



promoting youth involvement and
social engagement

PROMISE: Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement: Opportunities and challenges for ‘conflicted’ young people across Europe.

Collection of short comparative country reports – SPAIN

Summary: The full report presents a collection of standardised country reports from the ten partner countries involved in PROMISE. Using the most recent data available from macro-indicators and surveys, each country report provides a national baseline of the attitudes, activities and social involvement of young people. The macro-indicators used to describe the national context are used consistently throughout to allow comparison.

In particular, each country report provides an overview of the general ‘state of the country’s health’; the situation that young people face; how young people feel about their situation; and what, if anything, they are doing to change it.


We employ a concept of social and political engagement developed for PROMISE that includes four dimensions of engagement: civic activism, formal political participation, activism, and everyday engagement.

This report (Spain) should be read in conjunction with the Introduction and Appendices document. It was submitted to the EC as part of deliverable D9 (D4.3).

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Spain

	Population	46,443,959
	Population aged 15-29 years old	14.7%
	Population aged 65 years old and above	19.2%
	Birth Rate	9.0
	International migrant stock as a percentage of the total population	12.7%

1. Standards of living in Spain¹

Spain has been one of the European countries that suffered the most from the 2008 crisis. The actual gross national income (GNI) is 36450 and 17.4% of the labour force is currently unemployed, which is the highest rate among the PROMISE countries.

Although doing business is not that easy, it is the Southern European country in which there is the friendliest regulation. Furthermore, there is comparatively low perceived corruption and high government effectiveness perceived.

Fig. 1.1 GNI per capita, PPP (current international \$), 2016

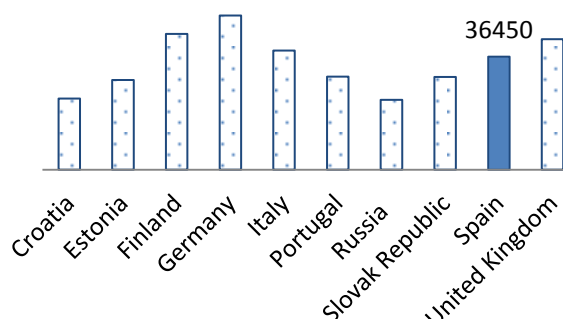


Fig. 1.2 Ease of doing business index (1=most business-friendly regulations), 2017

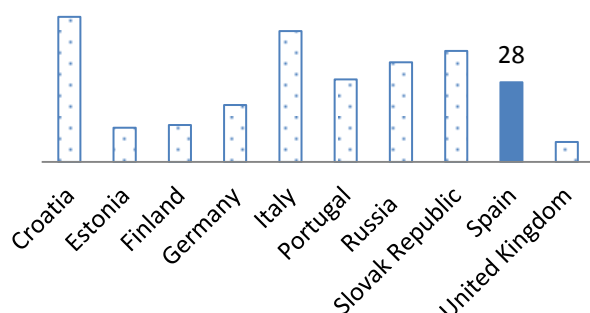


Fig. 1.3 Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modeled ILO estimate), 2017

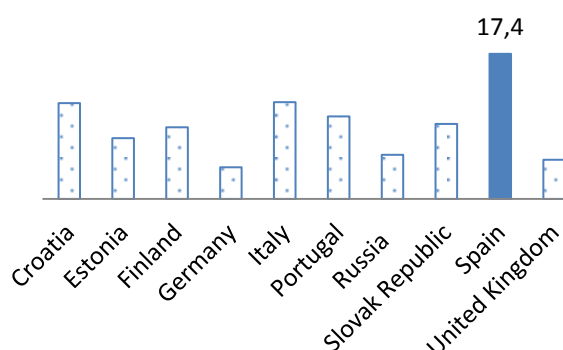


Fig. 1.4 Corruption Perception Index - Transparency International (1 to 100; 1= high corruption perceived), 2016

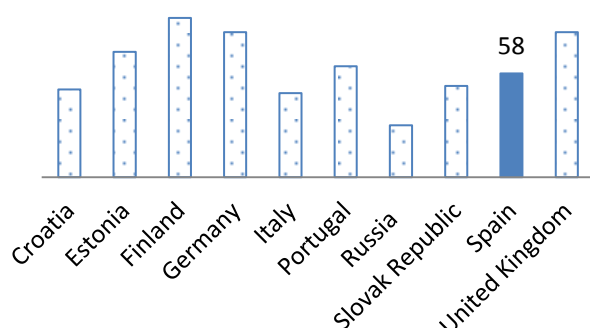
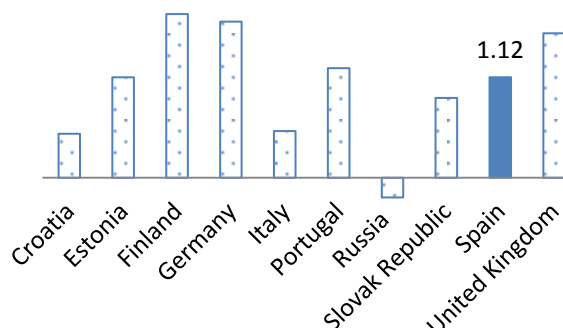
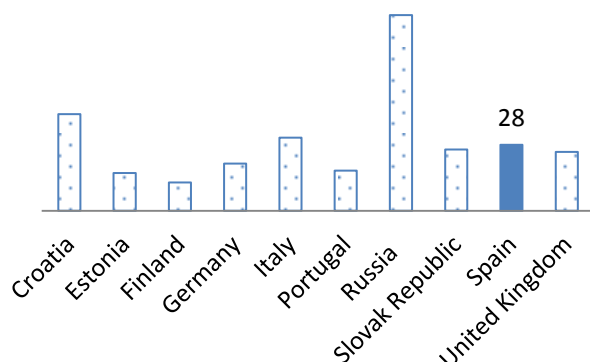


Fig. 1.5 Government Effectiveness: Estimate, 2014 (-2,5 to 2,5 -2,5=very low effectiveness perceived)



¹ Last available data. Sources: World Bank; Transparency International; Freedom House; Global Gender Gap Report (World Economic Forum); Eurostat; OECDStats. See Appendix 1 for detailed references.

Fig. 1.6 Freedom of the press (0=best, 100=worst), 2017



Although performing better than Italy and Croatia, Spain score quite low (28) in comparative perspective in terms of freedom of press. It means that the safety of journalists might be at risk, state intrusion in media affairs is not minimal, and/or the press is subject to onerous legal or economic pressures compared to other countries such as Finland (12) or Portugal (17).

However, at least in terms of gender equality Spain is the Southern European countries that score the highest. It scores 24th in the Global Gender Gap Report 2017, far higher than other Southern Europe countries such as Portugal (33) or Italy (82).

The rate of tertiary educated is among the highest of the PROMISE countries, although we must remember that there is a strong dualisation in the country with almost 40% of the population having low educational attainment. About eight in every ten people have internet access in Spain.

Fig. 1.7 Global Gender Gap Index (0 to 1, 1= gender equality), 2017



Fig. 1.8 % People with tertiary education (25-64 years old), 2016

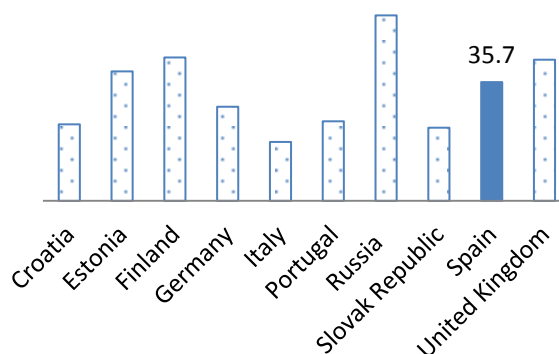
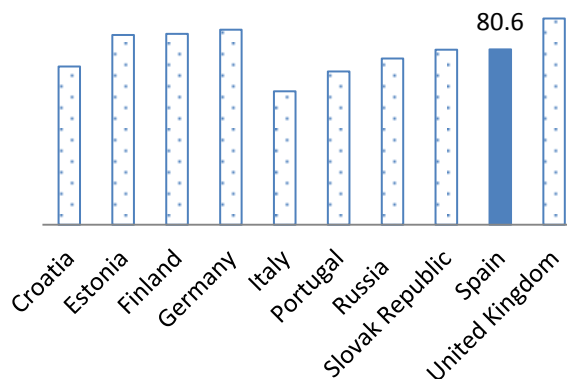


Fig. 1.9 Internet users (per 100 people), 2016



2. Being young in Spain

2.1 Demographic situation

The demographic transition in Spain shows a similar trend compared to Western countries. In the last thirty years, the ratio of the population aged 15-29 has decreased from 20% of the 1950s, to 9,3% in 2015. At the same time, the proportion of people aged 65 or more has increased from 7,2% to 18,9%. Since 1995, there are more elderly than young people in Spain.

The imbalance between the young and elderly strata of the population is also magnified by the difficult situation of the youth which are particularly exposed to precarious and deteriorating labour market conditions.

Not unsurprisingly, the rate of young Spanish still living with their families is quite high. Almost all those under 24 years old live with their parents, but even when we focus on the 25 to 29 group, the majority of them are still living with their parents. The evolution in time highlights the growing trend in this phenomenon, which is also connected to the lack of positive housing policies and investment in youth (see Deliverable D3.1).

