

Press Release: 19th January, 2006

FIRST EUROPEAN SINGLES SURVEY REVEALS SOME SURPRISING RESULTS

- PARSHIP research into lifestyles and attitudes in 8 countries unveils an interesting profile of European singles -

- **40% of singles in Europe have been without a partner for 3 years or more**
- **33% are looking for a long-term relationship**
- **42% believe they can find a suitable long-term partner via the internet**
- **UK singles the loneliest in Europe**
- **French poorest at flirting and watch most TV**
- **Swiss richest in Europe**
- **Spanish most sex-orientated *and* biggest party-goers**
- **Dutch are confirmed singles**
- **Italians top shoppers**
- **Austrians top flirter**
- **Germans rate eating out lowest**

(London 19/1/06) PARSHIP, the UK's first and Europe's largest compatibility-based online dating service, has conducted the first European survey on singles lifestyles and attitudes across 8 Western and Southern European countries. Over 5000 singles, male and female, aged 25-50, were interviewed in the UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain, Holland, Austria and Switzerland. The research, coordinated and compiled by renowned German research institute, INNOFACT AG, explored singles' attitudes to love, romance and relationships and other lifestyle subjects and identified both common ground and significant differences among these single people of Europe.

In relationship terms, European singles tend to stay unattached for quite a long time, 40% for more than 3 years. However that doesn't mean they don't want to find a partner – most (55%) have positive memories of their last relationship and a third are looking for a long-term relationship rather than a quick flirtation. Nearly a half (47%) are optimistic about being successful. Finally for Europe's busy singles the internet has increasingly become the medium of choice in terms of finding a long-term partner with 42% of Europeans now endorsing it, led by the France and UK with 58% and 54% respectively.

A profile of UK singles within the overall European context reveals some fascinating and contradictory results. Here is a summary of UK findings:

- UK singles are the loneliest in Europe. 51% admit to often being lonely and 65% spend a lot of time alone, both figures being the highest in Europe.

- UK men are the unhappiest in Europe about their single status and UK singles in general are the most pessimistic about finding a new partner. However they are the most active in terms of seeking a new partner and a long-term relationship!
- UK singles have the highest divorce rate in Europe, at 24%.
- UK singles would appear to be the shyest in Europe. In terms of flirting they score highest for liking others to make the first move at 60%.
- Women singles in the UK love their books – 65% of them read a lot, the highest in Europe.
- Surprisingly, single UK men come top in Europe in the culinary stakes, 57% saying they enjoy cooking. Yet those same men also score highest in Europe in terms of regularly eating fast food (26%)!
- Perhaps reflecting the breakdown of the nuclear family, UK singles spend the least time in terms of often getting together with family and relatives. Only 34% of them describe themselves as a family person, compared to a European average of 55%.
- UK singles are very conscious of their image. They come second in Europe in terms of rating appearance and fashion as being important to them.
- UK men are also the most considerate in terms of change their place of residence for a new partner (44%).
- They also have the highest proportion of flat sharers, at 30%, compared to the European average of 18%.

Spain seems to be the fun country in Europe in which to be a single. Spanish singles score highly on going to parties, playing sport, going to the movies, reading, culture and getting together with friends and family. They spend least time alone. Sex would also seem to be more important for them. 54% say they think about sex often, compared to 46% in the UK and only 24% in Holland! They rate second (after Austria) in terms of liking to flirt and flirting often. Spanish singles also score highest in terms of believing singles have a fuller sex life than persons living in a fixed relationship - 39%, nearly double the European norm of 20%. They also score the highest in expecting a full sex life out of their next relationship.

In terms of expectations about a future partner and relationship, rather predictably the top five values were: honesty, loyalty, sense of humour, empathy and joie-de-vivre. Age is not important to 38% of European singles, especially to the French, 60% of whom said age didn't matter. However, 40% of European singles wanted their future partner to be a non-smoker, especially in Holland and the UK, with figures of 49% and 43%. Italy scored highest in terms of wanting to get married quickly (16%) and have children (36%), and the UK lowest (3% and 17% respectively)! In terms of 'a full sex life', UK scored 75%, way behind Spain at 92%, but still a long way ahead of the undemanding Dutch at 37%!

Other interesting findings:

- Despite common misconceptions the Germans would appear not to like their food as much as other Europeans. They score lowest in terms of often eating out at

restaurants and inviting friends over for a meal, Austria and Spain respectively coming top.

- Italian singles are the top shoppers with 50% saying they like to go shopping. Surprisingly France comes bottom at 29%.
- Unsurprisingly, Italian singles scored highest in terms of being interested in culture, at 63%, the Dutch and French being the Philistines, at 21% and 28% respectively.
- Austrian singles consider themselves the best informed, politically, at 53%, the singles from Holland the worst, at 32%.

Tony Blin-Stoyle, PARSHIP.co.uk country manager and former managing director of UpMyStreet.com and FT.com said:

“Over the past 5 years PARSHIP has built up an expertise and knowledge about single life and lasting relationships in these European markets which makes it uniquely placed to explore and track developments in the lifestyles and attitudes of singles in Western and Southern Europe. This research will enable the company to further extend its knowledge of singles and relationships in modern, sophisticated markets, thereby optimising our customer service for each country.

The growing acceptability and usage of the internet to find a long-term partner has been instrumental in phenomenal market growth. The growth of online dating is a natural progression in our use of the internet, just as online shopping has been. The UK online dating market is already worth about £12 million and is expected to grow to £47 million by 2008. The UK online dating market is already worth about £12 million and is expected to grow to £47 million by 2008.

PARSHIP across Europe has over 1.5 million members and has matched thousands of single people looking for a serious, long-lasting relationship. Thanks to the 20-minute PARSHIP psychometric test, the result of many years of research into relationships, members' profiles are carefully matched in terms of similar and complementary characteristics. Research suggests that couples meeting with PARSHIP's help are twice more likely to form a lasting relationship than people meeting through any other method. For those seeking new love in 2006, PARSHIP.co.uk has a special New Year offer of a 7-day free trial from 27th December, 2005, to 31st January, 2006.

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