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LIFE SATISFACTION IN WESTERN EUROPE AND
THE GRADUAL VANISHING OF THE U-SHAPE IN AGE

David G. Blanchflower
Alex Bryson

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ABSTRACT

Using Eurobarometer data for 21 Western European countries since 1973 we show the U-shape in life satisfaction by age, present for so long, has now vanished. In 13 northern European countries - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK - the U-shape has been replaced by life satisfaction rising in age. We confirm these findings with evidence from the European Social Surveys, the Global Flourishing Survey and Global Minds. Evidence of change in the U-shape is mixed for Austria and France. In six southern European countries – Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain and Portugal - the U-shape was replaced by life satisfaction declining in age. In these southern European countries, life satisfaction of the young has been rising since around 2015. A contributory factor is the rapid decline in youth unemployment from its 2015 peak.

David G. Blanchflower
Dartmouth College
Department of Economics
and Adam Smith School of Business,
    University of Glasgow
and also NBER
blanchflower@dartmouth.edu

Alex Bryson
University College London
a.bryson@ucl.ac.uk

1. Introduction

In the decades up to the outbreak of the COVID pandemic in 2020 there were over 600 published papers showing a global mid-life morbidity crisis. Life satisfaction and happiness were U-shaped in age (Blanchflower, Graham and Piper, 2023, Blanchflower, 2021) whilst negative affect, variously defined, was hump-shaped in age peaking in mid-life (Blanchflower, 2020). This hump-shape was also apparent in 'deaths of despair' from drug overdoses, suicide and alcohol poisonings (Case and Deaton, 2020).

However, evidence began to mount indicating that the mental health of the young had begun to decline – as early as about 2013. This was first reported in a series of papers by Jean Twenge (Twenge, 2020, 2023; Twenge et al., 2018, Udupa et al 2023) but has now been observed across 167 countries (Blanchflower, 2025) and in a series of studies for separate countries.[1] This shift has been accompanied by behavioral change among the young, most notably rising suicide rates in the United States (Ehlman et al, 2022, Garnett and Curtin, 2023; Marcotte and Hansen, 2024) and rising unsuccessful suicide attempts (Yard et al., 2022).[2]

This deterioration in the mental health of the young has continued during COVID. This is apparent in the Netherlands, for example, where reported poor mental health and visits to the General Practitioner for mental health reasons among 15–24-year-olds have risen markedly since 2019.[3] Similar trends are apparent elsewhere. For example, in Sweden self-reported worry or anxiety has increased in the Swedish population and the prevalence is especially high among young women, i.e., those aged 16–29 years. Severe worry or anxiety was reported by 23 percent of the young women 2024. In 2011, the corresponding proportion was 9 percent. For young men, there has been a similar increase, from 5 percent 2011 to 10 percent 2024.[4]

Blanchflower et al. (2024) were the first to point out that this deterioration in the mental health of the young had changed the age-pattern in subjective illbeing such that, in both the United States and the United Kingdom, the hump-shape in illbeing had been replaced by a linear trend, with illbeing falling in age. The disappearance of hump-shape in illbeing is apparent elsewhere around the world too – in Asia and the Middle East (Blanchflower and Bryson, 2025) and in Latin America (Blanchflower and Bryson, 2024).

Debate as to what lies behind these changes is on-going. Central to the debate have been concerns regarding the role of social media (Twenge, 2023; Haidt, 2024) with commentators pointing to various mechanisms at play including social comparisons, impacts on brain function, displacement effects on other activities, information overload and cyberbullying (Human Development Report

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[1] These studies include recent evidence for Australia (Botha et al, 2023 and Leigh and Robson, 2025), Canada (Garriguet, 2021), Norway (Krokstad et al, 2022), Iceland (Thorisdottir et al, 2021), the Netherlands[1], and the United States (Daly, 2022; Haidt, 2024).

[2] Recent evidence from the European Commission shows rising suicide rates of youngsters ages 15-19 in twelve EU countries between 2011 and 2022 but falls elsewhere
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/view/tps00202/default/table?lang=en

[3] Quarterly Youth Study – round 7. National Institute for Public Health and the Environment, the Netherlands
https://www.rivm.nl/en/health-research-for-covid-19/quarterly-youth-study-round-7#:~:text=In%20March%202023%20as%20well,and%2014%25%20in%20March%202023.

[4] Mental Health, Public Health Agency of Sweden, https://www.folkhalsomyndigheten.se/the-public-health-agency-of-sweden/living-conditions-and-lifestyle/mental-health/

Office et al., 2025). Although contested, there is growing evidence that interactions with social media may have a causal impact on young people's mental health.[5] It appears that extended use of smartphones is particularly problematic. For example, Liu et al (2022) find that more time spent on social media, "is associated with a higher risk of depression in adolescence in a linear dose–response manner, especially for teenage girls."

Little prior work has examined the extent to which the previously well-documented life satisfaction and happiness U-shapes in age have remained intact. The studies that have been undertaken are not consistent.

Twenge and Blanchflower (2025) document changes in youth well-being, primarily life satisfaction, in six English speaking countries – Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States. Broadly speaking, they find evidence across, all of these, English-speaking countries that happiness and life satisfaction have been rising in age since 2020. In several of these surveys they also found that illbeing declines in age. The U-shape in wellbeing by age, they found, that used to exist in these countries is now gone, replaced by a crisis in wellbeing among the young. However, Marquez et al. (2024) come to very different conclusions analysing Gallup World Poll data for the period since 2005. They maintain that "globally, adolescents aged 15-24 report higher life satisfaction than adults aged 25 or above" Marquez et al (2024: 91), although they go on to say that "the gap between those aged 15-24 and those 25 and older is contracting in Western Europe".

More broadly, age patterns in positive affect since 2020 differ across surveys. Where surveys are conducted with an interviewer (either face-to-face or online) – as in the case of Gallup World Poll data – the young score more highly than when the survey is conducted on-line, as in the case of the Global Minds data (https://sapienlabs.org/). Blanchflower and Bryson (2025) examined the issue of survey mode further, confirming that young people's responses on wellbeing appeared more sensitive to the way the survey was conducted than in the case of older people. This raises important questions about one's ability to measure changes in age patterns in wellbeing over time, not least because push-to-web is an important development in survey technology in recent years.

In this paper we contribute to the literature by focusing on changes in life satisfaction in 21 Western European countries since 1973. We show the U-shape in life satisfaction by age has now vanished, but in perhaps a surprising fashion. In 13 northern European countries - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the UK - the U-shape has been replaced by life satisfaction rising in age. (Evidence of change in the U-shape is mixed for Austria and France). But in six southern European countries – Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Spain and Portugal - the U-shape was replaced by life satisfaction declining in age. In these southern European countries, life satisfaction of the young has been rising since around 2015. A contributory factor is the rapid decline in youth unemployment from its 2015 peak.

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[5] Pugno (2025) reviews a set of papers that have used natural experiments suggesting a causal connection between the arrival of fast broadband and deteriorating well-being of the young. Evidence is provided in Braghieri, Levy and Makarin (2022), McDool, Powell, Roberts and Taylor (2020), Golin (2022), Donati, Durance, Sobbrio and Zejcirovic (2024), Arenas-Arroyo et al (2022), Kyung, Lim and Lee, (2021).

The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Section Two describes our data and estimation. In Section Three we present our findings. Section Four concludes with a discussion of the implications.

2. Data and Estimation

We describe the seven data sets we analyze in this paper in turn, beginning with the Eurobarometer which is our primary focus. We run simple Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regressions on life satisfaction, variously defined and generally controlling for gender and year dummies and, in pooled regressions, for country dummies.

We restrict samples to those age under 70, but in the case of Global Minds we can only use under 75 as the age data are only reported in bands. We use this restriction because Hudomiet et al (2023) have documented in the United States using data from the Longitudinal Health and Retirement Survey a mortality selection bias at around age 70 as happy people live longer.[6] It is unclear the extent to which this mortality selection bias operates in Europe.

We consider the relationship between life satisfaction and age in a variety of ways across 21 European countries:

a) Single year of age, between ages 18 and 70.
b) Age bands 15/18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 555-64 and 65-69/74.
c) Age and its square and solve for a minimum by differentiation with respect to age, so dividing the age coefficient by (2*age squared coefficient) and then multiplying by -1.
d) An age 18-24 or 15-24 dummy.
e) A continuous age variable.

In general, though they tend to tell a broadly similar story.

2.1: Eurobarometer surveys, 1973-2024

Our main data source is the EU Commission's Eurobarometer Survey (henceforth EB) series which has been conducted since 1972 by the EU Commission. The various cross-sectional micro surveys, often including several each year, can be downloaded from the German data archive GESIS (https://www.gesis.org/en/home).[7] A subset of these EB surveys include questions on well-being, with the proportion that do so rising over time. To our knowledge, this is the longest continuous well-being survey available.

The main question we focus on is this 4-step variable which appears in many, but not all, sweeps of the survey.

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[6] They argue that *"both differential mortality and differential non-response bias the cross-sectional age profile upward: individuals with higher life satisfaction and in better health tend to live longer, and, among survivors, individuals with higher life satisfaction are more likely to remain in the survey, masking the decline in life satisfaction experienced by individuals as they age. We conclude that the optimistic view about increasing life satisfaction at older ages based on cross-sectional data is not warranted."*
[7] https://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/data-and-documentation/standard-special-eb/study-overview

Q1. On the whole, are you very satisfied (=4), fairly satisfied (=3), not very satisfied (=2) or not at all satisfied (=1) with your daily life?

We pool the 176 surveys containing the life satisfaction question for the period 1973-2024 excluding 1974 which has no data availability.[8][9] In total we have 2,421,597 observations. The panel of countries is unbalanced across the 51 years of data. Details by year by country are reported in Appendix One. The survey started with nine participating countries – Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and the United Kingdom have responses in all these years. As countries join the EU, they participate in the Eurobarometers and sometimes prior to their joining. The years available by country are as follows - Greece (1981-2024), Spain and (1985-2024), Portugal, Finland (+1992) Sweden and Austria (1995-2024), Cyprus and Malta (2005-2024), Turkey (2004-2025) with 7 years of observations and Iceland and Switzerland 2021-2023. After Brexit the UK left the survey. Sample sizes are over 100,000 for fifteen countries.[10]

The EB surveys prior to 2020 used Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), an in-person or face-to-face research method in which interviewers use software on a computer or tablet to record interview responses. CAPI is an interviewer-administered mode, meaning that interviewers can clarify questions that may be unclear to respondents and ask follow-ups. In the years 2020-2023 both CAPI and online survey collection methods were used, known as Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) which are surveys administered through a web browser or mobile application. Links for CAWI surveys can be sent through multiple methods, including email, mobile application notifications, online advertisements, and SMS messages. CAWI surveys are useful for gathering quick insights from large sample sizes as they do not require interviewers to be trained and can be distributed very widely, but they are limited to populations who have internet access and are comfortable using computers or internet-enabled phones or tablets.

Rickwood and Coleman-Rose (2023) have noted that there is evidence that people completing interviewer administered questionnaires are more likely to provide socially desirable responses than if they are self-administered. In the literature this is called social desirability response bias which

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[8] The earliest Eurobarometer with life satisfaction data is called the European Communities Study from September-October 1973 and is sometimes called Eurobarometer 0. https://www.gesis.org/en/eurobarometer-data-service/data-and-documentation/standard-special-eb/study-overview/eurobarometer-ecs-1973-za-0628-sep-oct-1973

[9] The surveys we use are as follows - 0; 30; 40; 50; 60; 70; 80; 90; 10.0; 10.1; 11.0; 12.0; 13.0; 14.0; 15.0; 16.0; 17.0; 18.0; 19.0; 20.0; 21.0; 22.0; 23.0; 24.0; 25.0; 26.0; 27.0; 28.0; 28.1; 29.0; 30.0; 31.0; 31.1; 32.0; 33.0; 34.0; 34.2; 35.1; 36.0; 37.0; 37.1; 37.2; 38.0; 38.1; 39.0; 39.1; 40.0; 41.0; 41.1; 42.0; 43.0; 43.1; 43.2; 44.0; 44.1; 44.3; 44.4; 45.1; 46.0; 46.1; 47.0; 47.1; 47.2; 48.0; 49.0; 50.0; 50.1; 51.0; 51.1; 52.0; 52.1; 53.0; 54.0; 54.1; 54.2; 55.0; 55.1; 55.2; 56.0; 56.1; 56.2; 56.3; 57.0; 57.1; 57.2; 58.1; 60.1; 61.0; 62.0; 62.2; 63.4; 64.2; 65.2; 66.1; 66.3; 67.2; 68.1; 69.2; 70.1; 71.1; 71.2; 71.3; 72.4; 73.4; 73.5; 74.2; 75.3; 75.4; 76.3; 77.3; 77.4; 78.1; 79.3; 79.4; 80.1; 80.2; 81.1; 81.2; 81.4; 81.5; 82.1; 82.2; 82.3; 82.4; 83.1; 83.2; 83.3; 83.4; 84.2; 84.3; 84.4; 85.1; 85.2; 85.3; 86.1; 86.2; 86.3; 87.1; 87.2; 87.3; 87.4; 88.1; 88.2; 88.3; 88.4; 89.1; 89.2; 89.3; 90.1; 90.2; 90.3; 90.4; 91.2; 91.3; 91.4; 91.5; 92.1; 92..2; 92..3; 92..4; 93..1; 93.2; 94.1; 94.3; 95.1; 95.2; 95.3; 96.1; 96.3; 97.3; 97.5; 98.2; 99.4; 100.2; 101.3 and 101.4

[10] France=148,403; Belgium=148,768; Netherlands=147,360; Germany=225,666; Italy=151,508; Luxembourg=68,382; Denmark=146,616; Ireland=146,269; UK=178,946; Greece=134,724; Spain=127,211; Portugal=128,242; Finland=104,169; Sweden=104,837; Austria=102,482; Norway=11,001; Cyprus=43,984; Malta=43,507; Turkey=42,130; Iceland =6,217 and Switzerland=6,284.

is the tendency to underreport socially undesirable attitudes and behaviors and to over report more desirable attributes.[11]

We explore survey mode effects below but find responses are not as sensitive to the method used compared with other surveys (Blanchflower, 2025 and Blanchflower and Bryson, 2025).

In addition to descriptive trends in mean life satisfaction, by age, we run ordinary least squares (OLS) estimates, focusing on differences across six age bands, where under-25 is the reference category. Pooled country equations incorporate gender and year dummies, as well as country dummies. We also run estimates for separate countries by grouped years and, in sensitivity analyses, replace the age dummies with alternative parameters capturing age.

2.2: The Remaining Surveys
The remaining analyses were undertaken with six different surveys.

We analyze responses in the **Gallup World Poll (GWP)** for the period 2018-2025 to the following question:

Q2. "Please imagine a ladder, with steps numbered from 0 at the bottom to 10 at the top. The top of the ladder represents the best possible life for you and the bottom of the ladder represents the worst possible life for you. On which step of the ladder would you say you personally feel you stand at this time?"

This is known as Canrtil's Ladder. We run 21 separate country OLS estimates for individuals aged 18 to 70, focusing on responses in six age categories with age under-25 the reference category, controlling for gender and year dummies.

For the **European Social Survey (ESS),** we run separate life satisfaction equations for 17 countries, namely Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. Models are run for Sweeps 7 to 10 pooled (for the period 2014-2020) and separately for Sweep 11 conducted in 2023/24. We present coefficients for age and age squared in models that also contain a gender dummy. The dependent variable, which is estimated with an OLS, is an 11-step life satisfaction variable as follows:

Q3. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole nowadays? Please answer using this card, where 0 means extremely dissatisfied and 10 means extremely satisfied.

