



**ACTIVE AGING AND SOCIAL CAPITAL:
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FROM
EUROPEAN SENIOR VOLUNTEERS**



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INTRODUCTION

Major public health challenge: **healthy aging**.

Inverting population pyramid.

Main goal: to study the determinants of the seniors' well-being, and in especial volunteering decisions.

Main contributions: to carry out an international study taking into account two indicators of well-being and four categories of volunteerism.

INTRODUCTION

International study: **Germany, Slovenia, Spain** and **Sweden**

- Elderly people represent an important population group.
 - Fertility rate: Sweden (1.88), Slovenia (1.58), Germany (1.47) and Spain (1.33)
 - Life expectancy: Spain (83.2), Sweden (82.0), Germany (80.9) and Slovenia (80.4).
- Governments from all Europe are enacting austerity plans and spending cuts to try to reduce national debts and rein in public spending.
- As in many other fields, there is an homogenization process in the national statutory minimum retirement age.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- Volunteering in NGOs: viable and sustainable solution that **benefits all their agents** (Amendola, Garofalo and Nese , 2011; Blinder and Freytag, 2013; Ronel, 2006; Taylor, 2004).
 - Policy makers: promote **social capital** (Sabatini, 2008).
 - **Reinforce messages:** Knowledge of the population characteristics that is or will enter the elderly (Fiorillo and Sabatini, 2011).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Volunteers report:

- **Better state of health** (Borgonovi, 2008; Moen et al., 1992; Musick et al, 1999; Oman et al., 1999; Rogers, 1996; Sabin 1993; Stephan, 1991).
- **Happiness** (Guyen, 2011; Harvey, 2011; Post, 2005).

Senior:

- Positive even in senior citizens with multiple chronic diseases (Barro et al., 2009).
- Elderly **empowerment** (Ahern and Hendryx, 2008; House et al., 1988; Chen, 2013).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Motivations: Request or individual initiative (Cocca-Bates and Neal-Boylan, 2011).

Activities:

- Relations perceived as "satisfactory" or not.
 - Important for the promotion of healthy behaviours (Fiorillo and Sabatini, 2011).
- Different types of volunteering activities require different volunteer profiles (Gil-Lacruz and Marcuello, 2013).

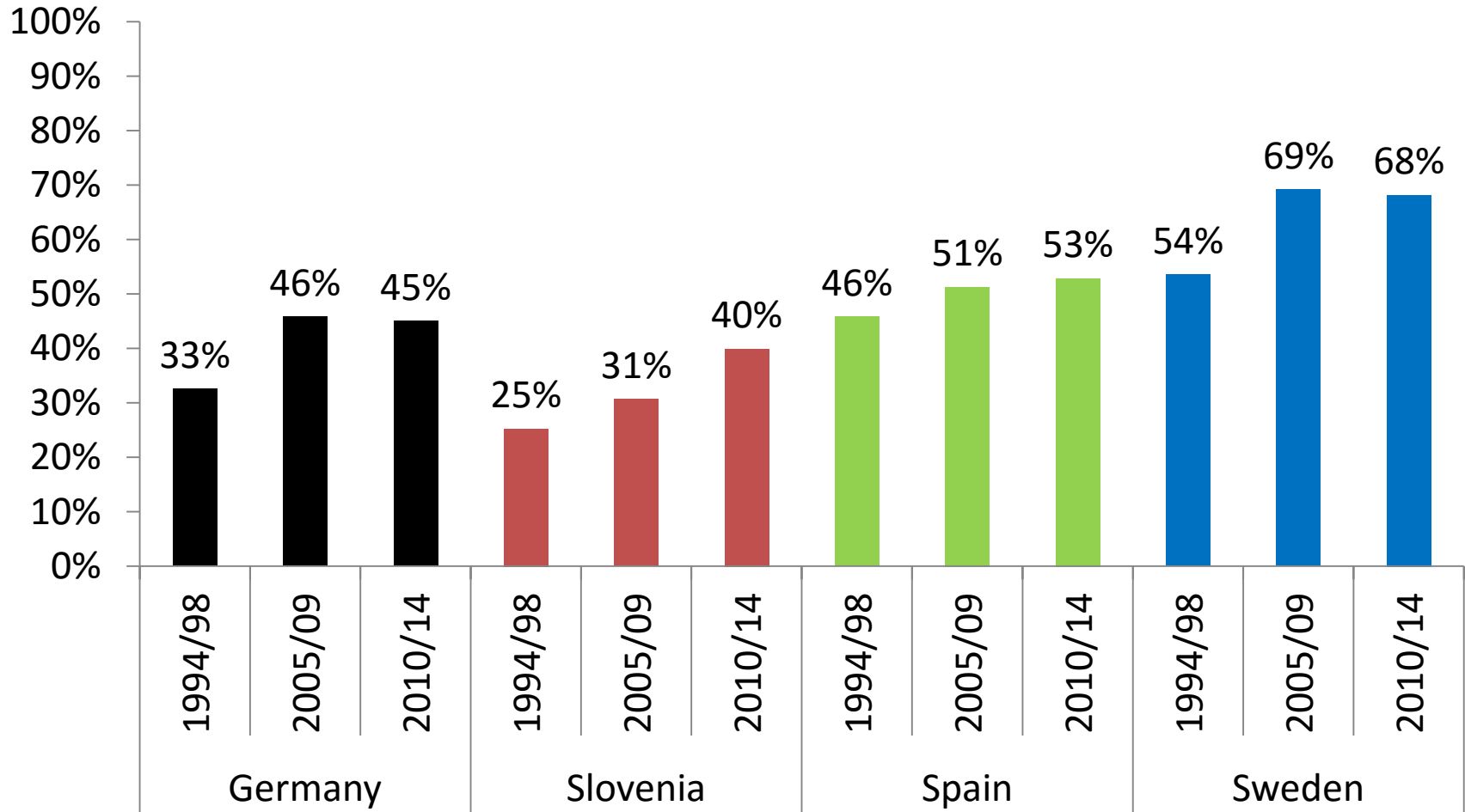
LITERATURE REVIEW

The effect of social relationships and support networks on the well-being depends on a variety of **demographic** and **environmental factors** (Doyal, 2000; Moss, 2002; Wei et al., 2006)

