European Values Studies

The European Values Studies is a series based on a large-scale, cross-national and longitudinal research program. The program was initiated by the European Value Systems Study Group (EVSSG) in the late 1970s, at that time an informal grouping of academics. Now, it is carried on in the setting of a foundation, using the (abbreviated) name of the group (EVS). The Study group surveyed basic social, cultural, political, moral, and religious values held by the populations of ten Western European countries, getting their work into the field by 1981. Researchers from other countries joined the project, which resulted in a 26-nations data set. In 1990 and 1999/2000, the study was replicated and extended to other countries. By now, all European countries are involved in one or more waves of the study, including those in Central and Eastern Europe. This series is based on the survey data collected in this project. For more information see: www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu.

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Mapping Value Orientations in Central and Eastern Europe

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CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIAL LEGACY AND SOCIAL VALUES:
A POST-COMMUNIST EXPERIENCE

Ivan Rimac & Siniša Zrinščak

Introduction

At least for the ex-communist countries, the last twenty years have been of major historical importance. These countries have undergone a complete social transformation, a radical shift to pluralistic democracy and a market economy. Although the social transformation has not been an easy and painless process, it was argued that at least for the majority of these states (particularly those who joined the European Union in 2004), it has been an exceptional, unprecedented historical event, as it has simultaneously encompassed six features: (a and b) it follows the main direction of development of Western civilization, with a capitalist economic system and democracy; (c) it was a complete transformation paralleled in all social spheres; (d) it was non-violent; (e) it took place under peaceful conditions; (f) it took place with incredible speed (Kornai, 2006: 217–218). The slower and more difficult (particularly more conflictual) transformation in some other countries partly disrupts this picture, but the general path of (eventually successful) transformation has remained valid.

The total transformation means changes in all social spheres, including substantial changes in cultural values and behaviour. Still, and even paradoxically, the long-lasting impact of the communist period on the range of social values, and hence on individual and collective behaviour, appears to be a common truth, acknowledged both in the everyday life of each society and in the literature about social values. Even those who argue for a fast and total transformation point to different problems of the communist state legacy, as the transformation has been slowed by high social expenditures, high ideological expectations and costly, unprofessional and corrupt state and corporative bureaucracies (Kovacs, 2003). There is also the accusation that post-communist states have just changed the laws and formal procedures,
but have not significantly changed their behaviours and values, which would eventually contribute to the collapse of the European social model (Vaughan-Whitehead, 2003). Another side of the same criticism comes from an acknowledgment of the significant social collapse in the 1990s, or at least of a number of so-called 'losers' of transitions (Standing, 1996; Manning, 2004), those who for different reasons were not able to adapt to the new circumstances and take advantage of them, thus maintaining old types of behaviour. In a word, the social costs of transition have been enormous, and that could have a significant impact on people's social relations and values.

The possible continuing legacy of communism is connected with its specific features. It was a period of a total control of the state over social life. That was visible not only in a political sphere which was completely controlled by the Communist Party and state bureaucracy, but also in the field of welfare development. The communist welfare state represented another side of the political regime, built in a way to legitimize a political rule. It is possible to speak of a kind of trade-off between political non-freedom and welfare rights guaranteed by the state, meaning that the lack of freedom was somehow, at least partly, compensated by extensive welfare rights. However, the performance of the welfare state was not so successful. Its scope surpassed the economic conditions of that time, and that was labelled as a 'premature welfare state' (Kornai, 1992). Due to insufficient economic conditions or for ideological reasons, in many cases numerous rights existed just formally and could not be used by the majority (Deacon, 1993). On the other hand, extensive welfare rights could be used by those employed in the state economy, and particularly by the 'nomenclature', while agricultural workers and those working in the private sector (in countries which allowed small private initiatives) lacked those rights. All of this contributed to the creation of a dual social order.

Another important feature of the communist period was that due to partial or deviant modernization (i.e. modernization forced and controlled by the state, and not pushed by other social forces), these societies retained basic features of traditional societies. While the state wanted to control everything, at the same time meeting all needs of people only in the way the state envisaged, the inability of the state to actually provide for these needs created another aspect of a dual social order: clear boundaries between public and private life. Needs which the state could not meet, very often because they were declared by party ideologists as 'decadent' and 'bourgeois', were satisfied in small private circles, usually among family, relatives and close friends. Civil society did not exist, and connections across society (in Putnam's terms 'bridging social capital') were extremely limited (Putnam, 2002). The anomic and dual social order maintained a strong division between 'us' and 'them', a practice of solidarity and social sensitivity that was manifest only in closely related social groups.

Recognizing both the legacies of the past and transition difficulties, and at the same time not denying the successful social transformation in the majority of the previously communist states, we expect to find a distinctiveness of post-communist societies that can be traced in certain social values. First, we expect a relatively high social distance to different and distant social groups and low social capital (measured by general and institutional trust). Second, we expect that nowadays concern about others and readiness to help are directed mainly toward close persons (family, friends and local community) and not to distant groups. Third, we anticipate high expectations of the state in contrast to individual responsibilities and achievements. Finally, although we talk about the distinctiveness of the post-communist world, we still expect many differences among these states, particularly taking into account their significantly different historical, social and cultural background, irrespective of the common past of 45 or 70 years.

This chapter is structured as follows. First, the theoretical background is presented, followed by a description of the research question and study expectations in the form of hypotheses. The empirical sources are then presented in the data section. The strategy of analysis is described including the statistical models used and operationalization of the dependent and independent variables. The results section presents the empirical evidence and statistical tests applied and interprets the results. Finally, the concluding remarks provide more connections to theoretical and empirical evidence from other sources.