We run OLS estimates using the **Global Flourishing Study (GFS), 2023/24** which contains data on Germany, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The dependent variable is an 11-step life satisfaction question:

Q4. How satisfied are you with life as a whole these days? Coded 0-10.

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[11] Exploiting random assignment to survey mode, Reisinger (2022) shows that the under-reporting of depression and over-reporting of happiness in surveys that do not permit anonymous reporting is causally linked to survey mode.

We run separate country regressions controlling for gender. Age is captured with six categorical variables with aged under-25 the reference category. In a second specification we capture age with age and age squared.

Using the web-based survey **Global Minds 2020-2024 (GM)** we run OLS equations for a 9-step life satisfaction question for six separate countries - Belgium, France, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. In a recent subset of surveys, a 9-step life satisfaction question (Q6) has been asked in a subset of six European countries – Belgium, France, Ireland, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. We only have age in bands, and no continuous age variable is provided. There are only 407 observations in Switzerland but over 23,000 for the UK. The question is:

Q5. How satisfied are you with your life in general?' 1 = not at all satisfied... 9 = extremely satisfied

Our estimates control for gender and year dummies.

To establish change in wellbeing among school-age children we rely on two surveys. The first is the OECD's **Programme for International Student Assessment (P ISA)** conducted in 2015, 2018 and 2022 for high school students aged 15/16. In each of those three years young people were asked:

Q6. "The following question asks how satisfied you feel about your life, on a scale from "0" to "10". Zero means you feel 'not at all satisfied' and "10" means 'completely satisfied'. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?".

We report the mean scores each year for 13 European countries – Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland and the UK.

The second is the **Health Behaviour in School-aged Children (HBSC) Survey** conducted in 2017/2018 and 2020/21 among 15-year-olds. They are asked:

Q7. "Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you, and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment? Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand."

We report mean scores for each of 15 countries for each year.

Both the PISA and HBSC surveys are conducted in collaboration with the WHO Regional Office for Europe. Data are collected in the HBSC surveys from pupils in mainstream schools using a self-report questionnaire. Pupils complete the questionnaire in school as a whole school class, using either pencil and paper or an electronic survey mode. The PISA surveys also use self-completion surveys.

The mean scores from PISA and HBSC correspond to those in Marquez et al (2024). We confirmed their finding from the micro data.

Of note is that the GWP, ESS and GFS surveys are collected using interviewers and/or telephones. By contrast the PISA, HBSC and GM surveys are collected via the internet.

3. Results
3.1: Eurobarometers (EB), 1973-2024
Figure 1 plots the relationship between single year of age and life satisfaction for 2020-2024 for each of the 21 countries in Western Europe in the data. We obtain these estimates by regressing life satisfaction on single year of age dummies, gender and year, setting age 18 to zero. We extract the coefficients and add them to the constant and plot. We also report a best-fit linear trend line to the scatter plots.

We find the function slopes upwards in age in twelve countries - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey and the United Kingdom – indicating that life satisfaction rises in age. We show that in further detail with different specifications and data sets below.

However, there are downward slopes in the remaining nine countries – Austria, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain. An obvious question here is what distinguishes the group of countries where life satisfaction is risng in age from those where it declines in age. We return to this below.

Tables 1 and 2 report the relationship between life satisfaction and age using the full time series from 1973, split into three time periods: 1973-2009; 2010-2019 and 2020-2024. In every case we report five age bands (with under-25s as an additional age band used as the reference category) and then separately a continuous age variable from a separate equation with gender and year controls.

Table 1 starts with data from 1973 (excluding 1974 for which we have no data) through 2009 using six ten-year age bands, using method b) above with the excluded category ages 15-24. As noted in the Appendix we have data on all these years for Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands and the UK, Greece joins in 1981, Spain and Portugal in 1985, Finland, Sweden and Austria in 1995 and Cyprus and Malta in 2004. Sample sizes vary from around 100000 to 9000, with ten countries with over 50000.

There is evidence of a U-shaped relationship between age and life satisfaction in every country except Luxembourg, with a minimum mostly in the age category 45-54. Four have minima in the 55-64 grouping (Greece, Spain, Norway and Portugal) with Turkey in the 35-44 group.

Table 2 runs the same analyses, but for the period 2010-2019. Here there are age minima in every country except Greece which showed a linear decline, with ten in the age 45-54 category. Both, Tables 1 and 2 are consistent with the findings of widespread U-shapes with minima around age 50 (Blanchflower, 2021 and Blanchflower, Graham and Piper, 2023). In every country in both tables the function minimizes in middle-age.

But in Table 3 the U-shape disappears. It uses data on individuals whose responses were obtained via CAPI for 2020-2024. Sample sizes range between 3000 and 12000. Overall, there are 231,608

observations on these 21 countries of which 150,714 or 65.1% are CAPI.[12] Focusing on the single age variable specification for simplicity there are *upward slopes* in seven: Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK. There are downward slopes in eleven - Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain and Turkey.

Table 4 reports life satisfaction in Eurobarometer, also for 2020-2024 but this time for the online CAWI surveys. We see:

1) All of the seven countries with upward slopes using CAPI (Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Sweden and the UK) also have them with CAWI
2) Out of the eleven in CAPI with downward slopes, six also had downward slopes with CAWI. These are Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Portugal, and Spain.
3) Now Belgium, Germany, Norway, Switzerland and Iceland also had upward slopes.
4) Now the coefficients on age are insignificant in Austria, Malta and Turkey.

Table 5a explores other ways of examining the age pattern in life satisfaction during 2020-2024 using methods a)-e) described at the start of Section Two. It turns out the results are highly consistent whichever method is used, including the single year of age plots in Figure 1.

The first column reports results from regressions where age is specified as a continuous variable rather than the age bands. In Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway. Sweden and Switzerland, but not Turkey, its coefficient is significantly positive.

Column 2 presents results, from regressions, where the continuous age variable is replaced by an age dummy where individuals aged 18-24 score '1'. It is significantly negative (lower happiness of the young) for Denmark, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and the UK.

Columns 3 and 4 present estimates from a third model specification which contains both age (column 3) and age squared (column 4) terms as per the specification used in the prior literature. A significant U-shape is apparent where the age term is significantly positive, and the age squared term statistically negative (T>1.5). There were no significant U-shapes in ten of the twelve countries that had upward lines in Figure 1. In the case of Ireland, the minimum was at age 24, while Turkey had a minimum at age 43.

Table 5b explores the time series changes by year since 2010. For simplicity we include the continuous age variable as in method e). We estimate separate equations by country for 2010-2017 pooled, and then every year from 2018. It is apparent that 2020 is the point at which the age coefficients start to change from negative to positive and especially so in the twelve countries referred to above which had positive trends in Figure 1. Sweden is notable for having positives in every case.

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[12] By country the proportions CAPI are Austria 77%, Belgium 58%; France 77%; Germany 79%; Greece 75%, Ireland 77%; Italy 77%; Luxembourg 77%, Netherlands 68%, Portugal 58%; Spain 82%, Sweden 58%; UK 67% plus Norway, Switzerland and Iceland 0%.

Table 6 sets out changes in life satisfaction by country for the young aged 18-24 for the 18 countries that we have the full time-series available for.[13] It shows declines over the period 2015-2024 in the majority of countries but *increases* in Italy, Ireland, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Austria as documented in Figure 2.

In Table 7 we shift away from Eurobarometer to report changes in life satisfaction for high school students aged 15 as reported by Marquez et al. (2024). These both show declines in life satisfaction over the last decade starting prior to COVID. This is true in all countries including Italy and Spain in PISA (Table 7a) and Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain in the HBSC survey (Table 7b). A major question to be explored further is why we observed declining life satisfaction among those age fifteen in these two surveys across similar years, but do not observe it using life satisfaction from the EB above, where we saw rising happiness. Below we argue that this is driven by what has happened in the youth labor market in the years since 2015.

Table 8 presents estimates of life satisfaction from the GWP 2018-2025. We include the age bands and, in each case, also report the results from the single year of age variable. For simplicity again we discuss the continuous age variable results. We find evidence of upward slopes, once again measured by the significance of the coefficient on the age variable and being positive (T>1.5) for eight of the twelve from Figure 1 - Denmark, Finland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and Turkey. The GWP results are broadly confirmatory. Consistently there are negative slopes in Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal. So the GWP results are broadly consistent with those from Eurobarometer.

In Table 9 we turn to the ESS. There is broad confirmation here that life satisfaction rises in age. In the first two columns of Table 9 we find significant U-shapes in Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Portugal, Spain and the UK for the period 2014-2020. In the most recent sweep (2023/24), we see evidence of positive and significant age effects for eight of countries - Finland, Germany, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and UK. There are negative slopes again for France, Greece, Italy, and Portugal. We have no data for Denmark, Iceland or Turkey.

In Table 10 we present life satisfaction estimates from GFS 2022. It is apparent again that life satisfaction rises with age in Germany, Sweden, Turkey and the UK but not in Spain.

In Table 11 we show evidence from Global Minds that life satisfaction rises in age in each of the six countries asked the question. This is the first evidence for France we have found of an upward slope in life satisfaction in age.

4. Discussion

The evidence in Section Three is suggestive that across Western European the U-shaped association between age and life satisfaction disappeared. On the face of it this is no surprise since a similar development has been apparent elsewhere in the world. However, there are some important surprises in the evidence we provide in this paper. First, the timing of the change. It comes a little later than evidence from other studies, with much of the change taking place around the time of the COVID pandemic. Second, in most other studies the U-shape has been replaced

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[13] We only have data for 2021-2023 for Norway and Switzerland, 2021 and 2022 for Iceland.

by a roughly monotonic increase in wellbeing with age, due to a collapse in young people's wellbeing relative to older people. Here, by contrast, there is evidence for a subset of countries, that the wellbeing of the young has been *rising*. This is the case in Eurobarometer for Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Austria (Table 6). Furthermore, in the period since COVID, regression analyses of Eurobarometer data indicate that life satisfaction has been *highest* among young people. If one examines Table 3 and Table 4 using Eurobarometer, this is the case in France, Italy, Greece, Spain, Cyprus and Portugal (for both CAWI and CATI data). The evidence on the age pattern in life satisfaction is less clear in some countries because life satisfaction is highest among the young in the CAPI surveys but not with CATI (these countries are Belgium, Germany, Austria, Malta and Turkey). In a further seven countries (the Netherlands, Luxembourg, Denmark, Ireland, the UK, Finland and Sweden) life satisfaction is rising in age in both the CAPI and CATI surveys.

Across other surveys evidence on the age pattern in life satisfaction is mixed. Life satisfaction is clearly rising in age in all six countries in Global Minds, which is a web-based survey. Although results from the Gallup World Poll for 2018-2025 are mixed, life satisfaction – measured with Cantril's Ladder – is highest among the young in the southern European countries (Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal and Cyprus) and France, supporting the Eurobarometer results.

We can discount access to the internet as being an important discriminator in terms of what has happened to young people's life satisfaction across Western European countries. By 2010, according to United Nations data, access was high in all countries, and over 95% in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Switzerland and the UK. Rates were lower in Cyprus (92%), Greece (88%), Ireland (90%), Portugal (91%) but lowest in Italy (85%) and Turkey (66%). By 2020 all countries had rates close to 100%.

Change in the labor market fortunes of the young is one potential reason for the fact that life satisfaction seems to have risen recently among the young relative to the old in Italy, Cyprus, France, Greece, Spain and Portugal. In these countries youth unemployment rates rose dramatically in the years after the Great Recession but have fallen rapidly in recent times.

Figure 3 illustrates this for six countries – France, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Spain, Portugal – where unemployment rates around 2015 peaked at over 30% and in the case of Greece and Spain at over 50%. But notably in the years after that, rates declined rapidly. Table 12 shows changes in youth unemployment rates for those aged 15-24 between 2015 and 2024 and calculates the ratio between the rate in 2024 and the rate in 2015. Appendix 2 reports youth unemployment rates for ages 18-24 obtained from the European Commission: we simply average monthly rates to get annual rates. In the case of Greece rates fell from 50.4% to 22.3% giving a ratio of .44. This can be compared to a ratio of .92 for Denmark, .90 for Switzerland and 1.22 for Sweden. Peak youth unemployment rates in earlier years were well below those in 2015.

In Table 13 we report six life satisfaction equations for Eurobarometer respondents aged 15-24. Columns 1 and 2 are for all countries. Columns 3 and 4 are for the group of thirteen countries with upward sloping age-life satisfaction profiles (Group 1) and columns 5 and 6 are for the group of eight countries without them. On each occasion we run estimates for the period before 2012 and

the period from 2012 onwards. We include the youth ratio as defined above, gender, year and country dummies. We cluster the standard errors at the country*year level.

In the first two columns for all 21 countries this youth unemployment ratio variable is negative and statistically significant in both the early and late periods. The implication is that the lower the ratio between the current youth rate, and the high point in 2015, the higher is the young person's life satisfaction.

For Group 1 countries the youth ratio is insignificantly different from zero in both periods. By contrast, for Group 2 countries in southern Europe it is significantly negative in both periods. The youth in these countries saw a rise in life satisfaction as the youth unemployment rate dropped rapidly over the years from 2015.

Labor market prospects for the young have improved more generally in these southern European countries. This is apparent from Table 14 which shows the proportion of young people who are neither in employment, education, or training (NEET). This has dropped sharply in these countries.

A major part of the story seems to be the improving labor markets in these South European countries in the years since 2015 or so. These countries were hit especially hard by the financial market shock in the years from 2008 as can be seen from Table 15 which shows GDP growth for the periods before and after the Great Recession. We know that marginal workers do worst in slumps and best in recessions, that seems to also be true of (peripheral) countries. The big story here is that the life satisfaction of the young rose between 2015 and 2024, as the youth unemployment rate fell from its peak reached in 2015. Young people are the last in and the first out, and their unemployment rate is more cyclically volatile than youth rates (Blanchflower, 1981). As Freeman and Wise (1982) noted *"youth employment is highly sensitive to cyclical movements in the economy" (p.8).* It seems the rise in life satisfaction of the young may reflect the absolute and relative improvement of these economies and labor markets in the most recent period.

Our main finding though is that the U-shape in life satisfaction by age, present for so long, has now vanished in 12 northern European countries - Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and the - UK plus Turkey. Life satisfaction in these countries now *rises* in age.

