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# BRIDGING AND BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL: WHICH IS MORE PREVALENT IN EUROPE?

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## **Abstract**

*There are a variety of ways of measuring social capital, including social trust, social networks, social support and participation in organisations. In this paper we use cluster analysis to show patterns of social capital or 'social capital regimes' across Europe, where the different elements are combined in various ways. The paper then goes on to look at how this differentiates European societies. Using the Eurobarometer 62.2, which covers a representative sample of 27 countries, the analysis found that European countries can be clustered according to the extent to which they have high or low levels of bridging and bonding social capital as developed in the theories of Michael Woolcock and David Halpern. The paper provides empirical challenges to previous studies that have shown that social capital reflects mainly welfare regimes and other studies that have tried to differentiate societies according to bridging and bonding social capital on a purely speculative basis by providing an exploratory "bottom up" classification based upon cluster analysis.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Social capital has aroused a great deal of interest in both policy and academic circles because it has been recognised that the quality of social relationships is important for enabling a well-functioning society and that economic indicators are insufficient for assessing this. In the words of a report from the World Bank 'Social capital refers to the internal social and cultural coherence of society, the norms and values that govern interactions among people and the institutions in which they are embedded. Social

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capital is the glue that holds societies together' (Grootaert 1998:iii). However, given the vagueness of this concept, it has been measured in many different ways. In a comparative European perspective, a range of indicators are used (derived mainly from the World/European Values Surveys, the ISSP or more recently the European Social Survey) that were not designed to measure social capital as such but have been developed as proxy indicators. These include measurements of social trust, civic and political engagement, social networks and social support. We take these together as representing social capital.

Faced with the many contradictions and discrepancies in the development of the idea (see (Banfield 1958; Baron, Field *et al.* 2000) some theorists have tried to identify two generic types of social capital: 'bridging' and 'bonding'. Bridging social capital is associated with weaker ties that apply across broad social networks and link different social groups. Bonding social capital is associated with strong ties that bind smaller, denser networks together more closely. This distinction has been broadly accepted by social scientists studying social capital (Putnam 1994; Putnam 1995; Halpern 2005). Whilst there is some speculation about how these different kinds of social capital vary across societies, attempts to identify certain patterns with certain regions have been mainly speculative (Halpern 2005). There have been some attempts to identify the empirical patterning of social capital but these have started with the assumption that the welfare state is the prime factor for generating these patterns (van Oorschot and Arts 2004; Kaariainen and Lehtonen 2006). In this paper, we build on these approaches and those of Mateju, Vitaskova and others (Mateju 1990).

This paper uses exploratory techniques (cluster analysis) to see how these different indicators can create different patterns of social cohesion in different European regions. We then test these patterns against models of social capital developed elsewhere to see whether the bridging/bonding relationships are found in Europe and, if so, whether they are primarily generated by welfare regimes.

One of the most common ways of measuring bridging social capital is through participation in organisations. This has been seen as a factor in social cohesion since de Toqueville first identified the role of civil society as an important factor for American democracy (De Toqueville 1840 (1969 trans)). More recently, Robert Putnam and James Coleman have pointed to the importance of this factor for maintaining social progress and democratic life in the USA (Coleman 1988; Putnam 2000). Putnam also argues that civic participation is a way of differentiating more developed and thriving parts of Europe from less developed and failing parts through the example of Northern and Southern Italy (Putnam 1994). Associative life is important because it facilitates the social control of individuals by introducing norms and sanctions.

Trust also plays an important part as an outcome (or perhaps as a pre-condition) of such participation. Trust enables bridging and bonding to take place. It is often equated with trust in institutions or by so-called 'social trust', i.e. by trusting people

one does not know (Fukuyama 1995; Uslaner 2003). It is easy to see how this can be seen as an aspect not only of democracy but also of capitalist market development where trust is the foundation for contracts and economic confidence. Coleman uses the example of New York diamond traders who lend each other valuable samples on the basis of trust (Coleman 1988; Halpern 2005). However, we should distinguish between the trust associated with bridging social capital which is impersonal and pervasive and the trust associated with bonding social capital which is bounded and particular.

Measures of bonding social capital focus rather on social networks and informal relationships (Lin 2001). Here trust is also important, but rather than being of a universalistic kind, it is more often of a particularistic kind. The example of the diamond traders is also apposite here – presumably they lend each other diamonds because they know each other. Lin explores this reputational aspect of social capital (Lin, Cook *et al.* 2001). Another example is that of market traders in Eastern Europe who, at the start of transition, were unprotected by civil laws and formed networks of relationships through which they organised small-scale trading in a chaotic and often hostile environment (Wallace, Shmulyar *et al.* 1999). Bourdieu and his followers see this aspect of social capital in terms of investments in social relationships – investments that can be latent or can be called upon for purposes such as maintaining social status, raising capital, helping with finding jobs or gaining access to resources (Granovetter 1974; Bourdieu 1983). In situations where social networks need to operate in a semi-clandestine way or where they are a substitute for formal market relationships, bonding relationships can be important, sometimes reinforced by family or ethnic group membership (Portes 1998; Wallace, Shmulyar *et al.* 1999).

A better measure of bonding social capital is social support since it measures not only whether the networks exist but also what they do. Social support refers to the way in which people help each other informally with a variety of domestic and other tasks or needs (Crow 2004) and may be associated with strong social networks (bonding social capital).

Bridging and bonding social capital can be combined in different ways. It is clear that much of the impetus for this discussion has come from the USA where the lack of universal welfare support, a tradition of anti-government attitudes and of strong civic association may have encouraged particular forms of social cohesion. But to what extent is this the case in Europe where the state has traditionally had a much stronger and more accepted role in society and where civil society has a long tradition of association with the state (Boje and Furaker 2003; Evers and Lavalley 2004)? Furthermore, how do these types of social capital – bridging and bonding – combine in different European regions in the context of different social formations, values and cultures?

## 2. SOCIAL CAPITAL IN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

European societies are associated with different forms of social cohesion. In some countries, such as the Nordic states and North-western Europe, we find high levels of civic and political participation. This is also associated with strong welfare states and this has been demonstrated in several studies (van Oorschot and Arts 2004; Kaariainen and Lehtonen 2006). The argument is that where there is a strong welfare state, there are not only higher levels of trust, but also higher levels of other kinds of social capital, especially the bridging kind. This is further encouraged by the fact in that in many countries where there is a strong welfare state, civil society in the form of welfare associations such as churches, trades unions and other kinds of NGOs has an institutionalised role. Hence, social capital to a great extent goes along with different welfare-regimes (van Oorschot and Arts 2004).