Theoretical background

Slow cultural and ideational change is widely argued to be a cause of the long-lasting legacies of historical developments. Starting from two different theoretical assumptions, one basically Marxist, which argues that social and economic development brings deep cultural changes, and the other basically Weberian, arguing that cultural changes continuously and autonomously affect societies, Inglehart (1997) and
Inglehart and Welzel (2005) concluded that both schools are partly right. The modernization pattern, which basically explains the development of societies, is not linear, and the impact of specific cultural values shapes social development. If the modernization pattern was linear, societies would develop from traditional to secular-rational values, and later (within post-modernization circumstances) from survival to self-expression values. This is also visible in the fact that socio-economic development is strongly linked with a society’s basic cultural values. However, analyses show considerable deviations in the positions of societies on the global cultural map. Therefore, the impact of a communist past has to be considered a crucial factor in shaping the cultural values of former communist countries, irrespective of the considerable socio-economic development experienced after the fall of communism.

Communism has left a clear imprint on the value system of those who lived under it. All of the societies that experienced communist rule fall into a larger cluster in the upper-left quadrant of the map. East Germany remained culturally close to West Germany despite four decades of communist rule, but its value system has been drawn toward the communist zone. And although China is a member of the Confucian zone, it also falls within a broad communist-influenced zone (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005:64).

The impact of the post-communist past has at the same time been further strengthened and mediated by transition development difficulties. As already indicated, the transition has been accompanied by considerable economic difficulties that have left sizeable social consequences, visible in diminishing GDPs in the 1990s, rising unemployment, and rising poverty and social inequalities. Because of that, the basic assumption that social development is going in the direction from survival to self-expression values should be affected. In societies where existential security is threatened, people emphasize economic and physical security, and there is not much space for values of self-expression, subjective well-being and quality of life. Furthermore, if people emphasize economic and physical security, they feel more threatened by foreigners, ethnic diversity and cultural changes. They usually have less trust in other people, report poor health, show intolerance toward homosexual people, support traditional gender roles and hold more authoritarian political attitudes. The communist transition should be, therefore, more associated with survival than self-expression values, and consequently create circumstances for the expression of lower trust and greater detachment to distant and foreign people.

The importance of both generalized or interpersonal and institutional trust, as well as active involvement in non-governmental organizations, is stressed in different theories of social capital. F. Fukuyama (1995) sees social trust as an important element of a good and prosperous society, while J. Coleman (1994) in fact introduced a concept of social capital by a study of education in the United States showing better scores of the Catholic schools, which is connected with active cooperation with parents and bonds with civil communities in the environment, particularly religious and local ones (Bahovec, Potočnik & Zrinščak, 2007). Unlike Coleman, Robert Putnam (Putnam & Goss, 2002) explains differences between bridging and bonding social capital. Bonding brings together similar people (in terms of ethnicity, age, gender, social class, etc.), while bridging refers to social networks that connect people of different backgrounds. Bridging networks have a much greater potential to have positive social effects than bonding social capital, which is not necessarily bad, but can create difficulties in the functioning of modern pluralistic and diverse societies. There is no space here to go deeper into different conceptions of social capital or the role of civil society. Furthermore, there is evidence of difficulties in measuring social capital, and in comparability of different international data (Adam, 2007). There are also other cultural factors connected with the spread of social capital as, for example, social trust is higher in Protestant than in Catholic societies (Dekker, Ester & Vinken, 2003). However, and having in mind the impact of the communist social order, social capital theories predict a lower level of social trust and lower level of bridging social capital in post-communist societies. Indeed, Adam argues (2007) that the majority of post-communist societies are included in the group of countries with weak social capital. Also, countries of Central and Eastern Europe have modest voluntary membership rates with modest activity of members, which can be associated with the fact that in countries with more post-modern well-being values, citizens express more basic feelings of social trust (Dekker, Ester & Vinken, 2003). Bartkowski and Jasinska-Kania (2004) found, in line with Putnam's thesis, voluntary membership and activity are strongly related to indicators of socio-economic and institutional development. This is another argument about the specific position of post-communist societies, which at the end of the 1990s
were still struggling with democratic institutional development and even more significantly with economic development.

Yet another important issue is if and how social capital affects concern about different social groups and readiness to help them. If there is a social distance to different individuals and social groups, if there is a spread of survival values, if bonding and not bridging social capital is present, then it can be expected that people will not care much about different and distant groups, and that there will be little readiness for active involvement in individual or social activities for helping others. However, this issue is also connected with more general changes in contemporary European societies. Namely, the growing diversity in Europe, particularly due to rising immigration, poses a question of shaking collectivistic solidarity, and consequently foresees an uncertain future for the European welfare models (Taylor-Gooby, 2005).

Still, research thus far has found no major differences in this regard between countries with different social capital, i.e. between countries of Western and Eastern Europe. On the basis of the 1999 EVS, which measured concern about the living conditions of the elderly, the unemployed, immigrants and the sick and disabled, analyses showed that the public is generally most solidaristic towards the elderly, closely followed by the sick and disabled, the unemployed, and finally with the lowest level of solidarity toward immigrants (Van Oorschot, 2006). The order is almost the same in all 23 European countries studied, both Western and Eastern. However, in Central and Eastern European countries, the distance between immigrants on the one hand, and other groups on the other is relatively large, while the distance between other needy groups is relatively small (Van Oorschot, 2006: 31). Except in Slovenia, the conditionality is also a bit higher in Central and Eastern European countries, but that should be viewed in light of the fact that conditionality tends to be higher among populations that are poorer, where unemployment is lower, there is a strong work ethic, a more negative attitude towards immigrants, less interpersonal trust and less trust in democracy, and in countries where people favour a meritocratic society (Van Oorschot, 2006: 32). At the individual level, the conditionality is a bit higher among older people, the less educated, more rightist oriented and those with less social trust.

The most comprehensive analysis about the impact of the communist past is that of the difference between Eastern and Western European countries concerning socio-economic justice norms and beliefs (Arts, Gelissen & Luijkx, 2003), which can be an indication about expectations of the state. Eastern Europe seems to more strongly support social justice principles and government interventions. Countries which are geographically and culturally closer to the West (the so-called ‘intermediate countries’: Eastern Germany, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) support market principles more, but in the case of government intervention the opposite is true, as the so-called ‘post-totalitarian countries’ (Belarus, Bulgaria, Romania, Russia and Ukraine) are more hesitant than the intermediate countries regarding government interventions. From this research, it can be claimed that the modernization theory (if a country has a successful market economy or successful transition, citizens will cherish market justice norms and beliefs more than socialist ones) and the culturalist theory (countries in geographic and cultural proximity to the West have a higher probability of support for market justice) have proven to be right. On the contrary, the legitimation hypothesis (based on the assumption of the impact of privatization and corruption) failed. At the individual level, younger people, those with higher education and income and men, as well as those who are ideologically more rightist, favoured the market justice principle more. Perhaps most interesting, the expectation that Eastern Europe was in an anomic situation in 1991 and more in the normalcy period in 1999 proved to be wrong.