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Table 1. Life satisfaction Eurobarometers, 1973-2009 (excluding 1974)

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark
25-34	-.1194 (14.02)	-.0724 (8.49)	-.0367 (4.66)	-.0447 (6.27)	-.0856 (10.00)	.0212 (1.70)	-.0162 (2.19)
35-44	-.1787 (20.18)	-.1034 (11.97)	-.0819 (10.40)	-.0424 (6.02)	-.0922 (10.81)	.0300 (2.52)	-.0338 (4.49)
45-54	-.2278 (24.37)	-.1313 (14.87)	-.1378 (16.37)	-.0789 (10.95)	-.1312 (14.81)	-.0057 (0.46)	-.0485 (6.19)
55-64	-.1378 (14.15)	-.1183 (12.93)	-.1120 (12.93)	-.0410 (5.58)	-.1268 (13.96)	.0445 (3.40)	-.0298 (3.73)
65-69	-.0420 (3.45)	-.0887 (7.44)	-.0399 (3.50)	.0338 (3.69)	-.1613 (13.62)	.0709 (4.06)	-.0100 (0.99)
_cons	2.9643	3.2088	3.4113	2.9848	2.9006	3.2801	3.5677
Adj R^2	.0230	.0276	.0177	.0211	.0345	.0097	.0116
N	67,541	66,501	66,626	101,627	71,605	28,581	64,640

	Ireland	UK	Greece	Spain	Finland	Sweden	Austria
25-34	-.0435 (5.06)	-.0301 (3.95)	-.1436 (12.94)	-.1084 (11.11)	-.0419 (3.28)	.0078 (0.59)	-.0663 (4.89)
35-44	-.0384 (4.32)	-.0478 (6.19)	-.1889 (16.74)	-.1513 (14.66)	-.1203 (9.61)	-.0365 (2.79)	-.0696 (5.20)
45-54	-.0386 (4.21)	-.0639 (7.88)	-.2782 (24.28)	-.1877 (17.19)	-.1911 (15.37)	-.0835 (6.38)	-.1050 (7.49)
55-64	-.0056 (0.59)	-.0026 (0.32)	-.3394 (28.42)	-.2036 (18.82)	-.1640 (13.28)	-.0322 (2.46)	-.1014 (6.88)
65-69	.0775 (6.19)	.0737 (7.13)	-.3307 (22.35)	-.1543 (11.44)	-.1359 (8.95)	.0133 (0.85)	-.1294 (7.10)
_cons	3.1520	3.1544	2.8436	3.0890	3.2791	3.3904	3.1675
Adj R^2	.0204	.0078	.0392	.0269	.0393	.0132	.0183
N	67,097	84,694	55,384	47614	26509	26391	26856

	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey	Norway	Portugal	All
25-34	-.1219 (3.82)	-.0335 (0.91)	-.1593 (6.72)	-.0410 (1.98)	-.1249 (12.30)	-.0689 (29.02)
35-44	-.2315 (7.49)	-.1141 (3.25)	-.2576 (10.14)	-.0455 (2.09)	-.2181 (21.35)	-.0984 (41.03)
45-54	-.2982 (9.89)	-.2101 (6.15)	-.2089 (7.28)	-.0710 (3.06)	-.2749 (26.51)	-.1346 (54.15)
55-64	-.3171 (10.61)	-.1752 (5.27)	-.1808 (5.50)	-.0891 (3.46)	-.3192 (30.58)	-.1134 (44.54)
65-69	-.2574 (7.07)	-.1434 (3.42)	-.0906 (1.86)	-.1141 (3.56)	-.3115 (24.04)	-.0698 (21.58)
_cons	3.3700	3.1893	2.8377	3.4276	2.8566	3.1431
Adj R^2	.0252	.0161	.0355	.0029	.0532	.1267
N	6,572	5,,892	12,399	8,192	46,853	881,574

Notes: All equations include gender and year dummies and the 'all' equation includes country dummies

Table 2. Life satisfaction Eurobarometers 2010-2019

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark
25-34	-.1626 (13.90)	-.1119 (10.28)	-.0639 (5.17)	-.0534 (5.65)	-.1190 (9.78)	-.1073 (7.13)	-.0254 (2.25)
35-44	-.2487 (21.47)	-.1287 (12.22)	-.0765 (6.79)	-.0500 (5.21)	-.1124 (9.94)	-.1111 (8.00)	-.0302 (2.88)
45-54	-.3523 (30.52)	-.1395 (13.68)	-.1601 (14.80)	-.1175 (12.93)	-.1524 (13.55)	-.1352 (9.78)	-.0451 (4.39)
55-64	-.3335 (30.02)	-.1056 (10.49)	-.1293 (12.37)	-.1235 (13.91)	-.1901 (16.35)	-.0604 (4.31)	-.0119 (1.18)
65-69	-.2636 (21.20)	-.0455 (3.99)	-.0571 (5.15)	-.0057 (0.59)	-.2333 (18.40)	-.0316 (1.96)	.0471 (4.44)
_cons	3.2486	3.2610	3.5152	3.0641	2.8763	3.4232	3.6647
Adj R^2	.0280	.0090	.0087	.0136	.0152	.0066	.0080
N	48,281	49,806	50,429	70,921	51,901	25,041	44,659

	Ireland	UK	Greece	Spain	Finland	Sweden	Austria
25-34	-.0679 (6.27)	-.0684 (6.96)	-.2875 (20.97)	-.1611 (13.69)	-.0512 (4.52)	-.0062 (0.44)	-.0300 (2.69)
35-44	-.0505 (4.89)	-.0946 (9.59)	-.4222 (32.25)	-.2010 (17.96)	-.0379 (3.47)	-.0103 (0.75)	-.0486 (4.49)
45-54	-.1081 (10.11)	-.1387 (14.13)	-.5469 (41.93)	-.2970 (26.39)	-.1078 (10.07)	-.0358 (2.63)	-.1036 (9.60)
55-64	-.0736 (6.71)	-.0649 (6.67)	-.6335 (47.24)	-.2739 (23.72)	-.1092 (10.78)	-.0109 (0.83)	-.1282 (11.41)
65-69	.0056 (0.46)	.0522 (5.05)	-.6424 (41.67)	-.1575 (11.99)	-.0719 (6.86)	.0839 (6.35)	-.1212 (9.59)
_cons	3.2510	3.3178	2.7417	3.1191	3.3410	3.4108	3.1333
Adj R^2	.0276	.0158	.0726	.0373	.0094	.0077	.0225
N	51,292	56,888	50,304	48,955	44,628	43,462	51,927

	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey	Iceland	Portugal	All
25-34	-.1965 (11.38)	-.1005 (5.98)	-.0026 (0.15)	-.0133 (0.49)	-.1665 (14.86)	-.1038 (36.16)
35-44	-.2202 (12.81)	-.1573 (9.66)	-.0991 (5.11)	-.0820 (3.13)	-.2316 (22.02)	-.1321 (47.58)
45-54	-.3517 (20.83)	-.2200 (13.88)	-.1179 (5.25)	-.1346 (5.14)	-.3304 (31.86)	-.1964 (71.42)
55-64	-.3392 (20.36)	-.2281 (15.37)	-.1721 (6.26)	-.1086 (3.92)	-.3779 (35.98)	-.1889 (68.99)
65-69	-.2904 (15.56)	-.2164 (13.70)	-.1578 (3.74)	-.1401 (4.24)	-.4254 (35.57)	-.1308 (43.73)
_cons	3.3665	3.1712	2.7914	3.6709	2.6255	3.0710
Adj R^2	.0328	.0408	.0004	.0088	.0373	.2122
N	25,066	23,052	19,779	4,588	50,258	811,237

Notes: All equations include gender and year dummies and the 'all' equation includes country dummies

Table 3. Life satisfaction Eurobarometers 2020-2024 - CAPI

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark
25-34	-.1105 (3.81)	-.2134 (8.71)	.0120 (0.34)	-.0039 (0.18)	-.1000 (3.85)	-.0228 (0.61)	.0173 (0.48)
35-44	-.2074 (7.34)	-.2553 (10.04)	+.0643 (1.93)	.0045 (0.21)	-.1225 (5.15)	-.0809 (2.29)	+.0666 (1.91)
45-54	-.3291 (11.91)	-.1962 (7.90)	+.0335 (1.04)	-.0834 (3.84)	-.1660 (7.22)	-.0709 (1.99)	+.0396 (1.18)
55-64	-.3564 (13.17)	-.1686 (7.06)	+.0566 (1.80)	-.0754 (3.71)	-.1871 (8.11)	.0190 (0.54)	+.0618 (1.82)
65-69	-.3263 (10.59)	-.0376 (1.31)	+.0882 (2.66)	+.0394 (1.69)	-.2182 (8.27)	.0480 (1.14)	+.1658 (4.53)
_cons	3.2559	3.1490	3.1776	2.8920	2.8926	3.2081	3.2741
Adj R^2	.0317	.0263	.0072	.0220	.0145	.0313	.0462
N	7,955	6,628	7,776	12,297	8,527	4,560	4,594
Age	-.0076 (15.26)	-.0011 (2.36)	+.0015 (3.11)	-.0011 (2.88)	-.0042 (9.61)	+.0014 (2.23)	+.0024 (4.33)

	Ireland	UK	Greece	Spain	Finland	Sweden	Austria
25-34	.0234 (0.84)	-.0182 (0.53)	-.1700 (5.31)	-.1717 (7.10)	-.0396 (0.97)	+.0816 (2.00)	.0172 (0.54)
35-44	.0174 (0.69)	.0064 (0.19)	-.2587 (8.55)	-.1993 (8.58)	-.0310 (0.78)	+.1359 (3.39)	-.0059 (0.20)
45-54	.0248 (0.98)	-.0484 (1.39)	-.3739 (12.64)	-.2446 (10.85)	-.0439 (1.12)	+.1285 (3.21)	-.0330 (1.10)
55-64	+.0735 (2.86)	.0325 (0.97)	-.4607 (15.50)	-.2592 (11.17)	-.0329 (0.87)	+.1887 (4.82)	-.0864 (2.85)
65-70	+.1344 (4.65)	+.0698 (1.75)	-.4460 (11.99)	-.1505 (5.28)	+.0815 (2.06)	+.2716 (6.65)	-.0361 (1.00)
_cons	3.1269	3.1702	2.7630	3.2619	3.1172	3.0734	
Adj R^2	.0319	.0030	.0400	.0175	.0271	.0297	.0027
N	8,584	4,911	8,558	9,052	5,384	5,081	8,800
Age	+.0024 (5.12)	+.0010 (1.65)	-.0102 (18.02)	-.0041 (9.31)	+.0015 (2.60)	+.0046 (7.75)	-.0022 (3.95)

	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey	Portugal
25-34	-.2359 (4.97)	-.0730 (1.62)	-.0389 (1.09)	-.1931 (8.03)
35-44	-.3000 (6.62)	-.2064 (4.72)	-.0663 (1.80)	-.2157 (9.82)
45-54	-.3426 (7.31)	-.3014 (7.08)	-.1637 (3.99)	-.2531 (11.69)
55-64	-.4410 (9.84)	-.2782 (6.77)	-.0659 (1.16)	-.3378 (15.79)
65-70	-.3992 (8.03)	-.2912 (6.63)	.0397 (0.32)	-.3525 (14.53)
_cons	3.4402	3.1836	2.6479	3.1157
Adj R^2	.0284	.0584	.0076	.0494
N	3,994	3,061	6,251	6,078
Age	-.0071 (9.41)	-.0062 (8.88)	-.0038 (3.64)	-.0068 (17.28)

All equations include gender and year dummies

Table 4. Life satisfaction Eurobarometers 2020-2024 - CAWI

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark
25-34	-.1801 (3.43)	-.0551 (1.34)	-.0478 (0.87)	-.0140 (0.34)	-.1150 (2.26)	.0383 (0.53)	-.1199 (3.37)
35-44	-.2656 (5.10)	-.0294 (0.76)	.0806 (1.68)	-.0255 (0.61)	-.1605 (3.32)	.1091 (1.57)	-.0629 (1.81)
45-54	-.3546 (6.94)	-.0482 (1.31)	.0157 (0.36)	.0023 (0.06)	-.2083 (4.52)	.0904 (1.31)	-.0094 (0.29)
55-64	-.3482 (6.94)	.0408 (1.13)	.0634 (1.53)	-.0004 (0.01)	-.2379 (5.21)	+.1645 (2.41)	+.0658 (2.06)
65-69	-.3125 (5.34)	+.1322 (3.32)	+.1346 (3.11)	.0491 (1.12)	-.3043 (5.83)	+.2164 (2.62)	+.1190 (3.23)
_cons	3.2508	3.1900	3.4072	3.2109	2.9154	3.0198	
Adj R^2	.0241	.0119	.0252	-.0005	.0168	.0050	.0440
N	2,436	4,746	3,464	3,357	2,569	1,437	5,099
Age	-.0068 (7.31)	+.0033 (5.31)	+.0025 (3.47)	+.0011 (1.61)	-.0058 (6.74)	+.0043 (3.64)	+.0041 (6.99)

	Ireland	UK	Greece	Spain	Finland	Sweden	Austria
25-34	.0981 (1.34)	.1619 (3.73)	-.1794 (3.17)	-.1221 (2.24)	-.0342 (0.80)	-.0210 (0.64)	-.1050 (1.94)
35-44	+.2551 (3.70)	.1891 (4.25)	-.2905 (5.51)	-.1374 (2.69)	-.0299 (0.71)	.0143 (0.44)	-.0736 (1.39)
45-54	+.2789 (4.17)	.1364 (3.07)	-.4522 (8.76)	-.2493 (5.06)	.0023 (0.06)	-.0021 (0.07)	-.0950 (1.82)
55-64	+.4056 (6.06)	+.3203 (7.35)	-.5021 (9.39)	-.2883 (5.79)	.0532 (1.29)	+.1098 (3.36)	-.0656 (1.23)
65-70	+.4841 (6.86)	+.4912 (9.29)	-.4921 (7.68)	-.1425 (2.30)	+.1214 (2.79)	+.1406 (3.64)	-.1389 (2.11)
_cons	2.8304	2.9215	2.8626	3.2735	3.0482	3.3019	3.2059
Adj R^2	.0383	.0387	.0474	.0188	.0108	.0168	-.0002
N	2,589	2,721	2,944	1,973	4,598	4,873	2,636
Age	+.0041 (6.99)	+.0072 (8.94)	-.0113 (11.42)	-.0052 (5.37)	+.0033 (5.37)	+.0037 (5.33)	-.0008 (0.87)

	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey	Norway	Switzerland	Iceland	Portugal
25-34	-.1400 (1.76)	.0077 (0.13)	.0894 (1.53)	-.0413 (1.07)	-.1016 (2.80)	-.0179 (0.35)	-.1311 (4.00)
35-44	-.0774 (1.00)	.0590 (1.04)	.0007 (0.01)	-.0642 (1.76)	-.0342 (0.98)	.0092 (0.17)	-.0564 (1.84)
45-54	-.2852 (3.55)	-.0288 (0.50)	-.1064 (1.42)	.0428 (1.22)	+.0484 (1.45)	+.0898 (1.68)	-.1645 (5.34)
55-64	-.2805 (3.69)	.0104 (0.19)	+.2183 (2.68)	+.1261 (3.50)	+.1199 (3.49)	+.1458 (2.76)	-.2112 (6.59)
65-70	-.2488 (2.95)	.0385 (0.61)	+.4077 (2.25)	+.2253 (5.42)	+.2044 (5.32)	.0404 (0.64)	-.1913 (4.86)
_cons	3.3108	3.1105	2.6479	3.1443	3.2949	3.2733	2.9002
Adj R^2	.0224	-.0003	.0076	.0230	.0266	.0055	.0167
N	1,190	2,102	1,710	5,137	5,204	1,751	4,864
Age	-.0056 (4.20)	-.0003 (0.34)	.0024 (1.40)	+.0056 (8.75)	+.0059 (9.95)	+.0033 (3.36)	-.0043 (7.19)

All equations include gender and year dummies.