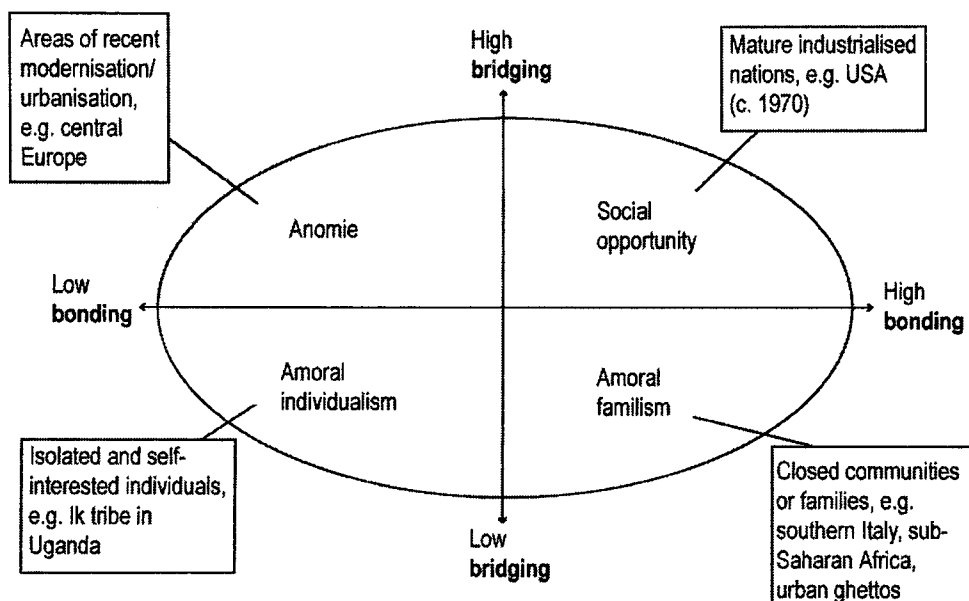
However, we are concerned that this simply imposes and therefore reifies the typology of welfare states. It is more difficult to explain why exactly different kinds of social capital should be associated with various welfare states. Indeed, it could be said that bonding social capital could act as a substitute for a comprehensive welfare state. For example family, ethnic community and network self-help can be an alternative to state-provided support. We would expect to find it in countries where the welfare state has traditionally been underdeveloped, such as in Southern Europe (Sotiropoulos 2004), or where it has broken down or been withdrawn, such as in some parts of Eastern Europe.

It is difficult to see where Eastern European countries fit into welfare state typologies. In Eastern Europe, there always was a strong welfare state, but the way in which people accessed state resources was through personal networks and systems of favours (Sik 1994; Ledeneva 1998). Furthermore, the cutting of the welfare state and the lack of formal civil society (Winant 1998) may have meant that people were forced to resort much more to informal social support or bonding social capital (Rose 1998). We may therefore expect to find stronger bonding social capital under these circumstances. If however, the traditional networks built up under the old regime have, to some extent, broken down, we may instead find a situation of isolation, insecurity and anomie (Sztompka 1999).

This scenario of bridging and bonding social capital has been mapped by Halpern drawing on Woolcock and Gittel's and on Vidal's ideas of relationships between bridging and bonding social capital (Gittel and Vidal 1998; Woolcock 1998). In Figure 1 below, which we have reproduced from Halpern's book *Social Capital*, he argues that high bonding and high bridging are associated with 'social opportunity' and are found most often in developed industrialised societies such as Sweden and the USA. High bonding and low bridging on the other hand are associated with 'amoral familism' or closed communities such as are found in southern Italy and in urban ghettos. The combination of low bridging and low bonding, by contrast, is associated

with ‘amoral individualism’, i.e. with a society of self-interested individuals who fail to form sustainable communities. High bridging and low bonding in the fourth quadrant, he describes as ‘anomie’ and are associated with areas of rapid dislocation and re-modernisation, such as we find in the post-communist countries of Central Europe. For our analysis, we will test to see whether these quadrants are empirically verifiable.

**Figure 1. Types of societies according to mixes of bonding and bridging social capital. (see Halpern 2005: 21)**



Given the extensive research linking social capital with welfare regimes (van Oorschot and Arts 2004; Kaariainen and Lehtonen 2006), we also test the hypothesis that social capital is associated with different welfare state regimes. Instead of taking these *a priori* categories for granted, we look at how social capital clusters and then see if this reflects the different welfare regimes in Europe. We would expect to find that patterns differ between the Nordic regimes (Sweden, Denmark and Finland), liberal regimes (UK and Eire) the corporatist conservative regimes represented by the Old Member States and perhaps by the Southern welfare regimes, if we accept that these represent a distinct type (Bonoli 1997). The Eastern European welfare regimes are quite heterogeneous and there has been no classification of them so far into welfare regime types. Thus, whilst Slovenia is more like a Nordic welfare regime, we find that Romania and Bulgaria resemble Southern welfare states with a declining coverage of social risks for much of the population since the transition from communism. The Czech

Republic, on the other hand, along with other post-communist welfare states, has adopted many aspects of the insurance-based German system. However, the fact that these countries have adopted aspects of liberal, corporatist and social-democratic welfare regimes makes them very hard to classify in terms of the well-known regime types.

### 3. DATA AND METHODS OF RESEARCH

In this paper, we shall analyse a European data set that was specifically designed to measure social capital – the Eurobarometer 62.2 conducted in November 2004. This covers 27 countries (all EU members and two ‘Candidate Countries’: Romania and Bulgaria). We have excluded Turkey from the analysis because it was quite dissimilar from the other countries. Sample sizes were approximately 1000 per country and samples were representative at the country level. In our analysis we use weighted data to account for within country deviations and different population sizes.

We first consider different definitions of social capital as single indicators before trying to ascertain their patterning across Europe using cluster analysis. Hence, in contrast to other approaches, we attempt to identify a typology of European societies based upon an exploratory, bottom-up approach that uses combinations of bridging and bonding social capital. Rather than starting with welfare regimes, we try to identify ‘social capital regimes’.

To evaluate the appropriateness of the assumption of these social capital regimes in Europe, we apply cluster analysis to show that levels and specific combinations of social capital relevant criteria group countries in different ways into well known clusters of EU15/NMS10 and the welfare regimes in Europe. Cluster analysis is an exploratory method. As such it should be seen as an auxiliary tool to detect particular patterns among the data. Since national averages of indicators are used, within-country variations are neglected. However, what we gain is a way of clustering a large number of countries into a manageable number of groups.

Another critical point to mention about cluster analysis is the multitude of ways in which it is specified in research. There are many ways to conduct a cluster analysis, for example by choosing different calculations of a) distances between units and b) different algorithms that reflect how these units are finally merged. We opted for Euclidian distances and chose single and complete linkage. Euclidian distances represent a mathematical-geometric way of assessing distances between two objects in a common space, single linkage is an algorithm, which is particularly useful for the detection of outlier cases and complete linkage leads to homogeneous clusters. These characteristics are important for a good understanding of the results of a cluster analysis. However, these clusters are relatively robust, since even when we applied different algorithms, no large deviations were found.