Although there are good reasons to speak about the specificities of Central and Eastern European countries, there are many reasons to expect differences between them. The post-communist countries are diverse in a historical, cultural and religious sense, and there are great differences in their transition success: some had a relatively easy transition crowned by EU membership; some are still rife with conflicts and social uncertainties. However, although there are many analyses about the social development of Central and Eastern European countries, there are still no typologies like those done for Western European countries (Esping-Andersen, 1990, 1999; Arts & Gelissen, 2002). Talking about welfare developments in the late 1990s, Deacon (2000) concluded that there is still a tension between a European-style social-market economy (or conservative corporatism) and a budget-induced and IMF-World Bank-backed residualism. Manning (2004) reviewed different typologies, particularly those developed by various international agencies, and he spoke of three groups of countries (Manning, 2004: 219). The recovery group consists of the EU accession group and is marked by a return to growth, less poverty, lower
rates of teenage pregnancy and lower rates of infectious diseases. A completely opposite group is the disintegrating group (Central Asian and Caucasus countries), where very high rates of poverty, a suffering economy, a growing level of infectious disease, and extremely low levels of government expenditures are visible. The third group is in between and can be further subdivided into those where conflict has influenced social developments (the Balkans and Caucasus) and those struggling (Russia). Bartkowski and Jasinska-Kania (2004: 117) divided post-communist Europe into four groups, based on their geographic and cultural background as well as on other important differences in historical, economic, and political development: the Baltic group (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania), the Visegrád group (the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary and Poland), the South group (Slovenia, Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania), and the former Soviet Republics (Russia, Ukraine and Belarus). We decided to follow these approaches, mainly the last one, with some amendments. As for post-communist countries there is still no typology based on the decommodification factor and the type of social stratification promoted by society it is only possible to rely mainly on geographic and cultural proximity, but also on the Europeanization process, which in a way shows the successfulness of transition and the potential to meet the criteria for EU membership. Without denying that these criteria are mainly political, the transformation process has proven to be linked (at least in part) with EU membership. Therefore, our typology retains the Baltic group and the ex-Soviet group, but we add Slovenia, widely recognized as one the most successful transition countries, to the Visegrád group, or more appropriately to the Central-Eastern group. By doing that, Croatia remains grouped with Romania and Bulgaria. The question is certainly whether it is a consistent group in a geographic sense, and even more in a cultural sense. Some analyses have already shown that Croatia, together with Slovenia, has more autonomous or socio-liberal values than other Central and Eastern European countries (Hagenaars, Halman & Moors, 2003; Rimac & Štulhofer, 2002). On the other hand, Croatia as a traditional Catholic society appears to be normatively strict. Late Europeanization, as a consequence of the war, slow democratization and the relative isolation of the country, are also important factors (Stubbs & Zrnićak, 2009). This is why we group Croatia with Bulgaria and Romania. Future research, particularly that based on the new EVS wave, should further test this typology by adding the missing elements of other Balkan countries not covered by previous comparative surveys.

**Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to describe and explain social solidarity in European countries. Social solidarity was chosen as an indicator of the social cost of transition, covering at the same time the typical European goal of social inclusion and a topic in which the heritage of socialism is easily recognizable.

The specific goal of the study is to determine the origins of diversity in social solidarity in different European countries by categorizing the sources of differences as global, macro-level characteristics of society/country and individual-level personal characteristics. The determination as country or individual level is somehow crucial to explain why some countries face more difficulties in the transition process and pay extra transitional costs originating not only in country performance and transition, but mainly because of obstacles connected with internalized patterns of values formed in the communist period.

Our expectations have already been outlined. We expect that citizens of post-communist countries have high social distance to different and distant social groups, low social capital, and less concern and readiness to help members of society, except very close family and friends. At the same time, we expect citizens of post-communist countries to have high expectations of the state in the domain of social rights, despite very low institutional trust and bad performance of the state administration, and low levels of personal initiative in this area due to learned passivity and blocked social initiatives in the communist period.

In the end, we want to find out whether social solidarity, operationalized as the behavioural intention of helping, is primarily determined by individual-level characteristics describing internalized social norms or more by social/country characteristics. In other words, the question is whether societal influences on personal social solidarity need to be mediated through the process of internalization of social norms and values. The answer to this question has a strong impact on the possibilities and time needed for societal change.

**Data**

Source data for this analysis was the 1999/2000 round of the European Values Study (EVS). The EVS questionnaire consists of standardized cross-national items measuring people's attitudes and beliefs in domains of concepts of life; work and leisure time attitudes; religious
beliefs; political attitudes; moral, social and educational values; and opinions about social solidarity. Thirty-three European countries were surveyed, providing the possibility to compare answers to the same questions in different states and cultures. Survey samples were mostly probabilistic type samples from populations of the included countries aged 18+.

In this analysis, 29 countries were included in the comparison. The selection of included countries was made on the basis of two criteria: presence of variables needed in the analysis and conforming with classification criteria for groups of countries. The analysis includes categorization of countries in eight groups, which is an extension of the classification by Arts and Gelissen (2002) used by Van Oorschot (2006). Classification reproduces the categorization of Western countries as follows: the social-democratic Scandinavian (Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Iceland), the liberal Anglo-Saxon (Great Britain, N. Ireland, Republic of Ireland), the conservative-corporatist Continental (France, Germany, Austria, the Netherlands, Belgium), and the budding Mediterranean (Portugal, Spain, Italy, Greece). As explained, the extended typology of transition countries consists of four more types: the Central-Eastern transition countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic, Slovenia), the South-Eastern countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Croatia), the Baltic countries (Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia) and the ex-Soviet countries (Russia, Ukraine, Belarus).