Fig. 2.1 Demographic trends, 1950 -2015: proportion of people aged 15-29 years old vs 65 years old and more

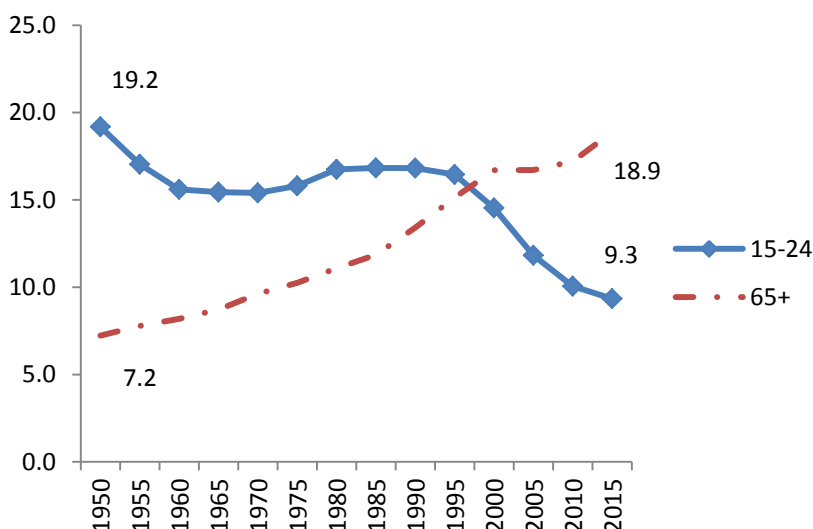
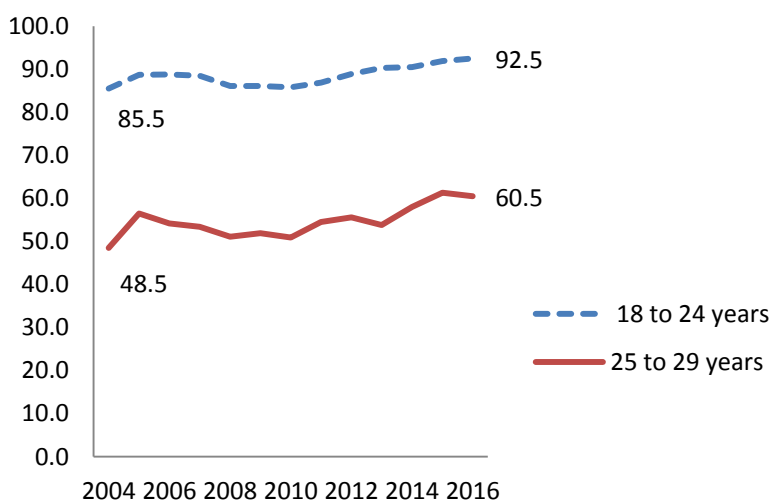
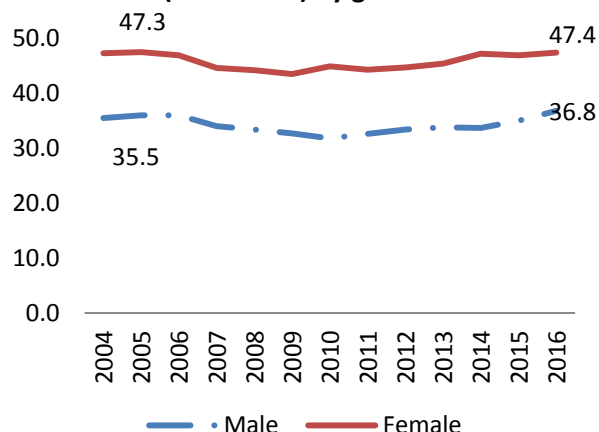


Fig. 2.2 Percent of young people (18-29 years old) living with parents 2004-2016



2.2 Education & Labour market in Spain

Fig. 2.3 Percentage of young people aged 25-29 with tertiary education (2004-2016) by gender



The system of education in Spain shows a strong dualistic feature. From the point of view of tertiary education, Spain is already achieving the headline target set by European Commission for Europe 2020 (at least 40% of young 30-34 with tertiary education), showing especially good performances of women.

However, the number of early leavers from education and training is still very high among the young Spanish - especially for men - far from the objective (10%) set by the Europe 2020 strategy. From 1992, nevertheless, the situation has greatly improved with a reduction of about 20 percentage points in the rate of early leavers. Still, Spain is one of countries with the highest percentage of NEET (aged 15-29), especially among women. From the highest peak of 2005, the reduction in the NEET rate has stagnated due to the negative consequences of the economic crisis.

Fig. 2.4 Early leavers from education and training by gender aged 18-24 (1992-2016)

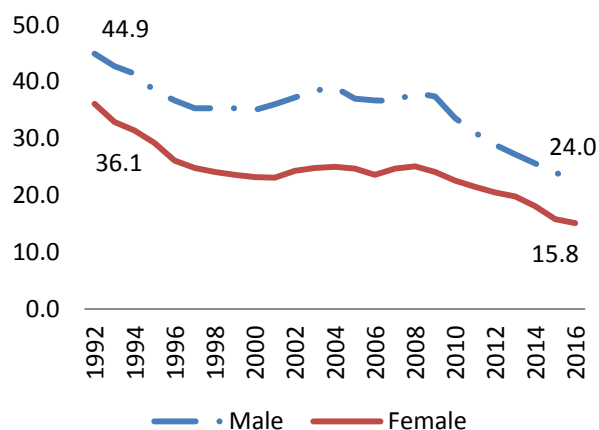


Fig. 2.5 Percentage of NEET aged 15-29 (2004-2016)

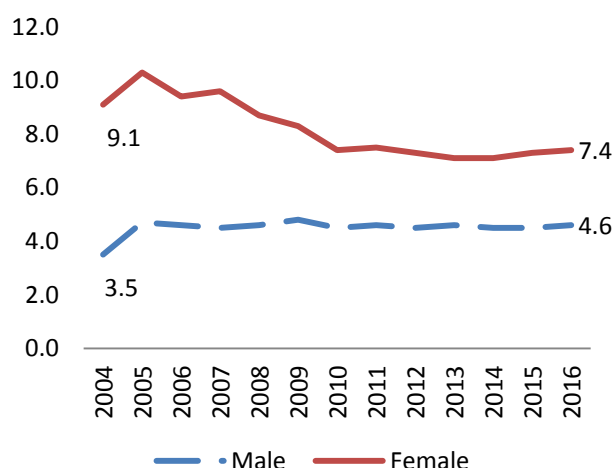
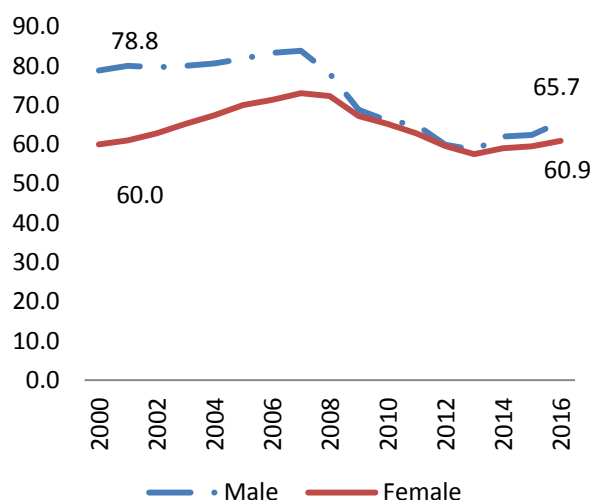


Fig. 2.6 Youth (25-29 years old) employment by gender (2000-2016)



Youth employment has been highly affected by the 2008 crisis. In 2007, about 80% of men and 70% of women aged 25-29 were employed in Spain, but in the following five years, numbers were down to 60% for both genders, with the highest relative loss among men. Men were more exposed, since the crisis has impacted mostly on male dominated sectors like manufacturing and construction.

Things are getting better now with a steady employment reprise starting in 2012, but still the before-crisis levels are far from being reached (-15 percentage points for men and -10 for women). However, the crisis has increased the dualisation of Spanish labour markets: young with low educational level were those who suffered the most from the crisis, with about 34.2% being currently unemployed.

The deteriorated labour market conditions have also impacted on the risk of poverty and exclusion, which has strongly increased during the last 10 years now affecting about one third of Spanish youth, although there is almost no difference between genders.

Fig. 2.7 Youth unemployment rate (25-29 years old) by educational attainment (2002-2016)

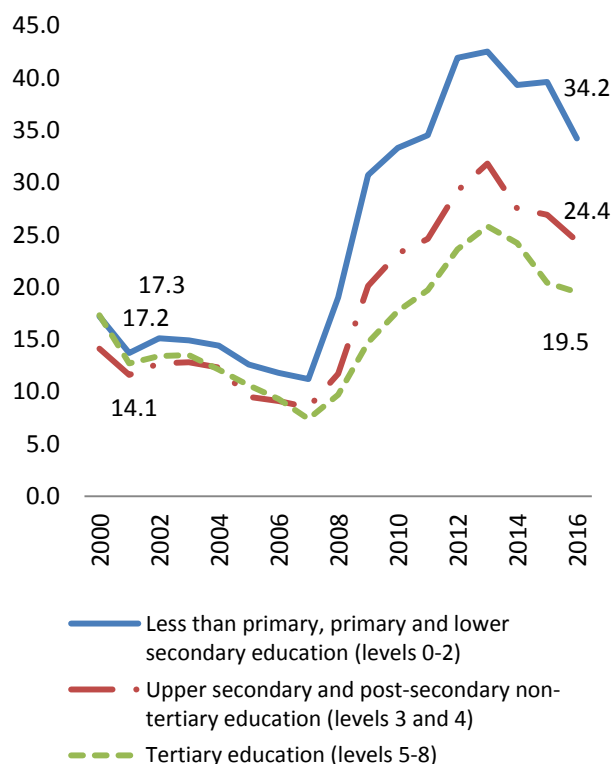
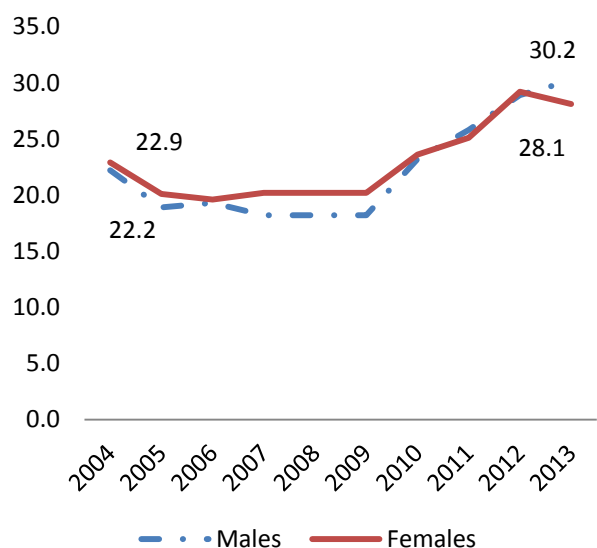
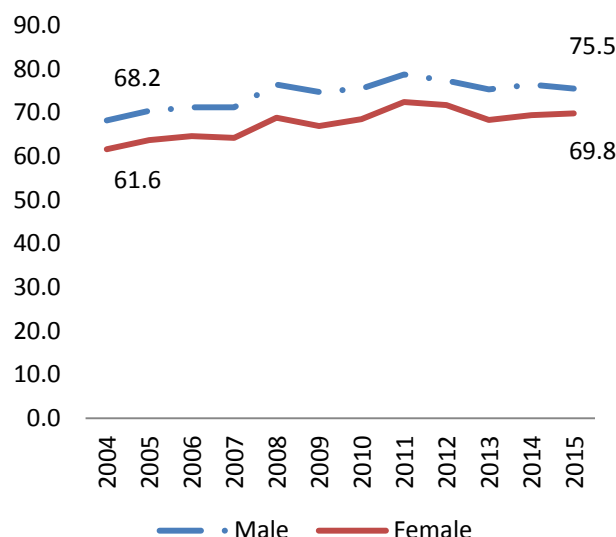


