not think, that there is any sort of spirit, God or life force: Germany and the Czech Republic. In the rest of Europe the majority of people believe or in a personal God (as f. ex. Turkey, Italy or Poland) or in some sort of spirit or life force (as f. ex. France, Bulgaria or Sweden).

Politics seems not to be so interesting for Europeans. Only in a few countries the majority of the people says, that they are interested in it. Despite of the low interest in politics and (some may argue perhaps even worse) very low confidence in political parties (the European average is 20%), most of the Europeans are supporting democracy: even in the country with the lowest score (Ukraine) 66,3% of the people think, that having a democratic political system would be a very or fairly good idea (Turkey 90,2%). But what people understand by democracy may differ from country to country, already the democratic system of the United Kingdom differs a lot from that one of the Netherlands, despite only several (sea-) miles which are separating both countries: where in the first country after the last elections one was afraid, that a coalition government would lead the country into chaos, in the latter country one cannot imagine a government which is only lead by one party.

A theory developed by Inglehart (1977) argues that growing levels of economic prosperity in industrial societies causes a gradual shift from materialistic desires to more post-materialistic orientations like self-realization, freedom of speech, healthy environment or gender equality (see also the pyramid of needs developed by Maslow). The Atlas of European Values shows indeed, that when people could choose between four options, the political priorities differ in European countries (see

Figure 3). Maintaining order in the nation scores the highest in most of the South-Eastern and Eastern countries (which might support the theory of post-materialism), but also in Norway, Denmark and Sweden (which might be contrary to it).

Society is a broad concept, so the Atlas of European Values highlights several different aspects. One important item is trust in institutions and other people. Here it is stated, that trust could be related to income and the (perceived) level of corruption. When it comes to people living in need, the majority of people states, that this is due to injustice in society. However, in an increasing number of countries the argumentation, that need is caused by laziness or lack of willpower seems to gain ground (see *Figure 4*).

Tolerance is an important issue in nowadays Europe. Tolerance is a difficult concept (Krause, 2011), because on the one hand it is easily mixed up with indifference and on the other hand, we are not ready to "tolerate" everything. Generally with the questions asked in the European Values Study a difference can be made between people, who are different, and people, who might cause troubles. Over all Europe, the least favourite neighbours are drug addicts. When it comes to migration the Atlas offers different pictures. The attitude of people towards immigrants cannot only be explained by income level, number of immigrants or unemployment rate. Social scientists argue whether *contact theory* (Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006) or *competition theory* (Card *et al.*, 2009) might explain attitudes towards immigrants in a country and if there is such a thing as an optimum in immigrant proportion in neighbourhoods for integration and peaceful coexistence. In an average Europeans are afraid, that immigrants are undermining the cultural life (5.5 on a scale from 1-10), putting a strain to the welfare system (6.4) and worsening crime (6.7). Generally speaking, in quite a lot of European countries people think, that there are too many immigrants (see *Figure 5*), and in some countries like Greece and Russia more than 70% of the people think so.

From the Atlas of European Values to the Website

It was obvious that the Atlas of European Values had a high potential for teaching in secondary schools and higher education. Thus in 2006 Tilburg University and Fontys University of Applied Sciences Tilburg decided to cooperate and make the results of the European Values Study accessible for educational use. One of the first activities was to publish the maps on a website (www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu) for free use because it was obvious that a paper version of the high quality print version of the atlas would not find its way into schools. For scientific research the results of the European Values Study are available on www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu, which gives researchers the possibility to explore the data in different ways, like for example gender, age, income group ...etc.

The most recent version of the website has been developed within a Comenius project called European Values Education. It offers the European maps of all EVS waves, which is 1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008. The languages are English, German, Dutch, Spanish, French, Slovak and Turkish. Furthermore a mouse-over and a country list show the exact average response per country. If you click on a country in the list, a graph shows the results for the whole 4 waves of the European Values Study, so that development on that specific issue becomes visible. A special tool allows comparing maps in three different ways, for example to see, if there is a correlation between tolerance towards abortion and religiosity. In addition maps of 2008 can be compared with meta-data like GDP, unemployment rate etc. Furthermore all maps of the Atlas of European Values can be combined and a new map can be created.

Because the European Values Study cooperates with the World Values Study, the results of both studies are visible in world a map, which allows a comparison between Europe and other countries in the world like the USA, India or China. However, only a part of the questionnaire is the same in both surveys.

