



# Opinion poll

2<sup>nd</sup> survey 2006

## CONCLUSIONS

Generational Perception  
Values and Attitudes,  
Quality of Life and Happiness



MINISTERIO  
DE TRABAJO  
Y ASUNTOS SOCIALES

**injuve**



**POLL ON THE OPINION AND SITUATION OF THE YOUNG  
(2<sup>nd</sup> survey 2006)**

**Generational Perception, Values and Attitudes, Quality of Life and Happiness**

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## POLL ON THE OPINION AND SITUATION OF THE YOUNG (2<sup>nd</sup> survey 2006)

Generational Perception, Values and Attitudes, Quality of Life and Happiness

### Introduction

This poll belongs to young people's opinions on two questions that are closely associated to the young turning into different generations:

1. The first one refers to the generational perception young people have about themselves. Each generation specifies its own identity according to a number of constant features: common problems for them, their socio economic situation, etc. Through these and other features we can adjust the view that society and young people have of themselves in a certain historical moment.
2. The second question has to do with young people's life satisfaction: young people's state of mind, the perception they have about happiness, what makes them happier...
3. The third question mentioned in this survey shows the view young people have about the values and attitudes that are common to each generation.



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# **I. YOUNG PEOPLE'S GENERATIONAL PERCEPTION**

## **1.1. YOUNG PEOPLE'S PERSONAL AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS AND CONCERNS**

In the first semester of 2006, the great majority (83%) of young people in Spain finds **problems in our society**. The most important social problems for young people are defined first of all in **unemployment (35%) and housing (23%)**; these are followed in order of importance by **immigration (15%), terrorism (14%), drugs (12%) and insecurity and delinquency (10%)**.

As less important concerns we find problems related with employment (9%), economic problems (8%), social problems (8%) and the crisis of values (7%).

The perception of unemployment as a social problem is more extended amongst men (37%) than women (33%), and it increases as young people become older (especially once they are older than 20).

The concern of housing also increases as young people become older, and it is especially mentioned by older people - aged 25 to 29 - (31%).

Although these social concerns are constant amongst the Spanish young people in the last years, we must mention the **relevant changes related to the evolution of the perception young people have about social problems comparing to the last year**:

- Although unemployment is still the main social concern, there seems to be a tendency in this last year to decrease the mentioned social problem. The perception of unemployment, according to young people, has decreased by five points comparing to 2005.
- The perception of terrorism as a social problem has decreased down to half the figure in the last year, going from being

**UNEMPLOYMENT AND HOUSING SEEM TO BE THE MAIN SOCIAL PROBLEMS FOR OUR YOUNG PEOPLE**

**THE YOUNG PERCEPTION OF TERRORISM AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM HAS DECREASED CONSIDERABLY IN THE LAST YEAR**



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perceived as a problem by 30% of the young people in 2005 to 14% in 2006.

- The case of **immigration** goes the opposite way. The number of people who think it is a social problem **has doubled in the last year**, going from 8% in 2005 to 15% in 2006.
- The concern of **young people about the situation and access to housing keeps increasing**. The perception as a problem amongst young people has increased by five points comparing to the last year, reaching 23% in 2006.

**ON THE CONTRARY, THE PERCEPTION OF IMMIGRATION AS A PROBLEM HAS INCREASED AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE**

Relating to **personal problems**, the main concern of young people is the same as the main social problem: **unemployment**, mentioned by **37% of the interviewees**. This problem is mentioned more often by women than by men and is especially remarked by young people aged 20 to 24. Alike with social problems, it seems that in the last year there has been a decrease in the perception of unemployment as a problem.

**UNEMPLOYMENT IS STILL THE MAIN CONCERN IN THE PERSONAL SITUATION OF YOUNG PEOPLE, ESPECIALLY FOR YOUNG WOMEN**

The second personal matter that creates greater concern in young people is **housing**, mentioned by **one out of ten young people (30%)**. This is a problem that is being increasingly perceived by a greater number of young people in our country every year.

Other less often mentioned personal problems are related to employment (17%), economic problems (14%) and studies and education (12%).