The pooled data set has 37,706 cases in total.

Strategy of analysis

The EVS data set provides an opportunity to perform comparative analysis across countries. In order to enable a relatively consistent and valid comparison, a check of invariance of measures used within the EVS project is necessary. In the first step, comparability across countries is checked, with the aim of achieving metric invariance, meaning that the content of the constructs used for comparison in the different countries should be the same.

The second step of analysis consists of two parts. In the first part, a review of the central tendencies of the proposed country clusters is conducted for both country-level and individual-level indicators. The main aim of this part is to empirically test the proposed grouping of countries. This review and empirical evidence was considered as a necessary prerequisite for the later use of country clusters in the second part. The second part uses hierarchical linear modelling in which analysis of individual and country-level descriptors was used to predict readiness to help three groups of people: socially close groups of family and neighbours; vulnerable persons consisting of the elderly, sick and disabled; and immigrants.

Dependent variables

Our central aim determined that the dependent variables consist of individual responses to three constructs calculated as composite scales of items measuring readiness to help others in society. The three constructs are derived from the following EVS survey question: ‘Would you be prepared to actually do something to improve the conditions of…’ ‘your immediate family?’ ‘people in your neighbourhood/community?’ ‘elderly people in your country?’ ‘immigrants in your country?’ ‘sick and disabled people in your country?’

For each social group respondents answered on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘absolutely yes’ (1) to ‘absolutely no’ (5). Correlations among items clearly cut three different areas of reaction: readiness to help close people (immediate family and people in neighbourhood), readiness to help vulnerable persons (the elderly, sick and disabled) and readiness to help immigrants. Composite indicators are calculated as mean score results of the indicators.

The three types of readiness to help could easily point to differences in conceptual approaches to social solidarity in different countries. Readiness to help close people shows the respondents’ level of empathy with the people around them and would not be influenced by the different historical and political backgrounds of societies in the different countries. That is to say, the level of social sensitivity for others would be affected mainly by economic conditions and the educational level of individuals (Van Oorschot, 2006). Readiness to help vulnerable members of society mixes several different models of social sensitivity: individual empathy, within-family intergenerational solidarity and within-family responsibility to disabled members, but it also shows the level of expectation of the state’s welfare system. In this

1 Variables are factor analysed on the pooled sample and on the separate country samples with the other indicators used in this study.
construct, differences are expected between Western and transitional countries together with differences among post-communist countries, as people’s level of expectation of the welfare system could be more emphasized in the ex-Soviet and Baltic countries (which had longer experience with communist rule) than in the South-Eastern and Central-Eastern countries. Finally, the attitude toward helping immigrants would be a mixture of individual universalism and social policy in the different groups of countries, but to some extent also a reflection of experience with individuals coming from different cultural and ethnic origins. Because of that, activity in voluntary organizations operating in the social welfare domain, general interpersonal trust and the proportion of immigrants in the country could have strong impacts on readiness to help. Of course, the excuse ‘it is the duty of the state or the duty of others’ could be stated more easily than in the case of inter-familial solidarity, which is strongly determined by moral, legal and religious norms.

Independent variables

Individual level

A list of independent variables was formed with the intention of describing the primary social characteristics of individuals. The only psychologically determined constructs are concern about close people (immediate family and neighbours), concern about distant people (people in the region, fellow countrymen, Europeans, humankind and immigrants), and concern about vulnerable persons (the elderly, unemployed and sick and disabled) derived as composite scores from the survey question: ‘To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of...’

Other constructs describe social attitudes and values of individuals. Three kinds of social distance (Could you please sort out any that you would not like to have as neighbours?): distance from different cultural groups (different race, immigrant/foreign workers, Muslims, Jews, large families—unprompted answers yes-no), distance from unusual individuals (those with a criminal record, heavy drinkers, the emotionally unstable, AIDS infected, drug addicts, homosexuals, gypsies—unprompted answers yes-no), distance from political extremists (left and right—unprompted answers yes-no).

Two social capital indicators: interpersonal trust (Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people? yes-no), institutional trust (Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them. Is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all? Listed were police, parliament, civil service, the social security system, the healthcare system and the justice system—1–4 scale).

Social capital measured through involvement in voluntary sector activities: membership in voluntary sector organizations (Do you belong to... a welfare organization, local community action group, voluntary health organization? yes-no), work in voluntary sector organizations (Do you work unpaid for... a welfare organization, local community action group, voluntary health organization? no-yes).

Views about state responsibility (‘Individuals should take more responsibility for providing for themselves’ vs. ‘The state should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for’. ‘People who are unemployed should have to take any job available or lose their unemployment benefits’ vs. ‘People who are unemployed should have the right to refuse a job they do not want’. ‘Competition is good. It stimulates people to work hard and develop new ideas’ vs. ‘Competition is harmful, it brings out the worst in people’. ‘The state should give more freedom to firms’ vs. ‘The state should control firms more effectively’, all on a 1–10 scale).

Age (rescaled in 5-year age cohorts).

Education (rescaled in four major categories: inadequate, primary, secondary and tertiary).

Most of the independent constructs at the individual level were discussed earlier in this chapter related to the specific historic path of post-communist countries. The addition of the demographic descriptors age and education was motivated by the findings of the social conditionality study performed by Van Oorschot (2006).

Invariance of individual-level indicators

The general strategy of the analysis is directed to developing multi-item scales of the constructs under consideration and checking metric invariance where there were multiple indicators for a given construct. The test of invariance is performed by comparing factor loading configurations by applying the Tucker congruence coefficient (Tucker, 1951) to the structures obtained from factor analysis of the indicators
measuring the same construct in each country separately and by calculating internal consistency Cronbach alpha reliability coefficients for the construct in each country (Cronbach, 1951). For those constructs that obtain at least a partial invariance, composite scale results are calculated by taking the average of indicators’ scale results (this procedure was chosen instead of the calculation of factor scores in order to preserve the original scale metric and to retain the possibility to check averages for different countries on the original scale metric).