Besides the maps, the website offers also videos of young people in 5 countries (Turkey, England,

Germany, the Netherlands and Slovakia), who were interviewed with questions from the European Values Study. A guideline for teachers or lecturers (principles), background information, teaching strategies and lesson plans help to make lectures and lessons more active and use the maps to develop a deeper understanding and critical thinking.

The Relevance of the Atlas of European Values for Geography and Geography Education

In fact the title of the Atlas of European Values is misleading. It does not show values, but opinions. Opinions about a wide range of themes like work, religion, politics, society, family and Europe itself. And because it shows maps of Europe, it seems to be obvious that it is relevant for geographers and geography education.

The maps on the website themselves can be used in two different ways. First the maps can be analysed. All maps are constructed accordingly by equal intervals using the range between the highest and lowest score and showing the results on a country scale. This allows the differences between the countries to be shown but it can also enlarge the differences. Working with the maps thus asks for map reading skills. While analysing the maps, differences and similarities can be investigated. That means that students should have an idea of patterns: Is there a correlation between the analysed map and richer countries or more religious countries? Can I see a difference between the former Communist countries and the rest? Often young people are not aware of these patterns and in some European languages it seems that there is not even a word for a thing like pattern (Uhlenwinkel, 2010). The comparison module on the website allows problematizing both aspects.

Another way to work with the maps on the website is to use the question of the map. The question offers the opportunity to relate the map and the topic to the students. As the questions are asking for opinions the student always has to make up his mind first (what do I think about this?) and the questions can lead to a lively discussion. The visualisation on a map allows the discussion to be put into a national (what do people in my country

think?) or European (what do people in other European countries think?) context. But as the maps on the website only show the average for each country, the range of answers and opinions behind an average result on a map has to be discussed. This could probably be linked to the diversity of answers of the students itself.

The maps cannot offer any explanation by themselves. This might be disappointing because a natural question while working with the maps is of course the reason why people from certain countries or a group of countries are answering in a particular way. As pointed out here above, sociologists collected this data to derive values from the opinions of people in Europe. This is a difficult project but nevertheless they succeeded in some ways. In their analysis social scientists have looked at the answers to the survey questions and used additional, mainly economical or demographical, data. When it comes to **family** (Hagenaars *et al.*, 2003), **society** (Inglehart 1997) or **work** (Ester *et al.* 2001) their explanations are generally linked to modernisation and individualisation theories. Secularisation theories, which are linked to modernisation and individualisation (Wallis *et al.*, 1992), play an important role when explaining the opinions about religion. Despite this general explanation sociologists are aware that country-specific circumstances lead to deviant patterns from modernisation (Wilson 1998). However, while using the maps teachers and students need to know about the sociological theories and the specific regional circumstances, which might have an effect on the answers in the values survey. This will deepen the student's understanding of the maps and enable them to think critically about the explanations given by these theories.

The maps of the Atlas of European Values are no facts. They only represent the average opinion in a country on a certain moment. Already the data representation on a country level has its limitations: regionalizing the maps would definitely help to find more correlations and thus may also lead to possible explanations. Thus, regionalizing the maps of the Atlas of European Values is for sure one of the projects for the future. Providing more country-specific or regional

explanations could and should be the task of geographers by using the sociological theories and looking at the specific historical, economical, demographical, political, social and cultural circumstances of a region. Yet there is another problem with the maps: As Massey (2005) pointed out very clearly; they even are not space, if you would define space as a product of multiple trajectories, with a past and a future. Maps in general are (a piece of) time. According to Massey's fundamental work on space, Taylor (2008) tries to derive key concepts, which might help us to develop an understanding of space. She suggests using the concepts of *diversity*, *change*, *interaction* and *perception & representation* and these perspectives might also be used to interrogate the maps. The fact that these maps are no facts but representations of perceptions at a specific moment makes them perhaps even more valuable to discuss. Perceptions can be very important as the following example shows: the former German chancellor Helmut Schmidt (2011) stated that the Euro crisis is due to "careless gossip" and warned his social democratic party that "*Germany should not forget its responsibility, because there will be for several generations a latent mistrust*" against Germany. In his point of view, perceptions and representations have an impact on the economic-geographical situation and perceptions and narratives of the past have and will have an impact on the political-geographical relations in the future. Perceptions thus might be more important for geography than some geographers think.

