

Social capital as the source of the elderly's subjective well-being in Eastern European countries

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1. The concept of social capital
2. Subjective well-being (SWB) and its determinants
3. Research questions
4. Data & Methodology
5. Results
6. Conclusion

Social capital

- R. Putman “Making Democracy Work”(1993), R. Wilkinson “Unhealthy Societies” (1996)
- Social support (Berkman, 2000; Lennartsson, 1999), social integration (Berkman, Glass, 2000), social cohesion (Kawachi, Berkman, 2000)
- Social capital differs from social networks and support (Harpam et al., 2002)
- Structural and cognitive components (Bain, Hicks, 1998)

Social capital – an individual or contextual feature?

- ❑ Individual level (Rose, 2000; Veenstra, 2000)
- ❑ Contextual level:
 - State (Kawachi et al., 1997; Kawachi, Kennedy and Glass, 1999, Putman, 2000)
 - Region (Kennedy, Kawachi and Brained, 1998)
 - Neighborhood (Lochner et al., 2003)
- ❑ Multilevel modelling (Kawachi et al., 1999; Subramanian et al., 2002; Poortinga, 2006)

How to measure social capital at a contextual level?

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- ✓Country (Helliwell, 2002), per capita median income (Helliwell, Putman, 2004)
- ✓Counting the number of civic associations, observing social interactions between individuals, etc. (Raudenbush, Sampson, 1999)
- ✓To aggregate individual responses (Kawachi et al., 1999; Subramanian et al., 2001)

BUT: contextual differences could be confounded by the residents' characteristics (Subramanian et al., 2003)

SWB measures and their determinants ⁶

- Psychological well-being, mental well-being, happiness, life satisfaction, positive affect
- Health (Kirby, Coleman & Daley, 2004), education and income (Pinquart and Sorensen, 2000; Yang, 2008), marital status (Diener et al., 2000), gender (Pinquart and Sorensen, 2001; Inglehart, 2002)
- Social integration (Ellison, Boardman, Williams & Jackson, 2001; Morrow-Howell et al., 2003), social relations (Wiligen, 2000; Krause, 2001)

Research questions

1. Are SWB benefits of social capital individual or collective at national level?
2. What form of social capital has the most significant impact on the elderly's SWB?

Cross-countries studies (Helliwell, 2002; Helliwell, Putman, 2004)

US (Subramanian, Lochner, Kawachi, 2002; Wen et al., 2003), Canada (Helliwell, Putman, 2004), EU (Druker et al., 2003; Poortinga, 2006)

Data & Methodology (1)

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- WVS (2010 – 2014)
- Belarus, Estonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Ukraine
- 50+
- SWB: happiness (1-4), life satisfaction (1-10), subjective health (1-4)
- Socio-demographic characteristics: age, sex, marital status, the presence of children, educational level, employment status, subjective income group, social class, religion, size of town

Data & Methodology (2)

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1. Structural component of social capital –

any participation (active or inactive member):

- Church or religious organizations
- Labor unions
- Political parties
- Humanitarian or charitable organizations
- Professional associations
- Environmental organizations
- Self-help and mutual aid groups
- Consumer organizations
- Sport or recreational organizations
- Other organizations
- Art, music or educational organizations

Data & Methodology (3)

2. Cognitive component of social capital:

- Would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be careful in a dealing with people? *Most people can be trusted/Need to be careful*
- Do you think most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance, or would they try to be fair? *10-point scale*