Table 5. Life satisfaction, Eurobarometers,2020-2024

a) 2020-2024	Age	Age 18-24	Age	Age^2	Age minimum
Austria	-	+	-.0043 (2.28)	.0000 (1.49)	NS
Belgium	+	+	-.0181 (12.87)	.0002 (13.50)*	48
Cyprus	-	+	-.0228 (8.73)	.0002 (7.11)*	57
Denmark	+	-	+.0031 (2.16)	.0000 (0.09)	NS
Finland	+	0	-.0010 (0.56)	.0003 (1.92)	NS
France	-	+	-.0216 (13.81)	.0002 (10.95)*	63
Germany	-	+	-.0095 (10.40)	.0001 (9.00)*	59
Greece	-	+	-.0272 (14.74)	.0002 (10.47)*	71
Iceland	+	-	+.0048 (1.13)	-.0000 (0.27)	NS
Ireland	+	-	-.0028 (1.74)	.0001 (3.98)*	24
Italy	-	+	-.0063 (4.33)	.0000 (1.15)	NS
Luxembourg	+	0	-.0074 (3.28)	.0001 (4.54)*	37
Malta	-	+	-.0134 (6.17)	.0001 (5.14)*	61
Netherlands	+	-	+.0018 (0.94)	.0000 (0.37)	NS
Norway	+	-	-.0031 (1.11)	.0001 (3.21)	NS
Portugal	-	+	-.0071 (5.79)	.0000 (0.87)	NS
Spain	-	+	-.0149 (10.55)	.0001 (8.18)*	68
Sweden	+	-	+.0061 (3.88)	-.00002 (1.58)	NS
Switzerland	+	-	-.0011 (0.43)	.0001 (2.99)	NS
Turkey	-	+	-.0191 (4.78)	.0002 (4.57)*	43
UK	+	-	+.0014 (0.74)	.00002 (0.89)	NS

Negative/positive means coefficient has absolute t >=1.5. Column 2 reports results from the inclusion, a 15-24 dummy Column 3 reports results from including age and its square as controls. If one or both are insignificant, we report Not Significant (NS), and if age is significantly negative and age squared is significantly positive we solve for a minimum which is reported in column 3. *=U-shape.

b) Sign on age variable

	2010-2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Austria	-	-	-	0	0	0	-	0
Belgium	-	+	0	+	+	+	-	-
Cyprus	-	-	-	-	-	0	-	-
Denmark	+	0	0	+	+	+	+	0
Finland	-	-	-	+	+	+	0	+
France	-	-	0	-	-	-	-	-
Germany	-	0	-	0	0	-	0	-
Greece	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Iceland	-				+	+		
Ireland	-	-	0	+	+	+	-	0
Italy	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Luxembourg	0	0	-	+	+	+	0	+
Malta	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0
Netherlands	-	-	-	+	+	+	0	+
Norway					+	+	+	
Portugal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Spain	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Sweden	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
Switzerland					+	+	+	
Turkey	-	-	-	0	0	-	0	0
UK	0	0	-	+	+	+	0	0

Table 6. Life satisfaction, youth age 15-24, 2015-2023, Eurobarometer

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark	Ireland	UK
2015	3.30	3.29	3.58	3.21	2.86	3.48	3.74	3.38	3.38
2016	3.24	3.28	3.59	3.17	2.79	3.47	3.69	3.37	3.43
2017	3.23	3.20	3.57	3.20	2.92	3.42	3.71	3.42	3.39
2018	3.22	3.09	3.60	3.18	2.93	3.43	3.75	3.44	3.37
2019	3.28	3.18	3.58	3.28	2.93	3.45	3.76	3.36	3.45
2020	3.25	3.09	3.45	3.21	2.90	3.12	3.55	2.99	3.10
2021	3.20	3.08	3.36	3.19	2.83	3.17	3.42	3.18	2.92
2022	3.19	3.16	3.32	3.20	2.93	3.32	3.51	3.23	3.05
2023	3.19	3.10	3.51	3.00	3.05	3.24	3.64	3.64	3.18
2024	3.20	3.26	3.33	3.11	3.16	3.34	3.63	3.42	3.29
2015-23	-0.10	-0.03	-0.25	-0.10	+0.33	-0.14	-0.11	+0.04	-0.09

	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Finland	Sweden	Austria	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey
2015	2.76	3.18	2.85	3.44	3.46	3.27	3.29	3.44	2.62
2016	2.74	3.21	2.93	3.35	3.43	3.28	3.30	3.41	2.71
2017	2.84	3.19	2.97	3.41	3.44	3.28	3.30	3.33	2.85
2018	2.79	3.24	2.98	3.37	3.43	3.29	3.30	3.42	2.87
2019	3.00	3.32	3.08	3.45	3.33	3.32	3.48	3.34	2.91
2020	2.95	3.23	3.00	3.07	3.20	3.22	3.34	3.22	2.78
2021	2.75	3.14	2.96	2.99	3.20	3.11	3.26	3.28	2.67
2022	2.90	3.33	3.12	3.26	3.23	3.13	3.32	3.40	2.58
2023	2.93	3.29	3.06	3.44	3.24	3.12	3.65	3.53	2.53
2024	3.10	3.44	3.11	3.27	3.34	3.34	3.35	3.36	2.53
2015-23	+0.34	+0.26	+0.26	-0.17	-0.12	+0.07	+0.06	-0.08	-0.09

Table 5 shows that between 2015 and 2023 life satisfaction rose in six countries – Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Cyprus and Malta, remained flat in Finland and fell in the rest. Data not available for Iceland, Norway and Switzerland.

Table 7a. OECD PISA life satisfaction weighted means 2015-2022, age 15/16

	2015	2018	2022	2022-2015
Austria	7.52	7.14	6.69	-0.83
Finland	7.89	7.61	7.41	-0.48
France	7.63	7.19	6.77	-0.86
Germany	7.35	7.02	6.51	-0.84
Greece	6.91	6.99	6.62	-0.29
Iceland	7.80	7.34	6.90	-0.90
Ireland	7.30	6.73	6.59	-0.71
Italy	6.91	6.91	6.53	-0.38
Netherlands	7.83	7.50	7.29	-0.54
Portugal	7.36	7.13	7.06	-0.30
Spain	7.42	7.35	6.88	-0.54
Switzerland	7.72	7.38	7.06	-0.66
UK	6.98	6.16	6.07	-0.91

Q1. "The following question asks how satisfied you feel about your life, on a scale from "0" to "10". Zero means you feel 'not at all satisfied' and "10" means 'completely satisfied'. Overall, how satisfied are you with your life as a whole these days?".

Table 7b. HBSC life satisfaction Age 15

	2017/18	2021/22	2022-2017
Austria	7.29	7.20	-.29
Belgium Flemish	7.48	7.46	-.02
Belgium French	7.22	6.81	-.41
Denmark	7.48	7.10	-.31
France	7.28	6.91	-.37
Germany	7.33	7.12	-.21
Greece	7.04	6.70	-.34
Greenland	7.49	6.66	-.82
Iceland	7.26	7.12	-.14
Italy	7.11	6.55	-.56
Netherlands	7.33	6.90	-.43
Portugal	7.35	7.05	-.30
Spain	7.64	6.77	-.87
Sweden	7.10	6.80	-.30
Switzerland	7.34	6.99	-.35

Q2. "Here is a picture of a ladder. The top of the ladder '10' is the best possible life for you, and the bottom '0' is the worst possible life for you. In general, where on the ladder do you feel you stand at the moment? Tick the box next to the number that best describes where you stand."

Source: Marquez et al, (2024)

Table 8. Cantril life satisfaction Gallup World Poll, 2018-2025

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark
25-34	.0610 (0.30)	.3418 (0.96)	.1475 (0.91)	.1252 (0.56)	-.1584 (1.46)	.0206 (0.07)	-.1294 (0.67)
35-44	-.1167 (0.56)	.0428 (0.12)	+.2531 (1.56)	.0794 (0.37)	-.2328 (2.23)	-.0762 (0.26)	.0690 (0.35)
45-54	-.3338 (1.66)	.3425 (0.98)	.1624 (1.06)	.1397 (0.67)	-.3888 (3.84)	.1226 (0.43)	.1069 (0.57)
55-64	-.1581 (0.78)	-.3767 (1.10)	+.3648 (2.49)	.0042 (0.02)	-.4441 (4.41)	.2660 (0.88)	+.4737 (2.45)
65-70	-.0322 (0.14)	-.1021 (0.25)	+.3544 (2.11)	.0437 (0.19)	-.4919 (4.44)	.6727 (1.79)	+.7027 (2.94)
_cons	6.6072	6.4146	7.0310	6.9026	6.6560	7.3150	7.3111
Adj R^2	.0005	.0043	.0033	.0063	.0213	.0056	.0026
N	4,630	3,984	3,009	3,924	4,515	2,495	3,838
Age	-.0042 (1.20)	-.0090 (1.40)	+.0066 (2.45)	-.0003 (0.09)	-.0100 (5.72)	+.0112 (1.95)	+.0141 (3.81)

	Ireland	UK	Greece	Spain	Finland	Sweden	Austria
25-34	-.1763 (1.01)	-.0988 (0.67)	-.3032 (1.81)	-.2462 (1.68)	.2321 (1.31)	-.3839 (1.38)	-.0697 (0.39)
35-44	-.2719 (1.61)	.0053 (0.04)	-.3329 (2,12)	-.3149 (2.16)	+.4614 (2.64)	-.0988 (0.38)	-.1465 (0.89)
45-54	-.3552 (2.04)	.0743 (0.51)	-.3590 (2.29)	-.3444 (2.45)	+.4957 (2.93)	.1164 (0.46)	-.0821 (0.50)
55-64	-.0651 (0.38)	-.0094 (0.07)	-.8355 (5.18)	-.3252 (2.24)	+.6678 (4.09)	+.4756 (1.84)	-.1040 (0.65)
65-70	+.3100 (1.52)	.0204 (0.13)	-.8622 (4.59)	-.4301 (2.56)	+.9238 (5.35)	+.7729 (2.65)	+.3025 (1.71)
_cons	6.9412	6.9704	5.7329	6.6402	7.0770	7.1233	7.1982
Adj R^2	.0120	.0121	.0135	.0013	.0253	.0067	.0226
N	4,586	4,260	5,217	5,034	3,341	3,501	4,214
Age	.0042 (1.33)	.0008 (0.34)	-.0171 (5.88)	-.0062 (2.45)	+.0166 (6.01)	+.1094 (4.08)	.0039 (1.34)

	Cyprus	Malta	Turkey	Norway	Switzerland	Iceland	Portugal
25-34	-.7689 (2.26)	-.3116 (1.59)	.2756 (1.03)	-.3125 (2.00)	.0140 (0.10)	-.5481 (1.37)	-.4301 (1.75)
35-44	-.5795 (1.72)	-.4638 (2.42)	.4624 (1.65)	-.1543 (1.01)	-.0897 (0.68)	.2530 (0.67)	-.4494 (1.94)
45-54	-.5037 (1.48)	-.2014 (1.02)	.3546 (1.14)	-.1728 (1.18)	.0143 (0.11)	.2470 (0.64)	-.7306 (3.15)
55-64	-.9007 (2.62)	-.5472 (2.83)	.0207 (0.05)	.2191 (1.49)	-.0076 (0.06)	.0348 (0.09)	-.7213 (2.98)
65-70	-.2434 (0.59)	.1112 (0.49)	+3.2176 (5.98)	+.4570 (2.70)	+.1272 (0.88)	.2394 (0.54)	-.1684 (0.55)
_cons	6.9380	6.7836	4.5021	7.2549	7.3854	7.8882	6.6563
Adj R^2	.0024	.0081	.0083	.0121	.0454	-.0008	.0016
N	4955	4,724	7,179	3,792	4,014	1,564	5,053
Age	-.0054 (0.86)	-.0023 (0.64)	+.0222 (3.23)	+.0121 (4.54)	.0020 (0.88)	.0092 (1.29)	-.0118 (2.53)

All equations include gender and year dummies. Age row refers to a regression which replaces the age dummies with continuous age.

Table 9. Sign on age variable in life satisfaction equations - European Social Surveys 7-11

	2014-2020 (sweeps 7-10)		N	2023/4 (sweep 11)		N
	Age	Age^2		Age and Age^2	Age	
Austria	-.0487 (6.55)	.0005 (6.28)*	6,270	NS	-.0002 (0.12)	2,346
Belgium	-.0276 (4.56)	.0003 (4.42)*	5,295	NS	.0019 (0.09)	1,588
Cyprus	-.0109 (0.46)	.0001 (0.40)	766	NS	-.0006 (0.12)	662
Denmark	-.0081 (1.08)	.0001 (1.67)	3,065			
Finland	-.0008 (0.15)	.0000 (0.73)	7,336	NS	+.0069 (3.33)	1,562
France	-.0854 (12.08)	.0007 (10.67)*	7,941		-.0106 (3.69)	1,735
Germany	-.0379 (6.26)	.0004 (6.26)*	8,220	NS	+.0053 (2.62)	2,413
Greece	-.0418 (3.84)	.0003 (2.65)*	2,729	NS	-.0152 (7.28)	2,745
Ireland	-.0412 (5.78)	.0005 (6.83)*	7,237		+.0066 (2.99)	1,981
Italy	-.0051 (0.83)	.0001 (1.22)	7,770	NS	-.0166 (9.03)	2,782
Netherlands	-.0068 (1.35)	.0001 (1.41)	6,707	NS	+.0033 (1.80)	1,670
Norway	-.0015 (0.25)	.0001 (1.70)	5,751	NS	+.0089 (3.72)	1,331
Portugal	-.0472 (5.14)	.0002 (2.55)*	5,394	NS	-.0158 (5.16)	1,372
Spain	-.0357 (4.90)	.0003 (4.34)*	5,534	NS	-.0011 (0.49)	1,826
Sweden	+.0178 (2.67)	-.0001 (1.92)	4,862	NS	+.0067 (2.63)	1,226
Switzerland	-.0029 (0.51)	.0001 (1.67)	6,082	NS	+.0099 (4.33)	1,369
UK	-.0310 (3.98)	.0004 (4.87)*	6,350	NS	+.0079 (2.80)	1,643

Note * = U-shape. T-statistics in parentheses,

Table 10. 11-step life satisfaction from Global Flourishing Study, 2022

	Germany	Spain	Sweden
25-34	.2397 (2.47)	.3133 (2.88)	.1467 (2.23)
35-44	.2856 (2.93)	.1781 (1.71)	.1088 (1.58)
45-54	.0864 (0.87)	.0942 (0.89)	.2737 (3.85)
55-64	.0824 (0.84)	.0587 (0.50)	.6034 (9.10)
65-70	.4475 (4.16)	.1587 (0.99)	1.3274 (15.14)
_cons	6.5918	6.6775	6.4167
Adjusted R2	.0050	.0028	.0271
N	8,345	5,984	12,351
Age	+.0064 (4.85)	-.0005 (0.30)	+.0265 (29.14)

	Turkey	UK
25-34	-.0701 (0.28)	.5716 (3.40)
35-44	.4678 (1.94)	.3265 (1.95)
45-54	.5929 (2.22)	.3380 (2.02)
55-64	.6247 (1.89)	.3796 (2.33)
65-74	.1057 (0.18)	.9710 (5.66)
_cons	4.0873	5.9364
Adjusted R2	.0083	.0138
N	1,437	4,104
Age	+.0169 (2.89)	+.0165 (9.33)

Also includes a gender dummy. T-statistics in parentheses. The age row refers to the results from a separate regression that replaces the age bands with continuous age.