Especially in a field which has to deal with the problem of a loose concept of social capital, such an exploratory analysis contributes to the clarification of the constructs. By clustering countries according to the multiple dimensions associated with social capital, we gain insights into the simultaneous appearance of particular outlines of social capital. Eight indicators are used: generalised trust, social networks (friends, work colleagues, neighbours), social support (support, provide) and voluntary organisations (membership, participation). This automatically leads towards weighting the impact of different dimensions. For instance, generalised trust represents just one out of eight criteria on which similarities and distances are calculated, whereas all other dimensions are represented by two or three, and thus have more weight, in the analysis.

Below we define and describe our key indicators along with their variations across European countries based upon their classification as either bridging or bonding forms of social capital. We take countries as the main unit of analysis, with country averages as our main data point – although we are aware of important variations within countries – because the political system, the welfare state and civil society are normally organised on a national basis, the nation is an appropriate unit of analysis for our work.

## 4. INDICATORS OF BRIDGING SOCIAL CAPITAL

### 4.1. MEMBERSHIP OF ASSOCIATIONS

The most common indicator of bridging social capital is that of *participation in civil society*. Here we mean voluntary organisations such as membership of social clubs like the Rotary Club, Churches or Sports Clubs. In the EuroBarometer 62.2, people were asked to mention any membership of 14 different organisations. The full list of organisations covered by the survey can be seen in Chart 1. We distinguish whether or not respondents were members of any organisation, neglecting the potential different meanings of ‘membership’ for social capital.

In addition to serving the community in various ways, participation in these organisations is expected to help build social networks and to develop and enforce social norms. The density of associations and numbers participating in them are often seen as good indicators of social capital. However, critics of Putnam have pointed out that participation can take many different forms (Banfield 1958; Baron, Field *et al.* 2000; Maloney and Smith 2000). Many people subscribe to an organisation, but never attend a meeting and this will not help them to build networks of social support or reinforce social norms. Hence, we operationalise participation in terms of membership on the one hand and active participation on the other. Again, we just



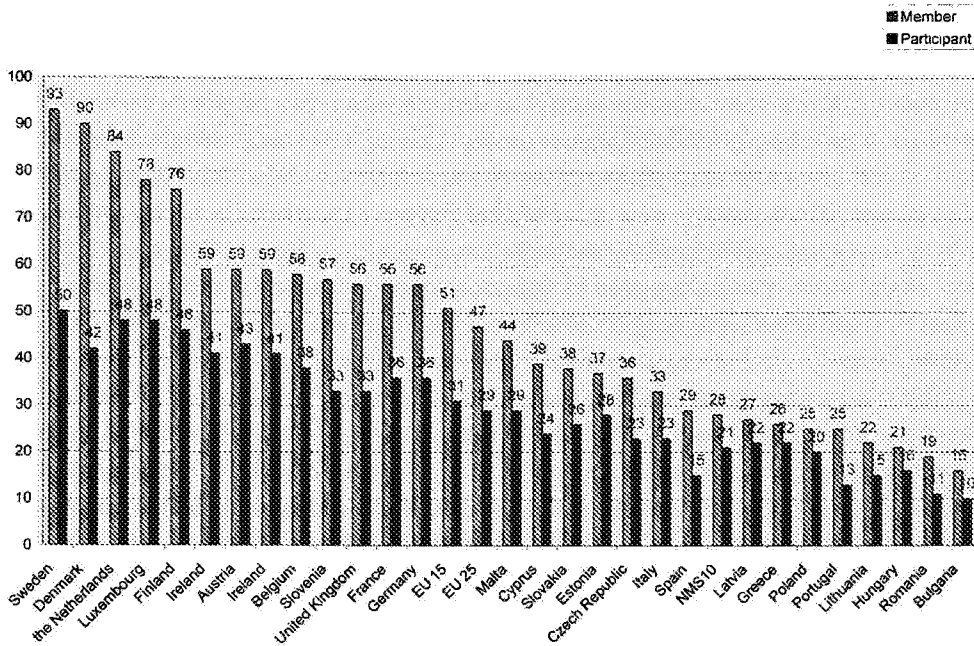
distinguish between those who participate in any of the 14 organisations and those who do not.

In the USA participation is assumed to refer to voluntary organisations. However, in Europe participation is not always voluntary to the same extent and civic society takes different forms. For example in Sweden and Denmark Trades Union membership is almost universal for employees and in Germany and Austria people have to opt out of the church rather than opting in. This of course raises rates of participation more than in countries where membership of civic organisations is more voluntary in nature. However, we have decided to retain the range of measures because they are indicators of participation in civil society.

In contemporary surveys, participation in voluntary organisations is measured in many ways. First, the kind of organisation is classified. The Eurobarometer 62.2 measures membership of 14 different organisations. Second, and very important for social capital formation, is the differentiation between levels of intensity of participation. As participation becomes more frequent and encompassing, it is assumed that those involved are more bound to the organisation and the community. But only by fully participating do people build the most useful stocks of social capital in the sense applied here. The paper therefore distinguishes between membership (which indicates a weaker form of social capital contribution) and active participation in organisations.

It can be seen from Chart 1 that Europe can be divided into four regions with respect to membership of associations. In northern Europe (Denmark, Sweden, Finland) along with some mainland European countries (the Netherlands and Luxembourg) more than three quarters of people are members of organisations and in Denmark and Sweden it is 90% or more. In the second group of countries, around half of the people are members of organisations and these countries comprise the rest of Western Europe plus Slovenia. The third group of countries is below the EU25 average but above the average for the New Member States and these countries are Malta, Cyprus, Slovakia, Estonia, the Czech Republic, Italy and Spain. In the remaining Eastern and Southern countries, membership of organisations is very low – it is only 16% in Bulgaria and 19% in Romania.

Chart 1. Membership and participation in associations



Question wording: 'Now, I would like you to look carefully at the following list of organisations and activities. Please say in which, if any, you are a member. And, for which, if any, do you currently participate actively or do voluntary work? Sports or recreational organisation: education, arts or music association; trade union; business or professional organisation; environmental organisation; charity or social aid; organisation for the elderly; organisation for elderly rights; religious or church organisation; political party or organisation; organisation for the interest of patients or disabled; other interest organisations e.g. for women, sexual orientation or local issues; or none of these.'