Fig. 2.8 Young people's at-risk-of-poverty or exclusion rate by gender (2004-2013)



2.3 Health and well-being

Fig. 2.9 Percentage of young people who perceive their health as good/very good by gender and age groups (2004-2015)



According to their self-report (Fig. 2.9), Spanish young people declare to have a good health, and recent years show an increase in the numbers.

However, it is quite interesting to notice the increase in self-reported depressive symptoms, with increasing age. Figure 2.10 refers to 2014 and shows that between 1% and 5% of youth suffer from current depressive symptoms. Younger females are more prone to depression, but when the 25-29 age-group show almost no difference between men and women.

Between 2000 and 2010 the suicide rate among young people decreased steadily, especially for men, who were more likely to commit suicide compared to women.

Fig. 2.10 Percentage of youth with current depressive symptoms by gender and age group (2014)

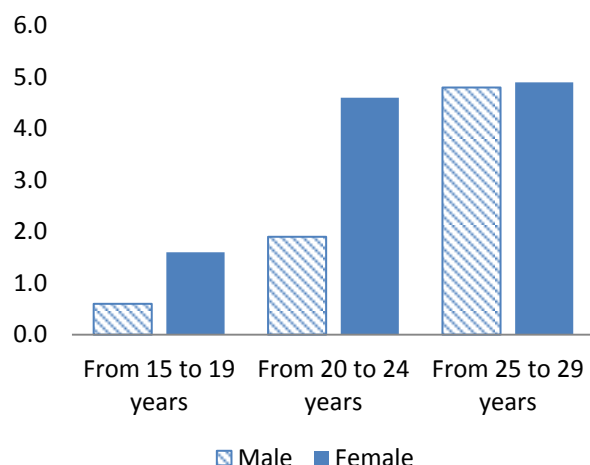
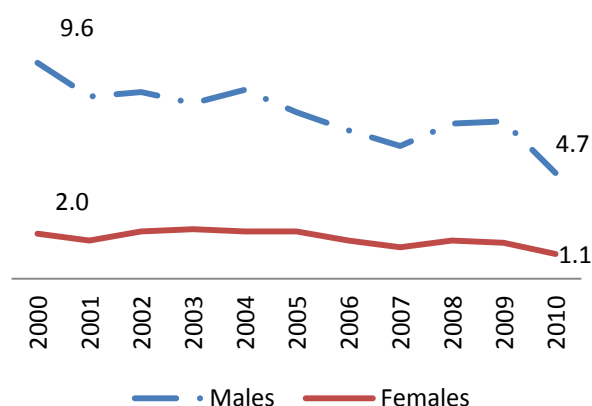


Fig. 2.11 Crude death rate per hundred thousand inhabitants by suicide of young people aged 15-29 years (2000-2010)



2.4 Use of Substances and Crime

In 2015, the majority of Spanish young people were consuming alcohol, while about 30% of them were smoking tobacco. For tobacco and alcohol there is almost no difference between genders, but men and women differ strongly in the consumption of illegal drugs (about 20% of men have consumed drugs in the last month but only the 10% of women).

Men are also much more likely to be imprisoned. However, between 2010 and 2015 the juvenile imprisonment has steadily reduced, although even in 2015, there were 15 times more men than women.

Fig. 2.12 Percentage of aged 15-29 who in the last month used... (2015)

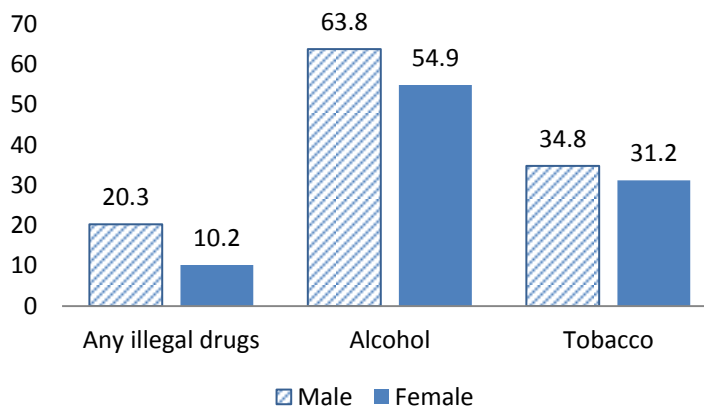
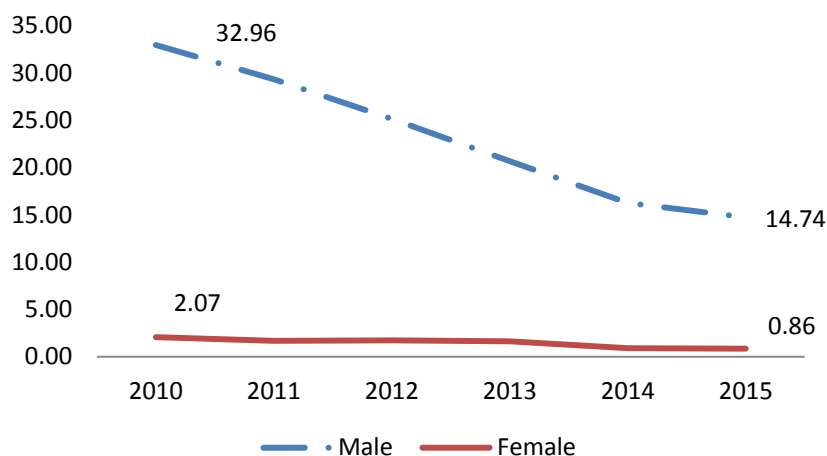


Fig. 2.13 Juvenile Prisoners per hundred thousand inhabitants (2008-2015) by gender



3. What do young people in Spain think and feel?

The majority of young people in Spain are pessimistic about their employment prospects and the economic situation. They are also unsatisfied with Spanish democracy in general, distrust political institutions both in their country and in Europe, and are particularly critical of the education and employment systems. Only a third of them thinks that life for the next generation will be easier. More or less a similar minority, 30%, feels their voice counts in Spain or Europe.

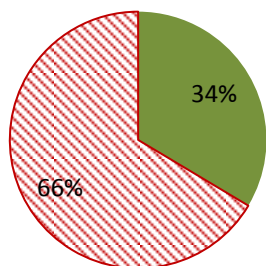
When assessing their personal life, however, the large majority of them are positive and confident about their future. This contrast between the negative perceptions of the institutional contexts at large, and their hopeful expectations at the individual level, calls for a more detailed explanation.

3.1 Perception of opportunity and constraints

3.1.1 Spanish and European situation

Fig. 3.1 Are you satisfied with the way democracy works in Spain?

■ fairly satisfied/very satisfied
▨ not very satisfied/not at all satisfied



The majority of young Spanish are not satisfied with the way democracy works in their country (Fig. 3.1), with almost no difference between men and women.

The highest rate of dissatisfaction can be found in those who are 20-24 years old. Students are slightly more satisfied, while there is no difference between those who are employed and those who are currently looking for a job (Fig. 3.2).

Fig. 3.2 Young people not satisfied with democracy in Spain by gender, age, employment status (%)

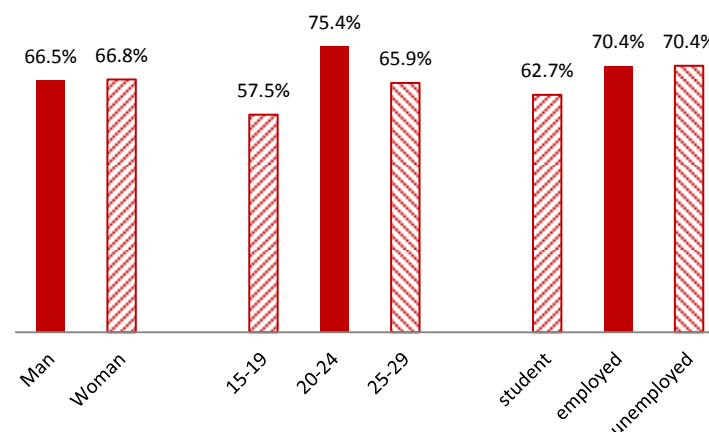


Fig. 3.3 How would you rate the situation of the Spanish economy?