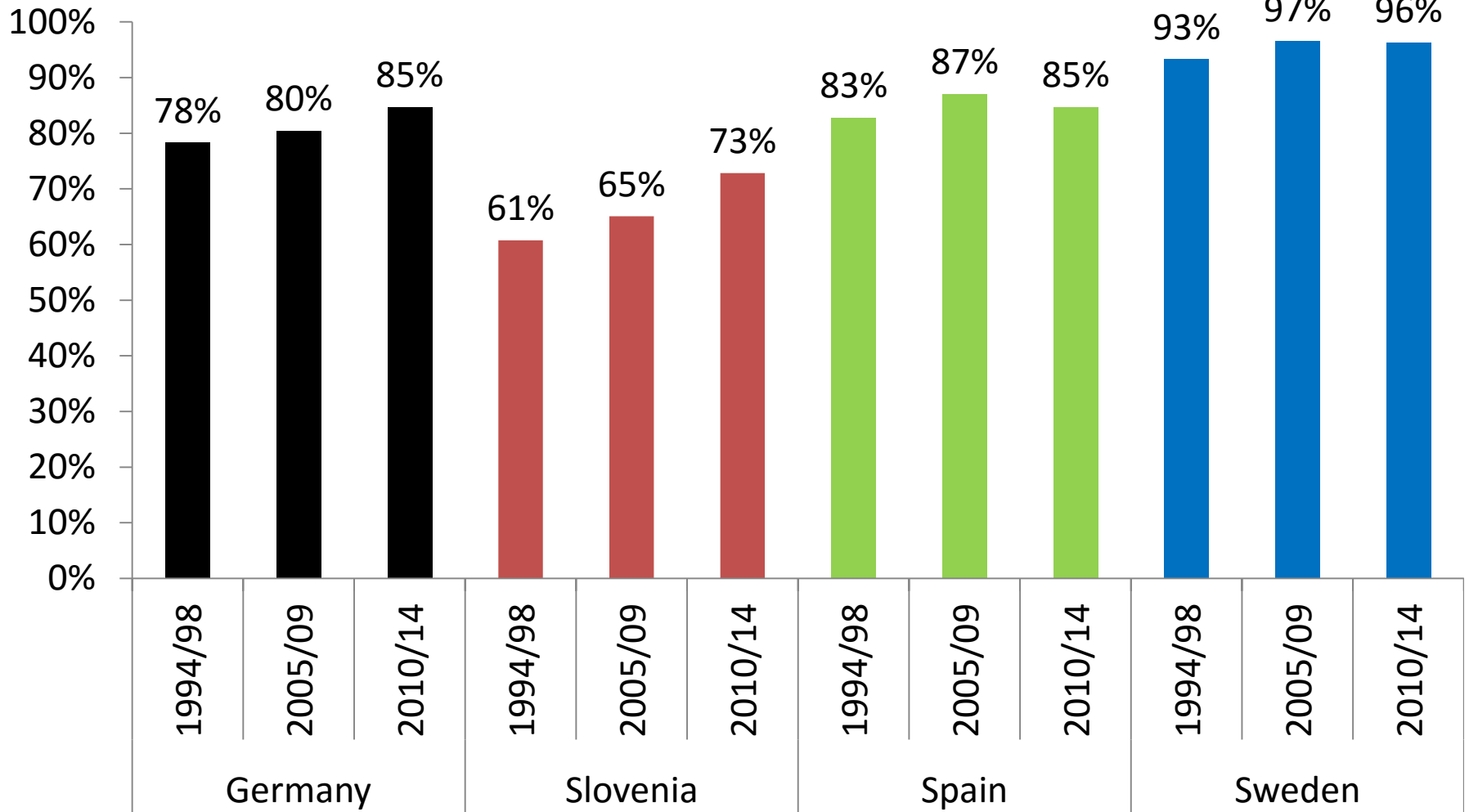
DATA BASE

- **Micro variables: The World Values Survey**
 - Senior citizens aged from 61 to 80 years old.
 - Waves: 1994-1998, 2005-2009 and 2010-2014.
 - Germany, Slovenia, Spain and Sweden.
- **Macro variables: OECD health Data**
 - In terms per capita, constant prices, adjusted to purchasing power parity US\$.