Besides the regionalizing of the data and the role of perception a challenge for geographers and other social scientists is, to explore the contexts in which the answers to the questions of the European Values Study were given. The high standard of research guarantees, that all questions are translated carefully to be able to compare the results. However, a translation cannot always take into account connotations people might have, when they consider answers to the survey questions.

Some examples can be given in order to make clear how important the regional context for a better understanding of the distribution of the values (Palings *et al.* (2011)). When asked, if people think, that having the army rule would be a

good idea, the result for Turkey is quite high: more than 1/3 of the people do think so (see *Figure 6*). Connotations in Western countries like the Netherlands would be that this is an indicator for anti-democratic structures in society (which, by the way, would not correlate with the support for democracy of Turkish people). However, the Turkish result can only be understood, if one knows more about the specific Turkish situation and the different interpretations and connotations of the role of the army. Another question of the European Values Study is, if people think, that a religious service for a birth is important (see *Figure 7*). The question has been translated correctly; the more neutral words “a religious service for birth” were used with the intention to include all religions and to avoid discrimination. But that cannot hide, that this question is led by the Christian concept of *baptism*. So, if one wants to understand the low scores on this question in Turkey, but also in Albania or Azerbaijan one has to be aware of this fact – and apparently the low response in the Czech Republic on this question must have different causes, which have to be examined in this specific Czech context.

The questions and the maps can also contribute to a critical citizenship and European citizenship. A lot of European countries like, for example, the Netherlands try to stimulate schools to be more engaged in citizenship education (Onderwijsraad 2003) and even a framework for European competences has been developed. This framework

shows the difficulties when it comes to Europe and European citizenship. It is a mixture of knowledge about Europe, general learning or communication skills and attitudes, which derive from a very clear view on what European values are: “peace, democratic decision-making, separation of religion and state, economic prosperity” (European Elos Network, 2010). In another discourse, European values (as being, for example, Christian) are used to define, from a historical perspective, who is European and who is not (Van der Vaart, 2009). Europe in this context is very often mixed up with the European Union. The questions and maps of the Atlas of European Values show that both approaches have their short comings and they offer possibilities for other approaches: to see Europe as a process (Guerrina, 2002) and to work on goals like freedom, peace, law, prosperity, diversity and solidarity. Separately, as Ash (2007) stated, these goals are not unique for Europe or the European Union, but the ongoing discussion of these values as being that European project might be typical European. In the Turkish context, it might be interesting to discuss, if Turkey can, wants and will be part of that European project. The Maps of the Atlas of European Values perhaps deliver new perspectives for that discussion.

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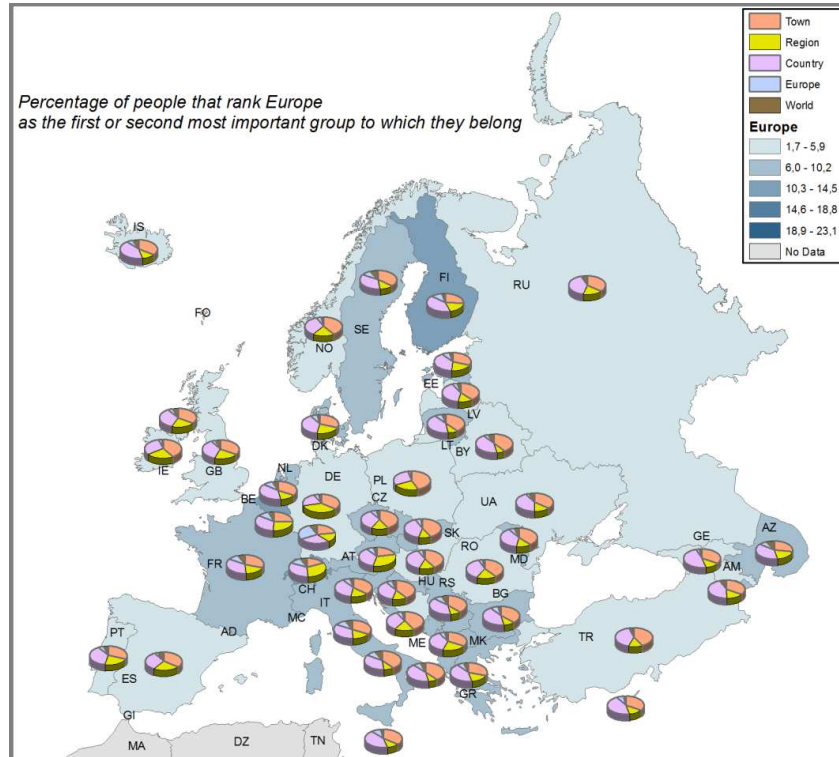


Figure 1: Regional belonging of Europeans (2008). Source: Atlas of European Values.