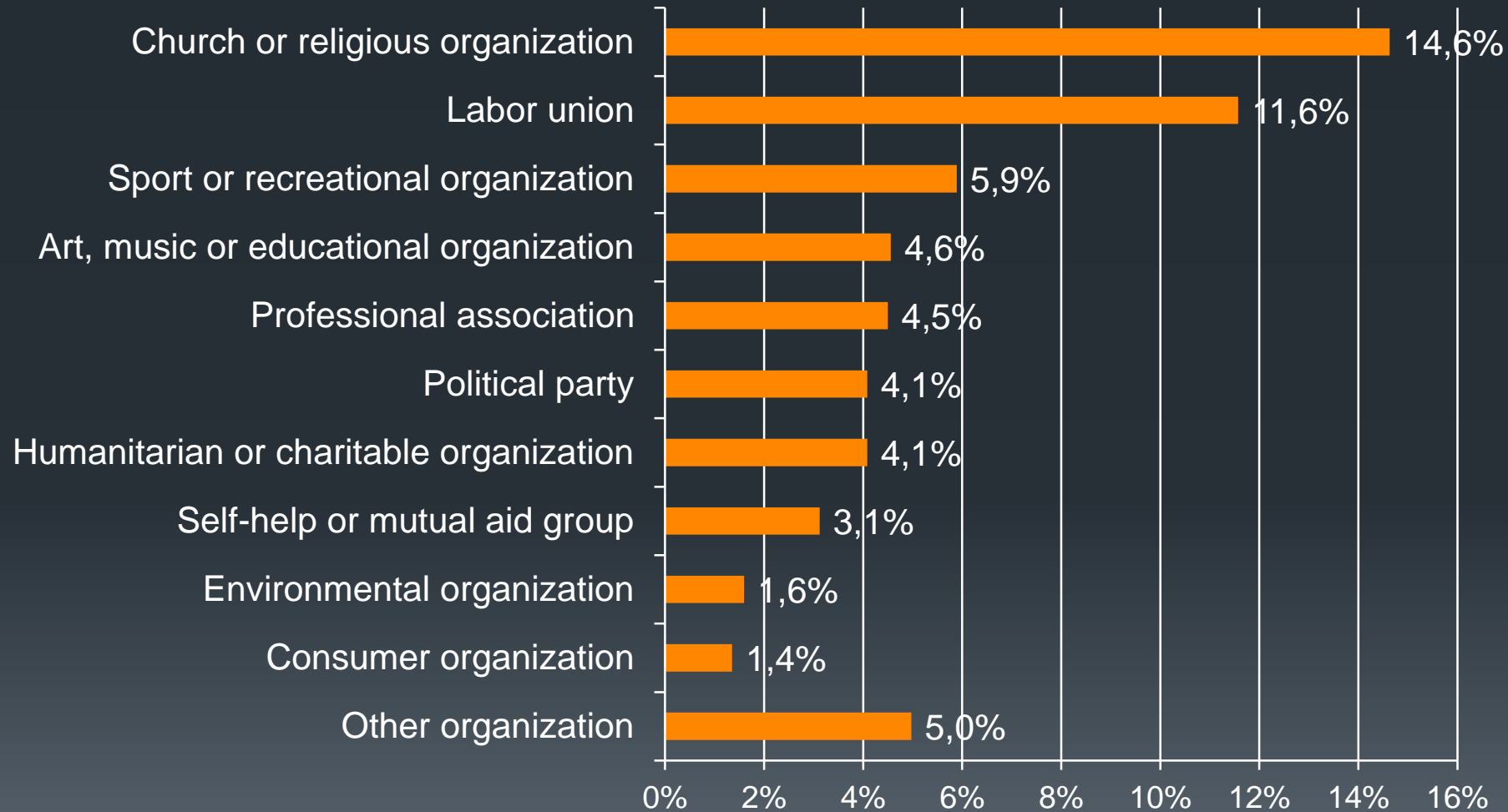
Data & Methodology (4)

Ordinal regressions:

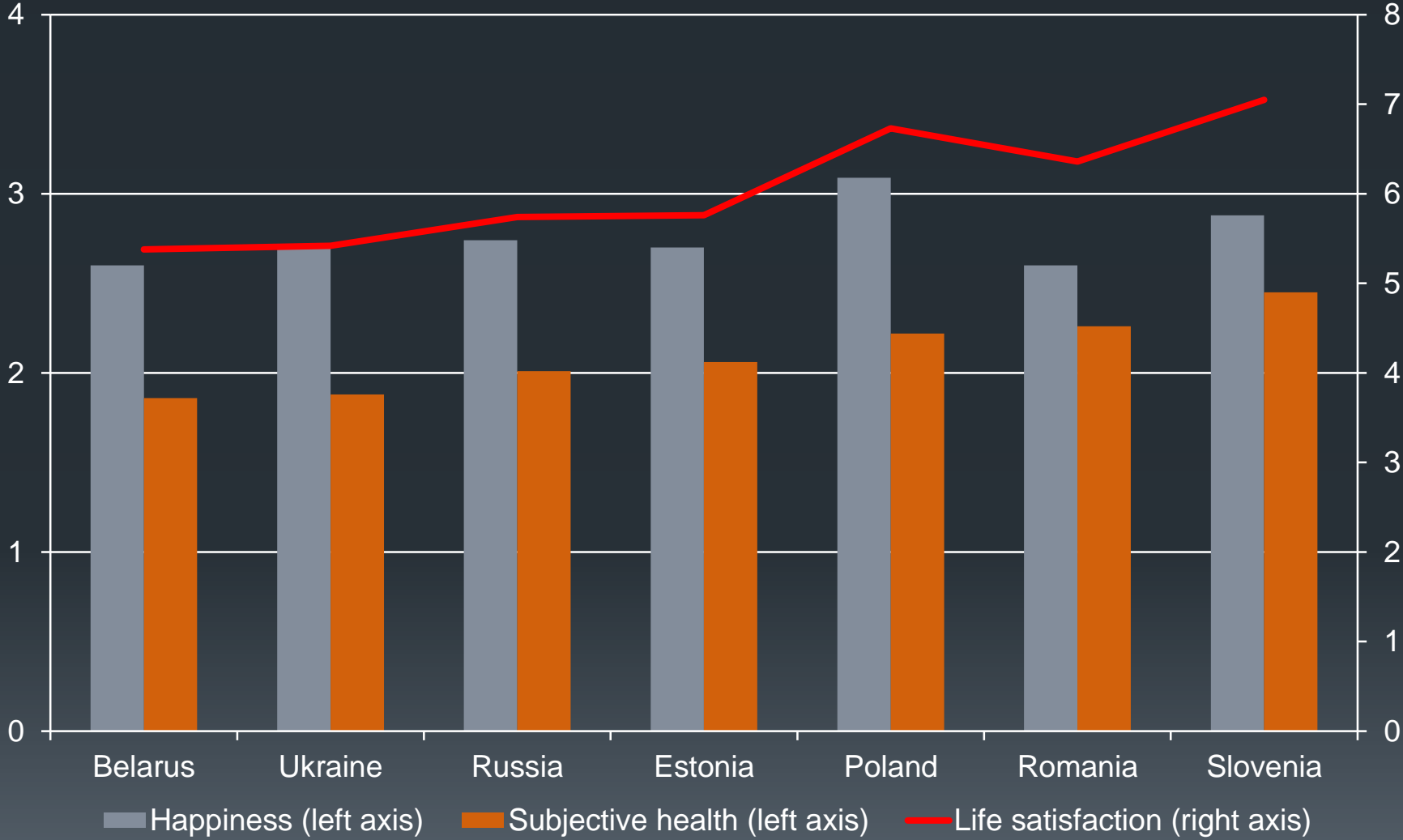
1. Socio-demographic characteristics (model 1)
2. (1) + Social capital indicators – individual level (model 2)
3. (2) + Social capital indicators – cross-level interactions of individual and national levels (model3)

