

JUST ONE WORD

There are **111** letters in the longest name of a place in the world:

Krunghthephramahankhlon
bowonratanakosin
mahintharayuthaya
mahadilokphihobnovphrad
radchataniburirom
udomsantisug

In one word: Bangkok

Source: Guinness World Records

A VAT NIGHTMARE

Value Added Tax in Europe? It ranges from a rate of **15%** in Cyprus to **25%** in Sweden, **20%** in Italy and **22%** in Poland. In most cases, it is far above the minimum **15%** set by the European Union. Denmark, Sweden **25** Finland, Poland **22** Belgium, Ireland, Portugal **21** Italy, Austria, Hungary, Slovenia **20** France **19,6** Germany, Czech Republic, Greece, Holland, Slovakia **19** Latvia, Estonia, Lithuania, Malta **18** United Kingdom **17,5** Spain **16** Cyprus **15** Luxembourg **12**

EUROPEANS KISSING

How often do we kiss? Only the Spanish are not afraid to use their lips. The British come in last, exchanging affection only once a day. **44%** of Spaniards exchange **10** "intense" kisses every day. Italians manage **7** kisses a day. The English kiss just once. And pecks on the lips? Practiced by **25%** of Spaniards, **10%** of Italians and **4%** of the English.

Source: Sifo Research and Consulting

FREE(DOM) PRESS

Italy ranks **77th** in the world for freedom of the press, comparable to Mongolia and the Philippines. If, when it comes to the media, **39%** of countries call themselves "free" then **35%** cannot. Other nations in the Global Press Freedom Ranking:

1. Finland **2.** Sweden
3. Iceland **4.** Denmark
5. Norway **6.** Belgium
7. Switzerland **8.** Luxembourg
13. Portugal **18.** Ireland
20. Germany **24.** United States **30.** Lithuania – England **35.** Slovenia
37. Poland **44.** Austria – Hungary **48.** Czech Republic – Spain **61.** Greece – Israel **71.** Botswana **77.** Hungary – Italy – Philippines – Mongolia **87.** Serbia and Montenegro
88. Argentina **104.** Romania
105. Turkey **123.** Ukraine
145. Egypt **177.** China
184. Uzbekistan **191.** Cuba – Turkmenistan **194.** North Korea

Source: Freedom House

YOU ARE WHAT YOU EAT

What do Europeans consume on average? Meat, mostly, with potatoes and lots of sugar. Annual consumption, expressed as kilograms per head:

meat **97.7 kg** potatoes **71.4 kg** sugar **32.9 kg** fish **24.8 kg** eggs **13.7 kg** rice **5.6 kg**

Source: Eurostat

INSIDE

There are **9 million** prisoners across the world with **2 million** in the United States alone, where for every **100,000**

inhabitants about **700** are currently in prison and of any **100,000 1,100** male adults have served time in prison. If we add those on parole (about **700,000**) and those under surveillance (more than **3 million**) we have a total of about **6 million** American citizens subject to criminal law protection.

In Western Europe there is an average of **1** detainee per every thousand inhabitants. **1.4** detainees for every thousand in Portugal, **1.39** in England, **1.27** in Spain, and in Eastern Europe there are **2 million** detainees.

In 2003, there were **59,000** prisoners in France, against a prison capacity of **48,000**. Italy had **56,250** detainees in 2003 against its **42,000** available places. In Spain there were **53,000** detainees against the **42,000** places available in the prisons of the country. In Greece there were **54%** more prisoners than forecast for its prisons.

Source: Antigone Report

BIKINIS

60 is the age of the most worn female swimming costume in the world. Designed by the Swiss Louis Reard, launched by the stylist Jacques Heim, the first two-piece was presented in Paris at the Molinar swimming pools on 5 July 1946, four days after the atomic bomb was dropped by the Americans on Bikini, an atoll in the Pacific Ocean. **50,000** are the marriage proposals that were made to the first model who wore it in public, Michelle Bernardine 1964 is the year when the first cover page with the

"scandalous" bikini. Published on "Sports Illustrated".

6 were the days of "forced work" in an old people's home for a 17 year old from Munich, found guilty of wearing one in a square.

35,000 sterling (equivalent to **64,000 dollars**) was paid, during an auction, for the bikini worn by Ursula Address in the film *007 Licenced to Kill*

Source: BikiniAtoll.com

INCOMES

From **643 euro** a year for the lowest band in Bulgaria to **64,761** for the highest in United Kingdom. This updated data for 2005 reflects the intermediate European band Belgium **30,694** Denmark **41,736** Czech Republic **7,212** Germany **34,622** Estonia **4,934** Greece **18,751** Spain **21,063** France **29,139** Ireland **32,912** Italy **25,808** Cyprus **22,315** Latvia **3,616** Lithuania **4,097** Luxembourg **38,103** Hungary **5,906** Netherlands **32,434** Austria **32,434** Poland **7,065** Portugal **13,609** Slovenia **11,27** Slovakia **5,708** Finland **30,965** Sweden **32,056** United Kingdom **38,538** Bulgaria **1,884** Romania **2,321** Norway **42,475** EU average **28,024**

Source: Eurostat