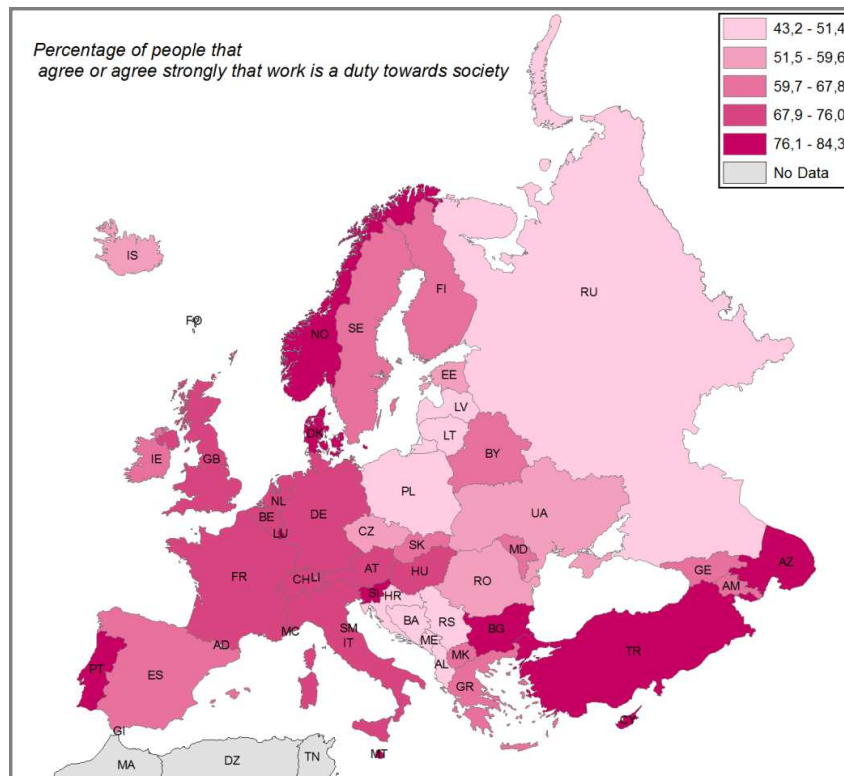


Figure 2: Work is a duty towards society. Source: European Values Study.

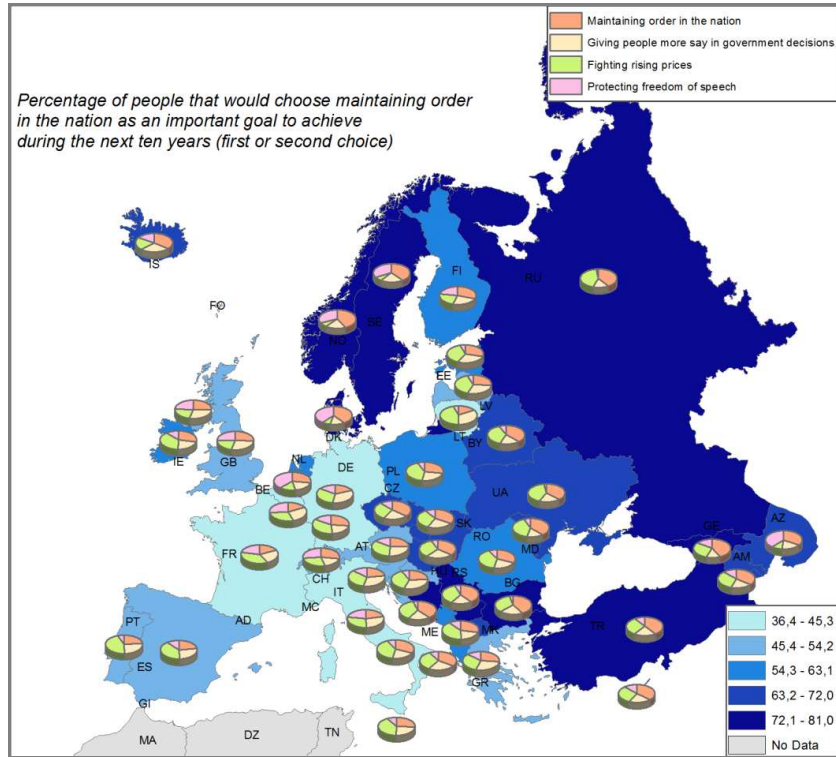


Figure 3: Political priorities of Europeans (2008). Source: European Values Study

