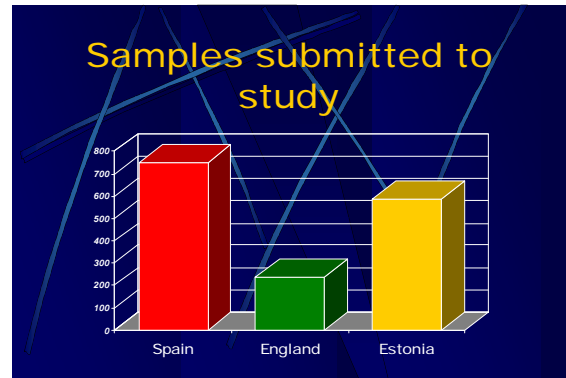


## Discussion

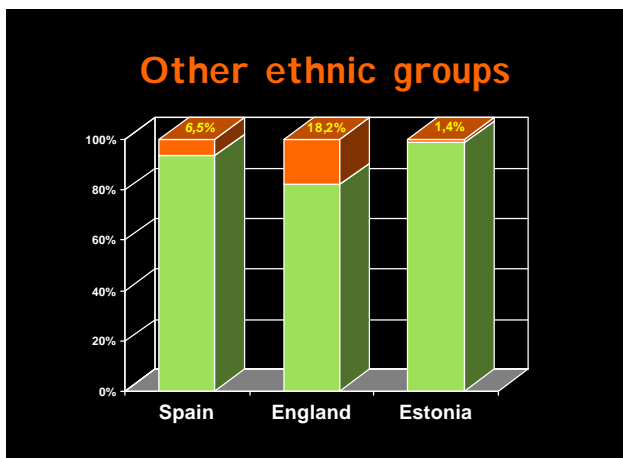
The demographic characteristics seen in the three samples which were collected do not lead us to think that these could be very different from the student populations. Therefore we believe that the results which were shown are representative and comparable with the target population: secondary education students.



### Multicultural Presence

The presence of different ethnic groups in the classrooms moves in variable ranges according to the centres and countries (between 1.4% and 18.2%), although it still does not seem to be a phenomenon with excessive quantitative weight, in spite of the concern which teachers expressed in their meetings. Also, the discrepancy between the representative cultures seems to attract

attention. In the Spanish sample, while the greater portion corresponds to students from South America, the teachers are more aware of the presence of Gypsies and Arabic students. In fact they have asked for external support in order to get to know them better. At the same time, they argue that their minority presence in the classroom is due to the fact that they come from cultures where



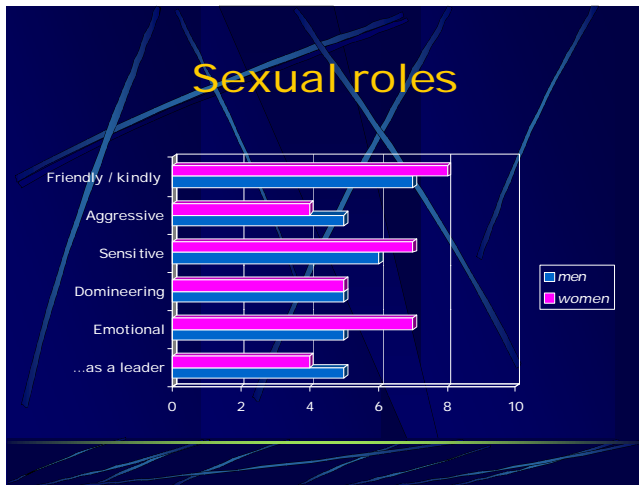
education is not a priority, as opposed to the South Americans, who do claim to place great importance on learning in an academic setting.

The data gathered from England and Estonia did not reflect a large number of different Ethnic groups from that of the country. Notwithstanding, England is the country which reflects the most significant percentage. As is logical, the profile was different for each country considered. Also, it caught our attention that in the visits to these countries by the programme's participants, they all observed

a large number of immigrants, which was different from what was observed in Spain. Perhaps this could be due to the fact that many of the questionnaires were passed out in schools located in areas with a homogeneous population.