**MEN HAVE A MORE POSITIVE VIEW OF THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF OUR COUNTRY AND OF THEMSELVES THAN WOMEN**

## **1.2. PERCEPTIONS ABOUT THE ECONOMIC SITUATION OF SPAIN AND YOUNG PEOPLE**

The young perception of the economic situation in Spain in the beginning of 2006 has hardly any difference comparing to last year. Around half of the young people (47%) consider this situation to be intermediate (not good and not bad). A third of the interviewed people (35%) consider it is good and 17% of them have a negative view.



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Men have a more favourable view of the economic situation of our country than women; and young people between 15 and 19 years of age and the ones aged 25 to 29 have a more positive perception of this situation than people aged 20 to 24.

When valuing the personal economic situation of young people, there are more people who think it is not good or bad (44%), while 39% think it is good or very good and 17% think it is bad.

Men and the youngest people have a more positive view of their personal situation than women and the oldest people.

## **II. YOUNG PEOPLE'S LIFE SATISFACTION**

### **2.1. YOUNG PEOPLE'S SATISFACTION WITH THEIR LIFE AND STATE OF MIND**

In 2006, young people have a high level of general satisfaction with their lives: 88% declares to be quite or very satisfied. Young people's positive valuation has improved slightly comparing to last year (84%).

In that same line, this number was reduced in the last year, although there still is a minority of the interviewed people (12%) who show clear doses of dissatisfaction with their personal lives.

Young people are quite optimistic about their future; 81% considers that their lives will improve and 12% think it will be the same. There are almost no young people who think their life will become worse in future.

However, there is still an important minority, 15% of the interviewed people, who show clear doses of dissatisfaction with their personal lives. These opinions coincide completely with the ones mentioned two years ago.

**THE NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT SATISFIED WITH THEIR PERSONAL LIFE HAS BEEN REDUCED**

**EMOTIONAL ASPECTS AND INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS ARE STILL THE MAIN CAUSES FOR HAPPINESS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN**



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Emotional features and interpersonal relations, alike in past years, remained in 2006 as the **most satisfactory questions** for young people in Spain. 96% of the interviewed people show satisfaction (very much or enough) with their families and 94% with their friends.

Relating to the level of satisfaction, we also have to mention **health (94%), the freedom they have at home (90%) and their appearance (89%).**

Other features considered to be important by young people are the **affective relations between couples** - the ones who say they have a partner - (75%), **their sex life** - the ones who have relationships - (73%) and their leisure time (71%).

The most negatively valued questions by young people according to their personal lives are jobs, the economic situation and studies. However, in most of the cases there is a majority of young people who value them positively more than the ones who do it negatively. Studies are valued positively by 64% of the young people; the economic situation is correctly valued by 58% of the people, and jobs by 51% of the young people who work.

Young people in Spain, as it happened in past years, keep having a **good state of mind**. We can see that because around seven out of ten young people qualify it in positive terms, such as **happy, lively**, etc. This percentage has remained stable since 2003. The number of young people who **value their state of mind negatively (30%)** also remains constant, using terms such as **stressing, nervous**, etc.

## **2.2. THE PERCEPTION OF THE YOUNG HAPPINESS**

As it has been mentioned before, in general terms, young people in our country **say to have a high level of satisfaction and happiness in their lives**. The main feature that brings happiness, according to young people, is having **good family relations (49%), followed by relations with friends (17%)** and affective relations with partners (17%). On a lower level, we find as features for happiness certain questions related to entertainment and travel (6%) and health and appearance (5%).

**FAMILY RELATIONS ARE THE CAUSES OF HAPPINESS AMONGST YOUNG PEOPLE IN SPAIN; A FEATURE THAT TENDS TO BE MORE VALUED BY WOMEN AND ALSO AS PEOPLE BECOME OLDER**



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Family relations seem to be a basic mainstay of happiness in a greater proportion for women than for men; and also once they are older than 20.

Relations with friends bring more satisfaction and happiness to men than to women and especially to those people who belong to the group of the youngest ones (15 to 19); happiness associated to these relations with their equals tends to lose importance as young people become older.

