

ESF EUROCORES Programme

Cross-National and Multi-Level Analysis of Human Values, Institutions and Behaviour (HumVIB)

Final Report

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EUROCORES (European Collaborative Research)

The European Collaborative Research (EUROCORES) Scheme enables researchers in different European countries to develop collaboration and scientific synergy in areas where international scale and scope are required for top class science in a global context.

The scheme provides a flexible framework for national basic research funding and performing organisations to join forces in supporting forefront European research in and across all scientific areas.

Until the end of 2008, scientific coordination and networking was funded through the EC FP6 Programme, under contract no. ERASCT- 2003-980409. As of 2009, the national organisations support all aspects including scientific coordination, networking and research funding.

www.esf.org/humvib

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Foreword

The origins and development of the HumVIB programme



The origins of the Human Values, Institutions and Behaviour (HumVIB) programme lay in a series of conversations that began in the political science department at the University of Michigan in 2006. The conversations arose from the publication of Vol. 13, No. 4, of *Political Analysis* in autumn 2005 – a Special Issue on Multi-level Modelling for Large Clusters – and, in particular, articles by Jusko and Shively¹ and Achen². Being, of necessity, prone to skim the algebra in articles of the kind that characterise *Political Analysis*, my role in these conversations was to ask the naive questions. As it turned out, these questions were not lacking in ambition and the conversations continued when Achen and Jusko moved to Princeton and Stanford respectively and I returned to Dublin.

At just around that time in 2006, the European Science Foundation launched its annual call for themes for interdisciplinary European Collaborative Research (EUROCORES) programmes. This was serendipity indeed as the EUROCORES scheme seemed to provide an ideal framework within which a multi-level comparative research strategy could be developed and implemented. Happily, a joint proposal for a EUROCORES programme in ‘Cross-national and Multi-level Analysis of Human Values, Institutions and Behaviour’ (HumVIB) was selected for development into a call for research proposals (see below for the team of theme proposers). While this was a major milestone in the development of

the HumVIB programme, the hard work lay ahead. This included a preparatory workshop in November 2006 with representatives of the interested national research councils to finalise the text of the call for proposals and make sure that various national priorities were addressed in the call. On one hand this threatened fragmentation, but on the other, it compelled the HumVIB team to identify, reflect on and articulate the European dimension of their thinking. At the same time a broad international perspective was encouraged by the participation of the American National Science Foundation in the final set of funding agencies.

Having participated in designing the programme, the members of the proposing team had the option of applying for funding: some did so, others did not. But there were many hundreds of researchers and research groups across Europe for whom the HumVIB call for research proposals in March 2007 opened a new vista of research possibilities for diverse perspectives and approaches. This had the beneficial effect of widening the range of topics and disciplines represented in the programme.

It was, however, regrettable that some of the individual partners in the selected collaborative projects did not, at the end of the day, get support from their national funding agencies and so were unable to take part. In these instances, the mechanisms of the EUROCORES scheme displayed some of the tensions between intergovernmentalism versus supranationalism. It was furthermore a loss for the programme that an envisaged ‘support’ project specialising in data management and methodology was not among the final line-up of funded projects.

1. Jusko, K.L. and Shively, W.P. (2005) A Two-Step Strategy for the Analysis of Cross-National Public Opinion Data. *Political Analysis*, 13(4), 327-344.

2. Achen, C.H. (2005) Two-Step Hierarchical Estimation: Beyond Regression Analysis. *Political Analysis*, 13(4), 447-456.

However, considering the programme as a whole, we trust that the collective efforts of the diverse HumVIB projects have added up to something more than the sum of the parts. Some evidence for this claim is contained in the description of the projects, their outputs and their joint activities that make up the main part of this report.