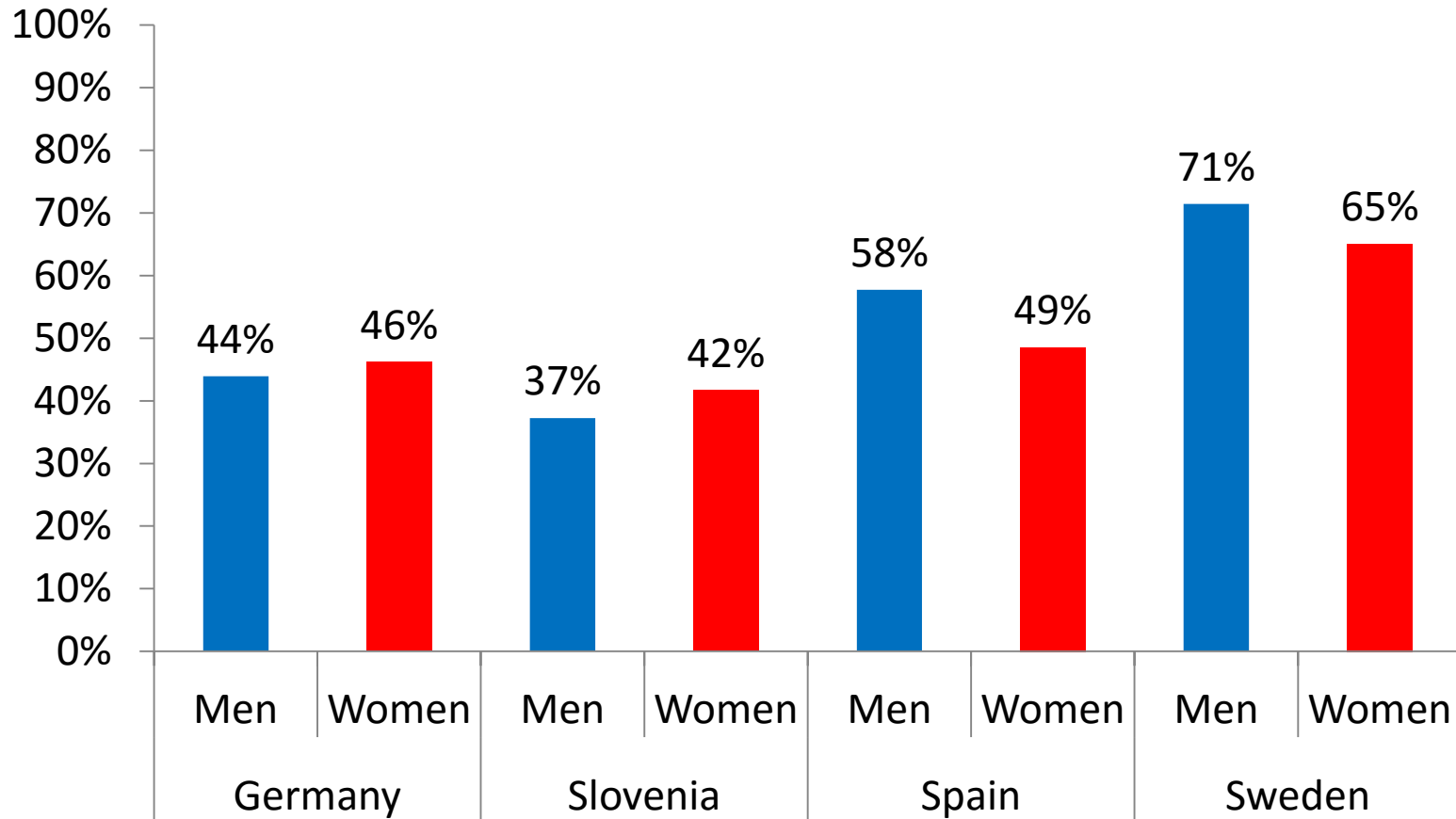
GoodHealth



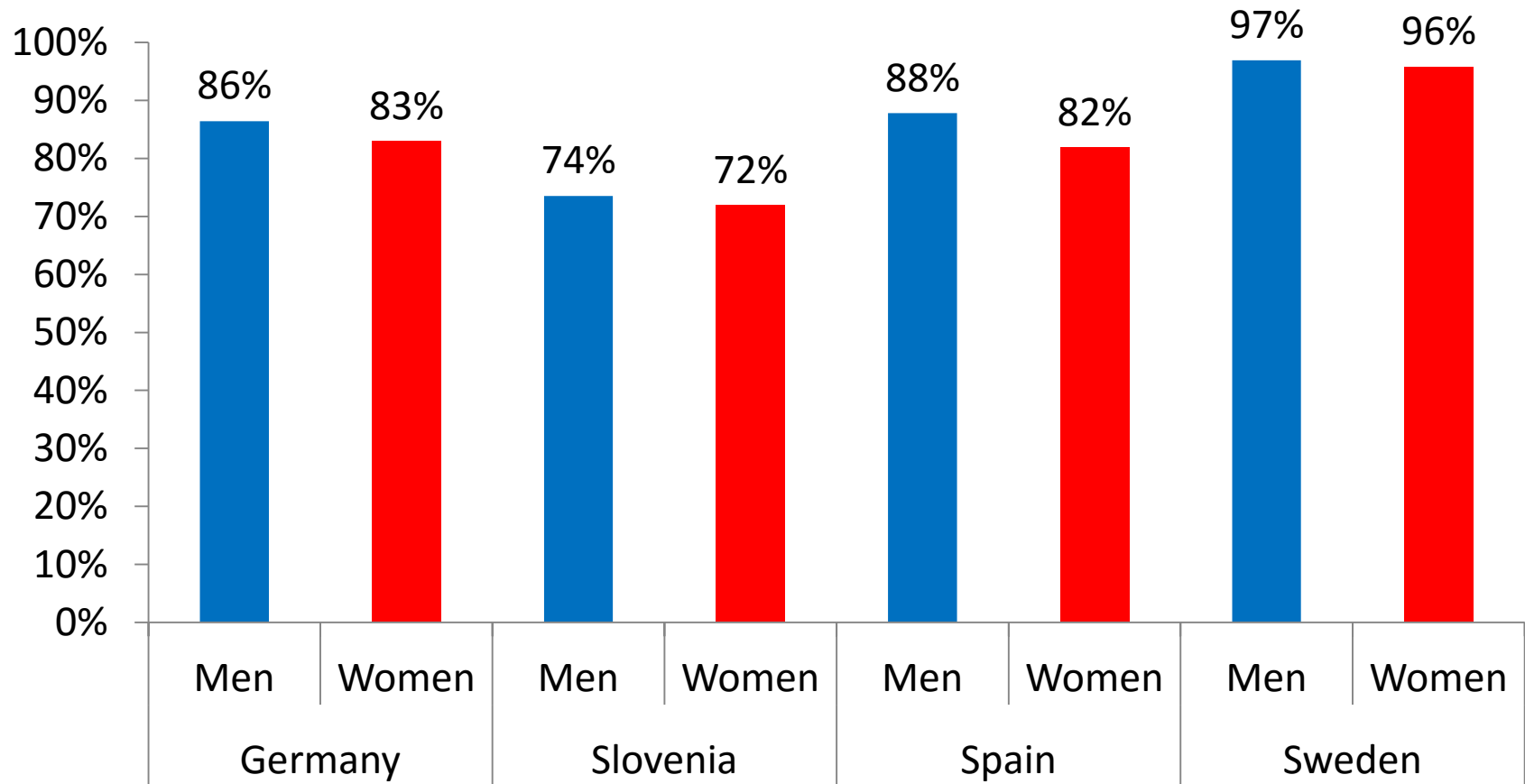
Happiness



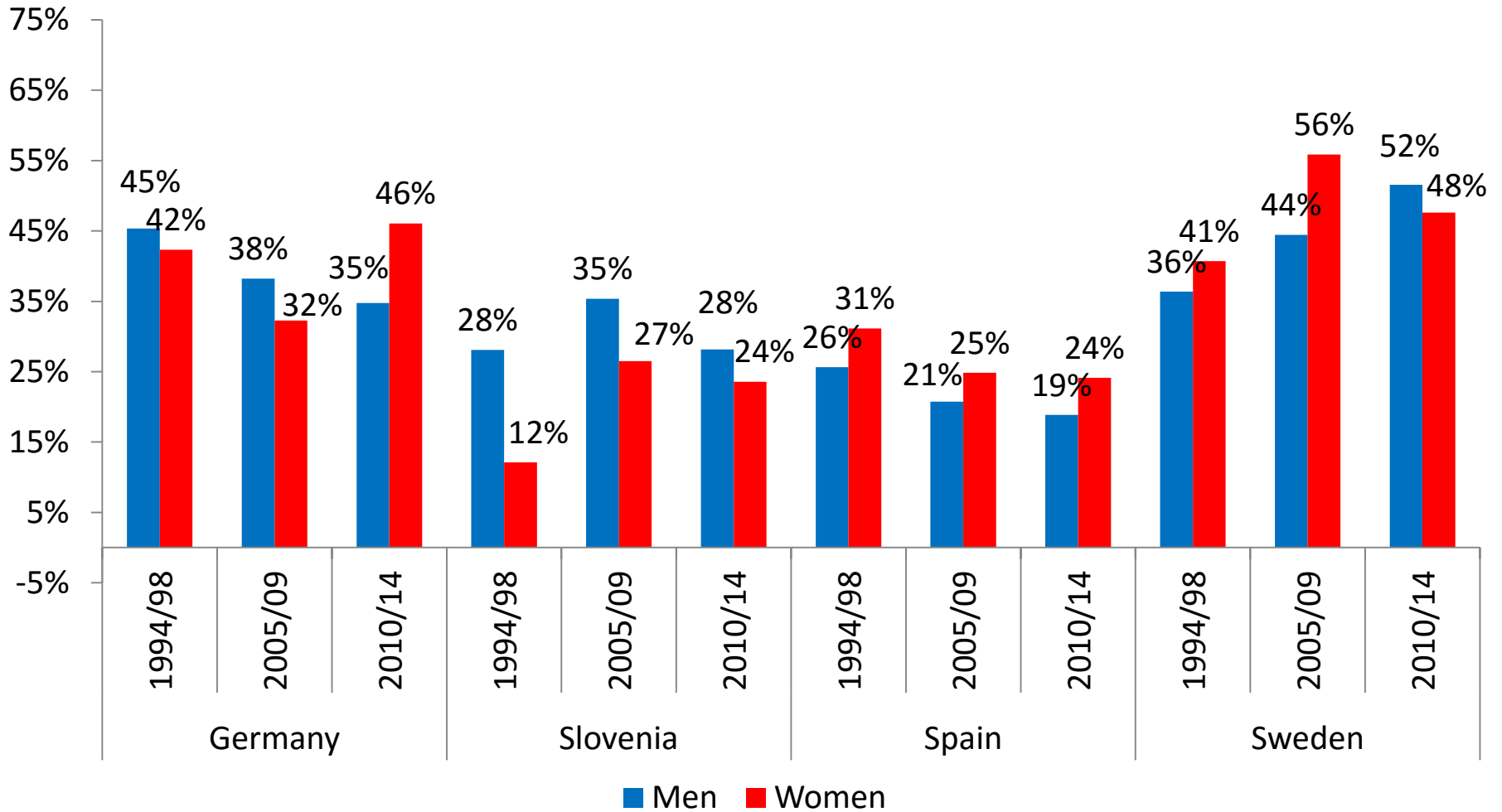
GoodHealth (2010/14)