Source: Eurobarometer 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

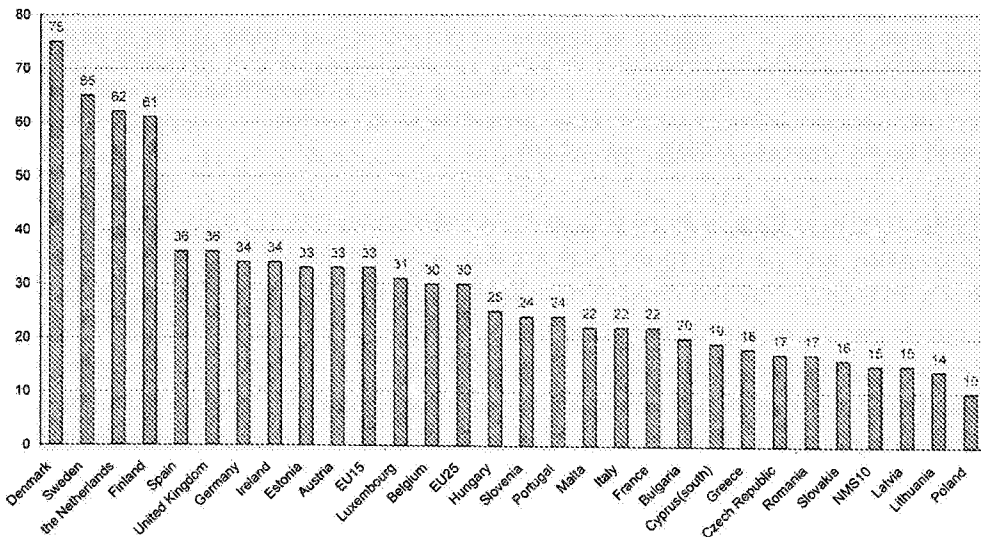
While in general there is some similarity between countries in terms of the levels of membership and participation, there are also some important discrepancies. In the countries with the highest levels of membership, we see that much of the membership is purely passive or formal in nature. Elsewhere, by contrast, we find that, although membership is lower, participation is relatively higher. In France, for example only half of the population holds a membership of any organisation, but 36% participate in organisations (this is also the case in Hungary and Spain). Indeed, where membership is very low, participation is often relatively higher as can be observed in Latvia, Greece and Poland. Do high levels of membership discourage activism? Are those who join associations in low associative countries more likely to be activists? These discrepancies should make us cautious about emphasising the role of membership in organisations.

## 4.2. GENERALISED TRUST

The second indicator of bridging social capital is that of *generalised trust*. In the EuroBarometer 62.2, people were asked whether they think that most people can be trusted or that one cannot be too careful in dealing with other people (see Chart 2 for wording of the question and the answer scale). Although it is only a single indicator, it is a powerful measurement of the universalistic levels of social cohesion in a society. That is, the extent that there is a belief that people can generally be trusted, even without knowing anything about their particular qualities. Generalised trust is taken by political scientists as a measure of the extent of openness and acceptance of public social ties and public spiritedness (Mateju 1990; Fukuyama 1995; Lin 2001; Uslaner 2003).

The results are set out in Chart 2 and show a clear pattern across Europe. In the Northern countries (Sweden, Finland, Denmark and also the Netherlands), people show high levels of generalised trust. More than 60% (up to 75% in Denmark) state that most people can be trusted. In Eastern and Southern Eastern Europe however, people are far less likely to report trust in their fellow citizens. Corresponding percentages indicate a very low level of generalised trust among the public in the Latvia, Lithuania and Poland as well as other Eastern and Southern countries where only between 10 and 20% express trust in others.

Chart 2. Social trust



Question wording: 'Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people? a) Most people can be trusted, b) You can't be too careful, c) it depends (spontaneous).'

Source: EB 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

## 5. INDICATORS OF BONDING SOCIAL CAPITAL

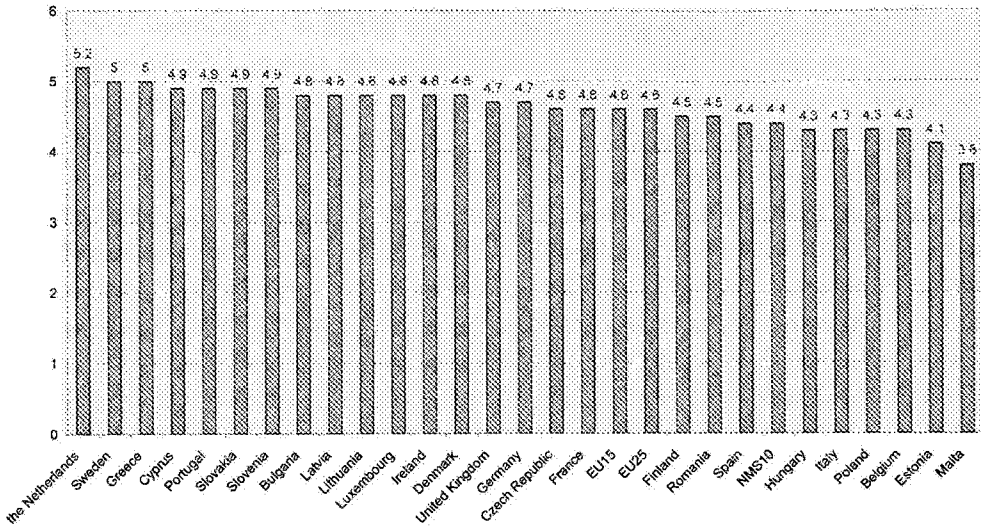
### 5.1. SOCIAL NETWORKS

The density, strength and extensiveness of *social networks* is very important for understanding the extent to which they form bonding social capital but difficult to operationalise in comparative surveys. There is a substantial literature on social networks and how they work as social capital, but they do not usually use these kinds of data (Burt 2001; Lin 2001; Lin, Cook *et al.* 2001). Here, we have taken three different measures of social network capital: frequency of contact (on a 6 point scale) with friends, with work colleagues and with neighbours. Together these can cover a range of different kinds of sociability. In subsequent analysis, we recoded the initial responses so that that high values indicated frequent contact and calculated the mean value. The results are presented in Charts 3, 4 and 5.

In general, such social contacts are more frequent in the EU15 than in the wider set of countries. For example, over three quarters of Dutch respondents report meeting their friends frequently, whereas less than half (45%) of Estonians did so. The highest frequency was in the Netherlands: almost 80% of the population there meets their friends at least once in a week. In Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, and Portugal (the South-Eastern European countries), high levels were also reported. Much lower levels of contacts with friends were found in Malta, Belgium, Estonia, Hungary and Poland.