Table 11. 9-step life satisfaction from Global Minds, 2020-2024

	Belgium	France	Ireland
25-34	.5268 (2.21)	.7605 (4.32)	.4190 (3.43)
35-44	.8877 (4.11)	1.1653 (7.74)	.7359 (6.84)
45-54	1.0318 (5.32)	1.2583 (10.99)	1.0962 (11.49)
55-64	1.3968 (7.64)	1.4882 (14.88)	1.6697 (17.99)
65-74	1.6262 (8.87)	1.6601 (16.85)	2.4679 (22.88)
_cons	5.9206	5.3588	4.7952
Adjusted R2	.0581	.0993	.1483
N	1,886	2,903	3,859
	Spain	Switzerland	UK
25-34	.8468 (8.52)	.1347 (0.32)	.3142 (2.21)
35-44	1.2287 (15.82)	1.0109 (2.69)	.5896 (4.11)
45-54	1.5402 (22.64)	1.4083 (4.07)	.7517 (5.32)
55-64	1.6817 (26.77)	1.5362 (4.55)	1.2326 (7.64)
65-74	2.1350 (29.85)	1.6226 (4.67)	1.9920 (8.87)
_cons	5.6694	5.5164	4.1755
Adjusted R2	.1257	.0743	.0949
N	7,943	407	23,532

Table 12. Youth Unemployment rates age<25.

	2015	2024	2024/2015
Austria	11.3	10.2	.90
Belgium	22.6	17.3	.77
Cyprus	37.0	13.0	.40
Denmark	12.1	14.6	.92
Finland	22.4	18.7	.83
France	26.1	18.6	.71
Germany	7.6	6.5	.86
Greece	50.4	22.3	.44
Ireland	20.3	10.6	.52
Italy	40.2	20.3	.50
Luxembourg	17.6	21.7	1.23
Malta	8.8	9.0	.78
Netherlands	12.6	8.7	.69
Norway	12.2	15.1	.89
Portugal	31.9	21.8	.68
Spain	48.3	26.5	.55
Sweden	19.6	24.0	1.22
Switzerland	8.8	7.9	.90
Türkiye	18.5	16.2	.88

Source: EU 10.2908/une_rt_m

Table 13. Life satisfaction Eurobarometer age <25, with peak/current youth unemployment rate, 1983-2024.

	All		Group 1		Group 2	
	<2012	2012-24	<2012	2012-24	<2012	2012-24
Youth ratio	-.0874 (3.04)	-.2214 (5.15)	-.0394 (1.27)	+.0076 (0.17)	-.3260 (5.61)	-.4917 (9.83)
Female	.0177 (3.20)	-.0049 (1.22)	.0391 (8.73)	-.0022 (2.06)	-.0142 (2.52)	-.0104 (1.39)
constant	3.0663	3.4355	3.2087	3.2122	3.2545	3.5953
Adjusted R^2	.0890	.1205	.0734	.1112	.0359	.0986
N	149,333	106,948	89,760	58589	59573	48,359

Equations include year dummies. Columns 1, 2, 5 & 6 excluded France. Columns 3 & 4 excluded Belgium   Standard errors clustered by country*year. T-statistics in parentheses. Group 1 is Belgium, Germany, Ireland Luxembourg, Finland, Netherlands, Norway Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and UK. Group 2 is Austria, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal and Spain. Source: Eurobarometers

Table 14. Young people neither in employment nor in education and training
https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/databrowser/explore/all/popul?lang=en&subtheme=educ.educ_outc.edatt.eda
tt0&display=list&sort=category&extractionId=edat_lfse_22

TIME	2015	2020	2024
Austria	7.5	8.0	8.7
Belgium	12.2	9.2	7.3
Cyprus	15.3	13.9	10.6
Denmark	7.0	7.5	6.8
Finland	10.6	9.3	8.3
France	12.0	11.4	10.7
Germany	6.2	7.4	7.2
Greece	17.2	13.2	9.6
Iceland	4.6	6.1	4.0
Ireland	14.3	12.0	5.8
Italy	21.4	19.1	12.0
Luxembourg	6.2	6.6	9.6
Malta	10.5	9.6	7.6
Netherlands	4.7	4.5	3.6
Norway	5.0	4.9	6.0
Portugal	11.2	9.1	7.8
Spain	15.6	13.9	10.1
Sweden	6.7	6.5	5.5
Switzerland	7.4	6.4	9.6
Türkiye	23.9	28.3	22.9

Table 15. Sum of quarterly real GDP growth (%) – source OECD.

Time period	2000-2007	2008-2015	2016-2024
Austria	19	4	10
Belgium	18	8	14
Denmark	15	2	18
Finland	29	-5	8
France	17	5	11
Germany	12	7	8
Greece	30	-34	12
Iceland	42	5	25
Italy	10	-7	10
Luxembourg	36	11	17
Netherlands	18	2	16
Norway	19	7	13
Portugal	12	-6	20
Spain	28	-2	16
Sweden	24	11	14
Switzerland	18	12	14
Türkiye	45	38	41
United Kingdom	21	7	13
United States	20	11	19
Euro area	17	2	12
EU 27	18	3	13

Appendix 1 – Eurobarometer observations by country and year

	France	Belgium	Netherlands	Germany	Italy	Luxembourg	Denmark	Ireland	UK
1973	2,198	1,261	1,451	1,931	1,888	329	1,197	1,197	1,921
1975	2,391	2,510	1,974	1,995	2,099	595	1,961	1,993	2,727
1976	2,555	2,026	2,012	1,985	1,959	557	1,926	1,980	2,681
1977	2,246	1,975	1,977	1,984	2,172	644	1,994	1,998	2,763
1978	2,122	2,004	2,065	1,972	2,197	608	1,977	2,000	2,754
1979	997	964	1,013	985	1,173	295	1,063	994	1,313
1980	984	970	977	989	1,112	297	985	1,004	1,449
1981	979	929	1,084	966	1,181	300	996	997	1,356
1982	2,130	2,151	2,260	2,387	2,314	694	2,187	2,174	2,740
1983	1,993	1,991	2,030	2,029	2,058	591	2,015	1,980	2,610
1984	2,000	2,029	1,993	2,008	2,148	590	1,953	1,996	2,727
1985	1,994	2,004	2,032	2,005	2,162	592	1,997	2,004	2,814
1986	1,970	1,974	2,011	2,051	2,186	595	2,007	1,994	2,677
1987	2,783	2,803	2,694	2,722	2,933	832	2,791	2,828	3,676
1988	983	1,011	1,015	1,000	1,015	295	1,004	987	1,336
1989	4,016	3,967	3,987	4,387	4,111	1,195	3,995	3,941	4,995
1990	2,593	2,515	2,671	4,328	2,682	796	2,596	2,620	3,532
1991	1,986	2,056	2,032	4,205	2,076	926	1,994	2,001	2,712
1992	4,397	4,515	4,418	9,095	4,541	2,192	4,398	4,434	5,793
1993	2,038	2,010	1,995	4,246	2,044	1,008	1,993	1,986	2,728
1994	2,035	2,100	2,050	4,149	2,090	1,114	2,000	2,042	2,712
1995	991	1,052	1,010	2,071	1,052	498	998	993	1,365
1996	1,292	1,322	1,322	2,653	1,391	575	1,268	1,324	1,641
1997	998	995	1,018	2,035	990	594	1,001	997	1,371
1998	1,020	998	1,031	1,993	994	600	997	984	1,350
1999	1,992	2,031	2,008	4,056	2,004	1,211	1,997	1,969	2,654
2000	1,986	2,097	1,973	4,024	1,980	1,194	1,976	1,970	2,725
2001	3,969	4,096	4,036	9,422	3,954	2,398	3,976	3,900	3,945
2002	2,961	3,084	3,003	6,030	3,026	1,791	2,991	2,940	3,944
2003	999	1,001	1,005	1,997	1,006	577	994	984	1,355
2004	1,014	1,975	1,008	4,088	3,008	1,010	2,035	1,986	2,660
2005	2,012	2,021	2,046	3,047	1,995	1,012	2,082	1,988	2,660
2006	2,023	2,021	2,026	3,043	1,996	999	2,009	1,972	2,612
2007	2,042	2,032	2,012	3,014	2,042	1,009	2,001	1,974	2,654
2008	2,059	2,005	2,080	3,051	2,075	1,001	2,032	1,953	2,609
2009	4,141	4,005	4,124	6,061	4,159	2,037	4,031	3,964	5,294
2010	3,051	3,012	3,074	4,659	3,071	1,518	3,092	2,987	3,917
2011	3,104	3,067	3,019	4,630	3,104	1,504	3,027	3,026	3,955
2012	3,027	3,163	3,031	4,557	3,072	1,509	3,013	2,969	3,900
2013	4,115	4,156	4,086	6,191	4,034	2,025	4,024	3,999	5,267
2014	8,205	8,061	8,140	12,435	8,081	4,020	8,087	8,056	10,564
2015	7,097	7,100	7,167	10,837	7,092	3,529	7,098	7,022	9,183
2016	6,455	6,444	6,453	9,934	6,456	3,295	6,365	6,452	8,345
2017	8,152	8,195	8,147	12,522	8,131	4,055	8,052	8,046	10,854
2018	7,097	7,312	7,220	10,632	7,083	3,527	7,065	7,027	7,474
2019	8,109	8,307	8,170	12,176	8,168	4,054	8,113	8,229	8,228
2020	2,007	2,049	2,031	3,099	2,048	1,100	2,040	2,055	1,153
2021	4,028	4,123	4,123	6,098	4,097	2,050	4,131	4,060	2,017
2022	4,021	4,189	4,140	6,133	4,078	2,115	4,056	4,271	3,180
2023	3,050	3,065	3,042	4,602	3,075	1,519	3,036	3,022	3,044
2024	1,996	2,025	2,074	3,157	2,105	1,011	2,000	2,000	1,010
Total	148,403	148,768	147,360	225,666	151,508	68,382	146,616	146,269	178,946

	Greece	Spain	Portugal	Finland	Sweden	Austria	Norway	Cyprus	Malta
1981	998								
1982	2,182								
1983	1,994								
1984	1,998								
1985	1,985	988	989						
1986	1,992	1,980	1,986						
1987	2,781	2,786	2,800						
1988	994	1,008	987						
1989	3,993	3,964	3,971						
1990	2,608	2,588	2,563						
1991	1,990	1,998	1,991				995		
1992	3,986	4,398	4,382	454			1,991		
1993	1,997	2,011	1,989				1,990		
1994	2,006	2,001	1,991				2,025		
1995	1,005	992	997	1,028	1,015	994	981		
1996	1,311	1,299	1,300	1,302	1,252	1,347			
1997	1,009	997	994	1,009	997	1,030			
1998	1,009	1,000	994	1,041	1,017	1,004			
1999	2,006	1,987	1,993	2,001	1,993	2,026			
2000	2,003	1,995	1,984	2,017	1,995	1,945			
2001	4,006	3,977	3,984	4,010	3,993	3,959			
2002	2,924	2,972	2,948	3,009	2,981	2,973			
2003	999	995	983	1,017	995	981			
2004	1,996	2,041	1,980	2,033	2,009	2,013		999	997
2005	1,993	2,014	1,983	2,049	2,052	995		1,518	998
2006	1,999	1,997	1,989	2,005	2,025	2,017		1,006	995
2007	1,999	1,994	2,008	2,070	2,004	2,016		1,000	995
2008	2,000	2,028	1,996	2,007	2,005	1,987		1,002	1,000
2009	3,999	4,028	4,038	4,042	4,119	4,035		2,013	1,993
2010	3,000	3,006	3,046	3,010	3,074	2,983		1,511	1,495
2011	2,998	3,013	3,084	3,013	3,081	3,011		1,508	1,496
2012	2,997	3,018	3,020	3,024	3,081	2,978		1,510	1,499
2013	4,001	4,040	4,110	3,929	4,032	4,070		2,006	1,998
2014	8,083	8,150	8,157	8,113	8,118	8,113		4,000	4,013
2015	7,027	7,039	7,152	7,063	7,299	7,097		3,497	3,503
2016	6,384	6,466	6,480	6,391	6,567	6,444		3,291	3,329
2017	8,055	8,131	8,633	8,110	8,276	8,093		4,007	4,055
2018	7,073	7,087	7,298	7,056	7,102	7,146		3,516	3,514
2019	8,097	8,061	8,081	8,047	8,184	8,129		4,034	4,001
2020	2,046	2,037	2,083	2,050	2,094	2,007		1,009	1,035
2021	4,095	4,032	4,083	4,058	4,135	4,034		2,018	2,074
2022	4,050	4,065	4,129	4,183	4,194	4,025		2,014	1,999
2023	3,039	3,031	3,041	3,024	3,119	3,021	3,010	1,514	1,518
2024	2,017	1,997	2,025	2,004	2,029	2,009	1,004	1,011	1,000
Total	134,724	127,211	128,242	104,169	104,837	102,482	11,996	43,984	43,507

	Turkey	Iceland	Switzerland
2004	1,025		
2005	1,999		
2006	1,997		
2007	1,969		
2008	1,943		
2009	3,969		
2010	1,993		
2011	1,994		
2012	1,997		
2013	1,996		
2014	2,112		
2015	2,022		
2016	2,023		
2017	2,006		
2018	2,034		
2019	2,019		
2020	1,015		
2021	2,005	2,057	2,108
2022	2,011	2,054	2,071
2023	3,000	2,106	2,105
2024	1,001		
Total	42,130	6,217	6,284