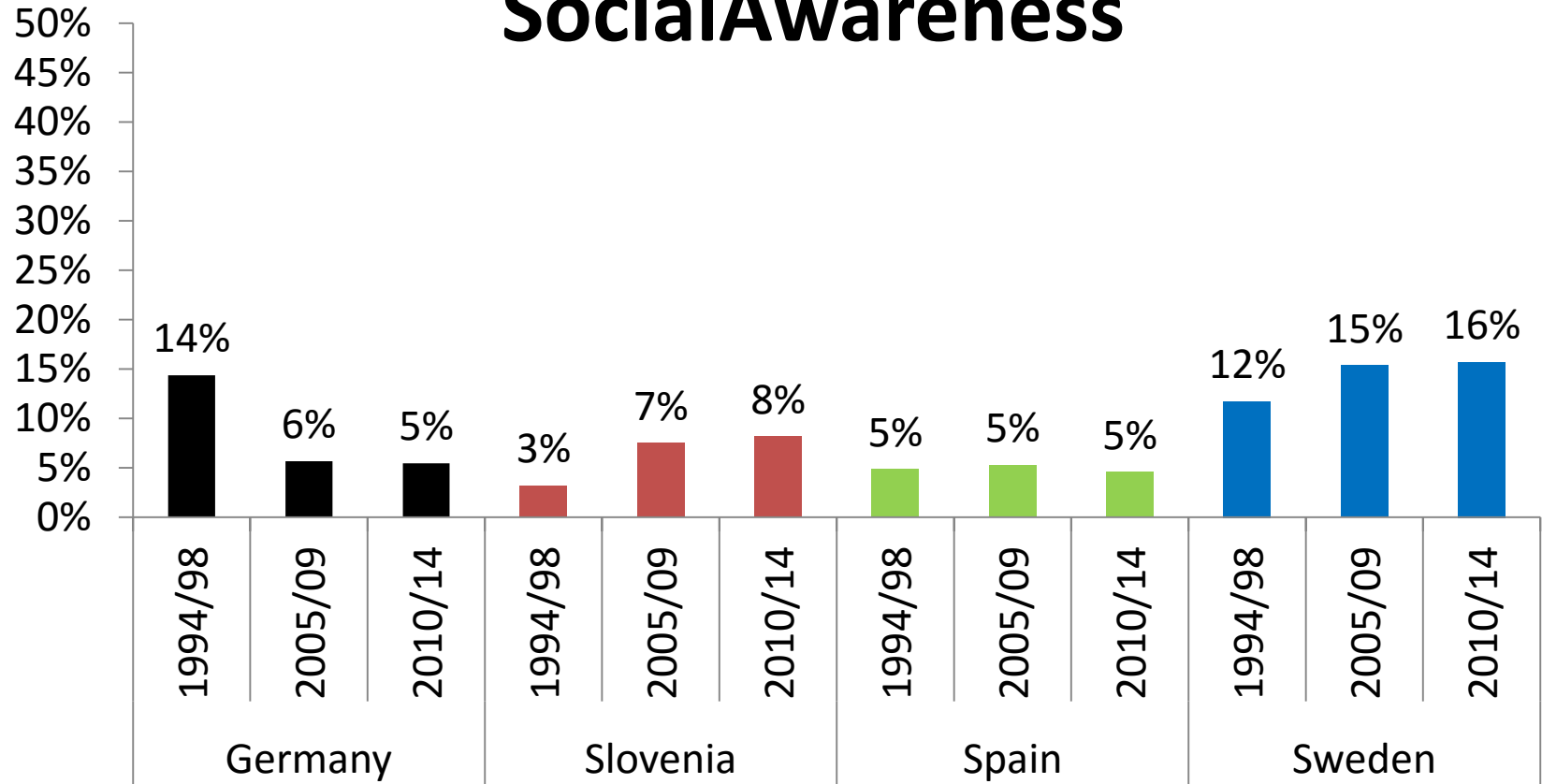
Happiness (2010/14)