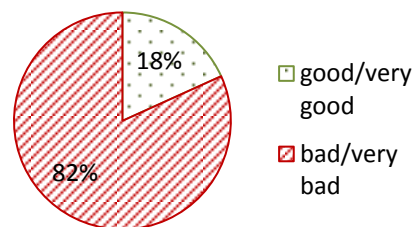


Fig. 3.4 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the Spanish economy will be... (%)

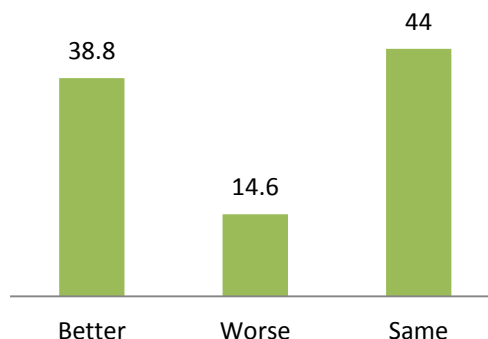
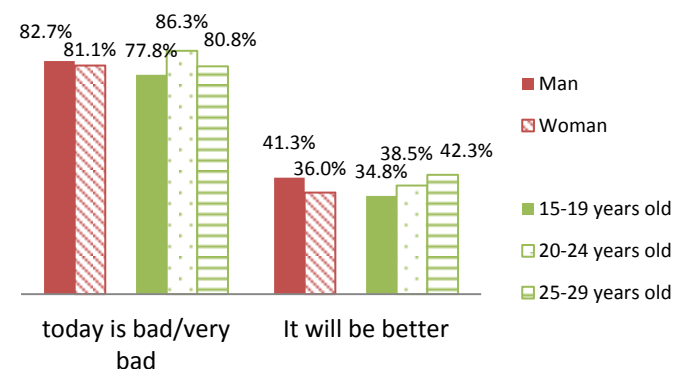


Fig. 3.5 Evaluation on the current Spanish economy and expectations for the future by gender and age



Young Spanish are quite pessimistic about the economic situation in their country, but even more pessimistic about the employment situation (Fig. 3.3 and 3.6). The majority of them think that it will be the same or even get worse in the next 12 months (Fig. 3.4 and 3.7). The youngest are the less optimistic about the future, while being the more positive about the present (Fig. 3.5 and 3.8). There is almost no difference between men and women, but while men are more positive about the economic situation, women are more positive about employment.

Fig. 3.6 How would you rate the employment situation in Spain?

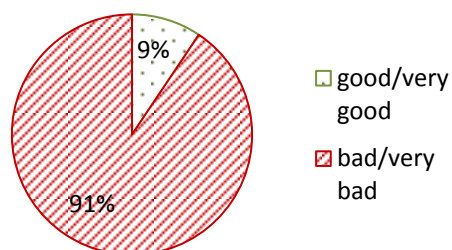


Fig. 3.7 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the employment situation in Spain will be... (%)

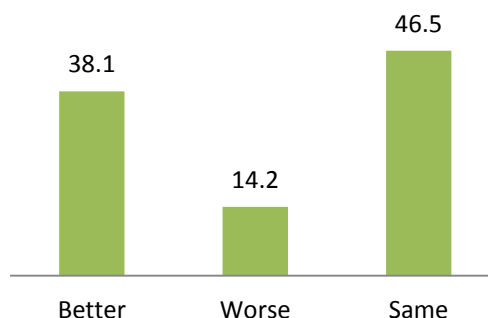


Fig. 3.8 Evaluation on the current Spanish employment, and expectations for the future by gender and age

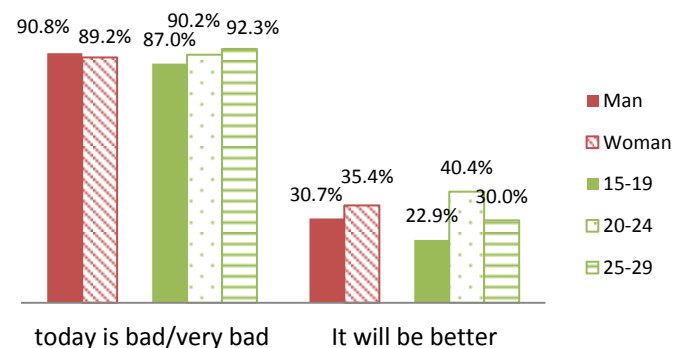
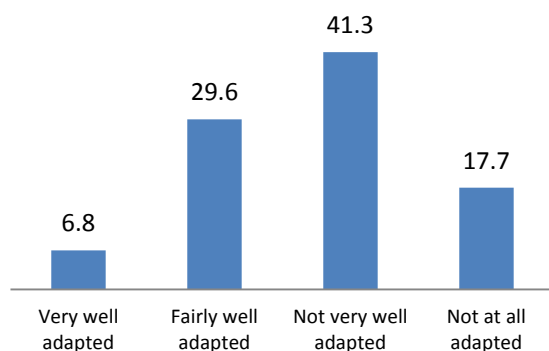


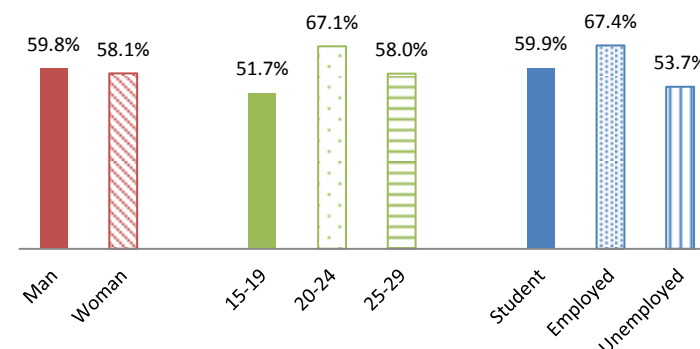
Fig. 3.9 Do you think that in Spain the education system is adapted or not to the current world of work? (%)



Spanish youth does not seem to trust their educational system, as the majority think that it not adapted to the current world of work (Fig. 3.9). Quite interestingly, those who are more critical are those who are employed, while the youngest in the sample are the most positive about the educational system (Fig. 3.10). We might suppose that those who are now in the labour market realise how their education is unsuitable for the job they have.



Fig. 3.10 "The education system is not well adapted to the current world of work", by gender, age, place of living



About 7 out of 10 young Spanish think that the crisis has marginalised young people, but at least the majority think that the worst is now over and that the impact on jobs has already reached its peak (Fig. 3.12). The most positive are those who are students, those who are aged 20-24 years old, and men (Fig. 3.13). Quite coherently the most pessimistic about the crisis are those who are currently unemployed, only 38.9% of them believe that the crisis has passed.

Fig. 3.11 Do you have the feeling that young people have been marginalized by the economic crisis (%)

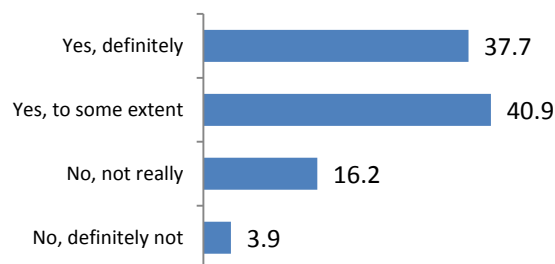


Fig. 3.12 What to you think about the impact of the economic crisis on the job market?

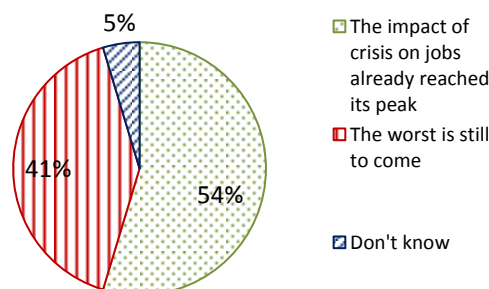


Fig. 3.13 "The impact of crisis on jobs already reached its peak", by age, gender, and place of living

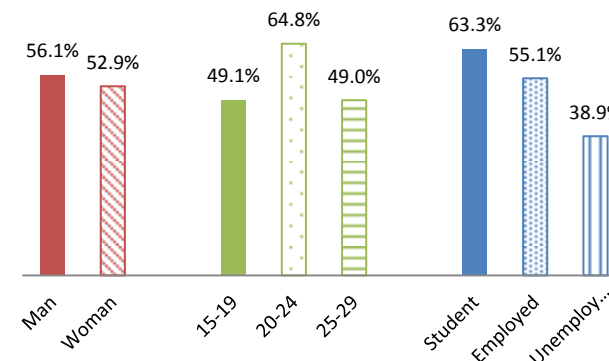


Fig. 3.14 Direction things are going in Spain (%)

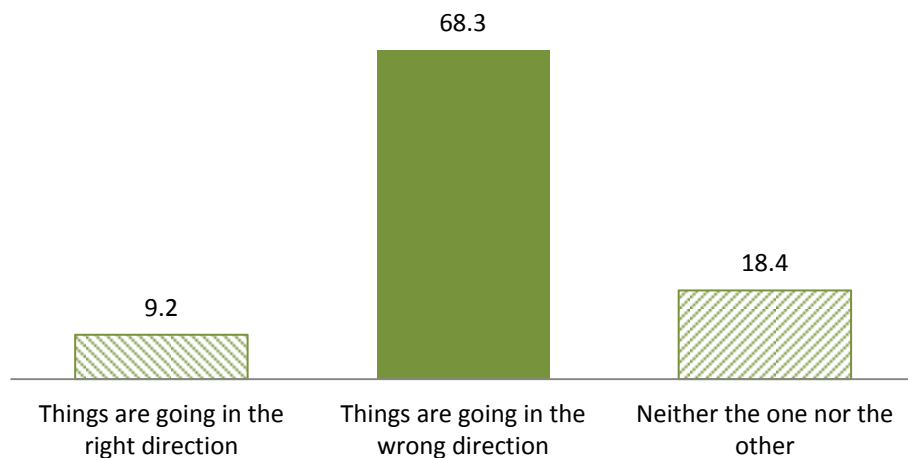
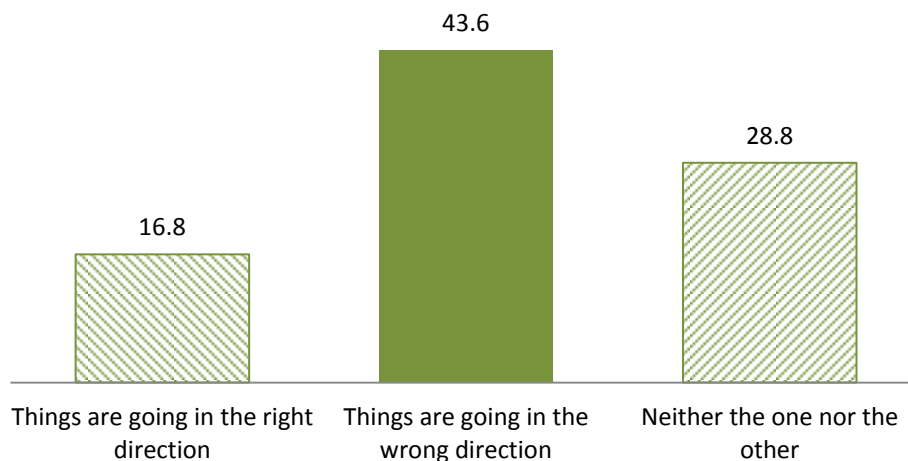