Totals by year

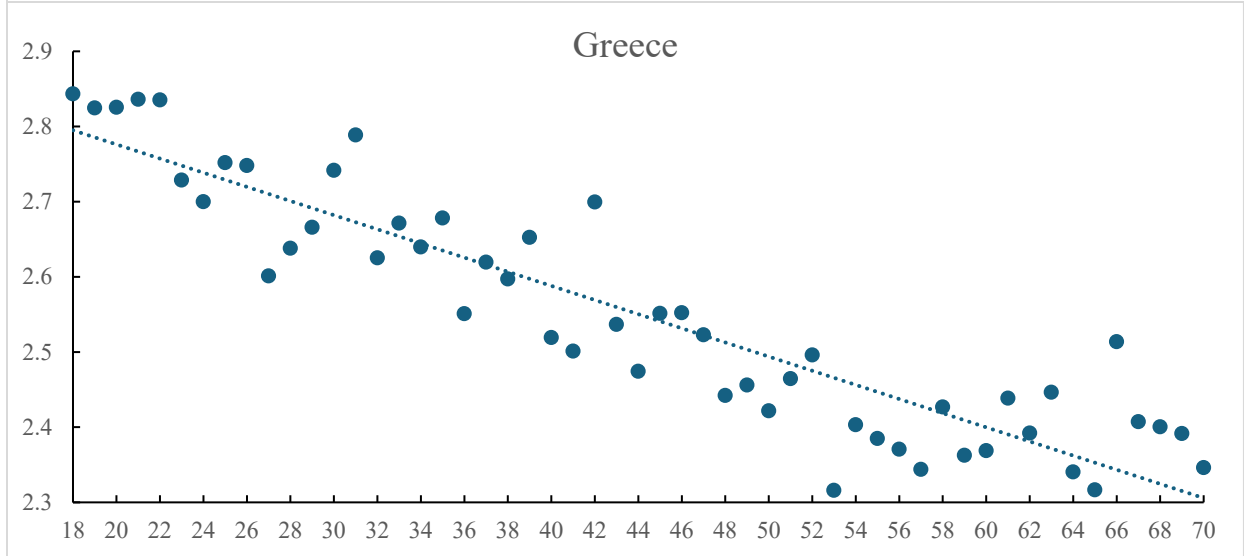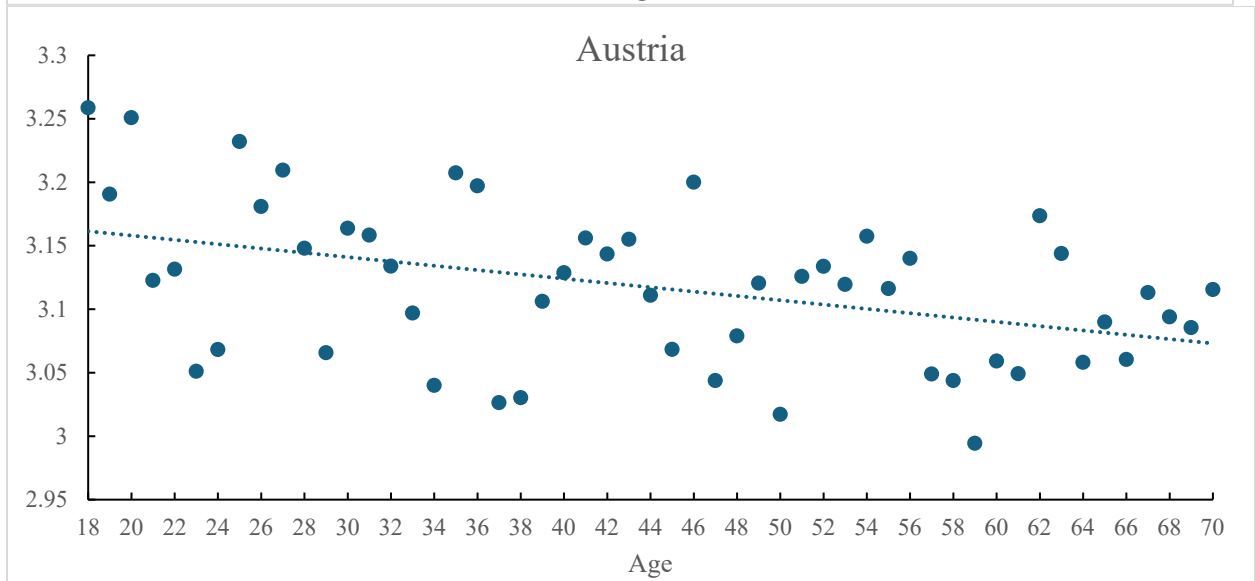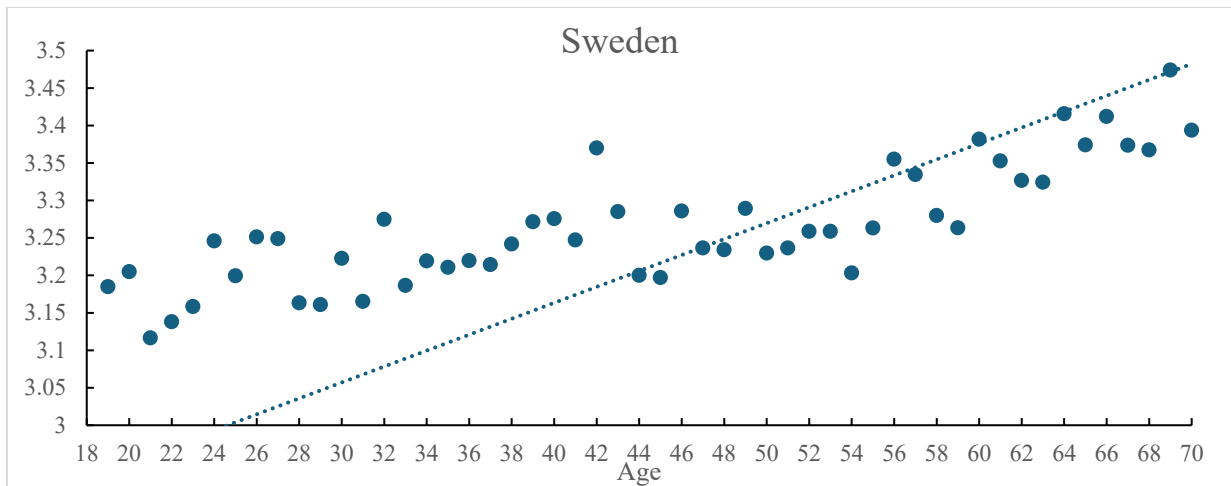|			
1973	17,319	2005	38,474
1975	22,195	2006	38,743
1976	21,633	2007	38,849
1977	21,707	2008	38,849
1978	21,655	2009	74,070
1979	12,755	2010	55,519
1980	12,727	2011	55,656
1981	13,748	2012	55,389
1982	25,183	2013	72,105
1983	23,257	2014	138,536
1984	23,410	2015	121,854
1985	25,536	2016	111,606
1986	27,395	2017	139,554
1987	36,403	2018	120,299
1988	15,611	2019	136,245
1989	50,500	2020	36,998
1990	36,072	2021	73,468
1991	30,944	2022	75,022
1992	62,978	2023	63,029
1993	32,021	2024	37,523
1994	32,303	Total	2,421,597
1995	21,032		
1996	24,591		
1997	20,029		
1998	20,028		
1999	35,926		
2000	35,864		
2001	67,627		
2002	51,581		
2003	19,894		
2004	37,885		

Appendix 2. Unemployment rates by country and year

	Austria	Belgium	Cyprus	Denmark	Finland	France	Germany	Greece	Iceland	Ireland	Italy
1983				16.7		16.4				20.4	25.5
1984				13.3		19.4				22.4	27.0
1985				10.3		19.2				24.2	28.7
1986		20.1		7.3		18.1				24.9	29.3
1987		19.6		7.6		17.6				24.4	30.6
1988		17.6		8.1	10.7	16.1				23.6	29.4
1989		15.6		10.2	8.7	14.9				20.4	28.8
1990		14.6		10.5	9.4	15.1				19.4	26.9
1991		14.2		10.7	16.3	15.6	5.8			22.3	25.5
1992		15.4		11.7	26.5	17.8	6.5			24.4	26.4
1993		20.7		12.8	33.6	20.9	8.0			25.3	28.2
1994		23.2		10.2	33.7	22.0	8.9			22.9	29.1
1995	5.9	22.9		9.6	29.8	21.2	8.9			19.5	30.3
1996	6.3	22.2		9.7	28.1	22.0	10.0			18.2	30.4
1997	6.7	22.1		7.7	25.4	22.6	10.6			15.4	30.2
1998	6.2	22.2		7.3	23.5	21.3	9.7	30.4		11.4	29.8
1999	5.4	20.3		8.9	21.6	21.0	9.0	31.4		9.8	28.7
2000	5.5	16.6	9.9	6.3	21.2	16.9	8.7	29.1		6.7	27.0
2001	6.2	16.8	8.3	8.2	19.9	16.0	8.3	28.0		7.2	24.1
2002	6.7	17.8	8.0	7.6	20.9	16.9	9.8	26.8		8.6	23.1
2003	7.7	21.7	8.7	9.3	21.8	20.1	11.4	26.9	8.8	8.9	23.6
2004	11.2	21.1	10.2	8.1	20.8	21.7	14.2	26.5	8.7	8.8	23.5
2005	11.6	21.5	13.6	8.5	20.1	22.3	15.2	25.9	8.7	8.7	24.1
2006	10.4	20.5	10.1	7.8	18.6	23.5	13.6	25.0	8.9	8.7	21.8
2007	10.1	19.0	10.1	7.3	16.4	20.9	11.7	22.7	8.1	9.2	20.4
2008	9.1	17.8	9.0	9.5	16.3	20.2	10.4	21.9	10.2	13.5	21.4
2009	11.3	22.1	13.9	13.4	21.9	25.0	12.0	26.2	16.9	24.5	25.4
2010	10.1	22.5	16.4	15.6	22.1	24.7	10.5	33.6	18.4	28.2	27.9
2011	9.6	18.9	22.5	16.2	20.3	24.1	9.1	45.2	16.8	29.6	29.2
2012	10.1	20.0	27.8	15.7	19.4	25.8	8.5	56.0	14.9	30.8	35.3
2013	10.3	24.0	39.0	14.7	20.3	26.4	8.3	59.3	12.2	26.7	40.1
2014	10.9	23.6	36.1	14.2	20.6	25.7	8.2	53.0	11.2	23.5	42.6
2015	11.3	22.6	32.6	12.1	22.4	26.1	7.6	50.4	10.0	20.3	40.2
2016	12.0	20.2	29.1	12.2	20.7	25.9	7.4	48.3	8.2	16.8	37.7
2017	10.5	19.4	24.8	12.3	20.0	23.5	6.9	44.4	8.2	14.4	34.8
2018	10.0	15.8	20.1	10.5	17.1	22.0	6.6	41.1	7.4	13.8	32.4
2019	9.1	14.3	17.6	10.0	17.4	20.8	6.2	37.5	8.7	12.4	29.2
2020	11.7	15.4	17.7	11.5	21.2	21.5	7.9	38.3	11.3	15.9	29.8
2021	11.0	18.2	17.3	10.8	16.9	18.9	7.0	35.7	10.1	14.8	29.6
2022	9.5	16.3	18.1	10.5	14.0	17.3	5.9	31.3	8.3	10.0	23.7
2023	10.4	15.9	16.7	11.5	16.2	17.2	5.8	26.7	8.3	10.6	22.8
2024	10.2	17.3	13.0	14.6	18.7	18.6	6.5	22.3	8.8	10.6	20.3
2025	10.7	17.5	11.1	15.0	19.4	19.0	6.7	21.0	9.2	11.0	19.7

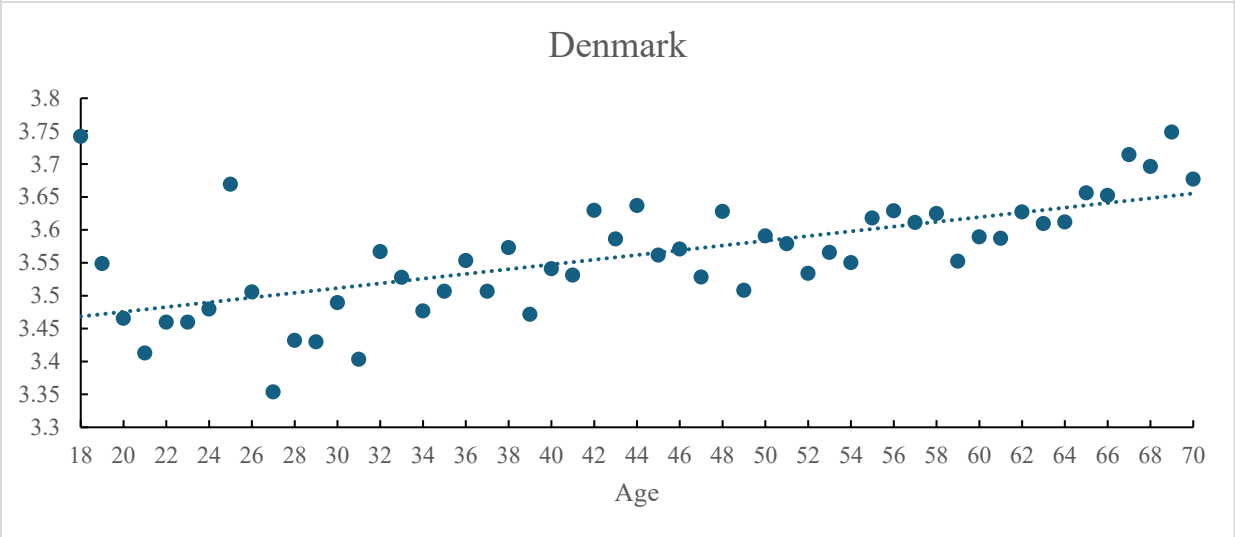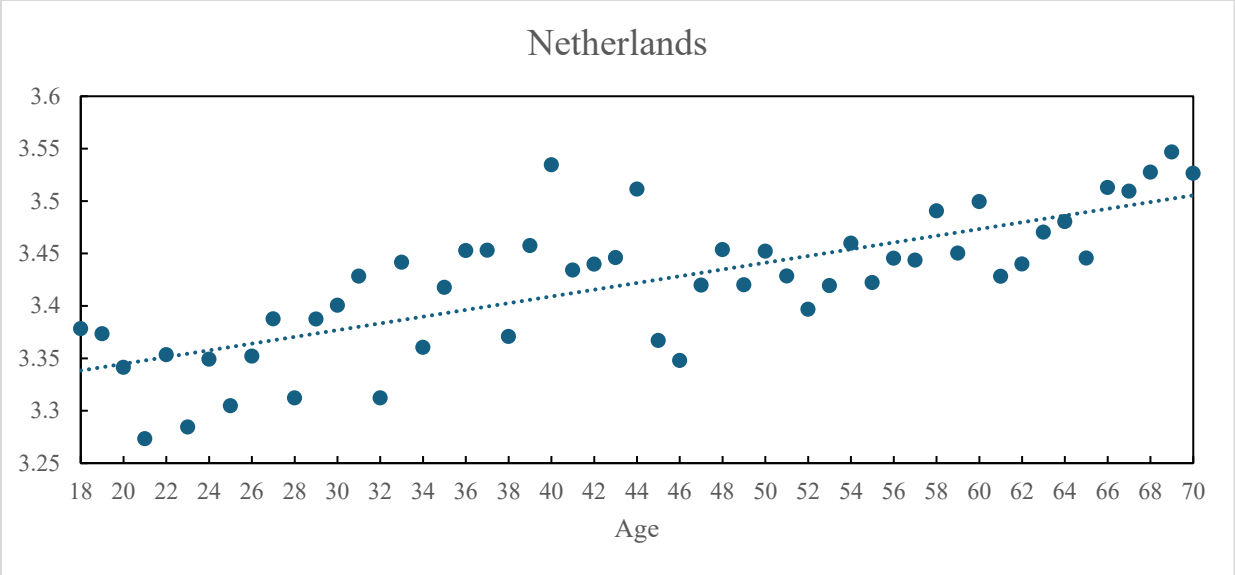|	Luxembourg	Malta	Netherlands	Norway	Portugal	Spain	Sweden	Switzerland	Türkiye	UK
1983	7.9		16.1		20.4		9.8			19.8
1984	6.7		15.6		22.1		7.6			18.9
1985	6.6		13.9		22.2		6.9			18.1
1986	6.0		12.3		21.2	43.2	6.5			17.8
1987	5.7		11.6		17.9	40.4	5.1			15.3
1988	4.8		11.1		15.2	37.9	4.1			12.2
1989	4.1		9.9	12.2	13.9	32.7	3.8			10.0
1990	3.8		9.1	12.7	12.9	30.5	4.4			10.5
1991	3.1		8.8	13.5	11.9	29.1	7.6			13.8
1992	3.8		8.5	14.8	12.6	32.4	13.3			16.3
1993	5.2		10.4	14.6	15.0	40.7	22.1			17.5
1994	7.1		11.2	13.6	17.0	42.3	22.1			16.4
1995	7.2		16.8	12.8	18.3	39.8	19.1			15.3
1996	8.2		15.7	12.3	18.7	39.2	20.6			14.9
1997	7.9		12.4	10.3	17.2	36.1	20.6			13.7
1998	6.8		10.9	9.0	14.1	32.4	16.2			13.1
1999	7.0		9.4	9.2	12.8	26.5	12.4			12.6
2000	6.4	13.7	8.1	9.8	12.6	23.2	10.5			12.2
2001	6.2	18.8	6.8	10.1	13.4	21.1	14.3			11.7
2002	7.1	14.8	7.4	10.8	15.6	22.2	15.7			12.0
2003	11.1	16.4	11.3	11.2	18.7	22.7	16.7			12.2
2004	16.1	16.6	12.8	11.2	19.8	22.0	19.8			12.0
2005	14.7	16.1	13.1	11.4	20.9	19.6	22.0		17.5	12.8
2006	15.5	15.5	11.4	10.8	21.3	17.9	20.9		16.5	13.9
2007	15.6	13.5	11.0	9.2	21.5	18.1	18.4		17.3	14.3
2008	17.3	11.7	10.2	9.7	21.6	24.5	19.4		18.5	15.0
2009	17.1	14.5	11.6	11.1	25.3	37.7	24.3		22.9	19.1
2010	15.1	13.1	12.4	11.7	28.2	41.5	24.0	8.2	19.8	19.9
2011	16.4	13.5	11.3	10.7	30.3	46.2	21.9	7.7	16.9	21.3
2012	18.4	14.0	12.9	10.6	38.3	52.9	22.9	8.3	15.8	21.3
2013	16.6	12.5	14.2	11.4	38.7	55.4	22.7	8.8	17.1	20.7
2014	20.9	11.7	13.7	10.0	34.7	53.2	22.1	8.6	17.7	17.0
2015	17.6	11.5	12.6	12.2	31.9	48.3	19.6	8.8	18.5	14.7
2016	18.8	11.0	12.1	13.1	28.1	44.4	18.2	8.6	19.5	13.0
2017	15.5	10.6	10.4	12.5	23.6	38.6	17.1	8.1	20.4	12.1
2018	14.3	9.3	8.9	11.4	20.2	34.4	16.7	7.9	20.1	11.3
2019	16.8	10.2	8.5	11.7	18.4	32.5	19.3	8.0	25.3	11.1
2020	22.3	11.4	10.6	13.3	22.7	38.4	23.6	8.6	24.7	12.9
2021	18.3	9.9	9.4	12.5	23.2	35.0	24.7	8.3	22.8	
2022	17.3	9.1	7.6	9.9	19.2	29.7	21.6	6.8	19.6	
2023	18.5	9.3	8.2	10.9	20.5	28.7	21.8	7.9	17.5	
2024	21.7	9.0	8.7	12.1	21.8	26.5	24.0	8.2	16.2	
2025	21.2	9.0	8.8	12.2	20.8	26.1	23.9	8.5	16.0	