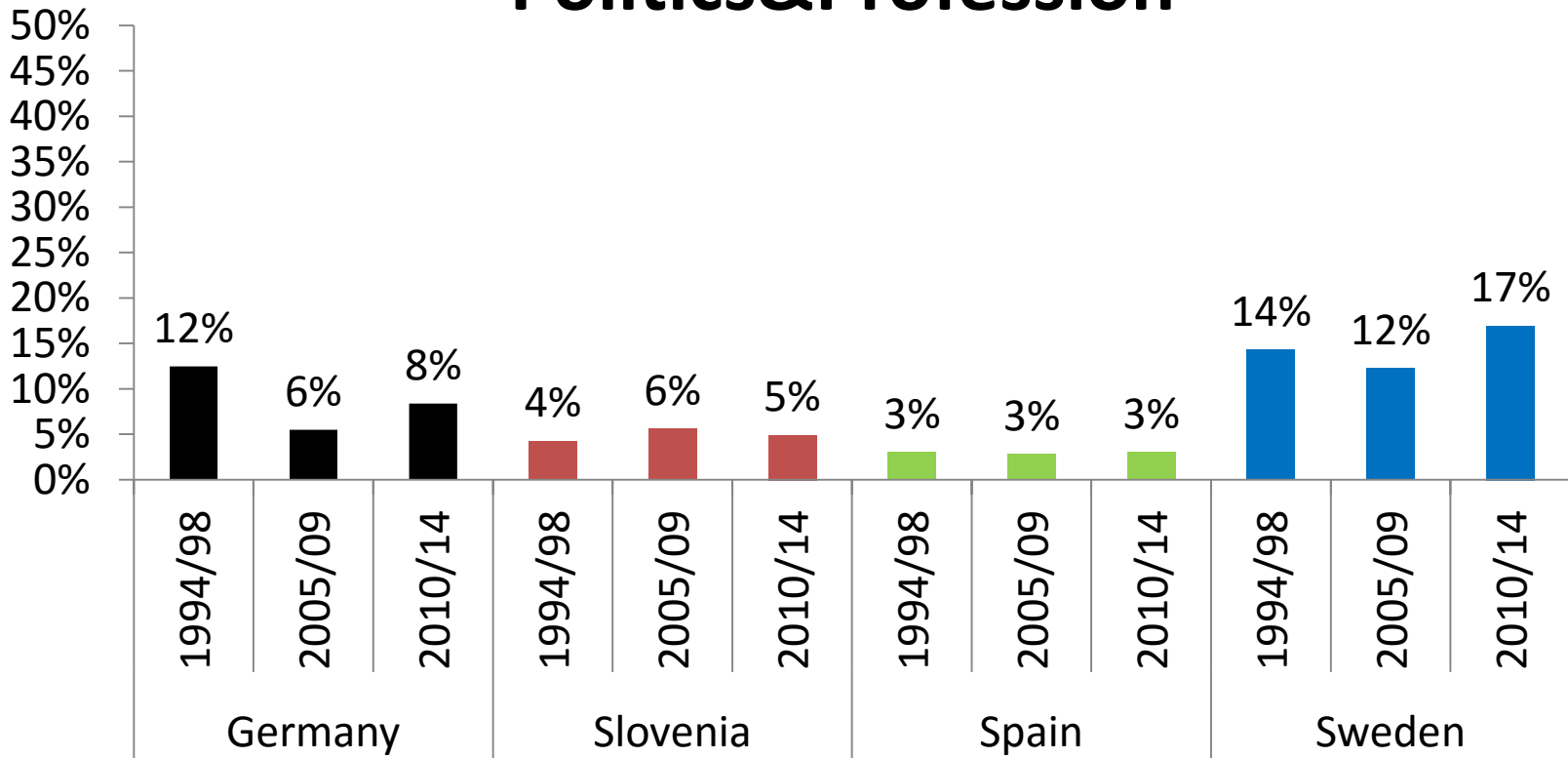
Volunteerism



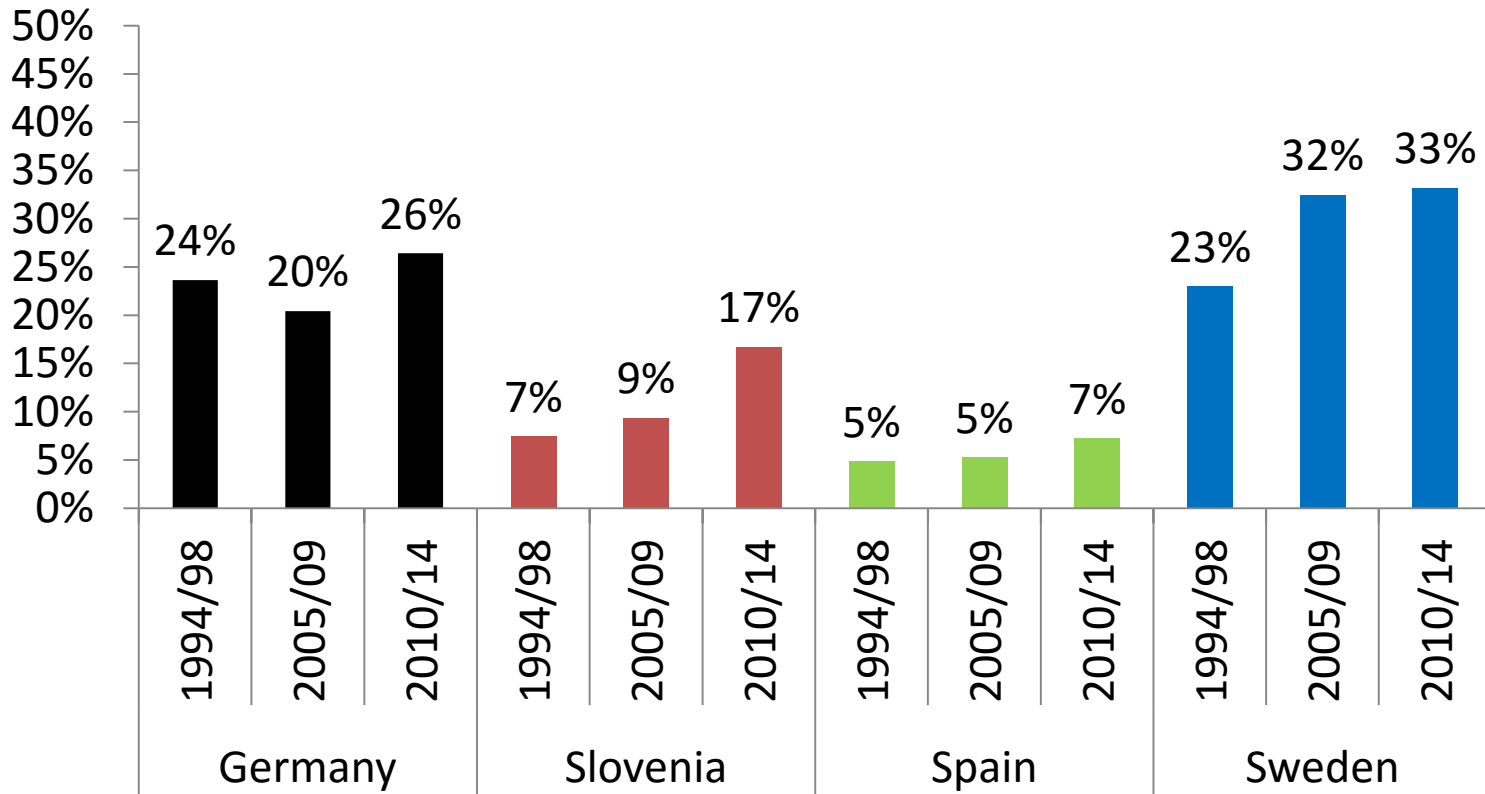
SocialAwareness



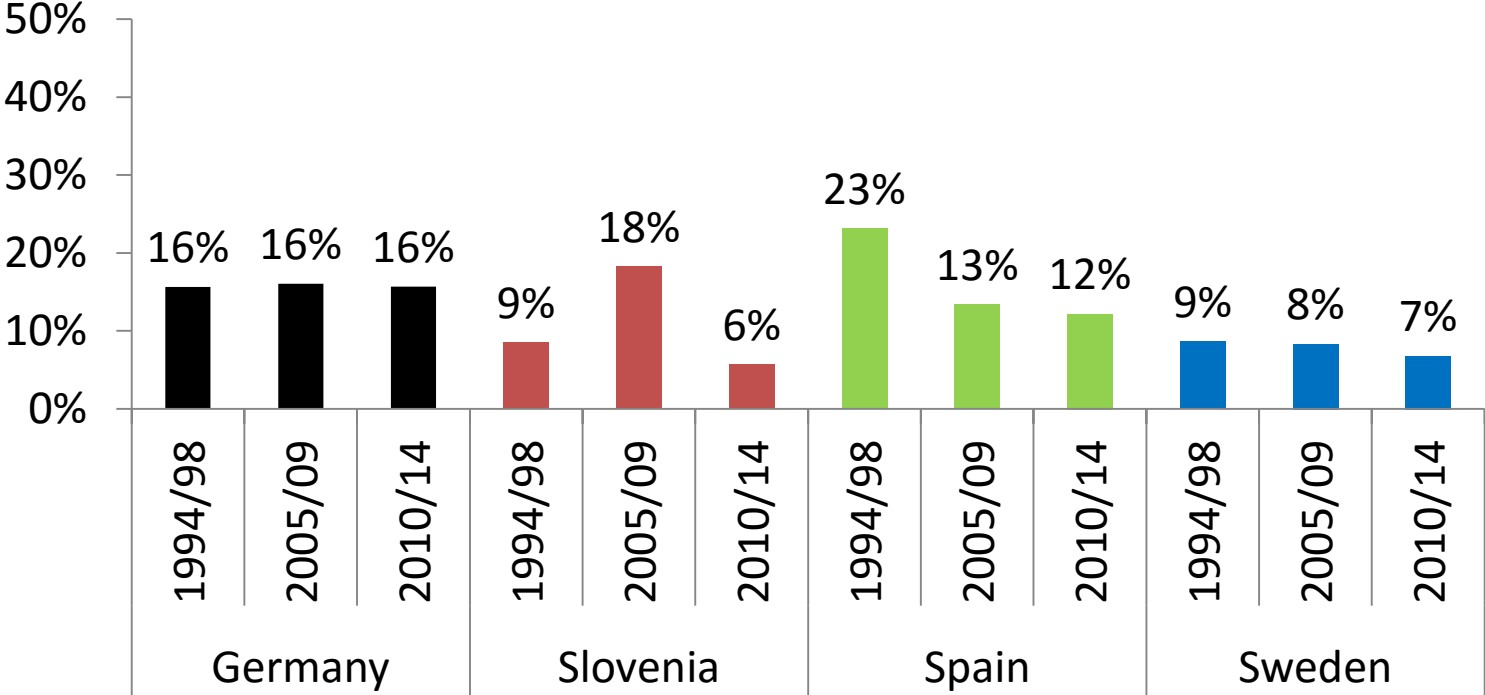