## Sexual Roles

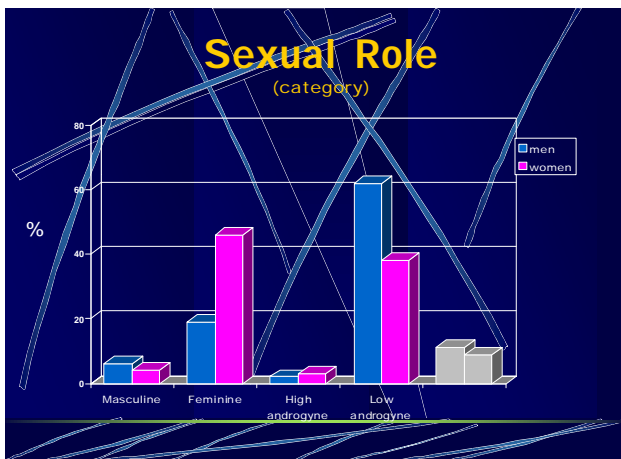
The clearest tendencies detected with respect to sexual roles and which were similar in the three countries studied, focused on the early adoption of the



feminine role for girls and an ambivalence which is more and more common (“slight androgyny”) among the boys.

In general there was a higher respect by both sexes for the characteristics which the test marked as “feminine.” In order to explain this tendency, several considerations are necessary:

- The faster biological and social maturation of girls, especially in the interval of ages studied, justifies the rapid acquisition of these roles.
- Social changes, which have happened since the publication of the questionnaire which was used, 1982<sup>1</sup>, lead us to believe that the features which define masculinity and femininity have perhaps become obsolete. The type of



clothing, the distribution of domestic tasks and the expression of emotions can be small examples of roles attributed to women 20 years ago which are now valued and praised in the media as recommended attributes and desirable for men.

c) Because of the vital cycle which is being studied, adolescence, it is also possible that the subjects are not yet adults and, therefore, may feel ambivalence towards the adoption of roles.

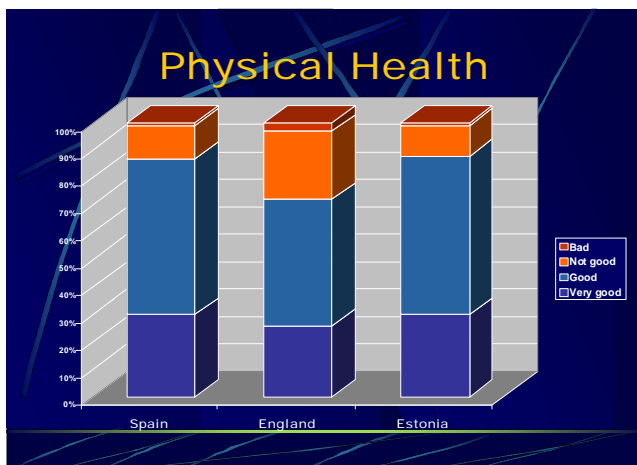
### Family Typology

The data concerning family typology confirm the fact that we are dealing with a diversity of family models that are in flux towards “new forms of families.” The appearance of different family options signals this fact and has caused some to speak of a structural change in the model of the nuclear family. Salustiano del Campo defined the traditional family as the patriarchal family from pre-industrial Europe. The nuclear family was the counterpoint to the traditional family. Now the nuclear family has become the traditional structure and all deviations are evaluated with regards to the nuclear family, but new postnuclear family forms are being outlined<sup>2</sup>.

Terms such as *step family* –joining the remains of the family in order to form a new one— (Popenoe, D.), *recomposed family* or *monoparental family*, are in the present “social market,” in an attempt to give a name to meaningful contents for human relationships<sup>2,3</sup>.

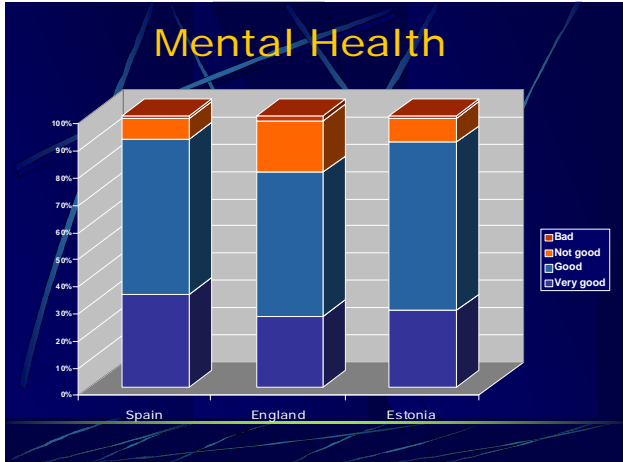
### Health

It is surprising that in a basically healthy group without any apparent worries concerning this subject, there is no small percentage of people who perceive



difficulties concerning their physical health (between 12% and 28%) and their mental health (between 9% and 12%), in the samples studied. Surprisingly enough in the English sample, the values are doubled. We do not know if these data show some bias in the procurement of the sample or if

they can be extrapolated to the English youth population.