Fig. 3.15 Direction things are going in EU (%)

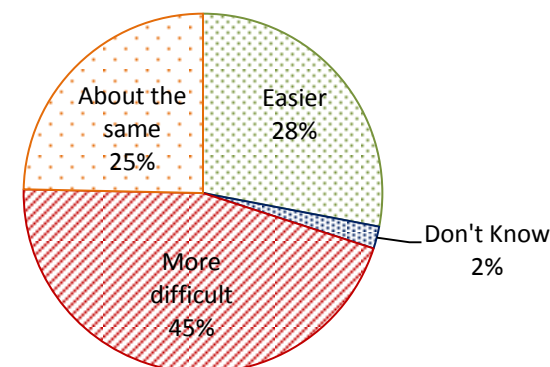


Despite seeming in general trusting and positive, the majority of youth in Spain think that things are going in the wrong direction, both in their country and in Europe. Especially in the case of Europe, there is a consistent minority (about 30%) that does not have a judgement, possibly a symptom of the perceived distance from European institutions (see section 3.1.2).

Distrust in their political institutions might play a role in increasing their dissatisfaction, as also the effect of the crisis which in Spain has mostly impacted on young people, with deteriorating labour market conditions and increasing unemployment.

However, about 30% of young Spanish are still positive about the future, thinking that life for next generations would be easier, although 45% feel it will get worse (Fig. 3.16).

Fig. 3.16 Do you think that life for the next generation in EU will be... (%)



3.1.2 Perceived agency

Fig. 3.17 "My voice counts in Spain"

■ agree/totally agree ■ disagree/totally disagree ■ missing

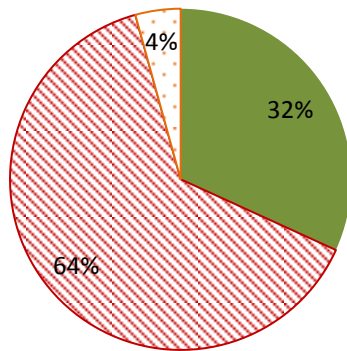


Fig. 3.17 and Fig. 3.18 show clearly how young people in Spain think that their voices are not heard by the political and social institutions in Spain and the EU. Their opinion regarding Spain does not seem to change across gender or age, but it does change in terms of employment condition with unemployed persons reporting more disconnection (Fig. 3.18a). But, the sensation of being unheard in the EU is higher among those who are younger and those who are working (Fig. 3.18b). The stronger feeling of integration in Spain and in the EU is perceived by Spanish students.

Fig. 3.18 "My voice counts in EU"

■ agree/totally agree ■ disagree/totally disagree ■ missing

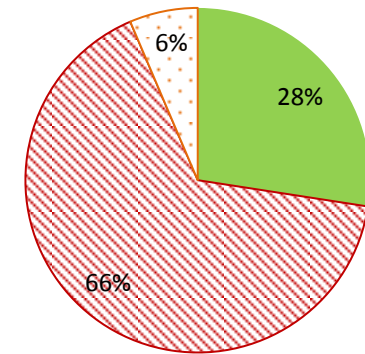


Fig. 3.18a "My voice does not count" in Spain by gender, age, employment condition

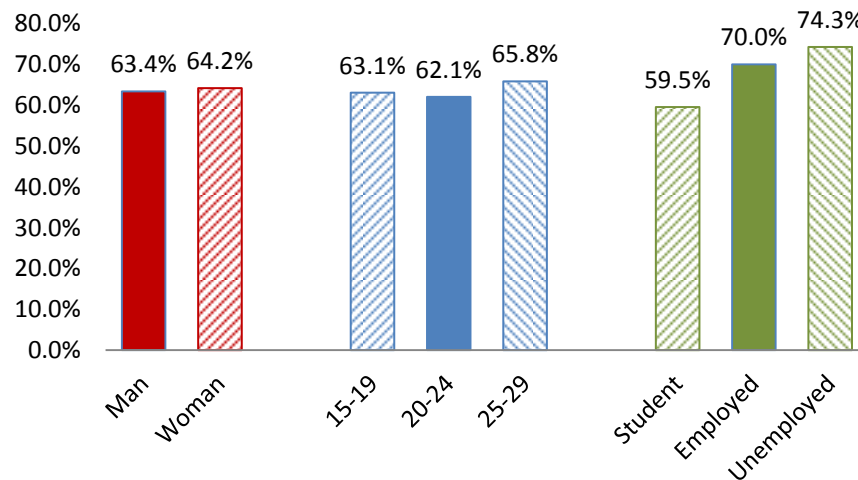
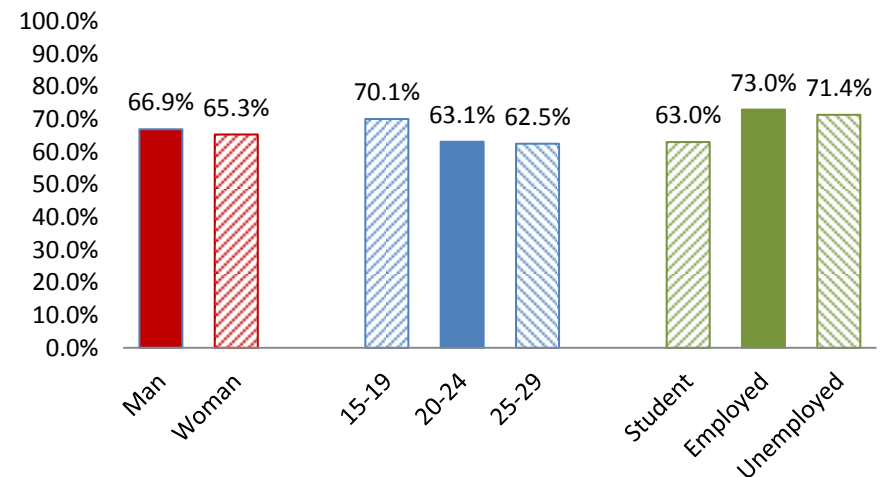
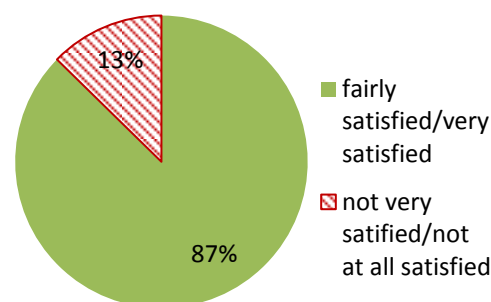


Fig. 3.18b "My voice does not count" in Europe by gender, age, employment condition



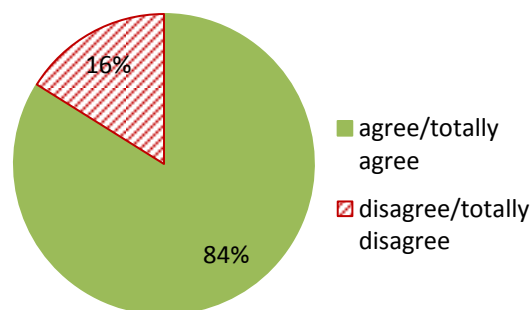
3.1.3 Personal situation

Fig. 3.19 Are you satisfied with your life in general?



Even if the country has suffered significantly from the crisis, young Spanish seem to be very satisfied with their life (Fig. 3.19), although women are in general slightly more pessimistic compared to men (Fig. 3.20). Those who are still students or who are employed, are especially positive about their life. But those who are currently unemployed are those who report the lowest level of life satisfaction, signalling how work still retain a very important role in predicting happiness and satisfaction in life.

Fig. 3.21 % agreement: "You have confidence in the future"



At the same time, the vast majority of Spanish youth are also confident in the future, especially men and those who are students or unemployed.

In fact, as it is possible to see in Fig. 3.22 women and employed people tend to be less confident in the future. These results might be interpreted as a legacy of an unresolved gender equality in the country and of a difficult labour market situation to which especially the young are exposed. Young are also less confident when they are in their early 20s.

Fig. 3.20 Young people satisfied with their life by gender, age, employment status



Fig. 3.22 Young people who have confidence in the future by gender and age



Fig. 3.23 How would you rate your personal job situation?