Politics&Profession



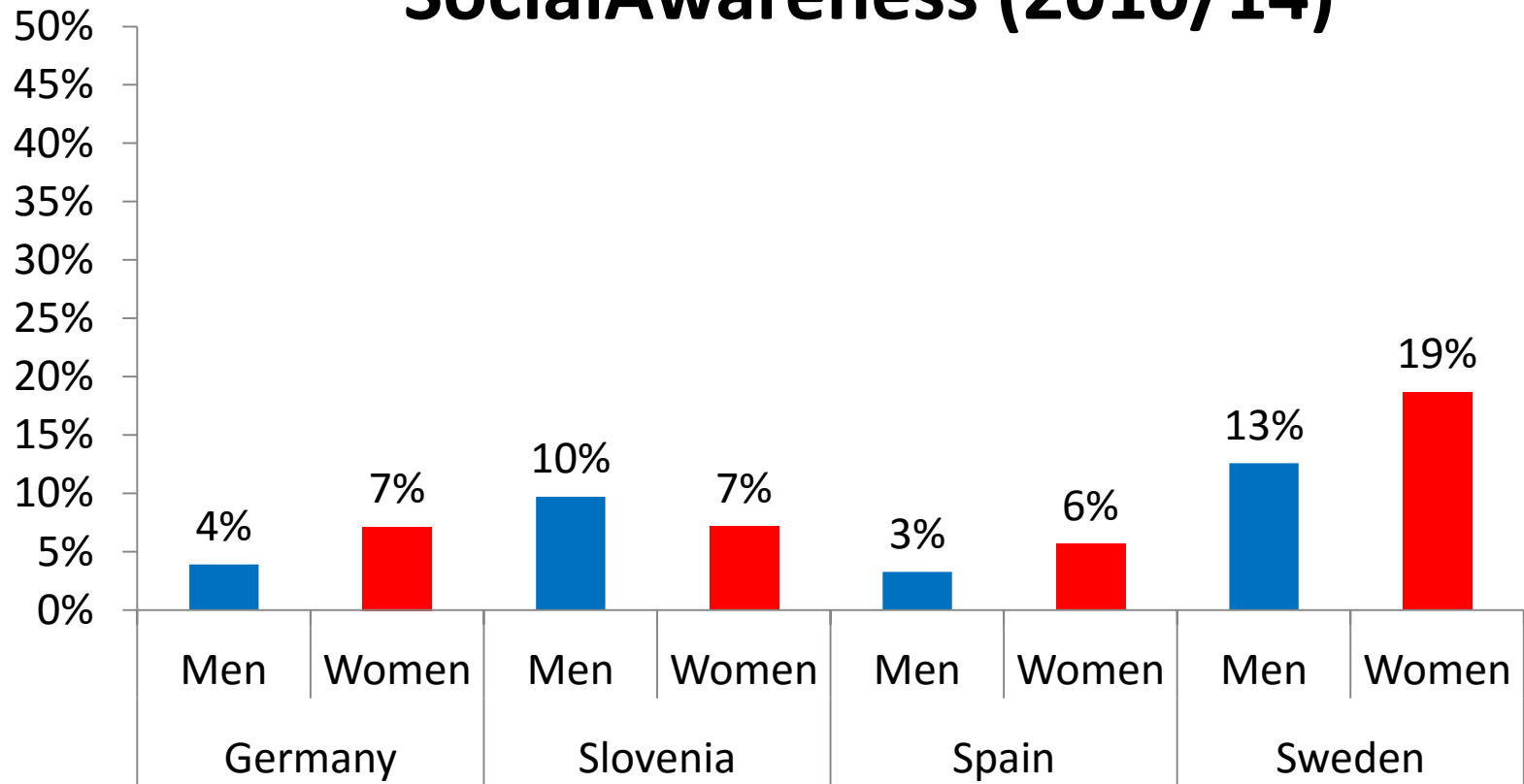
Education&Leisure



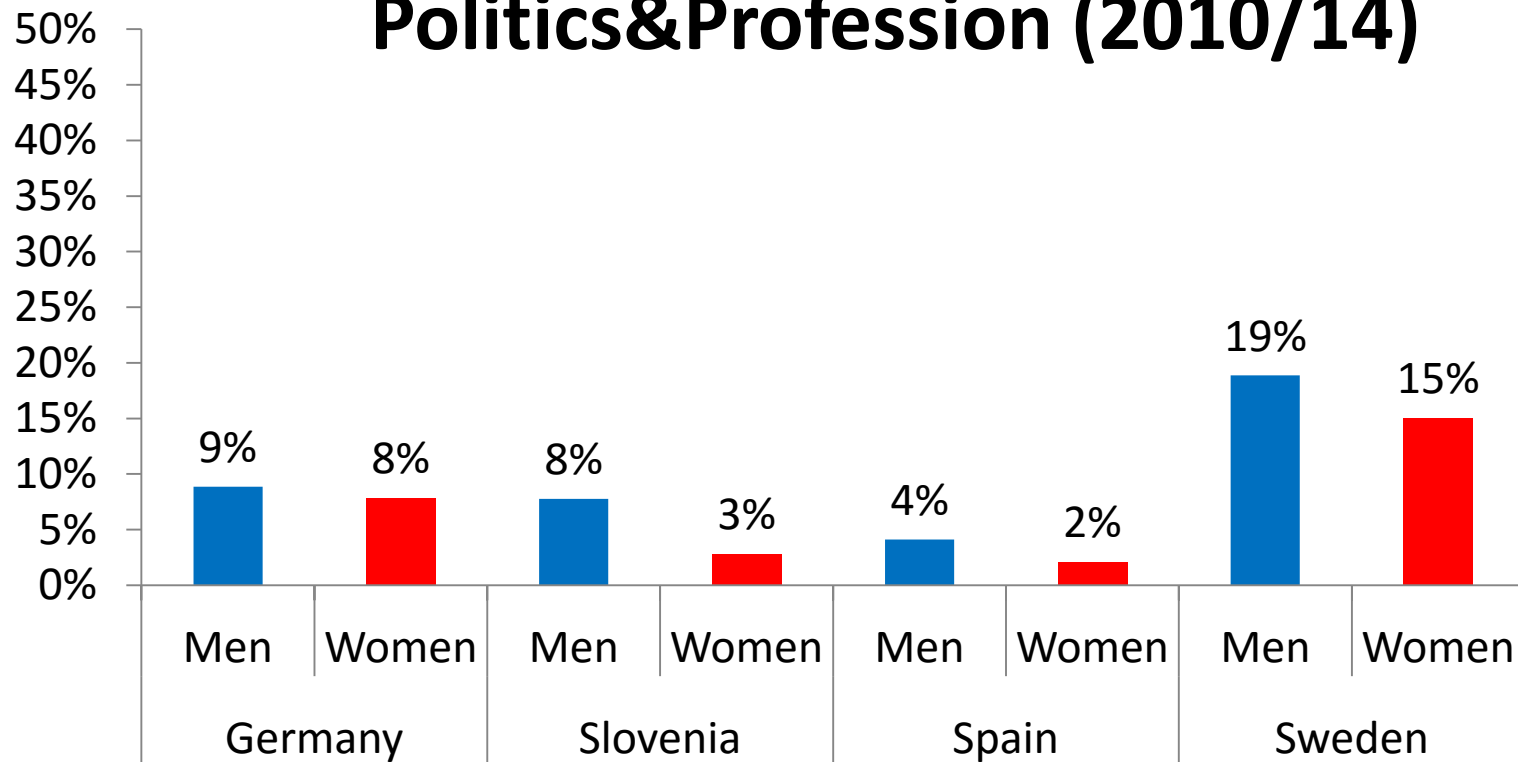
Religion



