

10 February 2006

**‘YOU’RE SO VAIN!’
BRITISH MEN SPEND LONGER DRESSING TO IMPRESS THAN THEIR
EUROPEAN NEIGHBOURS**

- ***One in four British men spend two hours or more in front of the mirror before a big date***
- ***British men take longer to get ready for a date than French, Italian Spanish and German men***

A European wide study from Scottish Widows, to discover how prepared we are as a nation for all life’s eventualities, has discovered that, contrary to popular belief, British men take extreme pride in their appearance, especially when it comes to going on a date. The ‘Preparation Nation’ study* has demonstrated that men will be hogging the mirror as much as women this Valentine’s Day as they prepare to woo their dates or partners.

The traditional stereotype of British men being slapdash about how they look compared to their more suave and sophisticated European neighbours has been quashed by the new findings. British men will be spending an average of an hour and 17 minutes getting ready, even more time than the average ‘Italian stallion’ (1 hour and 13 minutes), and streets ahead in the grooming stakes when compared to Spanish men (1 hour 6 minutes), French men (1 hour 2 minutes) and German men (59 minutes).

What is more one in four British men will be spending two hours or more getting ready for their big night out this Valentine’s Day.

And it is not just British men that are top of the European grooming league. British ladies also take more time preparing themselves for their dates than their European counterparts. British women will be spending 1 hour and 50 minutes preening themselves, compared to Italian women (1 hour 41 minutes), Spanish women (1 hour 26 minutes), French women (1 hour 19 minutes) and German women (1 hour 15 minutes), this Valentine’s Day.

European League: Time spent getting ready for a date

Country	♂	♀
	1hr 17mins	1hr 50mins
	1hr 12mins	1hr 41mins
	1hr 6mins	1hr 26mins
	1hr 2mins	1hr 19mins
	0hr 59mins	1hr 15mins

Source: Scottish Widows Preparation Nation study 2006.

The research also shows that married Brits are spending less time getting ready than their single counterparts, or those that are living with their partner. It seems that tying the knot means we spend less time worrying about our appearance – as the time spent getting ready for a night out plummets from 1 hour 45 minutes to 1 hour 28 minutes. Italian married people spend 26 minutes less than single people, but the French, Germans and Spanish seem to keep the romance aflame with just a 7 minute drop after hitching up.

Paula Sutherland, consumer affairs spokeswoman at Scottish Widows said:

“The rise of the modern day metrosexual man, who takes time over his style and appearance, coupled with the Beckham effect certainly play a part in explaining this new found vanity. It’s fascinating to see how long it takes both men and women to prepare for a big date across Europe and I’m sure it comes as a surprise to many that Britons spend longer than any other nation. The Preparation Nation study not only highlights this, but also how long we dedicate to preparing for a whole host of things in life – from buying a house, to preparing for a dinner party, to buying a pension. Interestingly whilst we don’t raise a plucked eyebrow to taking in excess of 2 hours to get ready for a date on Valentine’s Day, we don’t seem to be prepared to spend more than 20 minutes a week reviewing our financial circumstances.”

Visit the dedicated website at www.preparation-nation.co.uk to find useful tools and information on preparing for your future.

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*Scottish Widows 'Preparation Nation' study, commissioned by BMRB Research, questioned a random sample of 2000 adults aged 18+ in GB, Italy, Spain, France and Germany between 9 - 27 January 2006. Interviews were conducted across the country and the results have been weighted to the profile of all adults.

Notes for editors

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Scottish Widows news releases appear on our media hub website at www.scottishwidows.co.uk/company/mediacentre.htm

Scottish Widows was founded in 1815 as Scotland's first mutual life office. Becoming part of the Lloyds TSB Group in 2000, Scottish Widows has become one of the most recognised brands in the life, pensions and investment industry in the UK. The product range includes ordinary long term insurance, such as life assurance, pensions, annuities and permanent health insurance, and savings and investment products. Using a multi-sales network of Financial Advisers, Direct Sales, Direct Marketing, the Internet and via the branch network of Lloyds TSB, Scottish Widows currently employs about 4,000 people.

1000 individuals in Germany, Italy, Spain, France and 2000 in Great Britain were interviewed by BMRB in January 2006.