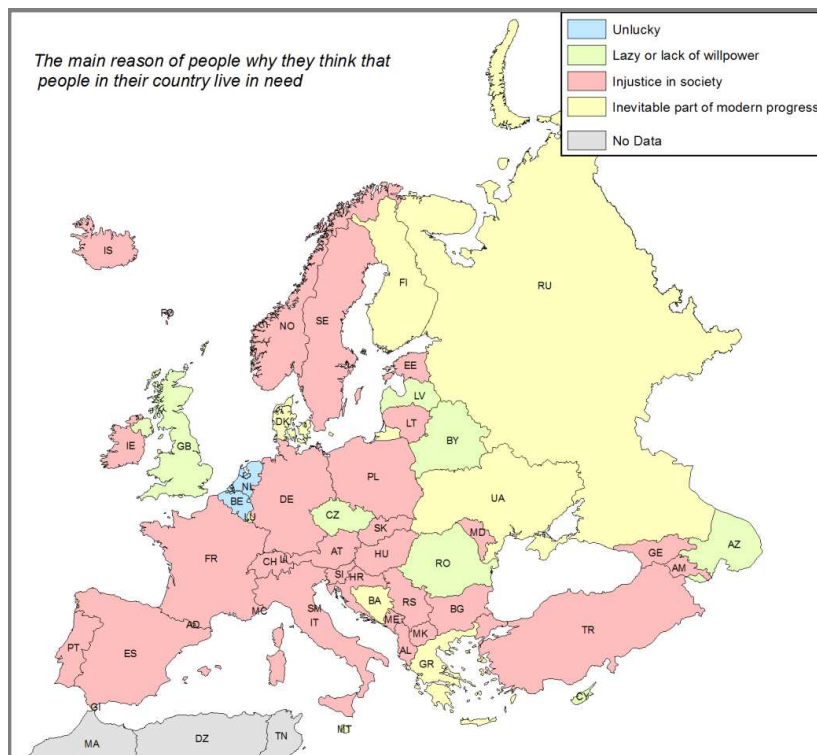


Figure 4: Why do people are in need? (2008). Source: Atlas of European Values

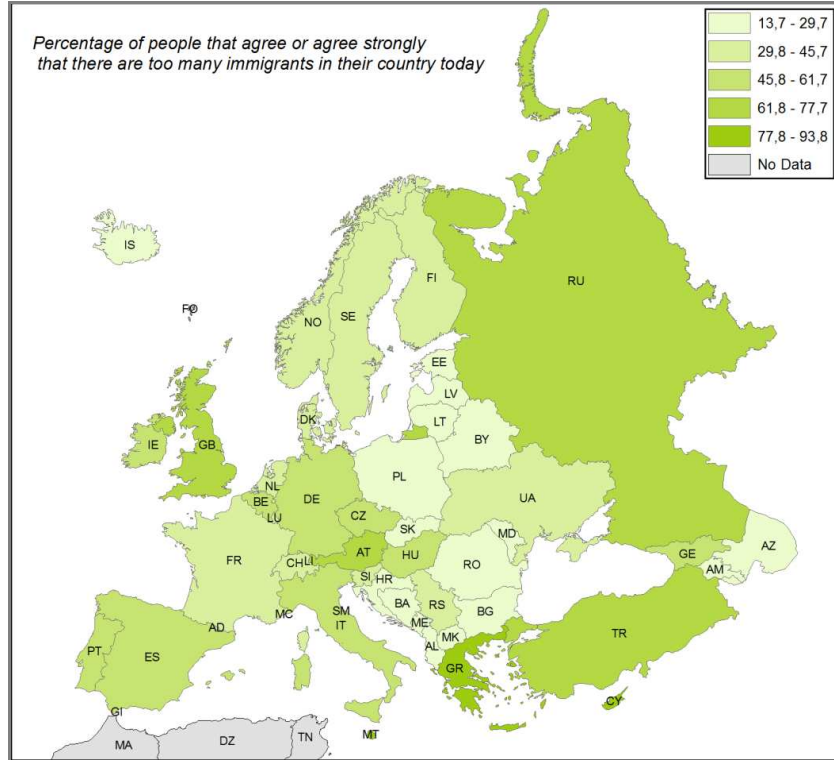


Figure 5: Percentage of people, who think that there are too many immigrants in their country