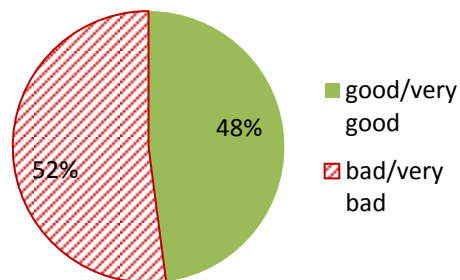


Fig. 3.24 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: your personal job situation will be... (%)

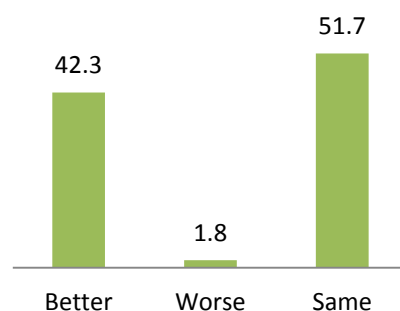
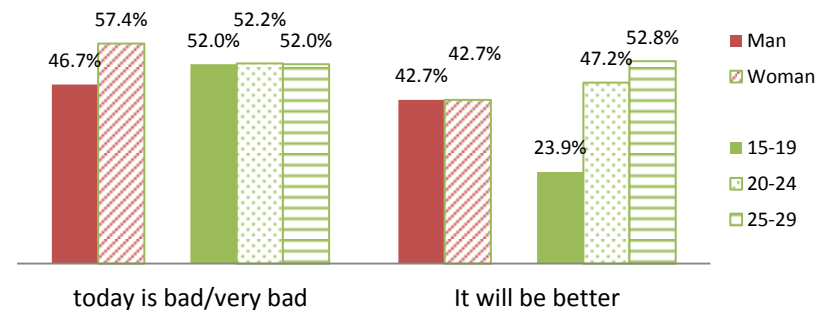


Fig. 3.25 Evaluation on the current personal job situation, and expectations for the future by gender and age



Young people's opinion of their current job is split almost equally between good and bad. However, 65% feel that their household financial situation is good (Fig. 3.23 and 3.26). Only a small minority think that their situation will get worse in the future (Fig. 3.24 and 3.27). Women are more pessimistic about the current situation and over 25s are more optimistic about the future.

Fig. 3.26 How would you rate your household financial situation?

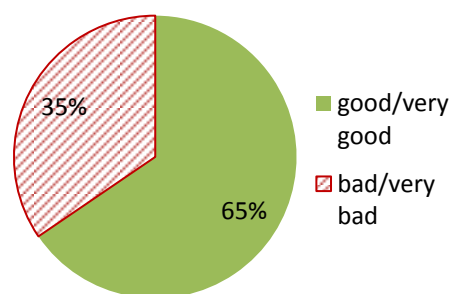


Fig. 3.27 What are your expectations for the next 12 months: the financial situation of your household will be... (%)

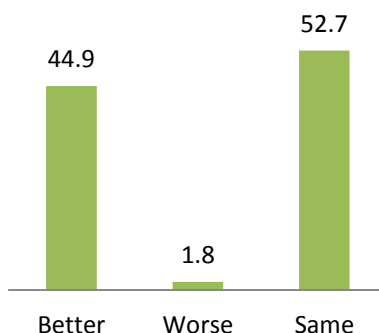
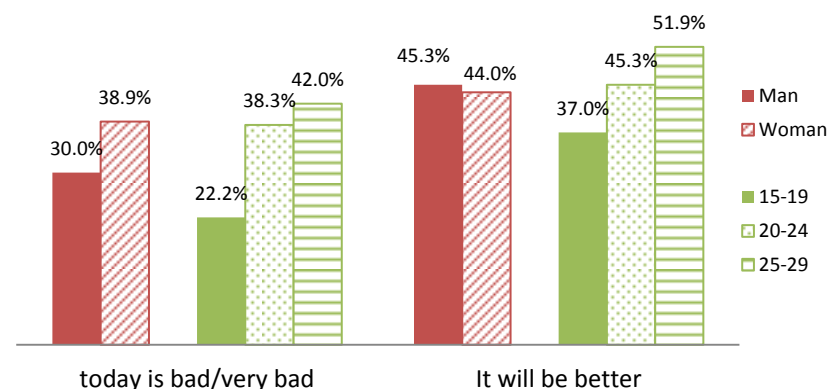


Fig. 3.28 Evaluation on the current household's financial situation, and expectations for the future by gender and age



3.2 Relation with authority

Fig. 3.29 Trust in Law & Order institutions

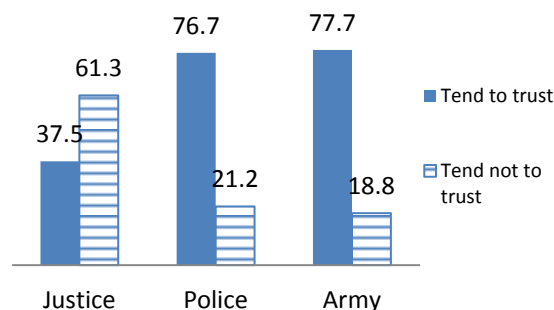
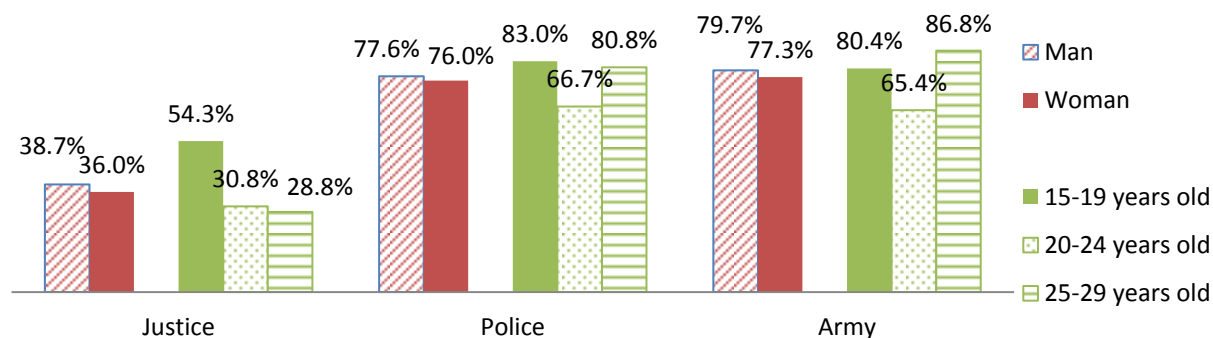


Fig. 3.30 Young people who tend to trust in Law&Order institutions, by gender and age



Young Spanish people express trust mostly in the Police and in Army, but they are quite reluctant to trust justice (Fig. 3.29); trust is higher in the youngest age-group, and slightly higher among women (Fig. 3.30). But they show a diffuse distrust in political institutions, especially in political parties trusted only by 9.6 % and national parliament, (Fig. 3.31). However, the European Union is the political institution that arouse the most positive attitude.

Fig. 3.31 Trust in political institutions

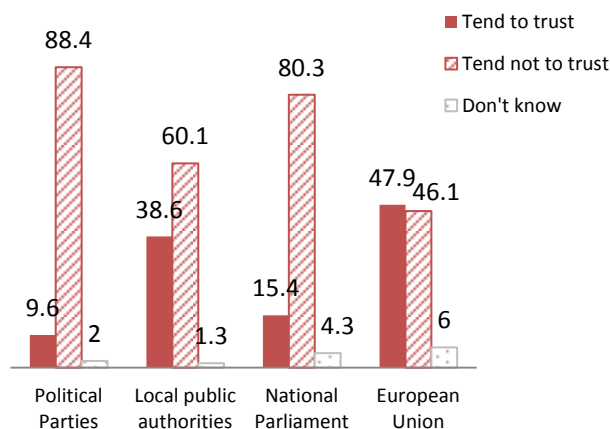
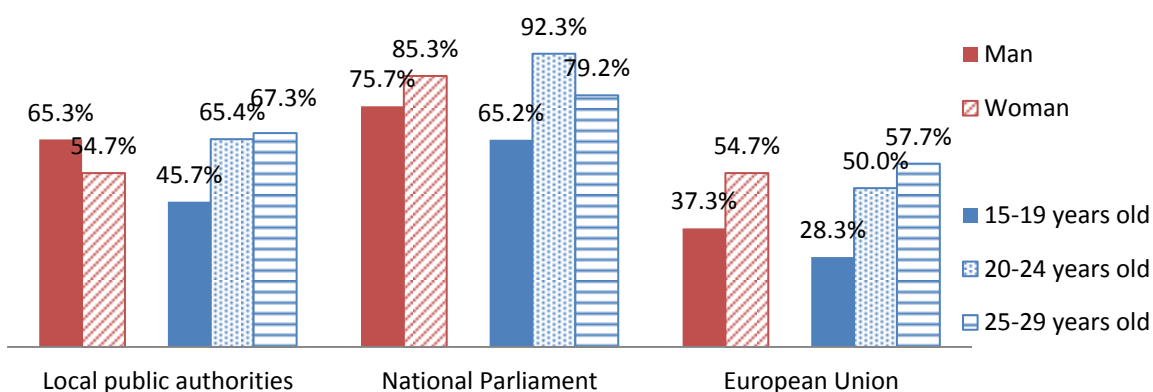