The share of the elderly participated in organizations

36% of the elderly take part in one or more types of organizations



SWB in Eastern European countries



	Subjective Health	Happiness	Life satisfaction
Age	-0,039***		
Sex (female)	-0,177**	0,177**	14 0,115*
Marital status (single)	-0,369***	-0,754***	-0,483***
Children (no children)	0,197*	-0,456***	-0,294***
Education (complete primary school)			0,521***
Education (complete secondary school)			0,137*
Employment (unemployed)	-0,313***		
Income scale (the lowest group 1)	-1,100***	-1,010***	-1,683***
Income scale (2)	-1,055***	-1,001***	-1,513***
Income scale (3)	-0,774***	-0,601***	-1,251***
Income scale (4)	-0,418***	-0,289*	-0,768***
Income scale (5)	-0,370***	-0,098	-0,462***
Income scale (6)	-0,298*	0,026	-0,259*
Social class (lower class)	-1,208***	-1,341***	-0,968**
Social class (working class)	-0,963**	-0,982**	-0,673*
Social class (lower middle class)	-0,692*	-0,883**	-0,500*
Social class (upper middle class)	-0,495	-0,652*	-0,326
Town size (less than 10 000)			0,175**
Town size (10 000 - 50 000)			-0,045
Town size (50 000 - 100 000)			0,004
Religion (not belong to any religion)	0,197**		
N	4312	4193	4305
R ²	0,153	0,114	0,142

Significance level: *** - 0.001; ** - 0.01; * - 0.1

	Subjective Health	Happiness	Life satisfaction
Participation (not belong)	-0,233***	-0,210**	15 -0,205***
Trust (need to be careful)	-0,120*	-0,277***	
Trust scale (people would try to take advantage of you = 1)		-0,634***	-0,875***
Trust scale (2)		-0,460**	-0,971***
Trust scale (3)		-0,565***	-1,027***
Trust scale (4)		-0,613***	-1,193***
Trust scale (5)		-0,296*	-0,764***
Trust scale (6)		-0,360*	-0,734***
Trust scale (7)		-0,499***	-0,641***
Trust scale (8)		-0,256*	-0,423***
Trust scale (9)		-0,336*	-0,392**
N	4092	3903	4141
R ²	0,155	0,125	0,167

Significance level: *** - 0.001; ** - 0.01; * - 0.1

	Subjective Health	Life satisfaction	Life satisfaction
Individual level			
Participation (not belong)		-0,190**	16 -0,189**
Trust (need to be careful)	-0,327***		
Trust scale (people would try to take advantage of you = 1)		-1,011***	-1,009***
Trust scale (2)		-0,950***	-0,950***
Trust scale (3)		-0,943***	-0,944***
Trust scale (4)		-1,082***	-1,083***
Trust scale (5)		-0,694***	-0,694***
Trust scale (6)		-0,657***	-0,657***
Trust scale (7)		-0,584***	-0,585***
Trust scale (8)		-0,379**	-0,384**
Trust scale (9)		-0,352*	-0,359*
National level			
National participation	1,588***	0,646*	0,544*
National trust	-5,344***	-2,990***	-2,910***
Cross-level interactions			
National participation * Participation (1)	0,449**		0,423**
National participation * Trust (1)			
National trust * Participation (2)			
National trust * Trust (2)		0,546*	
N	4092	3987	3987
R ²	0,202	0,183	0,183

Significance level: *** - 0.001; ** - 0.01; * - 0.1

Conclusion (1)

- ❖ Slovenia and Poland demonstrate the highest levels of SWB whereas Russia, Belarus and Ukraine show the opposite picture
- ❖ Along with socio-demographic characteristics the elderly's individual participation has a stable positive effect on SWB, individual perceptions of trust do the same, but the effect is greater for happiness and life satisfaction

Conclusion (2)

- ❖ National participation rates have a positive impact on subjective health and life satisfaction
- ❖ Contextual perceptions of trust might influence on SWB at another geographical or social level (not country level)
- ❖ Social capital does not collectively improve subjective health and increase life satisfaction but mainly benefits people who have high levels of trust themselves or take part in various types of organizations

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