



Associations and Social Capital in Finland

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1. Introduction
2. Associations and networks in Finland
3. Trust in Finland
4. Finland in comparison with other countries
5. Discussion

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What is social capital?

- At the community level social capital may be shortly defined “as a societal resource that links citizens to each other and enables them to pursue their common objectives more efficiently” (Stolle 2003, 19)
- The elements social capital are
 - Trust (generalized, particular, institutional)
 - Norms of reciprocity and
 - Networks (associations, sociability etc.)(Putnam 1993; Hooghe & Stolle 2003, 2)



What is not social capital and/or when social capital is bad for the community?

- Bonding vs. bridging social capital (Putnam 2000)
- Bonding ties often beneficial for the members of networks and may be even harmful for society (Hell's Angels, organized crime and KKK)
- Bridging ties between loose networks and people from different backgrounds create more easily generalized trust to the whole society
- Nordic countries score **usually** high in bridging social capital...

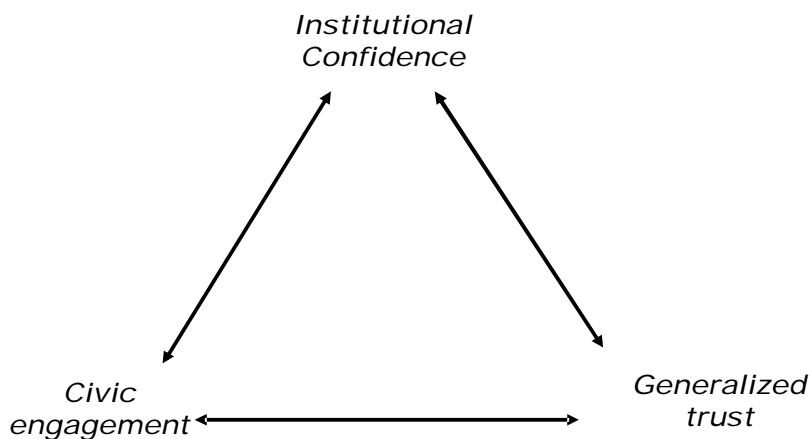


Top down or bottom-up?

- There are two common and contradictory approaches concerning the generation of social capital at the national level
- Society-centred approach. (“Tocquevillean” model) emphasizes the importance of civic engagement and “grassroots of society” (bottom-up mechanism) (see. eg. Putnam 2000) ASSOCIATIONS
- Institution-centred approach: Fair and well-functioning institutions are often seen as crucial sources of trust in society (top-down mechanism) (see e.g. Rothstein 2003) PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS



Typical Elements in Empirical Research (Brehm & Rahn 1997)



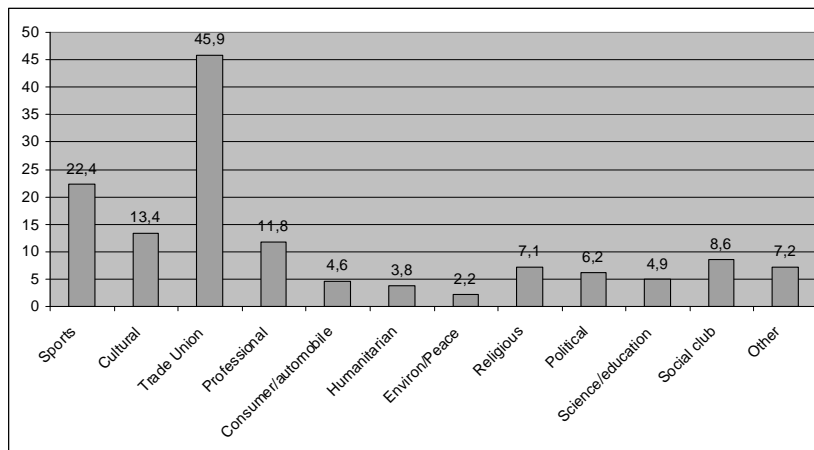


Associations in Finland

- The number of voluntary associations has increased more or less steadily from 1920's to present
- Also the number of memberships per citizen has increased (contrary to USA?)
- Economic and professional associations are the most popular type of associations (27 %)
- Political organizations are at the second place (22 %)
- Sports associations 10 %
- Other hobbies 12 %



Memberships in associations (Source ESS 2002)





Other Networks (Source ESS 2006)

Highest level of education * How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues Crosstabulation