Fig. 3.32 Young people who do NOT trust political institutions by gender, age



3.3 Opinion on social issues

Fig. 3.33 Percentage of agreement on statements regarding migration

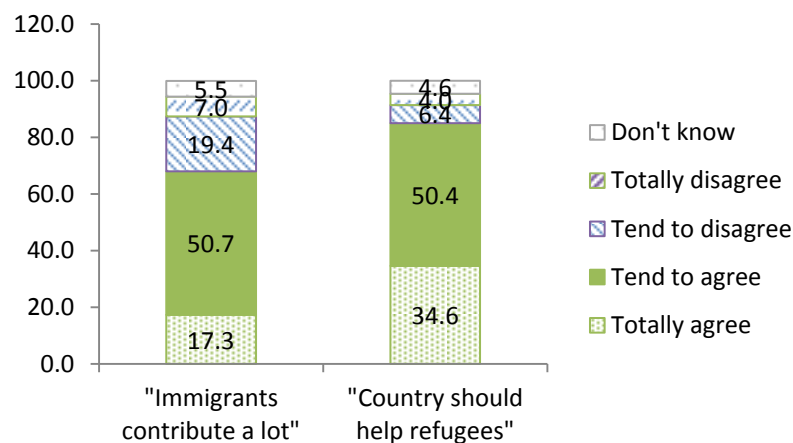
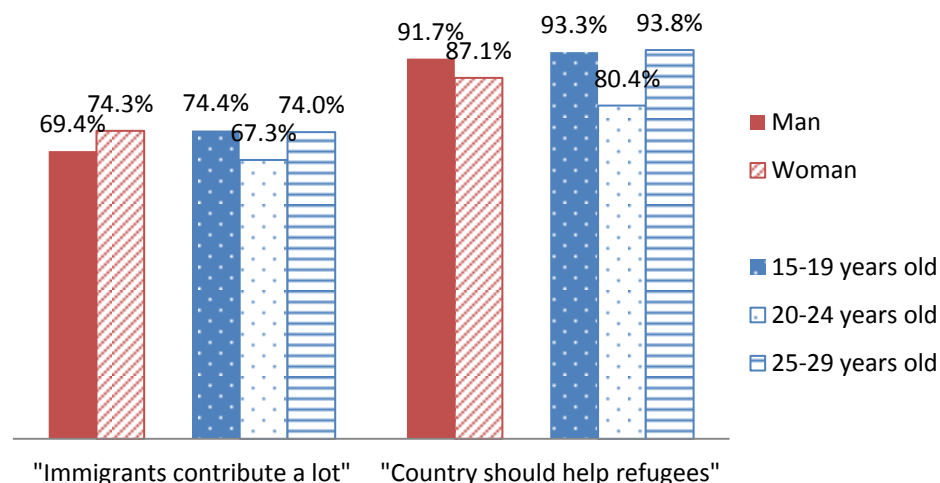
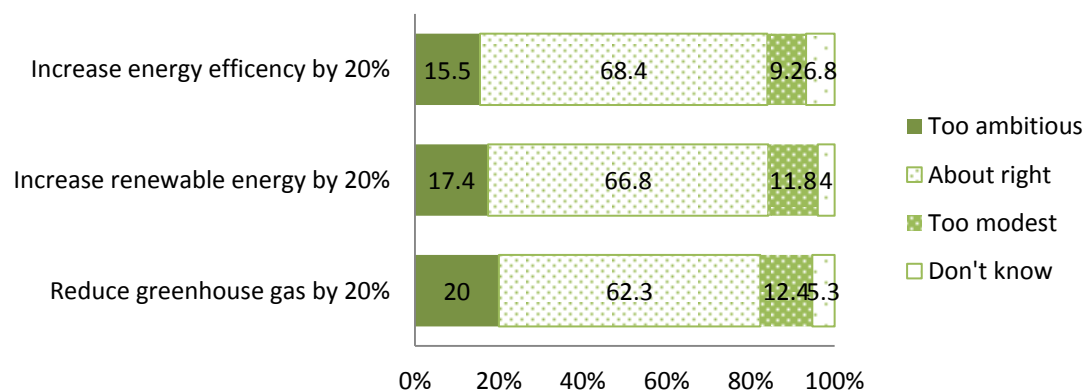


Fig. 3.34 Young people who agree with these statements by gender and age



When referring to migration, Spanish youth show a wide spirit of hospitality (Fig. 3.33). The majority of them think that immigrants contribute a lot to their country. The statement “Spain should help refugees” is strongly supported by young Spanish. In general, women are more open compared to men. Regarding the EU H2020 goals related to environment, a large majority (over 60%) support the goals, but it is also quite interesting to notice that a consistent minority (about 10%) think that they are too modest.

Fig. 3.35 Do you find these H2020 goals... (%)



4. Engagement and Social Change

In this section we provide information about young people's social and political engagement in Spain.

4.1 Civic engagement

Fig. 4.1 Best ways of participating in the public life in EU - civic engagement (%)

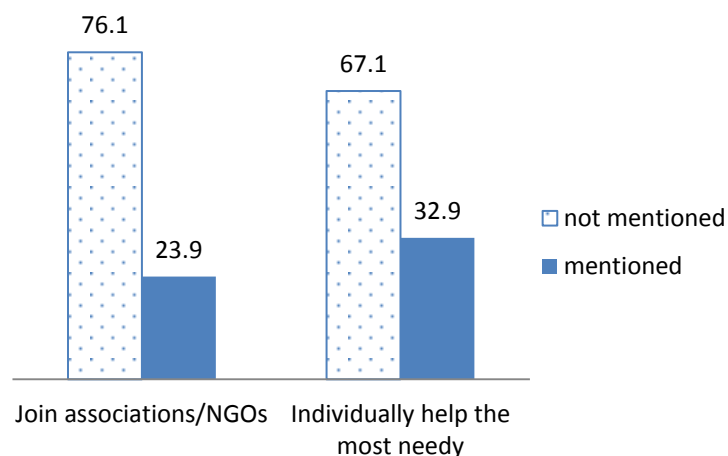
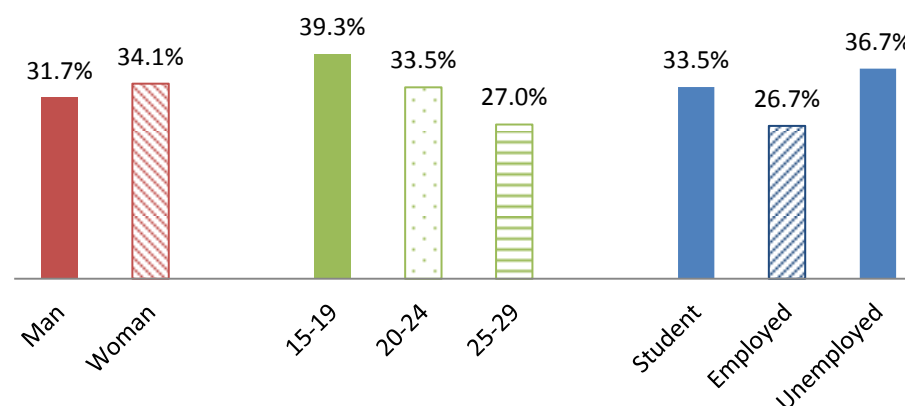


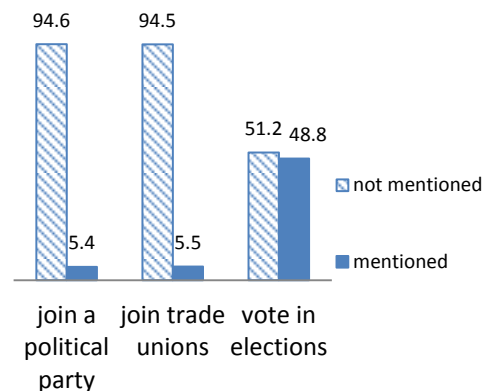
Fig. 4.2 Young people who says that individual help of the most needy is one of the best way of participation by gender and age



Spanish young are willing to engage in civic activities, about one respondent in four think that joining formal associations or NGOs is the best way to participate in the public life (Fig. 4.1). However, they also more frequently think that individual mobilisation is the best way of public participation: 32.9% vs. 23.9% to join formal associations. In particular, those who are more willing to opt for individual engagement are women and the youngest in our sample. While those are working are less propense to opt for individual mobilisation, maybe because they have less spare time to invest in civic engagement compared to students and under 19s (Fig. 4.2).

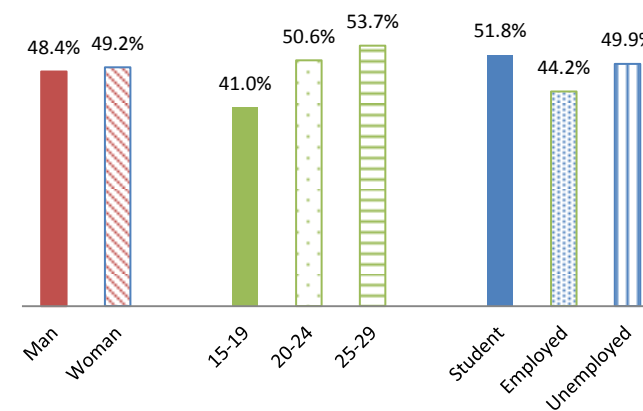
4.2 Formal political participation

Fig. 4.3 Best ways of participating in the public life of EU -Formal traditional participation (%)



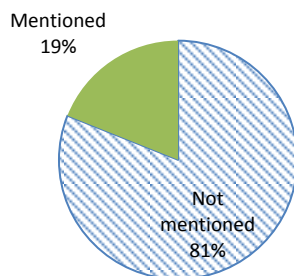
The diffuse distrust of young Spanish towards political, national and European institutions is reflected in the way they participate in public life: only a minority consider that joining a political party or a trade union is one of the best ways to participate in public life (Fig. 4.3). It is also probably linked to the diffuse conviction that neither the national government nor the European institution are able to listen to the voices of the young. But, voting still retains its importance: this especially occurs among the 25-29 age group, and among students (Fig. 4.4). Employed and the youngest group (15-19) are the least supportive of voting.

Fig. 4.4 Voting is one of the best ways of participation, by gender, age and place of living



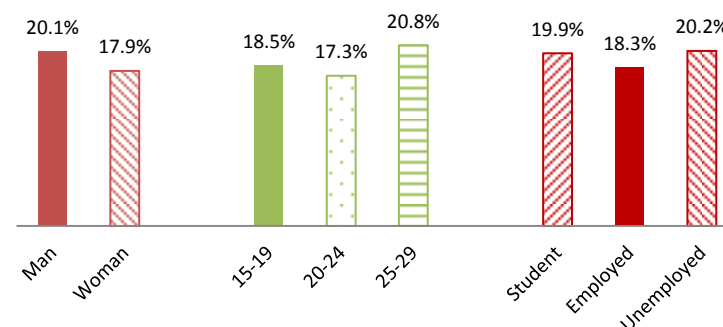
4.3 Activism

Fig. 4.5 Attend demonstrations is one of the best ways of participating in the public life in the EU - Activism



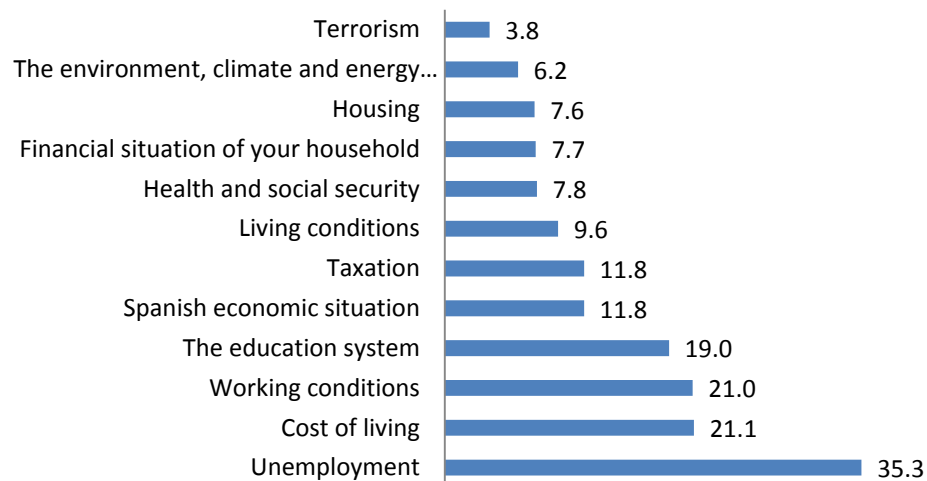
About 20% of young Spanish think that demonstrating is one of the best ways to participate in public life (Fig. 4.5). Men, and those over 25 years old are slightly more positive towards this type of political participation (Fig. 4.6).