The analysis of the invariance of constructs used in this chapter is presented in Table 5.1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicators and factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Social distance</td>
<td>Distance from different cultural groups</td>
<td>v53 don’t like as neighbours: people of different race (Q7B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v57 don’t like as neighbours: large families (Q7F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v59 don’t like as neighbours: Muslims (Q7H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v60 don’t like as neighbours: immigrants/foreign workers (Q7I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v64 don’t like as neighbours: Jews (Q7M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distance from unusual individuals</td>
<td>v52 don’t like as neighbours: people with criminal record (Q7A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v55 don’t like as neighbours: heavy drinkers (Q7D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v58 don’t like as neighbours: emotionally unstable people (Q7G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v61 don’t like as neighbours: people with AIDS (Q7I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v62 don’t like as neighbours: drug addicts (Q7K)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v63 don’t like as neighbours: homosexuals (Q7L)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v65 don’t like as neighbours: gypsies (Q7N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distance from political extremists</td>
<td>v54 don’t like as neighbours: left wing extremists (Q7C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v56 don’t like as neighbours: right wing extremists (Q7E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about others</td>
<td>Concern about close people</td>
<td>v266 are you concerned with: immediate family (Q70A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v267 are you concerned with: people neighbourhood (Q70B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concern about distant people (universalism)</td>
<td>v268 are you concerned with: people own region (Q70C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v269 are you concerned with: fellow countrymen (Q70D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v270 are you concerned with: Europeans (Q70E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v271 are you concerned with: human kind (Q70F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v274 are you concerned with: immigrants (Q70G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Concern about vulnerable persons</td>
<td>v272 are you concerned with: elderly people (Q70A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v273 are you concerned with: unemployed people (Q70B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v275 are you concerned with: sick and disabled (Q70D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social capital</td>
<td>Institutional trust</td>
<td>v205 how much confidence in: the police (Q58F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v206 how much confidence in: parliament (Q58G)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v207 how much confidence in: civil service (Q58H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v208 how much confidence in: social security system (Q58I)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v211 how much confidence in: health care system (Q58M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v212 how much confidence in: justice system (Q58N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpersonal trust</td>
<td>v66 people can be trusted/can’t be too careful (Q8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Membership in voluntary social organizations</td>
<td>v12 do you belong to: welfare organisation (Q5A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v17 do you belong to: local community action (Q5F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v25 do you belong to: voluntary health organisations (Q5N)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.1 (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Domain</th>
<th>Construct</th>
<th>Indicators and factor loadings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Work in voluntary social organizations</td>
<td>v30 do you work unpaid for: welfare organisation (Q5A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v35 do you work unpaid for: local community action (Q5F)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v43 do you work unpaid for: voluntary health organisations (Q5N)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>Generation</td>
<td>v292 Five years age cohorts (Q85)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>v304 Educational levels (Q94) rescaled in 4 categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State responsibility</td>
<td>for individuals</td>
<td>v186 individual-state responsibility for providing (Q54A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v187 take any job-right to refuse job when unemployed (Q54B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v188 competition good-harmful for people (Q54C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v189 state give more freedom to-control firms more effectively (Q54D)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Readiness to help</td>
<td>Readiness to help close people</td>
<td>v276 are you prepared to help: immediate family (Q81A)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v277 are you prepared to help: people neighbourhood (Q81B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readiness to help vulnerable persons</td>
<td>v278 are you prepared to help: elderly people (Q81C)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>v280 are you prepared to help: sick and disabled (Q81E)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readiness to help immigrants</td>
<td>v279 are you prepared to help: immigrants (Q81D)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The variation of factor loadings fulfils expectations of metric invariance, as most configurations of factor loadings in each country easily pass the criteria of 0.95 for Tucker’s congruence coefficient. However, the variation of Cronbach’s alpha coefficient shows that in some countries scales do have very low internal consistency. Low internal consistency suggests that multi-item scales in some countries do not meet the criteria of the same measurement content for all items in the scale, and variation of this coefficient among countries indicates that in some countries the aim of achieving the same internal validity of scale is met, while in other countries it is not. At the same time, a low alpha coefficient and high congruence coefficient lead to the conclusion that only a partial invariance is met in scales where larger variation of Cronbach’s alpha exists. Resuming this review, it can be stated that constructs of social distance, concern about the sick and disabled, concern about distant people (universalism), institutional trust and readiness to help the sick and disabled show strong evidence of metric invariance. On the other hand, concern about close people, membership and work in voluntary social organizations, state responsibility for individuals and readiness to help close people do not meet the criteria for full metric invariance, providing just partial invariance or an even less firm conceptual level of invariance. Differences in the meaning of state responsibility underlie the different views concerning the right of unemployed persons to refuse a job.
Within Western countries, respondents tend to be more consistent in favouring the right of unemployed persons to refuse a job as well as providing positive answers about other state interventions. At the same time, respondents in transition countries often do not connect the right of the unemployed to refuse a job with state interventionism. This distinction was mentioned by Van Oorschot (2006) in a study of the conditionality of social support in which more conditionality was shown by respondents in poorer countries with higher unemployment rates—mostly transition countries.

Another difference in construct content relates to concepts connected with concern about and help to immediate family. In both cases, respondents in the majority of transition countries (except Croatia and Bulgaria) tend to evaluate their concern and readiness to help their families in accordance with universalistic criteria, while respondents in Western countries evaluate immediate families on autonomous criteria.

Even with the described variation in factor loadings of these three constructs, invariance analysis sufficiently supports the conclusion that the constructs meet the criteria of partial invariance.