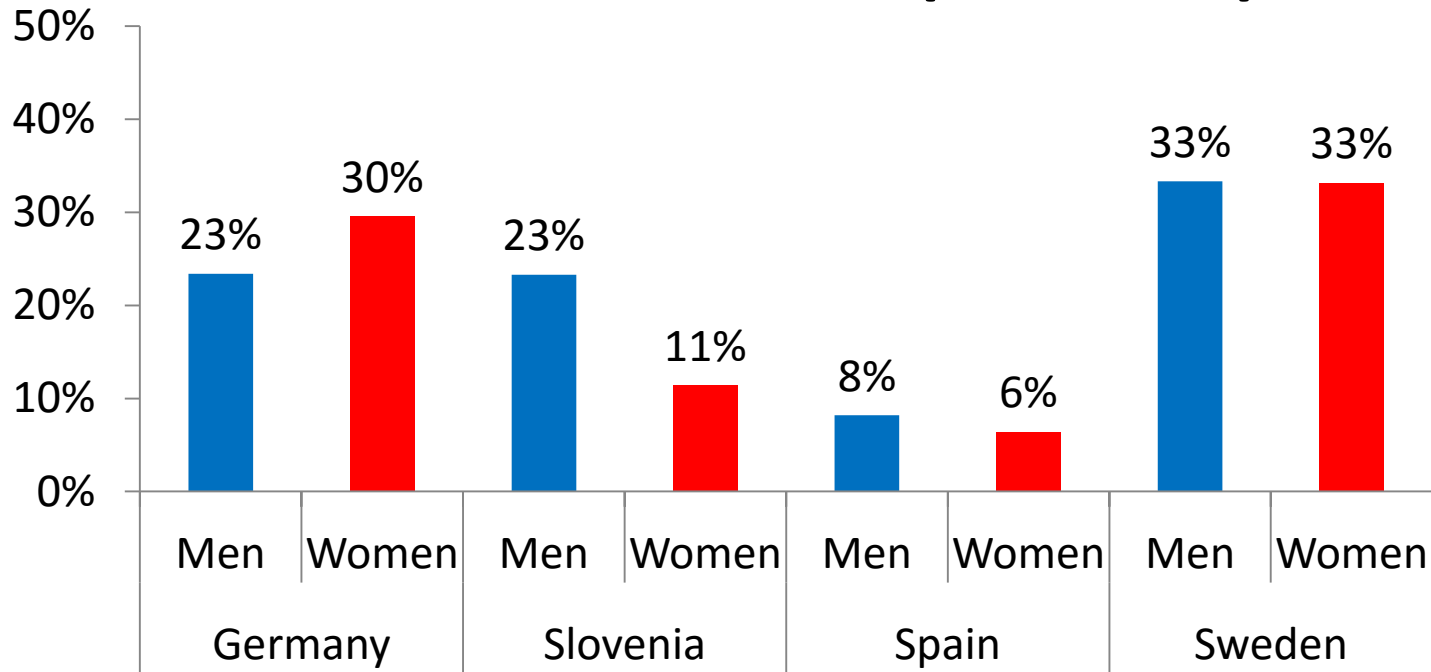
Social Awareness (2010/14)



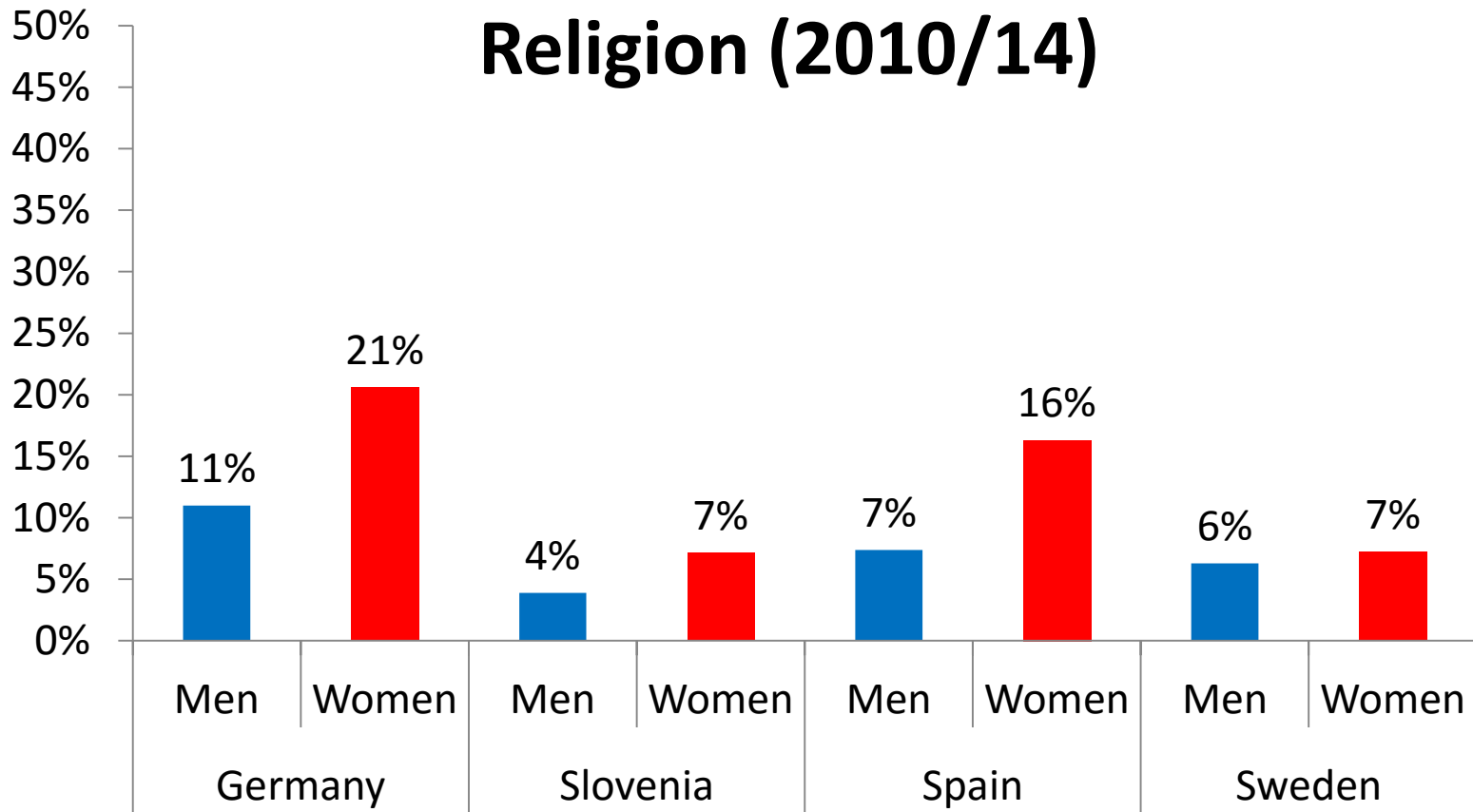
Politics & Profession (2010/14)



