

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***One third of couples keep money secrets from their partner***

- *Pan-European study reveals almost a third (31%) of Europeans think it is normal for couples to keep secrets about money from one another*
- *French consumers (42%) most likely to be willing to keep money secrets*
- *Almost one in seven (14%) of Europeans hide debt from their partner*
- *A quarter (23%) of Brits admit to being 'secret spenders'*

While Valentine's Day may be celebrated in similar ways across European countries, new research highlights differences in attitudes when it comes to couples talking about money.

The study, based on the spending habits of more than 12,500 consumers across 13 European countries asked people how honest they are willing to be with their partner when it comes to their personal finances.

The French are most likely to find financial secrecy normal, according to the latest ING International Survey on Savings, with 42% content to hide information about their finances. At the opposite end of the scale, only 13% of Dutch consumers are comfortable keeping money secrets, which suggests that talking openly about financial affairs is more commonplace in the Netherlands.

For those in a relationship, being in debt is a particular sore point, with almost one in seven across the continent willing to hide some form of debt from their loved one. The Turkish are most likely to conceal debts (31%), followed by Romanians (22%) and people in Poland (14%). Once again, the Dutch are more transparent with just 2% having debt they don't want their partner to know about.

In fact, the research revealed that Dutch consumers are frequently among the most open and honest when it comes to discussing financial affairs.

On the other side of the coin, European consumers are more likely to conceal a savings account than a debt, perhaps suggesting a greater willingness to seek support when managing financial outgoings.

The research also unearthed the phenomenon of 'secret spenders', with one in five (19%) European consumers admitting to hiding a purchase from their partner during the last 12 months. Romanian consumers are the biggest secret spenders (31%), followed by consumers in Turkey and the Czech Republic. A quarter (23%) of Brits hide purchases whereas very few (7%) Dutch couples partake in secret shopping.

But it's not just spending and savings habits that partners are in the dark about as the research went on to reveal that more than one in 10 (13%) European couples don't know how much money their partner earns. This is true for almost one in five couples in the UK, Romania, Turkey and the Czech Republic. This may reflect the differing attitudes and taboos across the continent when it comes to talking about one's salary, with more Spanish couples being aware of how much their partner earns than any other nationality.

Ian Bright, senior economist at ING commented: *"Many factors could influence how open couples are about their finances. Our research suggests that the majority of people are quite comfortable talking to their partners about how much they spend, save and earn, but around one in three admit to hiding some information."*

*"Discussing earnings or debt can be a sensitive matter for some. However, the support of those closest to home can be invaluable when it comes to managing money, meaning any surprises revealed this Valentine's Day will be pleasant ones."*

**Table 1: Financial secrecy across Europe\***

	<i>Consider money secrets 'normal'</i>	<i>Hiding debt</i>	<i>Hiding savings</i>	<i>Secret spenders</i>	<i>Hiding exact earnings</i>
France	<b>42%</b>	13%	14%	13%	10%
Turkey	<b>38%</b>	31%	28%	27%	18%
United Kingdom	<b>37%</b>	11%	17%	23%	18%
Italy	<b>34%</b>	12%	14%	16%	10%
Czech Republic	<b>33%</b>	10%	19%	26%	18%
Luxembourg	<b>29%</b>	8%	18%	13%	10%
Austria	<b>27%</b>	9%	24%	18%	13%
Romania	<b>27%</b>	22%	17%	31%	18%
Germany	<b>27%</b>	10%	17%	16%	11%
Belgium	<b>26%</b>	5%	14%	10%	9%
Spain	<b>26%</b>	10%	13%	20%	5%
Poland	<b>20%</b>	14%	20%	24%	16%
Netherlands	<b>13%</b>	2%	13%	7%	11%
<b>Europe average</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>13%</b>

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**Notes to editors**

The [ING International Survey](#) of 12,743 people was conducted by Ipsos using internet-based polling. The 13 countries surveyed were Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom between 16 October and 5 November 2014. The ING International Survey is produced three times a year and covers various consumer-related themes.

\*The base of the first column in Table 1 is all respondents (N=12,743) whereas the base of all other columns consists of those in couples only (N=4,498).

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