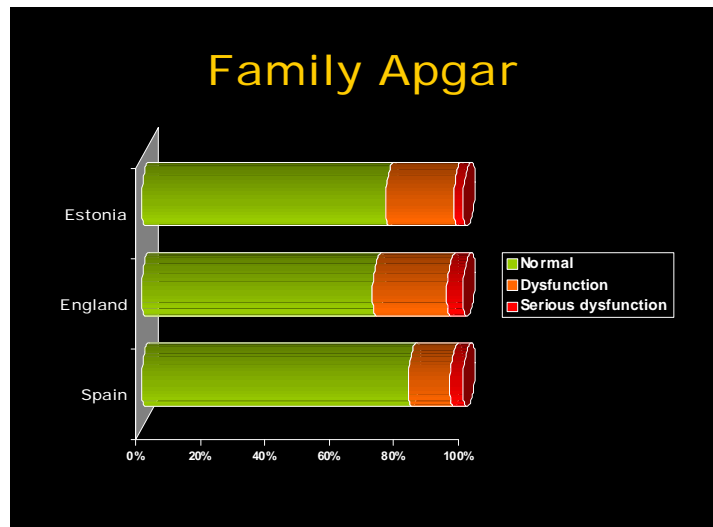


The correlation between both samples was significant ( $p < 0,0001$ ) to the point that more than a third of the group perceived difficulties not only for their physical but also for their mental health.

There was no correlation found with age—perhaps because of the small range—but there was a correlation with sex. There were significantly more girls in the group which perceived their physical or psychic health as regular or poor ( $p < 0,001$ ).

#### Apgar / Family Dysfunction

The percentages of dysfunction which the Apgar test detected with a score corresponding to a slight or severe family dysfunction, in spite of the fact that we normally consider these cases serious – between 17% and 28%; 20.6 in the complete sample–, are not very different from those found in other studies<sup>4,5,6</sup>.



In this case, it was the Spanish sample which showed the greatest imbalance and with noticeably lower scores. Perhaps there is a relationship with the fact that in this group, as has been commented above, the family occupies a more important place among the values of the study.

There was no correlation found with family dysfunction, age, or sex in the two surveys. However, there was a correlation, and a significant one ( $p < 0,001$ ) with the perception of problems with physical and psychic health.

The expression of family dysfunction by means of the symptoms of one of its members, is a common reality. The frequent perception of dysfunction in the family on the part of our adolescents, (one in every five) could be associated with the presence of symptoms (perception of poor health). This agrees with what was detected in the other studies of young people where there was also a significant correlation with the detection of family dysfunction by the Apgar test, the perception of deficient mental health and the consultation of specialised services<sup>5</sup>.

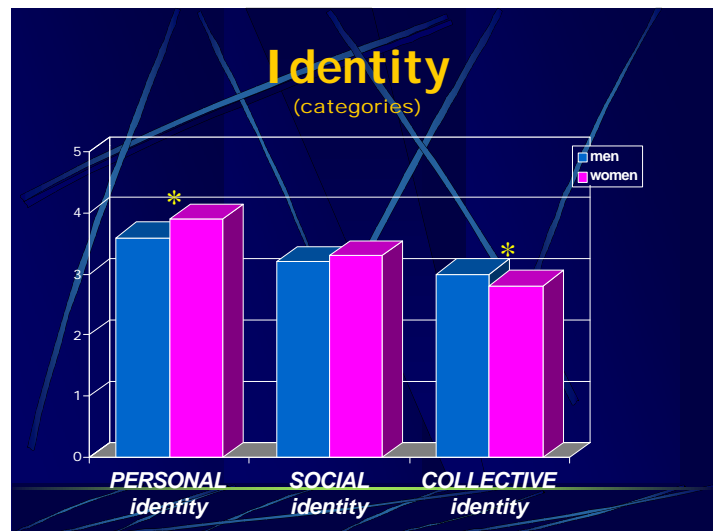
There was also a unity among samples: in the countries with a greater awareness of dysfunction, there was a higher perception of health problems.

## Identity

The authors group the items in this scale (AIQ-IIIx)<sup>7</sup> in three dimensions: individual, social and collective.

Of these three stages, the items corresponding to the individual dimension of identity were obviously more highly valued by the young people in the study, which seems well related to their stage of development and individualisation.

However, the social dimension and especially those items linked to the appreciation of their image ("to be popular," "what they think of me," "am I attractive," . . .) were the ones that received a significantly lower score, as opposed to those which we expected for this age group and also as opposed to what we had been told in the participant observation groups.



At the same time, the teacher group cited the importance that they believe belonging to a group has for their students, based on student conduct in class.