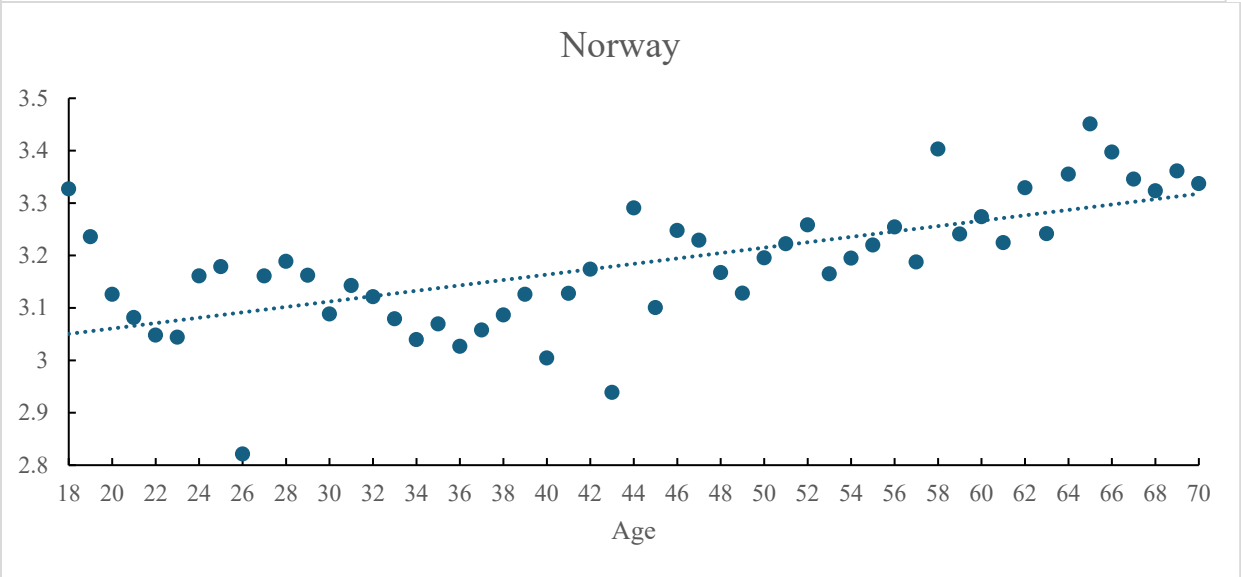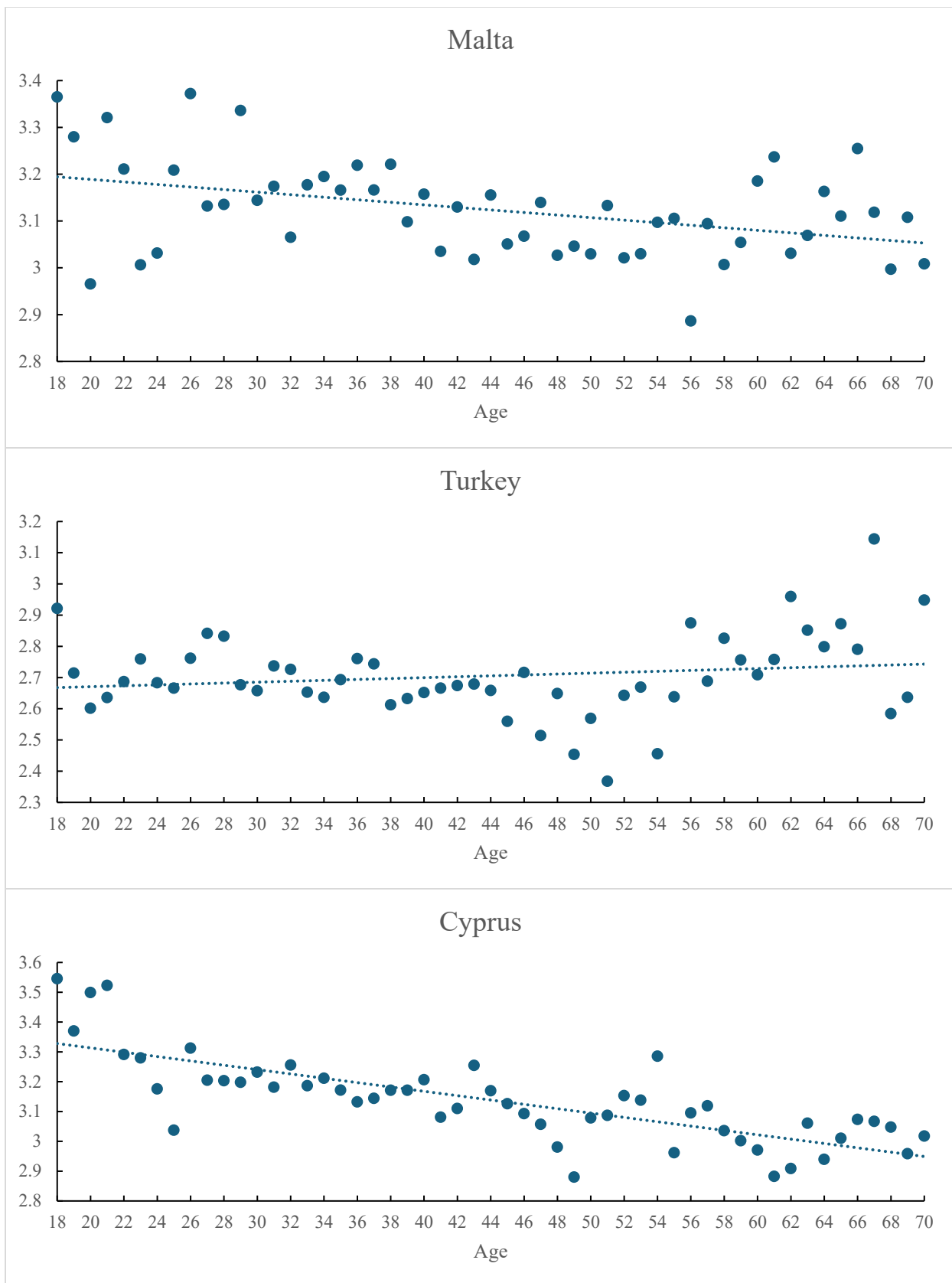Figure 1. Life satisfaction plotted by year f age, Eurobarometers, 2020-2024