*Country-level indicators*

Country descriptors are the smallest possible subset of indicators that can illustrate the previously mentioned duality of Marxist and Weberian hypotheses of societal development. With no ambition to test this dichotomy, country-level indicators are included in the analysis with an idea of dividing the origins of individuals’ readiness to help into the specificities of the society to which the person belongs and individual characteristics (even if those characteristics can be conceived as internalized societal norms). In this analysis the distinction between individual-level and country-level indicators separates macro-societal obstacles to development and transition (like poor economic performance) from personal characteristics in those societies. Thus, two economic indicators show the economic position of country: ‘real GDP per capita (1999)’ and ‘compound annual growth of GDP (1991, 1995–2000)’. Our two indicators of the process of modernization in society (whether endogenous or ‘forced’ by communist regime) are as follows: ‘percentage of college educated citizens’ and ‘percentage of town population living in towns larger than 100,000 inhabitants’. Both modernization indicators are by themselves partly spurious, but their inclusion could describe a country’s level of modernization. The proportion of religious citizens in the population is aimed to represent social pressure to conform to traditional societal norms. Finally, the percentage of immigrants in the total population could represent the chance of meeting immigrants during everyday activities. It is worth noting that this indicator could have different meanings in Western and Eastern Europe; as in fact immigrants in Western countries usually come from the Third World for economic reasons, and in transitional societies foreigners are mostly members of other cultural populations residing on territory that became part of another country after the break-up of unified multinational communist countries like the USSR and Yugoslavia. In that sense, immigrants in Western countries differ much more from the dominant culture than in transition countries where immigrants share the same history with the majority and differ only by belonging to an ethnic group that has a majority in a neighbouring country.

*Results*

*Readiness to help*

As it can be seen from Figure 5.1, readiness to help close people is highest among analysed groups in all countries, although not absolutely high. In the Baltic and particularly ex-Soviet countries, readiness to help close people is considerably lower than in the other country clusters. This result stands in direct opposition to the hypothesis regarding the possible communist legacy, which predicts much stronger relations to close family and friends in these countries compared to other social groups. Although more research should be conducted in this respect, it should be noted that readiness to help for each category is generally lower in these two groups of countries, and these are countries which had a specific, Soviet type of communism, different from other ex-communist countries. Readiness to help vulnerable persons (the elderly, sick and disabled) has a similar value in all groups of countries, except in the Baltic and ex-Soviet groups, where it is again lower than in other countries. Immigrants, and rising ethnic diversity in general, have spurred fervent discussion in all European countries, and rising discrimination is even observable (European Commission, 2007). Nonetheless, there is a readiness to help immigrants in all countries, though those in the ex-Soviet group show the lowest level of readiness, followed by the Baltic group. All post-communist countries
have a lower level of readiness to help immigrants than Western countries in spite of the fact that the share of immigrants is actually very low in post-communist countries. Having that in mind, we do have a non-expression of readiness, because that group actually appears to be socially irrelevant. On the other hand, distance to a particular cultural group could be quite different from the general attitude towards culturally diverse groups taken together.

### Table 5.2 Country-level descriptions*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Scandinavian</th>
<th>Anglo-Saxon</th>
<th>Continental</th>
<th>Mediterranean</th>
<th>Central-Eastern</th>
<th>South-East</th>
<th>Baltic</th>
<th>Ex-Soviet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance from different cultural groups</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from unusual individuals</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.42</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>0.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distance from political extremists</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.41</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about close people (-)</td>
<td>2.84</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.22</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.28</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about distant people (-)</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.02</td>
<td>3.33</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.61</td>
<td>3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concern about vulnerable persons (-)</td>
<td>2.48</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.51</td>
<td>2.18</td>
<td>2.41</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>2.60</td>
<td>2.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust in institutions (-)</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>2.68</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal trust (-)</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>1.65</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>1.72</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td>1.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsibility of state</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>4.62</td>
<td>4.51</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>5.03</td>
<td>4.73</td>
<td>5.49</td>
<td>5.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership in voluntary organizations</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in voluntary organizations</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound annual growth of GDP (91, 95-2000)</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>3.93</td>
<td>2.12</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>2.65</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-1.67</td>
<td>-3.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Real GDP per capita (1999)</td>
<td>23,848.25</td>
<td>23,130.92</td>
<td>24,346.91</td>
<td>17,506.78</td>
<td>11,994.53</td>
<td>6,621.49</td>
<td>8,837.13</td>
<td>7,088.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of immigrants in total population (2005)</td>
<td>7.52</td>
<td>10.56</td>
<td>10.87</td>
<td>7.74</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>5.48</td>
<td>13.15</td>
<td>11.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proportion of religious citizens in population</td>
<td>0.64</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>0.74</td>
<td>0.68</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of college educated citizens in population</td>
<td>0.23</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of town population (towns over 100,000)</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Indicators with a minus sign in parenthesis have inverted scale.
Indicators proposed to measure the modernization process and the level of social pressure to obey traditional moral norms actually do not fit this classification of countries, as they provide information that cannot be related to the categories. This is especially visible in the percentage of religious citizens and the share living in towns with a larger population. The percentage of religious citizens seems to be related to the appearance of Catholic-dominated countries in different groups, where the level of religiosity has a higher value. Town population is probably affected by the size of the total population, with higher results in larger countries. As mentioned before, the percentage of immigrants does not differentiate between immigrants in Western countries and minorities in Baltic and ex-Soviet countries.

Aggregated individual indicators show diverse fit characteristics. Institutional and interpersonal trust, as well as membership of and unpaid work for voluntary organizations, are usually seen as basic elements of the concept of social capital, although there are inconsistent findings about the importance of elements of social capital, as well as their relations to elements of social and economic development (Adam, 2007). It is also worth noting that cultural (and religious) differences, expressed for example on the North-South axis, appear to be of great importance. With some minor exceptions, institutional and interpersonal trust follow the expected pattern. Although the difference is small, trust in institutions is the highest in Scandinavian countries, followed by Anglo-Saxon and Continental countries, while the lowest level is observed in all groups of post-communist countries. A similar pattern is seen in the case of interpersonal trust, with two important exceptions: interpersonal trust is particularly high in Scandinavian countries, and the former Soviet group has higher interpersonal trust than other post-communist countries. As rightly argued by Szomptka (1999), a low level of trust is the most visible expression of an anomie social situation, influenced by both the communist and the early transitional period.