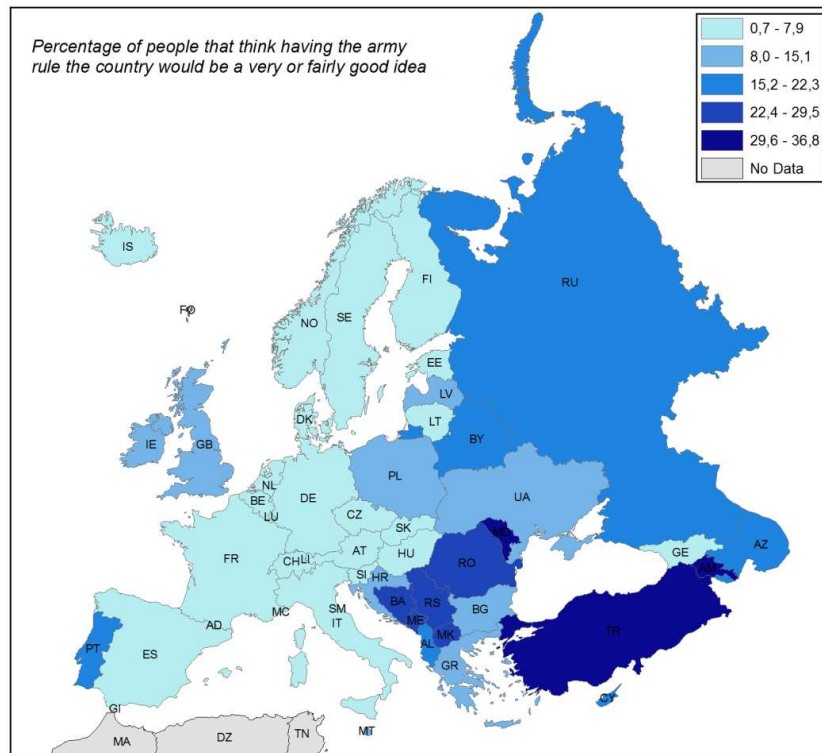


Figure 6: Having the army rule would be a very or fairly good idea.

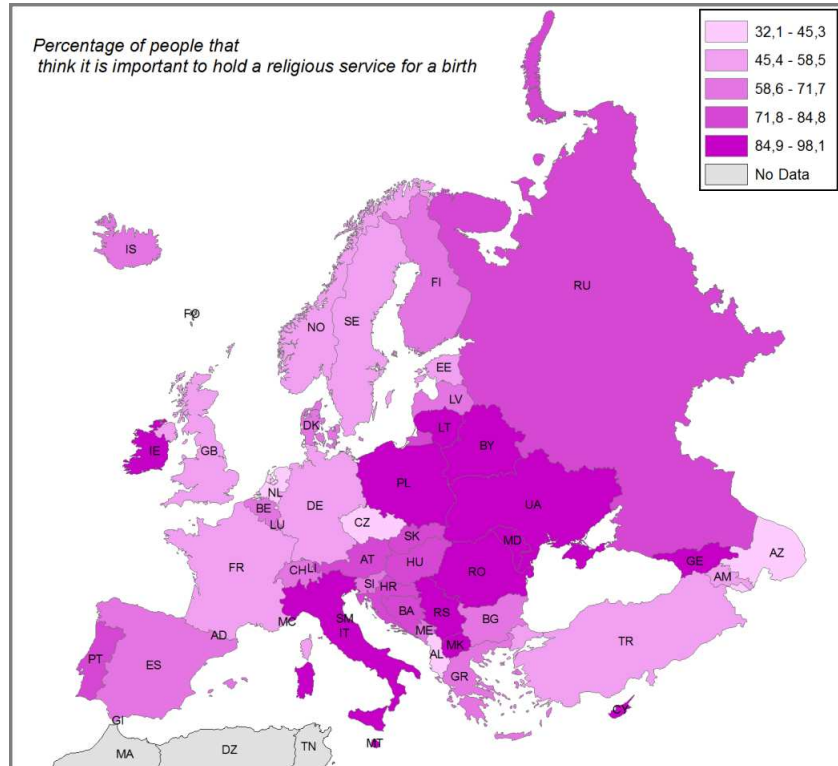


Figure 7: Religious service for birth (2008). Source: European Values Study.