Fig. 4.6 Attending demonstrations is one of the best ways of participation by gender and age



4.4 Everyday Engagement

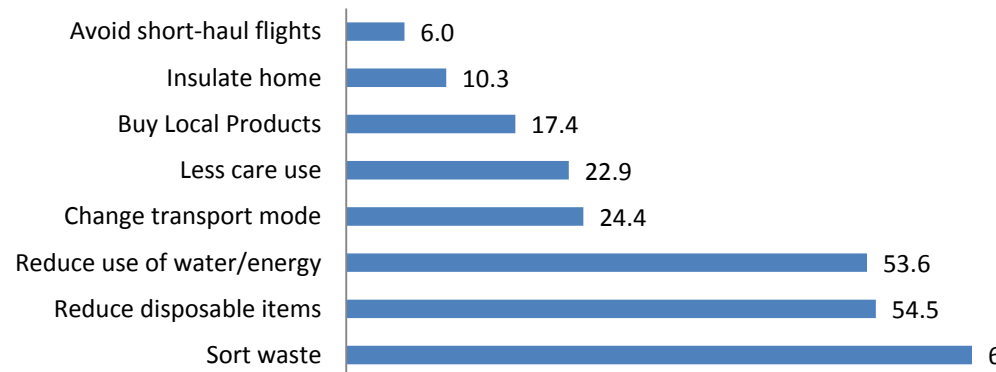
Fig. 4.7 What are the most important issues you are facing at the moment? (%) [max 2 answers]



Although ranked as only a minor issue among the most important current issues facing society (Fig. 4.7), actions for environmental issues gains wide support from young Spanish (Fig. 3.35). Not unsurprisingly then, young people in Spain are willing to take various actions to personally protect the environment (Fig. 4.8). Waste management and reduction of water are actions currently taken by the majority of the respondents. About one in four have changed their mode of transport, mostly because they try to reduce the use of cars (22.9%).

The effect of the crisis is clear when analysing the most important issues raised by young Spanish (Fig. 4.7), which are almost totally related to economic issues. The most urgent issue is unemployment, selected by 35.3% of the respondents. The second and the third are about the working condition and the cost of living, both still linked with the economic situation (although scoring about 15 percentage points less than unemployment). It is however quite interesting to notice how immigration is not perceived at all as a problem (only 0.6% choose the item – data not shown), confirming the welcoming climate for migrants in Spain. Education is another important issue (19%), which is quite understandable considering the highly dualised labour market that characterises Spain (see section 1). Environmental issues and terrorism are relatively minor concerns and are the only topics of concern not directly linked with economic conditions.

Fig. 4.8 Which of these steps have you taken personally to protect the environment? (%)



Considering the number of environment-friendly actions, we can consider different levels of youth's engagement in this dimension of participation, as shown in Fig. 4.9. About half of young Spanish show a low engagement in environmentally friendly actions, with about 45% taking only 1 or 2 actions and about 8% that do not take any action at all. The highest commitment comes with age, with more than half of the over 25s taking at least 3 actions. Men, students and the unemployed are the least committed (Fig. 4.10).

Fig. 4.9 Engagement in environmental-friendly actions

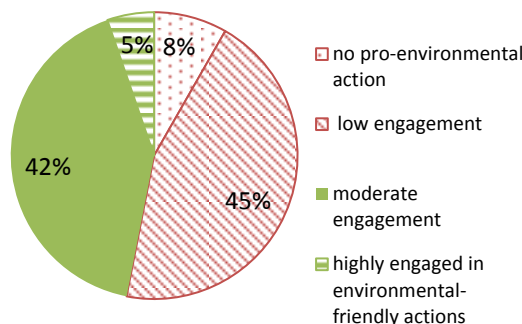
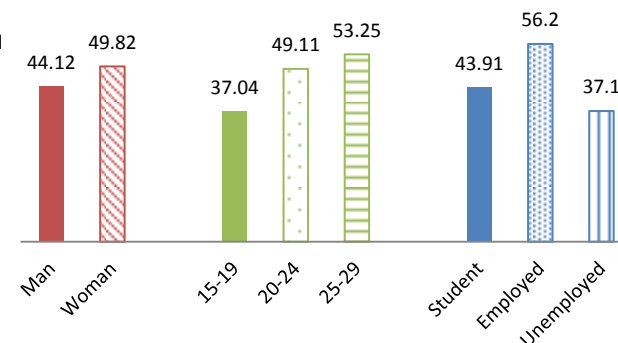


Fig. 4.10 Moderate/high pro-environmental engagement by gender, age, employment status (%)



Despite their distrust in political institutions and the scarce involvement in formal political participation, seven out of ten young Spanish at least occasionally discuss political matters with their peers and family. However, their interest changes regarding the type of political issues, with European matters raising the lowest interest among the interviewees. If we focus on the minority that frequently discuss political matters, men are the most involved. Interest in politics seems correlated with age, and it grows as the person grows older (Fig. 4.12).

Fig. 4.11 How often do you discuss political matters with your friends or relatives? (%)

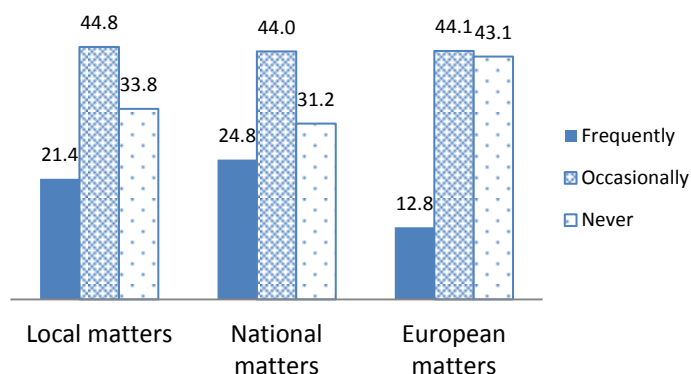
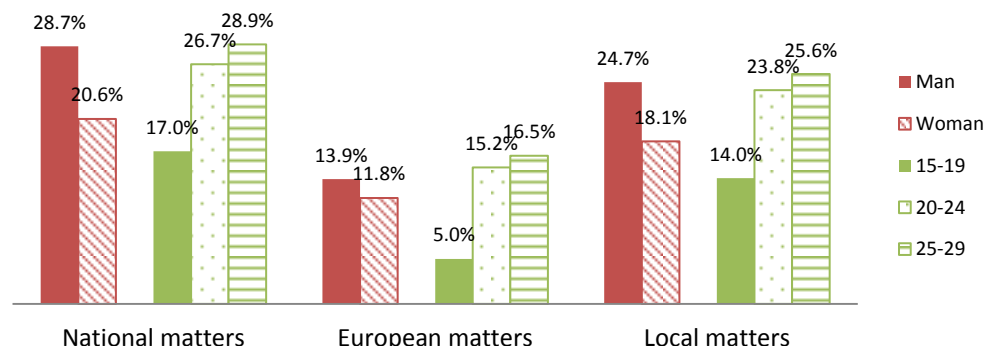


Fig. 4.12 Youth who often discusses political matters by gender and age



Project Identity

PROJECT NAME	Promoting Youth Involvement and Social Engagement (PROMISE)
COORDINATOR	Jo Deakin, University of Manchester, UK. Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk
CONSORTIUM	<p>Raffaele Bracalenti, <i>Istituto Psicoanalitico per le Ricerche Sociali, Italy.</i> r.bracalenti@iprs.it</p> <p>Eckart Müller-Bachmann, <i>Christliches Jugenddorfwerk Deutschlands e.V., Germany.</i> eckart.mueller-bachmann@cjd-nord.de</p> <p>Zyab Ibanez, <i>Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain.</i> zyab.ibanez@eui.eu</p> <p>Raquel Matos, <i>Universidade Católica Portuguesa, Portugal.</i> rmatos@porto.ucp.pt</p> <p>Ivan Chorvát, <i>Univerzita Mateja Bela v Banskej Bystrici, Slovakia.</i> Ivan.Chorvat@umb.sk</p> <p>Kaisa Vehkalahti, <i>Finnish Youth Research Network, Finland.</i> Kaisa.Vehkalahti@oulu.fi</p> <p>Annett Wiedermann, <i>YES Forum (Youth and European Social Work), Germany.</i> annett.wiedermann@yes-forum.eu</p> <p>Anna Markina, <i>University of Tartu, Estonia.</i> Anna.Markina@ut.ee</p> <p>Markus Quandt, <i>GESIS - Leibniz Institut für Sozialwissenschaften E.V., Germany.</i> Markus.quandt@gesis.org</p> <p>Elena Omelchenko, <i>National Research University, Russia.</i> omelchenkoe@mail.ru</p> <p>Ben Perasović, <i>Ivo Pilar Institute, Croatia.</i> ben.perasovic@gmail.com</p>
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WEBSITE	http://www.promise.manchester.ac.uk/en/home-page/
FOR MORE INFORMATION	Contact: Markus Quandt (Markus.quandt@gesis.org) or Jo Deakin (Jo.deakin@manchester.ac.uk)