Again, membership in voluntary organizations and unpaid work is somewhat higher in Western countries, and lower in Eastern European countries. It should be stressed that, obviously because of cultural reasons, voluntary activism in the Mediterranean is the lowest among Western countries, equal to the best performing transition country group—the Central-Eastern countries. Other post-communist countries show a considerably lower level of social activism, if it is measured by involvement in formal associational life. Of course, that does not mean that at the informal level we could not find a similar type of activities to help others in these countries.

A relatively small proportion of inhabitants in each country express their distance from culturally diverse individuals within their society. Naming the undesirable neighbours is mostly rare and follows patterns which do not coincide with the magnitudes of the groups mentioned. In expressions of non-tolerance, citizens of all countries show more tolerance toward members of society coming from different culture backgrounds (named as undesirable by less than 20% of respondents) than to unusual individuals of own cultural background (expressed as undesirable by 30% to 60%). Different levels of expressed tolerance are probably partly due to the different mechanisms of estimating desirable contacts among different people: unusual individuals are very often associated with an image of disturbed or sick people bringing trouble to neighbours or even endangering them by health hazard behaviour. On the other hand, as acceptance of cultural diversity increases, any expression of non-tolerance becomes undesirable or unlawful behaviour in most European societies, which strongly influences declarative and real expressions of distance to immigrants and ethnic minority groups.

Distance to political extremists shows an inconsistent pattern that can probably be linked to political opinions generated in the political life of a specific country and the historical development of the political system in each country.

The comparison shows that citizens of transition countries in general express more non-tolerance towards groups of different cultural origins and less tolerance to unusual behaviour of members of society originating from their own cultural background. The distance to different cultural groups does not differ much between Western and Eastern countries, with the South-East group being to some extent an exception with a bit higher distance. Still, the observed difference leads us to conclude that Western countries promote more individual and cultural diversity in societies than transitional countries, and/or that the inherited division between 'us' and 'them' does have an influence.

Views on concern about others do not show the same pattern as social distance indicators. Despite the expectation that societies which

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2 We have to stress that we calculated membership and unpaid work for only three types of organizations (welfare, local community and health organizations), which are important for social policy, thus excluding other types of voluntary organizations. This is a reason why even Scandinavian countries which usually appear high on voluntary scale, have low values in our table.
express more distance to specific social groups will show less concern about these groups, this was not supported by the empirical data. The problem could be the relative nature of the indicator of social concern about others, in which an individual could express no concern about others because he or she does not care about others or because he or she feels that other people in society do not deserve their attention or because someone else cares or should care about needy persons (the state, voluntary organizations, etc.). Articulated concern about close people (own family and neighbours), vulnerable persons (the elderly, unemployed, sick and disabled) and immigrants or people who do not live in close proximity to respondents (people in the region, fellow countrymen, Europeans or humankind) is more or less the same in all types of countries, with a clear tendency for closer groups to get more attention and social empathy.

As was researched in many studies, egalitarian attitudes and high (and even unrealistic) expectations of the state could be one of the basic features of the communist legacy. State responsibility is somewhat more stressed in post-communist countries, particularly in Baltic and ex-Soviet countries. The role of the state is not clear, however, although Eastern Europeans seem to be more cautious about individual responsibility, competition and freedom of enterprise, which might again be an expression of the transitional economic model, which has not been socially regulated like the capitalistic economic model as in the West.

Multilevel regression analysis

Hierarchical linear modelling was applied on the multilevel data from the EVS. For each dependent variable, ‘readiness to help close people’, ‘readiness to help vulnerable persons’ and ‘readiness to help immigrants’, two models of data analysis were applied. Model 1 is a random intercept model entering only individual-level indicators in its predictions, while Model 2 adds country-level indicators to predict the intercept of the criteria. Besides the already-mentioned country-level descriptors, dummy variates describing groups of countries were added. The Anglo-Saxon group was chosen as the referent group in order to facilitate comparison with the Van Oorschot study.3

3 Correlation matrix of country level descriptors and dummy variates is given in Table 6.5 in Appendix.

Membership in voluntary organizations and unpaid work in the same organizations were almost collinear, putting the analysis in a mathematically undefined position by giving the same information in two variables. For practical reasons, membership in voluntary organizations was excluded from the analysis.

Both models were computed using two variants of individual data—uncentred and country mean centred individual descriptors. As uncentred and country mean centred individual descriptors have equal slope coefficients (betas), the conclusion that the slopes of the individual-level predictors do not depend on country membership gives enough evidence that individual descriptors have the same relation to criteria in all countries. Therefore, individual-level relations are just shifted by different intercepts. In the further text, the presentation focuses only on analysis of the uncentred individual data. The results of the analysis are given in Table 5.3.

Multiple correlation coefficients for the three types of readiness to help show the expected order of explained variance. The lowest level of determination with predictors is present on readiness to help close people; slightly more explanation is present on readiness to help vulnerable persons; and the best explained dependent variable is readiness to help immigrants. This order is in line with the idea that attitudes toward closer groups are more determined by psychological determinants, while those toward the more distant groups become more dependent on social determinants. Another characteristic of the analysis is the failure of country-level indicators to add new information to the analysis beyond that present in the individual-level indicators. Country-level indicators seldom pass the significance test criteria. The idea that country-level indicators are not suitable for the prediction of criteria is in contradiction to our previous review of aggregate results in which differences in readiness to help and other indicators were clearly present. Another assumption that the relation is not linear could not overcome the lack of predictive power of dummy variates, which were tailored to catch nonlinear relations between groups of countries and readiness to help. The only explanation of the lack of predictiveness of country-level descriptors could be the good predictiveness of individual-level indicators and the lack of individual slope variation in dependence of the level of intercept. In less mathematical terms, whatever the average performance of the countries, the relation of individual characteristics to readiness to help stays the same.
Table 5.3: Regression coefficients explaining readiness to help close, vulnerable and immigrant social groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>HELP close</th>
<th>HELP vulnerable</th>
<th>HELP immigrants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Model 1</td>
<td>Model 2</td>
<td>Model 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intercept</td>
<td>0.61334 **</td>
<td>0.67413 *</td>
<td>0.73955 **</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compound annual growth of GDP (’91, ’95-2000)</td>
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<td>Trust in institutions (-)</td>
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<td>0.06582 *</td>
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<td>0.24490 *</td>
<td>0.24490 *</td>
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<tr>
<td>Concern about distant people (-)</td>
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Notes: * Coefficients marked with ** are significant at p < 0.01, while * marks coefficients significant at a level of p < 0.05.
about distant social groups, giving a more universalistic perspective to this kind of social sensitivity. Again, work in voluntary social organizations raises the level of readiness to help. A combination of concern about vulnerable persons and concern about distant social groups leads to another conclusion—help to vulnerable individuals is often connected to a bridging kind of social capital in which wealthy members of society help needy people who are mostly members of social groups not socially close to helpers.