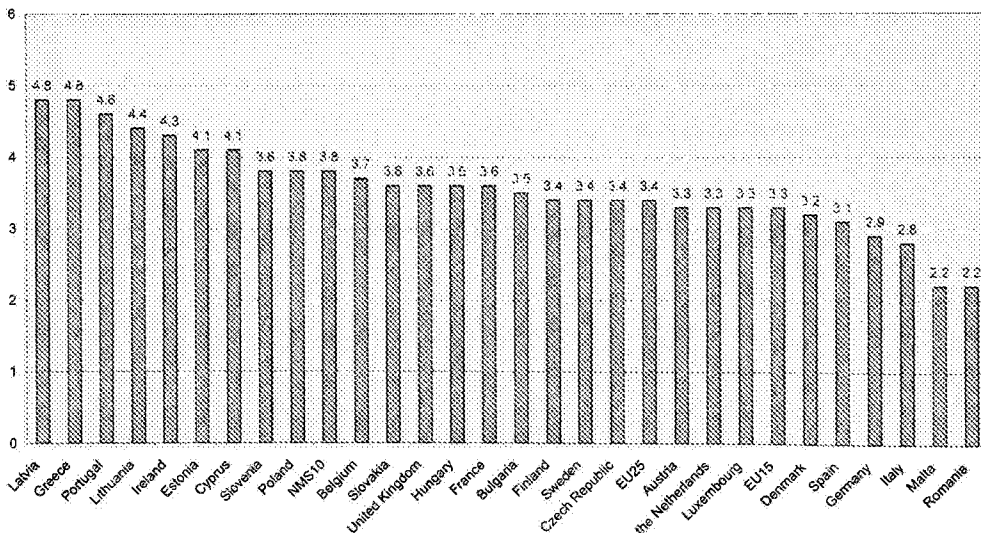
However, contacts with work colleagues and neighbours took different forms. Here it was the Eastern and Southern countries that were most likely to have this kind of contact.

Chart 3. Meeting friends (mean)



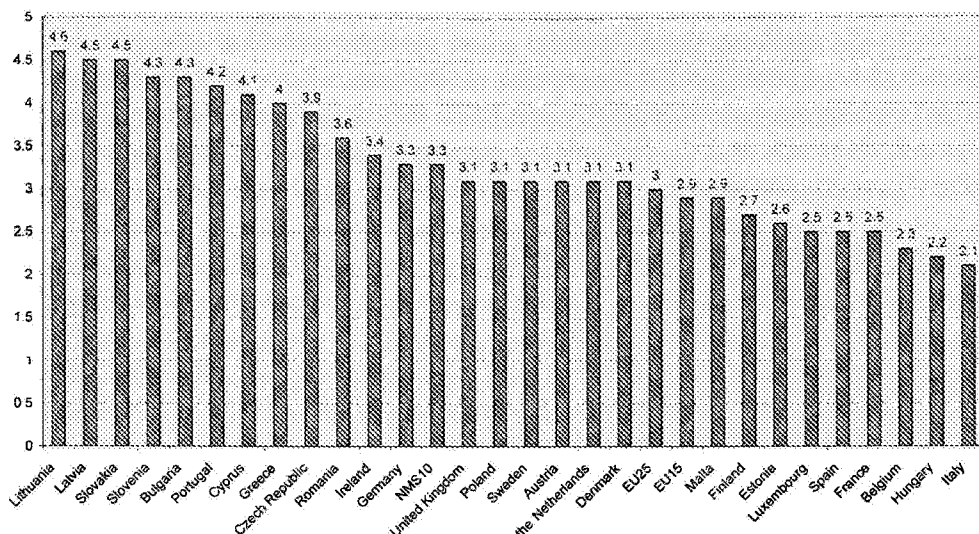
Question wording: 'How often do you meet socially with friends? Answers: several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less than once a month, never.' (means)  
 Source: EB 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

Chart 4. Meeting work colleagues



Question wording: 'How often do you meet socially with work colleagues? Answers: several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less than once a month, never.' (means)  
 Source: EB 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

Chart 5. Meeting neighbours



Question wording: 'How often do you meet socially with neighbours? Answers: several times a week, once a week, several times a month, once a month, less than once a month, never.' (means)  
 Source: Eurobarometer 62.2, 2004, weighted data.

## 5.2. SOCIAL SUPPORT

A concrete indication of the strength of bonding social capital is *social support*. Social support refers to the extent to which people give or provide services of different kinds within informal networks, or at a neighbourhood level. The EuroBarometer 62.2 asks its respondent to choose from eight different situations where they would be able to rely on friends, work colleagues, neighbours or other acquaintances (without paying them) and where they helped the above-mentioned groups of people during the last 12 months. Chart 5 shows the exact wording of the multiple-choice questions that were used. For our analysis, we calculated summative indices for both a) the support provided by those other people and b) the provision of help to those people. These indices both show a satisfactory level of reliability for the two measures of social capital.<sup>1</sup>

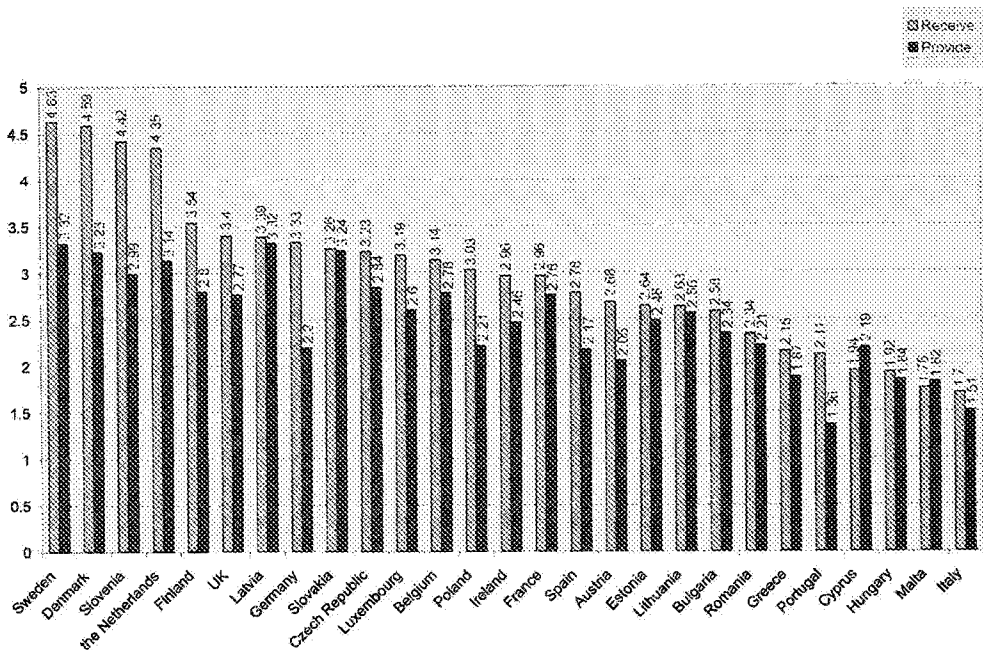
On these indicators, we find a clear tripartite picture in Europe (see Chart 6). People in the North receive help more often than in mid-latitude Europe (Slovenia is an exception). In southern and Eastern Europe, people are less likely to receive help from others. In the South and East the mean number of situations across which they

<sup>1</sup> Guttman's  $\lambda$  was calculated for both indices, yielding sufficiently high coefficients of .76 for support by others and .70 for the provision of help ( $\lambda_3$ , which equals Cronbach's Alpha) and .74 and .68 respectively ( $\lambda_6$ ).

would receive help is lower than 2.5, compared to about 4.5 in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, the Netherlands and Slovenia.