% within Highest level of education		How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues							Total
		Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	Several times a month	Once a week	Several times a week	Every day	
Highest level of education	Not completed primary education		6,0%	10,4%	16,4%	17,9%	20,9%	28,4%	100,0%
	Primary or first stage of basic	,3%	10,5%	12,4%	18,4%	20,6%	22,5%	15,2%	100,0%
	Lower secondary or second stage of basic	,4%	5,5%	7,3%	17,6%	15,4%	33,7%	20,1%	100,0%
	Upper secondary	,1%	4,5%	6,7%	17,5%	22,7%	31,8%	16,7%	100,0%
	First stage of tertiary	3,2%	7,6%		20,4%	22,5%	37,9%	8,4%	100,0%
	Second stage of tertiary				29,0%	25,8%	41,9%	3,2%	100,0%
Total		,2%	5,2%	8,0%	18,6%	21,1%	32,0%	14,8%	100,0%

Gender * How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues Crosstabulation

% within Gender		How often socially meet with friends, relatives or colleagues							Total
		Never	Less than once a month	Once a month	Several times a month	Once a week	Several times a week	Every day	
Gender	Male	,2%	6,6%	8,5%	19,6%	19,7%	31,9%	13,4%	100,0%
	Female	,1%	3,9%	7,6%	17,7%	22,4%	32,1%	16,2%	100,0%
Total		,2%	5,2%	8,0%	18,6%	21,1%	32,0%	14,8%	100,0%

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Social capital at the individual level

- Usually social capital varies to a certain degree between different individual-level factors, eg:
 - demographic characteristics (age, education, gender)
 - success and well-being (income, life-satisfaction, class, occupation, employment status) -> "Luke's Theorem"
 - Informal social networks
 - Voluntary association participation
 - Time-use (TV, in latest studies also Internet)
 - Personality (eg. morality)
 - Life Course experiences
 (e.g. Brehm & Rahn 1997; Freitag 2003; Delhey & Newton 2004)

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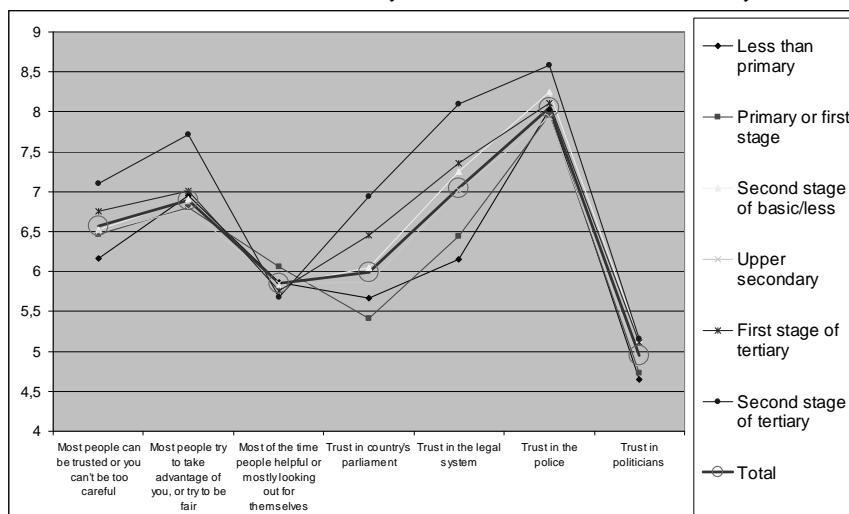


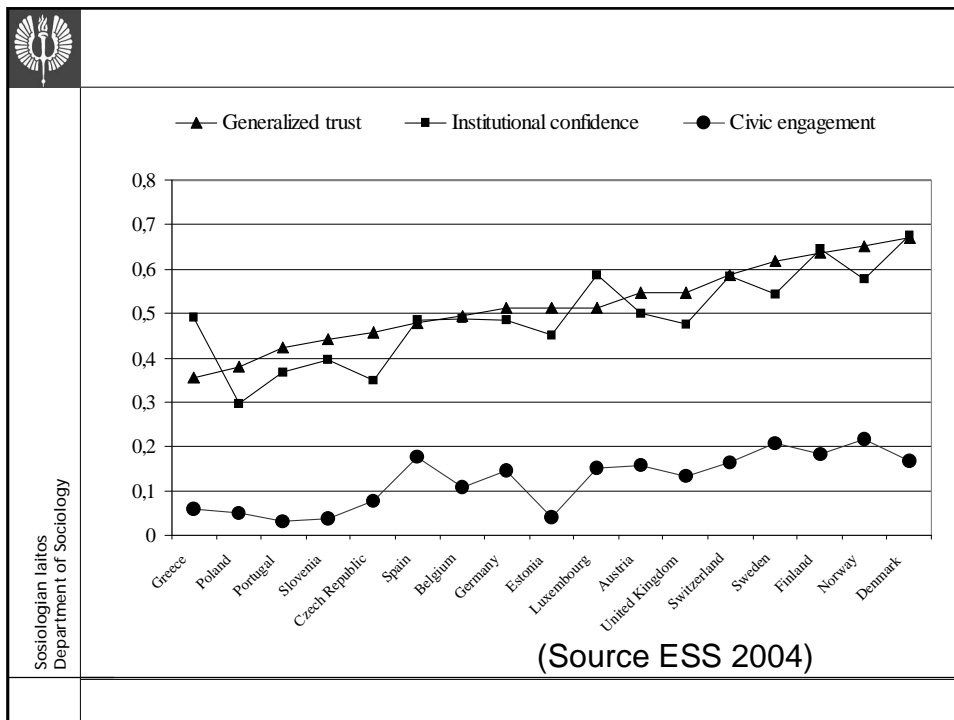
Aggregate level (III)