Readiness to help immigrants, i.e. individuals who are by virtue of their group marked as still not fully integrated members of society, is much better predicted by social attitudes than other types of readiness to help. Concern about distant social groups is associated with more readiness to help, showing that there is a strong distinction within society between those who are concerned and who help and those who do not care about immigrants. Besides this general psychological empathy for this social group, there are other social issues involved—less social distance from those who are culturally different, but also less distance from individually different people, produces more readiness to help immigrants. Another part of the equation is again related to voluntary work—more voluntary work is associated with more readiness to help—and the reverse—more readiness to help is associated with more involvement in voluntary work. Finally, the most controversial part is the association of more trust in social institutions with less readiness to help immigrants. As this is an individual-level descriptor, the only explanation for this relation could be confidence in welfare state institutions, that is, citizens might believe that the social welfare system of their country works well. If that is the case, citizens do not show much concern about needy people who do not live in their close surroundings.

Comparing coefficients of different country groups raises some questions and, indeed, suggests directions for further research instead of giving clear answers. Transversal comparison focused on the change of coefficients between different kinds of help to those who are close, vulnerable and immigrants in different types of countries show different patterns not strongly supported by statistical evidence. Scandinavian countries exhibit less variation in readiness to help the different social groups than other countries, showing constant willingness to help. The corporative-Continental group shows a clear division between close persons on the one hand and those who are vulnerable and immigrants on the other hand, while respondents in Mediterranean countries express less readiness to help those who are close and vulnerable (in comparison to the Anglo-Saxon group), but they are more open to helping culturally diverse immigrant groups.

All transition countries, with the exception of the former Soviet countries, show more openness to helping immigrants than Western countries. The Central-Eastern group of countries shows no difference among the various types of help, following the pattern of the Scandinavian countries. The South-Eastern group shows a less private orientation, and more orientation towards distant groups, while Baltic countries show less readiness to help close individuals than others. Former Soviet countries show the least readiness to help any social group. All of these patterns still need better evidence in empirical data.

Concluding remarks

In their analysis of differences in beliefs about socio-economic justice norms, Arts, Gelissen & Luijkx (2003) concluded that despite some differences the twain (West and East) could meet in due time. Eastern European countries, they argued, may very well eventually come to hold more or less the same kinds of market justice norms and beliefs as Western European countries. Similarly, by noticing some differences, Van Oorschot (2006) concluded that the solidarity rank order accorded to different social groups is basically the same for all European countries, which indicates that the underlying logic of deservingness is deeply rooted in popular welfare culture.

For transition countries, the idea of both worlds meeting could be considered as their finding a different path for development than that of the communist period. The main problem seems to be overcoming obstacles erected by the cultural and psychological heritage of the socialist period. As Štulhofer and Rimac (2002) stressed in their analysis of the grey economy in Croatia during 1990s, the main problem in overcoming the grey economy in transition countries is the moral costs emerging from low trust and failure to obey civil norms in society. The origins of both obstacles could be found in the dual morality developed during the communist period. Our analysis points to the same origin, showing that success in transition coincides with the rise of social capital and individual initiative, abandoning the idea of state responsibility as a sole mechanism of social solidarity.

A general conclusion that can be drawn from this particular analysis is that differences between West and East have to be acknowledged, but not overemphasized. The difference is more visible in the
case of social capital, which is lower in Eastern European countries, while other elements of social sensitivity are much more blurred (concern about others, readiness to help). The role of the state does show some specific patterns, such as higher expectations in post-communist countries with very low economic growth, like former Soviet states or the South-Eastern countries, compared to the long-standing, developed welfare states, like the Scandinavian ones. It seems that expectations rise where individual initiative and economic abilities are weak. Still, many of the distinctions found in this analysis between groups of countries in the West and in the East lead to the conclusion that it is not proper to speak generally about Western and Eastern European countries, but that it is much better to differentiate among groups of countries.

Still, there are other conclusions from this analysis that deserve attention. First, social capital has an important impact on attitudes toward different groups of people and readiness to help them, and in that respect transition countries differ from non-transition countries. Second, individual factors offer considerable explanation for social solidarity, overshadowing country-level descriptors and giving strong support to the idea of internalization of social norms and values as a dominant mechanism of forming individual concerns and solidarity in society. The lack of major differences between groups of countries which are not covered by standard economic or social descriptors shows that common ideas and values are based on concepts of solidarity, and consequently that the European picture of social solidarity, in the East and West, shares a similar perception of the welfare state and social policy concepts. Still, that does not mean that post-communist countries are not burdened by the experience of a non-democratic past, which is visible in lower (government) performance and a slow mental transition to unblock individual initiative for social helping activities.

Going back to the origins of this text, it could be concluded that social solidarity in European societies depends on individually internalized values that are mostly based on empathetic concern for others. Solidarity with distant social groups, mostly covered by concepts of social capital and social trust, constitutes an additional social determinant besides empathy. The level of solidarity in different countries mostly traces the line of economic performance and social trust. Moreover, the ranking of countries by level of solidarity shows that these three characteristics are strongly related. Still, some autochthonous differences could be found between West and East (in expectations of the state), and between North and South where different models of interpersonal relations appears to affect views of solidarity in society.

References


——. 2006. 'The great transformation of Central and Eastern Europe: Success and disappointment'. Economics of Transition 14(2): 207–244.
### Appendix

#### Table 5.4  Correlations among country level indicators and dummy variates describing groups of countries

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