Portugal

Germany

UK

Italy

France

Belgium

36

Netherlands

Denmark

Ireland

Iceland

Norway

Spain

Malta
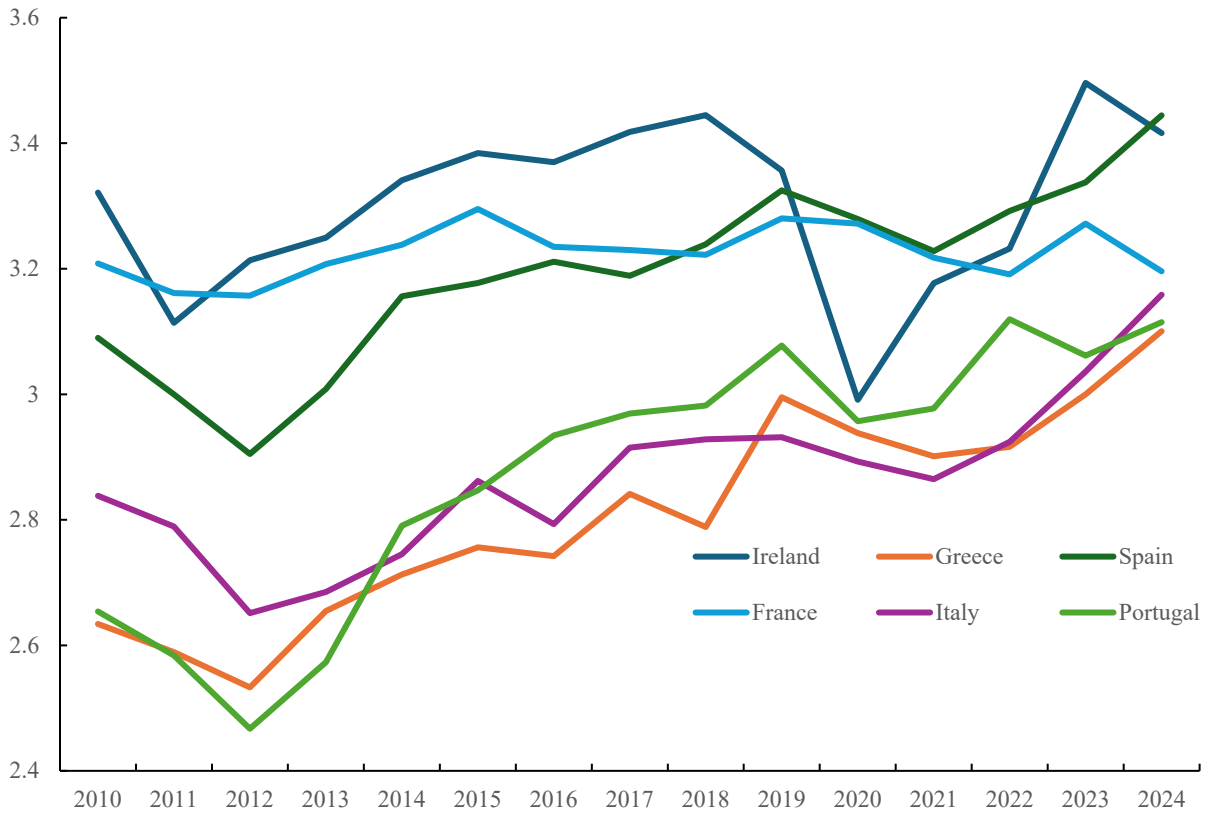
Turkey

Cyprus
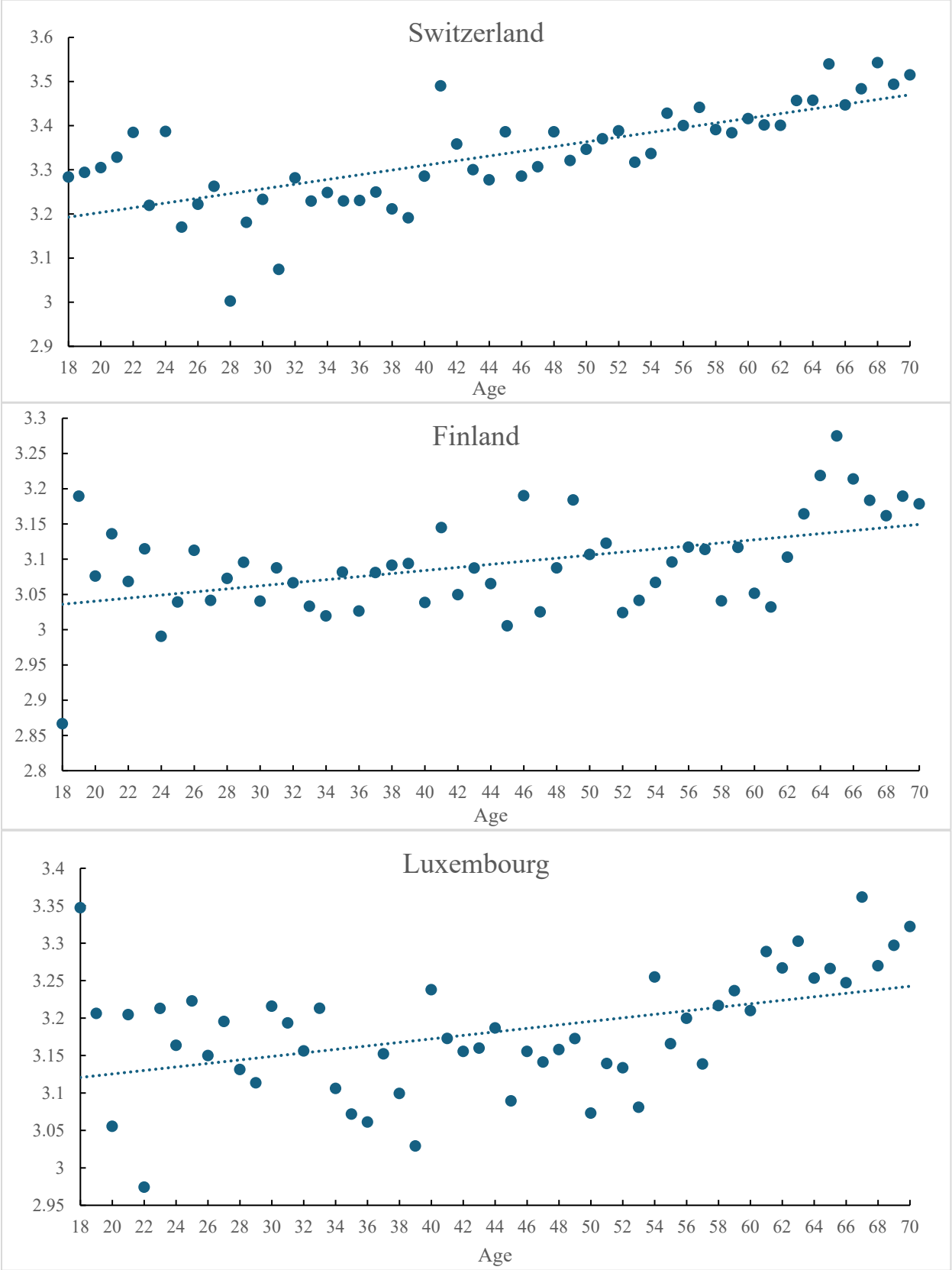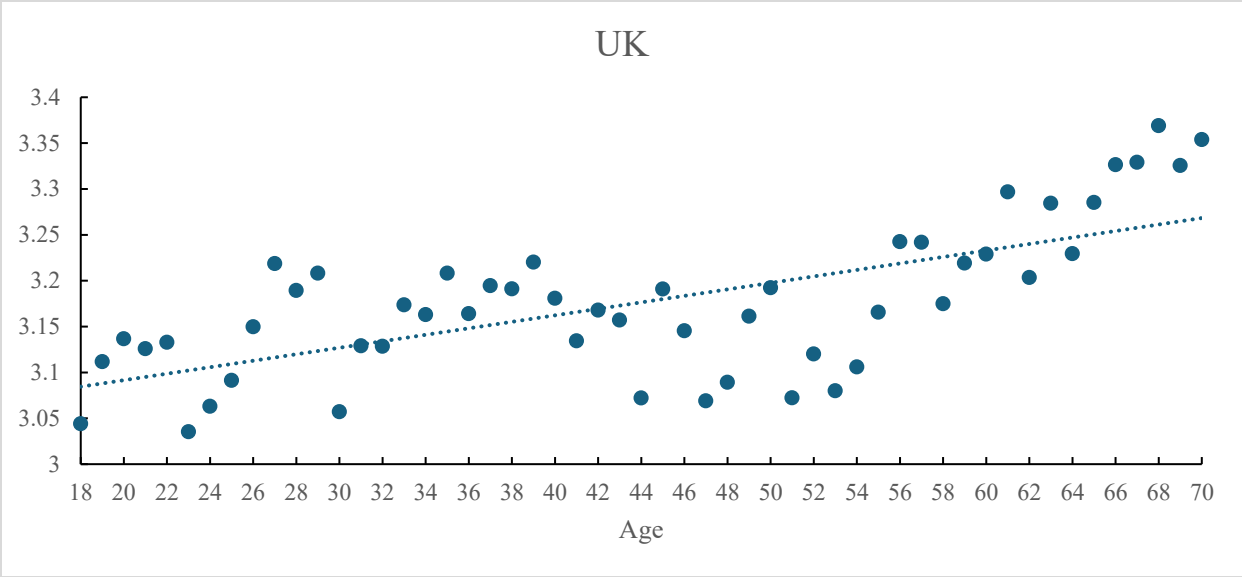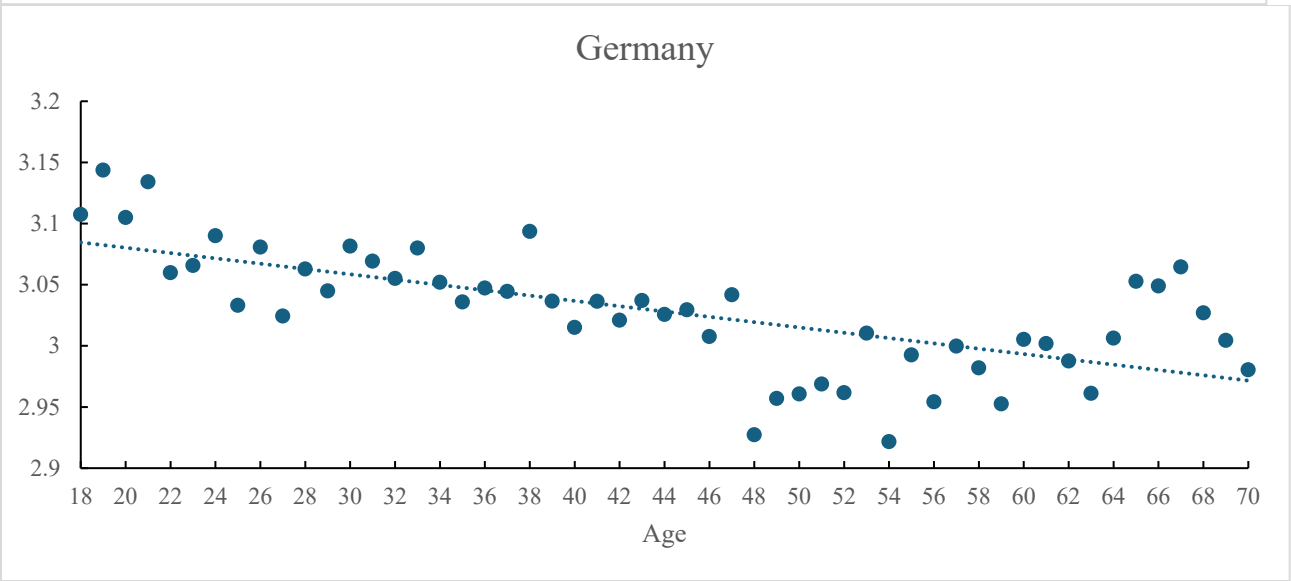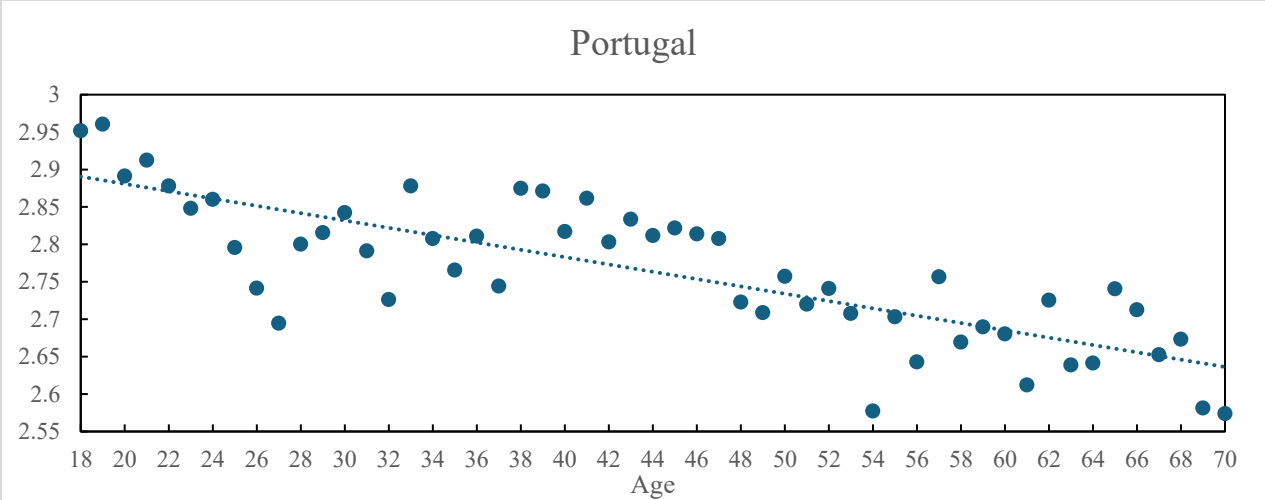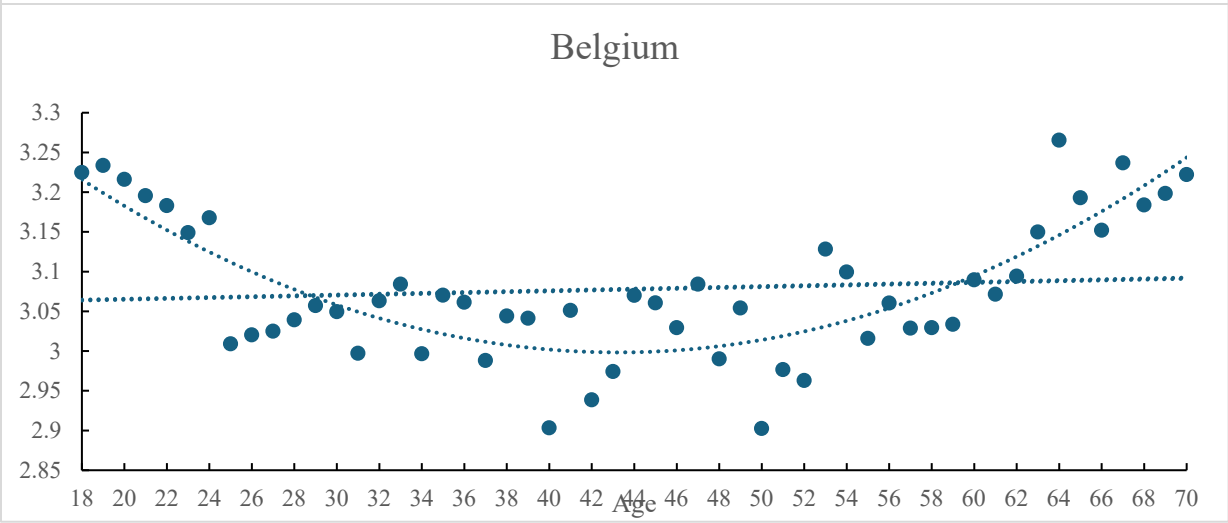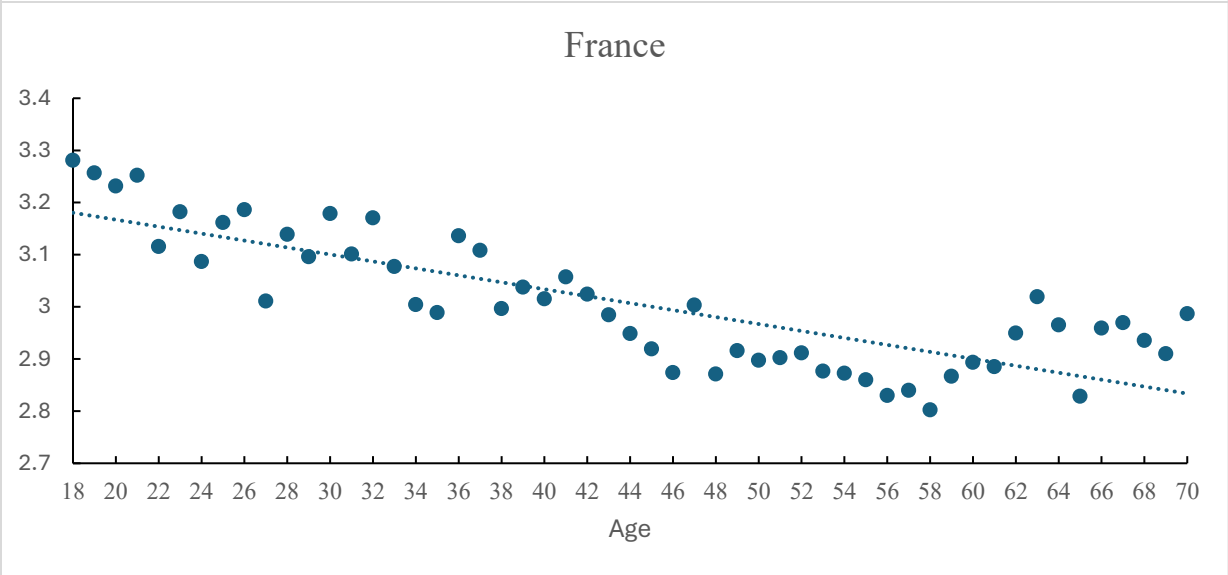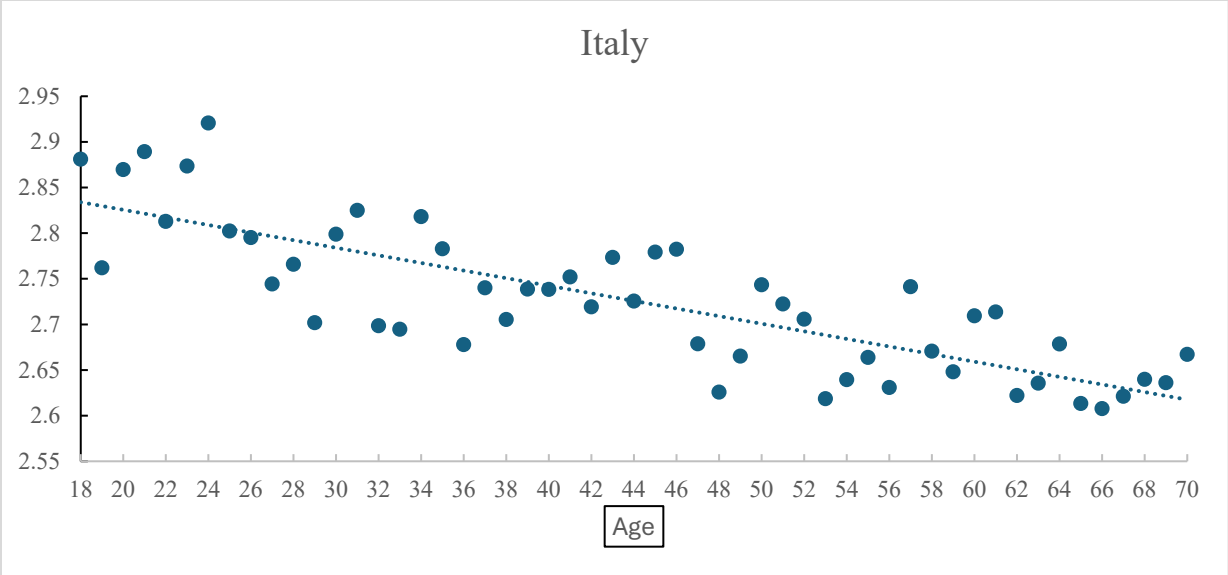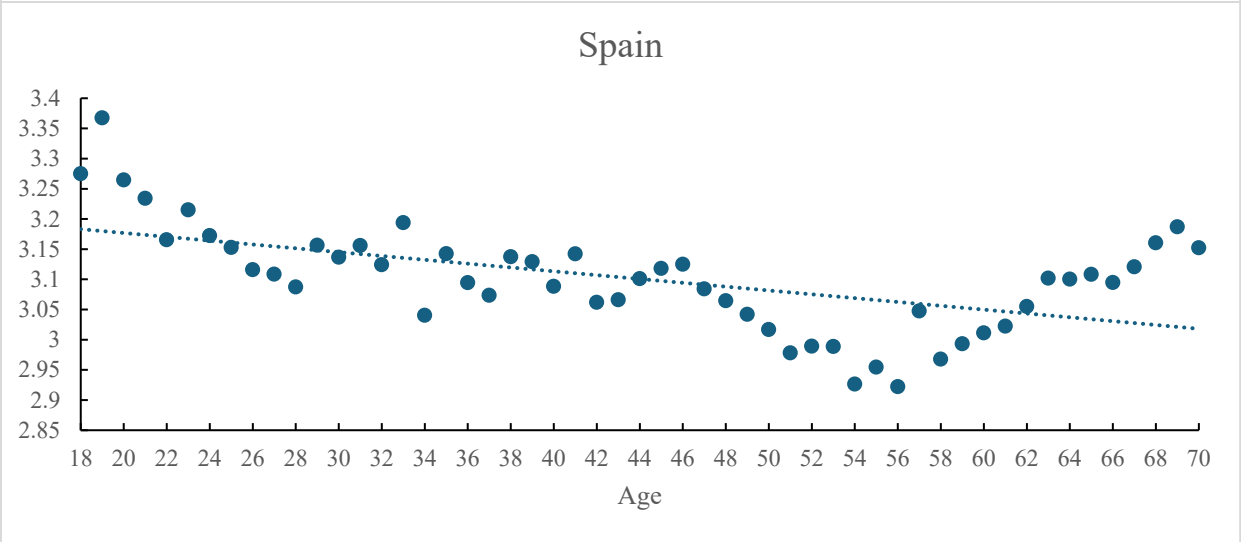
Figure 2. Life satisfaction age<25, Eurobarometer

Figure 3. Annual youth unemployment rates