Generally speaking, those countries where most is received are the ones where most is given. Although the mean number of situations where people receive help is larger than the mean number of situations where they provide help, people in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands provide a great deal of help compared to other European countries.

Chart 6. Receiving and providing social support



Question wording: 'In which of the following situations would you be able to rely on friends, work colleagues, neighbours or acquaintances to receive help or support? (Please note that we do not mean people who would be paid for it.) And in which of the following situations did you, yourself, help or support friends, work colleagues, neighbours or other acquaintances in the past twelve months? (Please note that we do not mean help provided in the context of a formal organisation, or help you have been paid for). Help with household tasks, shopping, gardening, etc.; occasional care for a dependent member of your household (child, elderly, disabled, etc.); personal care including washing, dressing, eating, etc. Help with paperwork for getting social benefits, prepare tax returns, getting a phone or another device, etc.; discuss personal problems; borrow money; borrow valuable goods (car, use of house, lawn mower, electric drill, etc.); help in case you were threatened, harassed or assaulted; none of these situations; don't know.'

Source: EB 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

## 6. CLUSTERING SOCIAL CAPITAL IN EUROPE

Next we consider how these different forms of social capital are clustered in Europe. The question is thus: how is social capital distributed in European countries? Can we see any pattern to this? Finally, does it correspond with the theoretical parameters of Halpern's bridging and bonding scheme?

Figure 2 shows the cluster results in the form of the dendrogram that represents the similarities and differences concerning social capital in Europe. It shows the similarity and differences of the merging process. The larger the index (printed on the y-axis) the more differences can be observed between countries or clusters of countries. As can be easily seen in the dendrogram, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden are very similar as they merge at a very early stage of the process. The dendrogram shows the final cluster solution that suggests five fairly homogenous clusters in Europe by cutting the 'tree' at the index value of about 10 points.<sup>2</sup> The dendrogram should be read in conjunction with Tables 1 and 2, which describe the patterns that the dendrogram identify in more detail.

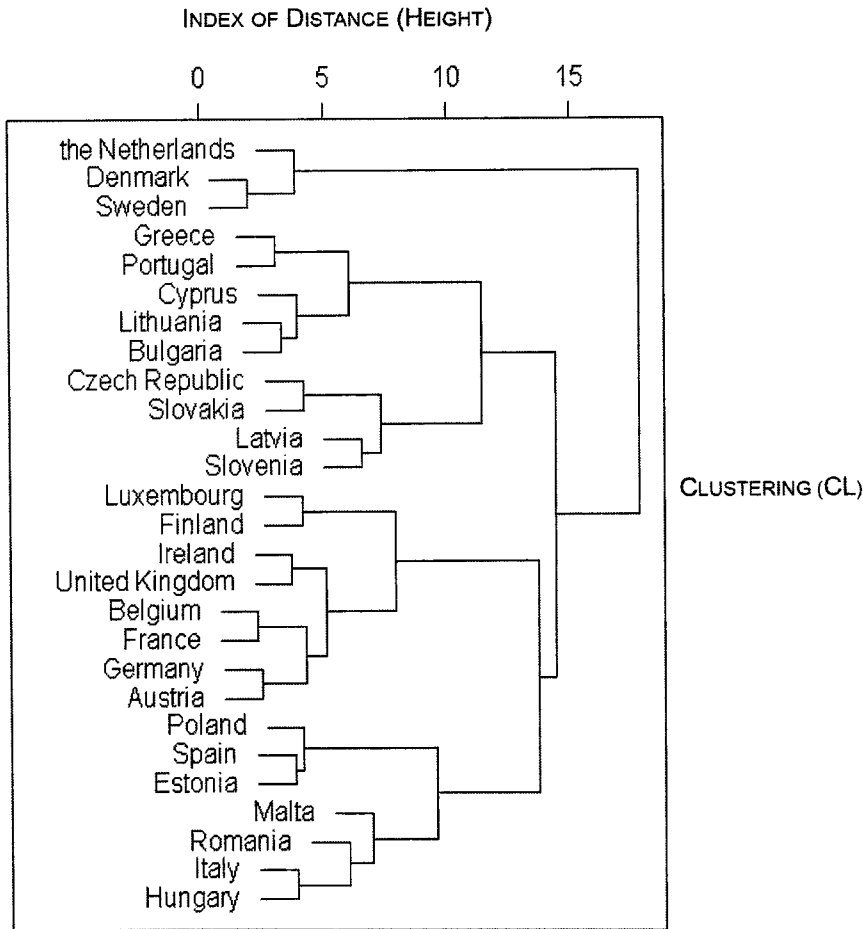
The first cluster of countries is very clear. It consists of the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden (Type 1). This is the group of countries which are high on both bridging and bonding forms of social capital because they score highly on all indicators (as can be seen in Table 2). Cluster 2 consists of Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Lithuania and Bulgaria. In these countries there is strong bonding social capital and weak bridging social capital. The next cluster includes the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Latvia and Slovenia. In these countries the levels of bonding and bridging social capital are about average but with a slight tendency towards bonding, mainly because levels of trust are low. The fourth cluster of countries includes Luxembourg, Finland, Ireland, the United Kingdom, Belgium, France, Germany and Austria, which are also average on the eight measures of social capital but have a slight tendency towards bridging social capital, partly because levels of trust are high. The last cluster (cluster five) is made up of Poland, Spain, Estonia, Malta, Romania, Italy and Hungary. In this cluster all forms of social capital are low.

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<sup>2</sup> That is just one solution, but cluster analysis is an exploratory method so the researcher has to argue for a meaningful interpretation of his or her selected one.



**Figure 2. Social capital clusters in Europe. Results of a cluster analysis based on complete linkage clustering**



Notes: Variables are standardised prior to the analysis to account for different variances according to the measurement level. Euclidian distances are calculated. Single Linkage is applied to detect outliers, Complete Linkage to find reasonable cluster solutions.

Source: Eurobarometer 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

The dendrogram provides further information about the homogeneity within each cluster and the heterogeneity between them. As we can see, the first cluster (the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden) is very homogenous, in fact they are the most similar countries of all and are the first to merge (they have low values on the index of height). Interestingly, they are also most different from the other countries as they merge with the other clusters in the very last step of the analysis. However, in other clusters there is also reasonable homogeneity, especially in cluster 3 which represents more or less the rest of Western Europe.