Education&Leisure (2010/14)



Religion (2010/14)



World Value Survey

(3.152 observations)

| Variable | Total | Germany | Slovenia | Spain | Sweden |
|--------------------|-------|---------|----------|-------|--------|
| Women | 52% | 50% | 57% | 54% | 49% |
| Men | 48% | 50% | 43% | 46% | 51% |
| Age:61-65 | 33% | 32% | 35% | 35% | 32% |
| Age:66-70 | 30% | 32% | 28% | 29% | 30% |
| Age:71-75 | 23% | 23% | 22% | 21% | 24% |
| Age:76-80 | 14% | 12% | 15% | 15% | 14% |
| AgeActive* | 28% | 25% | 26% | 28% | 38% |
| Single | 5% | 4% | 5% | 5% | 8% |
| Married | 67% | 64% | 65% | 72% | 71% |
| Divorced | 7% | 8% | 4% | 3% | 10% |
| Widow | 21% | 23% | 26% | 20% | 12% |
| Housewife | 14% | 3% | 6% | 26% | 31% |
| Unemployed | 1% | 1% | 1% | 2% | 1% |
| Worker | 10% | 7% | 2% | 8% | 25% |
| Retired | 74% | 89% | 91% | 65% | 43% |
| PrimaryEducation | 62% | 63% | 47% | 88% | 45% |
| SecondaryEducation | 23% | 20% | 47% | 8% | 25% |
| TertiaryEducation | 15% | 17% | 6% | 4% | 30% |
| NumberChildren | 2,08 | 1,84 | 2,05 | 2,57 | 2,07 |
| LowIncome | 32% | 27% | 30% | 50% | 24% |
| MiddleIncome | 61% | 66% | 67% | 48% | 60% |
| HighIncome | 7% | 7% | 3% | 2% | 16% |

OECD Health Data

| | | Public Expenditure per capita | | | | GDP per capita |
|----------|-----------|-------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| | | Old Age | Health | Other | Total | |
| Germany | 1994/98 | 2166 | 2117 | 2912 | 7196 | 37058 |
| | 2005/09 | 2862 | 2443 | 3025 | 8332 | 44786 |
| | 2010/14 | 2978 | 2761 | 3249 | 8989 | 46510 |
| | Variation | 38% | 30% | 12% | 25% | 26% |
| Slovenia | 1994/98 | 1662 | 963 | 1065 | 3691 | 20393 |
| | 2005/09 | 2086 | 1435 | 1779 | 5302 | 32258 |
| | 2010/14 | 2412 | 1604 | 1961 | 5977 | 30789 |
| | Variation | 45% | 66% | 84% | 62% | 51% |
| Spain | 1994/98 | 1743 | 1097 | 1629 | 4469 | 28347 |
| | 2005/09 | 1814 | 1614 | 2437 | 5866 | 37979 |
| | 2010/14 | 2315 | 1868 | 2996 | 7180 | 35488 |
| | Variation | 33% | 70% | 84% | 61% | 25% |
| Sweden | 1994/98 | 2421 | 1484 | 3932 | 7838 | 34007 |
| | 2005/09 | 3088 | 2151 | 4301 | 9541 | 47560 |
| | 2010/14 | 3273 | 2269 | 3961 | 9504 | 47240 |
| | Variation | 35% | 53% | 1% | 21% | 39% |

EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK¹⁾

Well-being: *GoodHealth, Happiness*

Volunteering decisions: Aggregated category (*UnpaidWork*) and + 4 types (*UnpaidSocialAwareness, UnpaidProfessionalPolitical, UnpaidEducationLeisure* and *UnpaidReligion*).

EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK¹⁾

Multinomial Logits (elasticities) for volunteering and well-being.

| Unpaid Work & Health (Mlogit) | No Good Health & No Volunteer | No Good Health & Volunteer | Good Health & No Volunteer | Good Health & Volunteer |
|--|--|---|---|--|
| <i>Women</i> | -0.011 | 0.030** | -0.025 | 0.006 |
| <i>Men^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>PrimaryEducation^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>SecondaryEducation</i> | -0.056*** | 0.032** | -0.041** | 0.065*** |
| <i>TertiaryEducation</i> | -0.171*** | 0.073*** | -0.028 | 0.127*** |
| <i>LowIncome^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>MiddleIncome</i> | -0.101*** | -0.010 | 0.063*** | 0.048*** |
| <i>HighIncome</i> | -0.159*** | -0.084*** | 0.129*** | 0.114*** |
| <i>LN(TotalPublicpc)</i> | 0.391** | 0.000 | -0.209 | -0.182 |
| <i>LN(GDPpc)</i> | -0.144 | 0.600** | -0.567* | 0.110 |
| <i>Germany</i> | 0.187*** | 0.048* | -0.151*** | -0.084*** |
| <i>Slovenia</i> | 0.391** | 0.261* | -0.418** | -0.234 |
| <i>Spain</i> | 0.243* | 0.079 | -0.196 | -0.126 |
| <i>Sweden^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>Wave:1994/98^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>Wave:2005/09</i> | -0.087 | -0.214*** | 0.274** | 0.027 |
| <i>Wave:2010/14</i> | -0.126 | -0.199** | 0.315*** | 0.011 |
| Estimated probabilities | 34.88% | 16.12% | 28.52% | 20.47% |

| Unpaid Work & Happiness (Mlogit) | No Happy & No Volunteer | No Happy & Volunteer | Happy & No Volunteer | Happy & Volunteer |
|---|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <i>Women</i> | -0.021* | 0.017* | -0.021 | 0.025 |
| <i>Men^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>PrimaryEducation^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>SecondaryEducation</i> | -0.034** | 0.001 | -0.060*** | 0.093*** |
| <i>TertiaryEducation</i> | -0.084*** | 0.023* | -0.111*** | 0.172*** |
| <i>LowIncome^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>MiddleIncome</i> | -0.057*** | -0.013 | 0.014 | 0.055*** |
| <i>HighIncome</i> | -0.066** | -0.103** | 0.067 | 0.102*** |
| <i>LN(TotalPublicpc)</i> | -0.027 | 0.228** | 0.163 | -0.364* |
| <i>LN(GDPpc)</i> | 0.017 | -0.021 | -0.607* | 0.612** |
| <i>Germany</i> | 0.120*** | 0.069*** | -0.091** | -0.099*** |
| <i>Slovenia</i> | 0.187 | 0.194** | -0.196 | -0.186 |
| <i>Spain</i> | 0.067 | 0.135** | -0.016 | -0.186 |
| <i>Sweden^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>Wave:1994/98^a</i> | -- | -- | -- | -- |
| <i>Wave:2005/09</i> | -0.009 | -0.054 | 0.169 | -0.106 |
| <i>Wave:2010/14</i> | -0.014 | -0.092* | 0.188 | -0.082 |
| Estimated probability | 11.05% | 4.67% | 52.22% | 32.06% |

CONCLUSIONS & POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Education and income are important predictors of well-being.

- Public policies to reduce **poverty**
 - **Gender subsamples**: female well-being more sensitive to economic factors.
 - ✓ Women empowerment

Volunteering activities might reinforce seniors' wellbeing

- Interaction of happiness on state of health.
- Male well-being is more sensitive to volunteering activities.

Volunteering should be recognized as a key element for social cohesion (Deloitte, 2012)

**Thank you for your
attention!**