Emotional relationships or personal relationships produce similar satisfaction both for men and for women and provide greater happiness as young people become older.

Finally, happiness based on entertainment and travel is a more important feature for young men and, above all, for younger people (15-19).

**ALTHOUGH MOST OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE CONSIDER HAPPINESS TO BE IMPORTANT (67%), THERE IS AN IMPORTANT NUMBER (32%) THAT DOES NOT AWARD IMPORTANCE TO THESE EMOTIONAL QUESTIONS**

Most of the young people in our country (67%) consider happiness as an important feature in their lives and they really try to obtain it. Although the other third of young people does not consider to be so important neither happiness nor the effort to obtain it.

The importance of happiness and the effort to obtain it are features that are valued especially by older young people (25-29), while the youngest ones (15-19) are the ones who less importance give to these questions.

These feelings of satisfaction and happiness are reinforced by the feeling of freedom Spanish young people say they have. Young people say they have a high level of freedom to select and control their lives: they say that this level is on 7.5 on a scale of ten (where 1 means "no freedom at all" and 10 means "total freedom").



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### III. YOUNG PEOPLE'S VALUES AND ATTITUDES

#### 3.1. YOUNG PEOPLE'S VALUES

Young people keep having, above the rest, priority values such as **health and affective relations (family and friends)**. These mentioned priorities coincide with the ones from past years, which reinforces the **generational tendency** to consider these questions as main aspects in the life development of the majority of young people.

After the affective questions we find, as important features for the great majority of young people (between eight and nine out of ten), the questions related to economic success (**earning money**), ecology (**environment**), their own concerns (**work and studies**) and life experiences (**leisure and sexual practices**).

Since 2003, we find **politics and religion** as less important features for young people.

Amongst the main values used by young people to define social success ("to succeed in life") we find obtaining the **desired family, a good job and independence**.

The perception of social success offers some differences according to young people's **gender and age**:

- **Women** more than men and the group of the **oldest ones (25-29)** award more importance to the fact of having the **desired family** as a key to social success.
- **Men** more than women and the **youngest ones** more than the oldest ones tend to value more the power to **work in something they like**.

#### 3.2. YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES

Alike in 2005, in 2006 the great majority of young people (80%) think there is **no political cause at all to justify violence**. Women share more this opinion than men, and as they become older, so do the young people who have a higher socio-economic level and especially the ones who live in rural settings.

ACCORDING TO YOUNG PEOPLE, SOCIAL SUCCESS IS ASSOCIATED TO OBTAINING THE DESIRED FAMILY, A NICE JOB AND INDEPENDENCE

THE GREAT MAJORITY OF YOUNG PEOPLE SAY THERE IS NO POLITICAL CAUSE AT ALL TO JUSTIFIES VIOLENCE



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There is quite an important number of young people who consider that violence can be justified through political reasons (16%).

Amongst the causes that would justify the mentioned attitudes towards violence we could underline the defence of freedom (21%), terrorism (20%), respect to human rights (20%) and the defence against an external aggression (17%).

In 2006, as in past years, the main causes young people are willing to do sacrifices for are those related to **solidarity and social justice**: defence of human rights, fight against hunger, freedom, peace, gender equality and defence of nature. The capacity of sacrifice for these **solidarity causes** is more popular amongst **young women than men**. We can also find that, as in past years, questions related to **religion, revolution or the defence of Spain** are less valued causes for young people.

#### **THE TOLERANT ATTITUDE OF SPANISH YOUNG PEOPLE RELATING TO HOMOSEXUALITY SEEMS TO BE CONSOLIDATED**

Young people's attitudes regarding certain social questions offer an idea of the tolerance levels young people have in Spain. The great majority of young people have a tolerant attitude relating to the acceptance of homosexuality from a close friend. 82% say they **would accept a friend's homosexuality** and they would not change their relationship; **one out of three young people (12%) say they would probably change their relationship**; and **only 3%** would break their relationship if they knew a friend is homosexual.