The group dimension also received a low assessment, as well as, among others, the items concerning political and religious commitment which were

shown to be of even less importance. This could be more related to the crisis in the chapter on values and to the absence or distance of possible referents which obviously could not communicate with this age group.

The only important exception in this assessment of identity which has been mentioned, was the fact that only one item at most—"be a member of my family...." belonging to the group dimension—attained the highest possible global evaluation on the test. Besides, this occurred only in the sample of Spanish young people, while in the rest of the countries, it received very low scores as did the rest of the items in this group (GB: 21 of 36, Estonia: 22 of 36).

This seems to indicate that there is a greater family presence in Spain. On the one hand, Spanish, as well as Mediterranean culture, is in agreement with the data. Prestigious anthropologists, such as Lisón Tolosana, with his studies about Spanish Family Typologies<sup>8</sup>, Comas D'Argemir, and his publications about new forms of family<sup>3</sup> or John Davis and his studies about Mediterranean culture<sup>9</sup>, are indexes for the significance of family in Spanish culture. On the other hand, the history of Spain in the last two thirds of the 20th century has been marked by strong political movements for the protection and exaltation of the family. The fact that Spanish young people perceive an emotional distancing among members of their family, and from these toward themselves, could cause them greater concern, and therefore raise the level of desire to belong to a family.

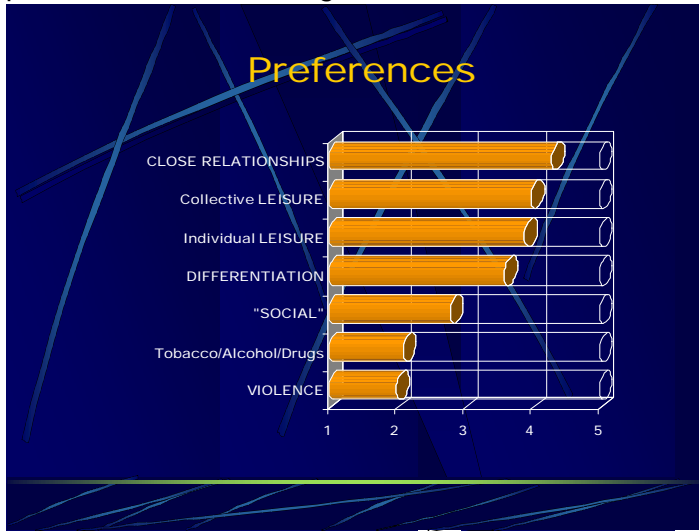
This dimension of the family and its importance for the emotional stucturalisation of the young person also appeared very frequently in the Spanish participant observation groups.

But, if we take into account the English and Estonian young people's perception of family dysfunction, it is even greater than that which the Spanish signalled. It is also possible that in all these cases, the feeling of belonging to a group and the sensation of feeling loved by their families is important.

A longitudinal study done in England by Khu and his colleagues<sup>10</sup> proved a correlation between the chain of personal failures from infancy until adolescence, and the scarcity of contact with family among the subjects studied.

## Preferences

As can be seen in the results of the chapter on preferences, the items that deal with close relationships were once again the most important (closeness/influence = identity/belonging) being among the most highly valued, as well as the group with the most points among the young people's preferences. Once again, this caused us to think about the desire shown by



adolescents to have close, stable emotional support. This fact is in contrast to the profile which certain scientists offer for the description of the vital cycle of children in the 21st century: "[...] *the children who are being born now will probably live several years with their parents, or only with their mother, or with*

*their mother and stepfather; they will get together with someone without getting married, marry this person or another latter on and will then divorce. They will live on their own again and then get married a second time, only to live alone once again when they are widowed, when they separate for the last time or are at the point of entering an old folk's home*".<sup>11</sup>

The second most preferred component refers to group leisure, those elements which tend to set young people apart from the group and help them distinguish/differentiate themselves from everyone else (adults). What is most surprising about these elements is that -in spite of the fact that group space is as important as it is at this stage of life- they are often consigned in their preferences behind those of affective closeness.

Among the groups which scored lower ratings were the social, political and religious commitments (data which agree with the items corresponding to the section on Identity) and to tobacco/alcohol/drugs. This last group, besides

reflecting the reception of messages which have been given over so many years, could be a point of differentiation from the previous generation and the preponderant culture, where they are perhaps more normalised.

Finally, all the results related to violence received the lowest ratings: "violence does not exist for them." This fact could be due to the following influences:

- The normalisation of violence starting from its presence, which is so common in cinema, TV, the media,... in such a way that the margin for tolerance is wider than for educators, parents, etc.

- There is less violence and/or we are more sensitive to the violence that exists (the predominate culture is less tolerant)

- We possess more knowledge about violent acts.



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