**Table 1. Social capital in clusters of European countries. Means or percentages of variables used in the cluster analysis**

Cluster		Networks				Social Support		Organisations (%)	
		Trust (%)	Friends	Colleagues	Neighbours	Support	Provide	Members	Participants
Type 1 (N=1750)	Mean	64	5.1	3.3	3.7	4.4	3.2	87	48
	SD	0.48	1.17	2.50	1.85	2.46	1.91	0.34	0.50
Type 2 (N=1960)	Mean	20	4.9	4.4	4.2	2.3	2.0	23	16
	SD	0.40	1.46	2.98	1.95	1.93	1.75	0.42	0.36
Type 3 (N=1160)	Mean	18	4.7	3.5	4.0	3.4	2.9	37	24
	SD	0.39	1.36	2.36	1.91	2.18	2.00	0.48	0.43
Type 4 (N=11900)	Mean	32	4.6	3.3	3.0	3.2	2.5	58	36
	SD	0.47	1.40	2.62	1.91	2.30	2.02	0.49	0.48
Type 5 (N=9980)	Mean	22	4.3	3.1	2.6	2.3	1.9	28	19
	SD	0.42	1.67	2.61	1.96	2.10	1.81	0.45	0.39

Notes: For variable description see previous tables. Means refer to average percentages in the clusters (trust and organisations) or index values (networks and support).

Source: EB 62.2 (2004), weighted data.

The remaining clusters represent a mixture of Southern and Eastern European countries where we have already hypothesised that bridging social capital is likely to be low and bonding social capital higher.

Table 1 shows the means and standard deviations for eight different indicators of social capital and in Table 2 the information is summarised under the different types, ranging along a continuum from high bridging to high bonding and finally low on all kinds of social capital.

In the case of the Type 1 countries, we can see that they are high on all indicators – both bridging and bonding. They are countries with strong welfare states, but the Netherlands would often be classified as a corporatist/family centred welfare state whilst Sweden and Denmark are more universalist. In these countries, the one implies the other and they would confirm the arguments of Putnam, Coleman and others that high formal participation leads to stronger networks and higher social trust. It is surprising, however, that in these countries social support is strong although the welfare state provides extensive support for its citizens. The fact that this group was the most consistently homogenous of all our clusters, means that this is a very significant finding. If we had ended our analysis here, we would have concluded that the proponents of formal social capital as an agent of social cohesion (such as Putnam, the World Bank etc.) were correct. However, European societies are varied in their histories and cultures, so that we also encounter other patterns.

Type 4 countries are countries with medium levels of bridging and bonding social capital. They exhibit the same characteristics as the Type 1 countries, but less strongly. They are all high social trust societies and correspond, more or less, with the remaining older members of the European Union.

In Type 3 countries, we find many more post-communist states, where civil society has developed to a far greater extent than in the Type 2 societies. However, informal participation is stronger than formal participation, making these into countries where bonding social capital is somewhat stronger than bridging social capital.

**Table 2. Types of social capital regimes in Europe. Results of a cluster analysis, description and interpretation**

Types of social capital regime	Countries in the cluster	Characteristics of regime
Type 1	Denmark Sweden the Netherlands	High bonding, high bridging social capital.
Type 2	Greece Portugal Cyprus Lithuania Bulgaria	High bonding, low bridging.
Type 3	Czech Republic Slovakia Slovenia Latvia	Medium bridging, medium bonding with tendency towards bonding social capital. Low social trust.
Type 4	Luxembourg Finland Ireland United Kingdom Belgium France Germany Austria	Medium bridging medium bonding but with high levels of bridging, especially social trust.
Type 5	Poland Spain Estonia Malta Romania Italy Hungary	Low bridging, low bonding.

Type 2 countries represent the ones with highest levels of bonding social capital and the lowest levels of bridging social capital. Here Greece, Portugal, Cyprus, Lithuania and Bulgaria represent a collection of Eastern and Southern European countries where bridging social capital is very low, but bonding social capital is strong. In these

countries the substitution hypothesis works. In these countries, strong social relationships are associated with lack of trust and lack of participation in organisations. All of these countries were formerly under communist or authoritarian rule, where civil society was crushed or manipulated by the regimes in power. In these countries informal connections are the principal way of getting things done (Rose 1998).

Finally, in Type 5 societies, we find low levels of social capital on all indicators. These comprise some Eastern and some Southern countries. These comprise societies of atomised individuals and societies characterised by strong family bonding at the expense of other types of social ties. Since we did not ask about family ties in this survey and it is possible that, in these countries, the family is most important, which would make these countries more typical of 'amoral familism' rather than 'amoral individualism'.

We find in general three geo-cultural patterns: in the three Nordic countries there is a high and homogenous level of social capital of all kinds. In the old EU countries, regardless of welfare regime, we find similar patterns but less strongly. The Southern and Eastern European countries represent a bridging social capital deficit (although the Central European New Member States are more similar to the old EU members). In other parts of Southern and Eastern Europe, bonding social capital is the way in which societies cohere, which might have important implications for solidarity across national groups within society as well as between nations. The apparent lack of even bonding social capital in some countries could be explained by the greater importance of family bonding: the indicators we have used exclude familial forms of support because they do not lead to broader social cohesion. However, the family could be the first port of call for those needing a loan or help with a personal problem. The family is then also an alternative to associational life. Since other studies have pointed to the fact that the family is stronger and more dominant in social welfare and social organisation in the South and the East this may come as no surprise (Wallace 1995; Hantrais and Letablier 1996; Pfau-Effinger 2003; Evandrou and Glaser 2004). Therefore, it is not necessarily the case that there is no social capital in Type 5 countries, but rather that social capital is concentrated in the family. Other analysis carried out by us has shown that close familial forms of social support are found in the Type 2, 3, and 5 countries (Pichler and Wallace forthcoming). That is, there is a limited and concentrated set of social relationships. The more extended de-familialisation that we find in the Nordic countries means that friends and associations may have an enhanced role (Esping-Andersen 1990).

Another factor affecting our findings is that the idea of 'friends' may be interpreted differently in different parts of Europe. There may be a broader definition of friends in those countries where respondents report more frequent contact. On the other hand the fact that 15% or more of the respondents in Estonia, Hungary, Poland and Romania reported seeing friends less often than once a month seems to us to point to high levels of social isolation in those countries. Nobody in Northern Europe reported

being so isolated. It could also be the fact that where family is the predominant form of social relationship, those without family nearby are truly disadvantaged, whilst those societies with less sanguinary and affinal ties offer more opportunities for social relationships – people are more embedded in a loose but extensive network of ties.