#### **MOST OF THE SPANISH YOUNG PEOPLE ARE IN FAVOUR OF THE APPLICATION OF EUTHANASIA IN CASES OF TERMINALLY ILL PEOPLE WHO ASK FOR IT AND OF GENETIC SELECTION WITH THERAPEUTIC PURPOSES**

On this same line, we find young people's attitude towards the marriage of two people of the same gender. **Around three out of four young people (78%) say to be in favour of marriage between homosexuals**, 16% is against and 7% does not have an opinion yet about that question.

According to young people's attitude relating to a controversial issue such as **abortion**, most of the young people **(68%) think it is the woman who has to decide about it**, 18% considers that society should have certain limits and 17% declares to be completely against abortion. The favourable attitudes towards abortion are reinforced as young people become older.

In 2006 the opinion of young people has been asked relating to a number of questions considered to be controversial and questions that generate encountered social debates.

One of these questions is the **occupation of unoccupied houses**. The number of young people who are contrary (50%) to this idea is greater



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than those people who say they are in favour of this attitude (41%). Comparing to 2005, the number of young people who are against occupation seems to have increased.

Relating to the **application of the death penalty** to people who have committed severe crimes, the number of young people who are against this measure maintains the percentage (60%) comparing to 2005, and the people who are in favour represent a little bit more than a third of the interviewed people.

A current affair in the last years in our country has been euthanasia. In 2006 young people have been asked to give their opinion about **helping a sick and incurable person to die when asked for it by themselves**. Three out of four young people (76%) show to be favourable to the application of euthanasia in these cases, 15% shows to be against it and 9% does not have an idea about the question.

**ALTHOUGH THERE ARE MORE PEOPLE (49%) WHO DEFEND A RELIGIOUS EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS, THERE IS AN IMPORTANT NUMBER OF YOUNG PEOPLE (37%) WHO ARE CONTRARY TO THIS EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM**

Another issue that has attracted some interest in the last years in our country is the **genetic selection of people with therapeutic purposes**. Most of the young people (64%) are favourable to this genetic selection, 19% is against it and 16% does not know what to think.

Finally, the opinion of young people on religious education in schools has been asked. In this sense, most of them (49%) say they are in favour of a **religious education in schools**; although the number of those people who considers this education **should not be taught in schools** is also very important (37%).



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# IV. YOUNG PEOPLE'S LEISURE AND SPARE TIME

## 4.1. LEISURE AND SPARE TIME ACTIVITIES

In 2006, the main leisure activities practised by Spanish young people are the same ones as in past years. Most of them (between eight and nine out of ten) declare as priorities in their leisure time **listening to music** (CD, cassettes, etc), **going out or meeting friends to go to the theatre or the cinema**.

The second most practised group of activities for young people (between six and seven out of ten) includes **watching TV, going out with boyfriends/girlfriends or partners, listening to the radio and reading books and newspapers**.

Another group of activities which is not so popular amongst young people (between three and four out of ten) is to spend their leisure time on **doing exercise, playing with computers, videogames and consoles, drinking or going out, travelling or going on an excursion and going to discos or dancing**.

Amongst the less popular leisure activities in our country we find **going to concerts, going to sports competitions, museums, exhibitions or cultural acts**.

Young people's gender keeps offering some differences relating to the leisure practises they carry out; thus, for example, men carry out more activities such as doing exercise, playing with computers and videogames and going to sports competitions. Women, more than men, listen to the radio, read more books and newspapers and spend more time with their partners.

In the same way, young people's age also determines their leisure practices:

- When people are younger it is more usual to use leisure time to listen to music, play with computers and videogames, read books and magazines and practise sport.
- As young people become older, they tend to occupy their leisure time going out with boyfriends/girlfriends or partners, watching TV, listening to the radio...

YOUNG PEOPLE'S  
FAVOURITE LEISURE  
ACTIVITIES ARE  
LISTENING TO MUSIC,  
GOING OUT WITH  
FRIENDS AND GOING TO  
THE CINEMA



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Spanish young people in 2006, alike in past years, seem to be satisfied with their leisure activities and spare time; at least this is what can be understood from the coincidence between the most practised activities and the ones they like most for their leisure time. These activities are listening to music, going out with friends, going to the cinema and watching TV.