- However, macro-level factors often more powerful determinants than individual ones
 - community characteristics (safety of neighbourhood, town size)
 - societal conditions (corruption, governance etc.)
 - Type of welfare-state



Trust in Finland (Source ESS 2006)





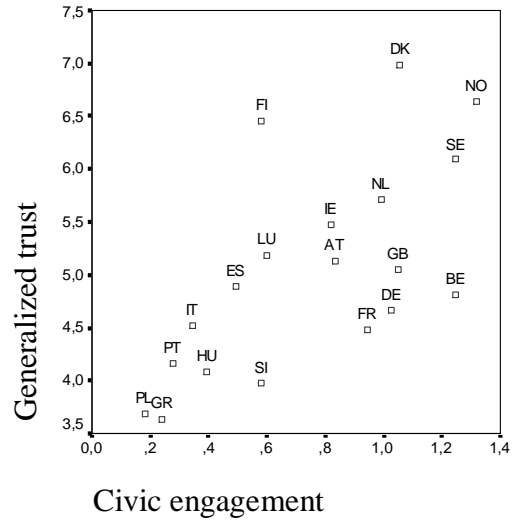
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Social Capital and (Nordic) Welfare State (I)

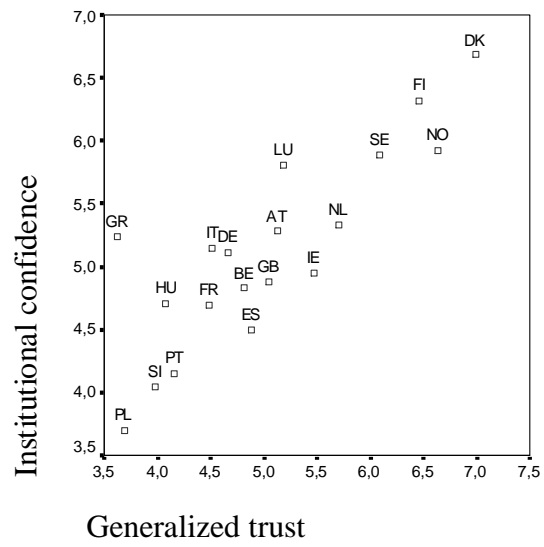
- As it is possible to see from previous figure, social capital appears to be at the highest level in Nordic Countries
- Despite that it has been stated that welfare-state may "crowd out" social capital
- Empirical evidence usually contradicts with crowding out –hypothesis (e.g. Oorschot & Arts 2004)
 - from American Exemptionalism to Nordic Exemptionalism?
 - Rothstein: Universal versus needs-tested benefits?




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<i>Relationship of indicators (Finland)</i>		
Pearson 2-tailed (sig.)	Institutional confidence	Civic engagement
Generalized Trust	.451 (.000)	.075 (.001)
Institutional confidence	1	.122 (.000)


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<i>Society- or institution-centred hypothesis?</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal trust necessitates that societal and political institutions provide a fair and efficient environment in which trusting will be rewarded and not exploited ? • Rothstein: Universal Welfare State • Selective recruiting to associations = people that already trust? • Other social networks (friends, workplace, ICT's, neighbours)? • Not all the associations generate social capital (example: "There's too much social capital in Bosnia") 	

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	<p><i>Discussion</i></p>
<p>Sosiologian laitos Department of Sociology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The type of welfare state determine strongly the level of social capital • Crowding-out hypothesis does not work • A remarkable association with the type of the welfare state and social capital even when the effect of numerous individual level determinants is taken into account • However, clear differences in the relationship of individual level determinants of social capital between countries • There is also some evidence of aggregate-level importance of associations “Rainmaker effects”

	<p><i>Remarks from Finland</i></p>
<p>Sosiologian laitos Department of Sociology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Along with other Nordic welfare states, social capital is at high level in Finland • Still social capital – as other forms of capital - is unevenly distributed between different socio-economic groups • At the same time high level of associational social capital and relatively strong welfare (universal) state • Finland has overcome many crises of social capital (for example civil war 1918) but has overcome them



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Thank you!