## 7. SOCIAL CAPITAL REGIMES?

Let us now return to the diagram originally used by Halpern (2005). Figure 3 represents our own amended version of this diagram. We can see that in the top right hand quadrant, there is a clear set of countries which exhibit both high bonding and high bridging social capital. These are Type 1 countries, although Type 4 countries are rather similar, although weaker in their levels of bridging and bonding social capital. These are societies which are open to social relationships of a kind leading to system cohesion but which also have strong social bonds of mutual support. Hence, they are characterised by strong social solidarity of an open and inclusive kind. This solidarity extends to people they don't know as well as people they know.

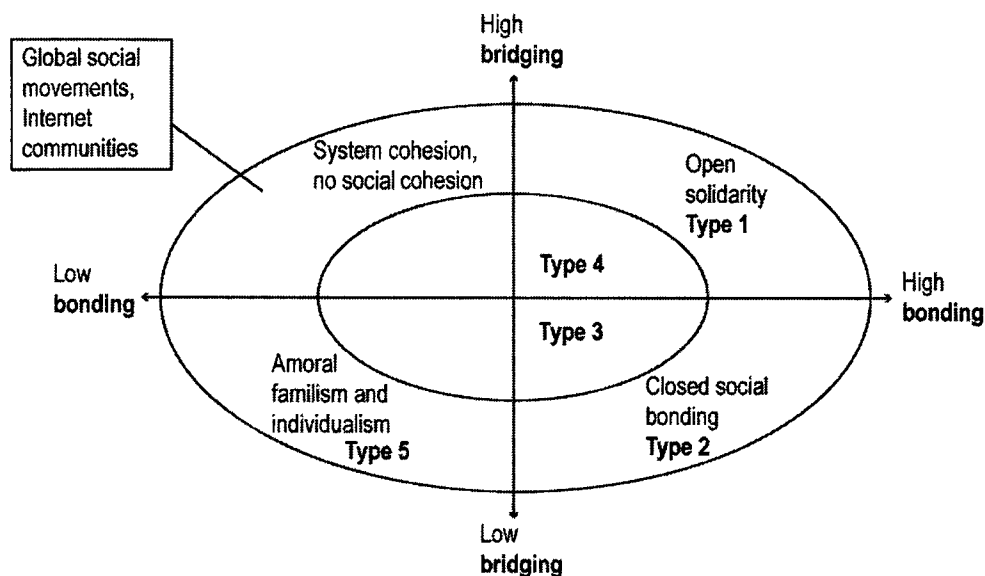
In the second, lower right quadrant, we find societies with low levels of bridging social capital but high levels of bonding social capital. Here we find Type 2 countries, consisting of certain Southern and Eastern European states as well as Type 3 countries, consisting of other Southern and Eastern European states that are similar but have higher levels of bridging social capital. At least in the case of Slovenia, the Czech Republic and Slovakia, there are historical and developmental similarities with many Type 4 countries, their neighbours. It is more difficult, however, to see why Latvia is in this category. We could see this as simply an outlier. The societies in this quadrant could be characterised as being more closed communities, which rely on close personal bonds as forms of social cohesion.

In the third, bottom left quadrant, we find the societies that are best characterised by amoral familism and amoral individualism. Here, social cohesion is of a particular kind is much stronger than system cohesion. A number of Southern and Eastern European countries fit this model.

Finally, in the top, left hand quadrant we find societies with high bridging and low bonding social capital. There were no examples of this in our sample, and we find it difficult to characterise these societies as ones of 'anomie' as Halpern did in his original classification. Furthermore, these were not societies of transition as he suggested (since they can be found in the bottom two quadrants). We can try to speculate that societies with strong bridging but low bonding social capital might consist of groups formed by association and not by face-to-face or personal contact. Social groups of these kinds might be represented by global social movements or internet communities. It is also possible that strongly authoritarian societies where

personal bonds have broken down in favour of more anonymous relationships with the state. An example might be that of the former Eastern Germany.

**Figure 3. Relationship between bonding and bridging social capital in European societies (adapted from Halpern)**



## 8. CONCLUSIONS

The paper has focused on those aspects of social capital that relate to social relations and social cohesion. It considers whether the different kinds of social capital (bridging and bonding) relate to one another in different ways in different countries. The analysis shows that there are distinct clusters of social capital in different countries. In some countries both bridging and bonding are high, in others, bonding social capital predominates and in a third group there is little social capital of any kind.

Whilst there is a relationship between social capital and welfare regimes, much of the strength of this relationship relates only to some welfare regimes – namely three of the social democratic welfare regimes (Denmark, Sweden) whilst other Nordic regimes (Finland) do not feature as strongly and the Netherlands (often characterised as corporatist/family based) also belongs to this cluster. The heterogeneity of welfare regimes represented by the rest of pre-1995 Member States are not so different in terms of social capital since they all cluster together. On the other hand, we find some differences between the post-1995 and 2004 member states even though these are clearly different from the older EU Member States. The relationship between social capital regimes and welfare regimes is therefore not a straightforward one and ‘Nordic

exceptionalism' (Delhey and Newton 2005) is not entirely borne out since Finland is not in the first cluster of countries, whereas the Netherlands is.

Combinations of bridging and bonding social capital can have implications for social security. It is clear that bridging social capital is associated with strong welfare states and established democracies. The welfare state provides basic social security so that people do not have to struggle for their existence and this enables various kinds of social communication, participation and trust to flourish. Furthermore high levels of trust allow for universalistic forms of welfare whereby the state redistributes resources on behalf of the citizens. A high level of trust in others and in state institutions is needed to allow this to happen. This can be seen in Type 1 countries and to a lesser extent in the Type 4 countries.

The state provides a model of altruistic provision, which is then mirrored in activities in various kinds of organisations and associations that provide a model of social support for the citizens – rather in the way of the blood donations described by Richard Titmuss – as a foundation for a welfare state (Titmuss 1959). However, as we have seen, strong and redistributive welfare states do not necessarily preclude strong forms of bonding social capital. In some circumstances, affective and socially supportive relationships can be fostered by high levels of trust and social spending.

In other circumstances, strong bonding social capital would seem to undermine universalistic models of redistribution. Where generalised trust in other people is low, people will resort to their own networks, friends and relatives to help them out, something which we see happening in post-communist countries, where the system of informal control of resources was well established through close-knit networks (Wedel 1992) and in some Southern countries where family systems prevail (Type 5 societies). These closed social systems provide social security only for their members. People may therefore be differentially placed to access these resources and this form of particularistic redistribution must certainly disadvantage those who are not favourably placed in networks. This kind of bonding social capital can lead to cynicism and distrust, especially in situations where 'network capital' is used as a method of diverting public resources for private ends (Sik 1994; Kolankiewicz 1996).

Therefore, we would concur with Putnam that bridging social capital is important for creating an open and redistributive society, whilst also recognising that social bonding is also important as a form of social cohesion. However, societies based upon too much bonding social capital and insufficient bridging social capital are associated with public distrust and the undermining of public resources – or with failed welfare states and social insecurity.

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