Richard Sinnott
HumVIB Scientific Committee

Theme proposers

The proposal for a EUROCORES programme on the subject of Cross-National and Multi-Level Analysis of Human Values, Institutions and Behaviours was submitted by the following team in 2007 (with their affiliations at the time of the proposal):

- Richard Sinnott, Professor of Political Science, University College Dublin, Ireland
- Anthony F. Heath, Professor of Sociology, University of Oxford, UK
- Nan Dirk de Graaf, Professor of Empirical Sociology, University of Nijmegen, The Netherlands
- Yannick Lemel, *Inspecteur Général* of the French National Institute for Statistics and Economic Studies (INSEE) and Centre for Research in Economics and Statistics (CREST), France
- Jan W. van Deth, Professor of Political Science and International Comparative Social Research, University of Mannheim, Germany
- Joan Font Fàbregas, Director del Departamento de Investigación, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, Madrid, Spain
- Gabor Toka, Associate Professor and Director of Doctoral Studies, Department of Political Science, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary.

1.

About the programme



Background

The concept of Europe as a natural laboratory for the social sciences had its roots in efforts by Stein Rokkan and others in the 1950s and 1960s to lay the groundwork for a genuinely comparative European social science. Those efforts were hampered by the division of Europe, by the lack of individual-level and aggregate-level data and by problems of statistical method, particularly in the area of cross-level inference. These obstacles have been either swept aside by history or largely overcome by progress in data collection and management and in statistical methods. The EUROCORES programme Cross-national and Multi-level analysis of Human Values, Institutions and Behaviours (HumVIB) was designed to take advantage of this new moment in a coordinated, cross-national and multidisciplinary research effort combining:

- the unprecedented individual-level data resources now available in Europe and typified by the European Social Survey (ESS);
- comprehensive system-level and contextual data;
- appropriate new methods of multi-level analysis;
- the development and testing of carefully elaborated theories of the effects of contextual factors on individual attitudes and behaviour.

The EUROCORES programme HumVIB was therefore designed to offer social scientists all over Europe the opportunity to study and exploit the wide diversity of institutions, histories, practices and resources found across Europe and beyond to analyse how human values, attitudes and behaviour are affected by the characteristics of the multi-level systems or contexts in which they occur.

The theme of the programme was proposed and selected through an open competition for EUROCORES themes in 2006 (see Section 1 for the list of theme proposers) and developed into a Call for Outline Proposals which was launched in March 2007 with the backing of 18 national research agencies.

Following an international two-stage review process, six Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs) were funded and the EUROCORES programme HumVIB was formally launched in October 2008. The funded projects were supported by 11 national research funding organisations (see Annex 3), with the participation of independent Associated Partners in an additional four countries. Combined national research funding for the 24 Individual Projects amounted to more than €4M. The duration of the individual grants was three or four years, depending on national rules. As is normal for EUROCORES programmes, research funding was provided directly at national level. In total, the programme brought together 27 research teams across Europe and North America, with more than 75 researchers working on the projects at any one time.

The six Collaborative Research Projects funded in the framework of the EUROCORES programme HumVIB took up the challenge for comparative social science research on a broad range of substantive topics: gender inequality (EQUALITY), the influence of environmental conditions and political context on well-being (HAPPINESS), the extent to which political elites represent their constituencies (REPCONG), the organisation of the life course (LIFETIMING), the factors affecting voter turnout and abstention (VTAC), and attitudes to welfare policies (WAE).

The formal three-year duration of the programme culminated in a conference in Berlin on 8-10 September 2011 at which the six projects presented their results thus far and debated the way forward for comparative social science research (see www.esf.org/humvib/conference). A synthesis of this debate is contained in Section 4. Some of the CRPs continue into early 2012.

Collaborative research, networking and dissemination

The HumVIB programme, like all EUROCORES programmes, offered a framework for researchers with complementary expertise and from different disciplinary backgrounds (including in this case economics, political science, sociology, demography and social statistics) to work together across geographical boundaries on diverse substantive topics.

An additional layer of added value was provided by the cross-CRP networking and dissemination activities. Until the end of 2008, funding for cross-CRP networking (as for coordination of the scheme) was covered under the EC FP6 support contract ERASCT-2003-980409. From January 2009 to the end of the programme, the participating national funding organisations provided the networking (and coordination) budget on the principle of a common pot.

Over the course of three years, members of the six Collaborative Research Project teams were thereby able to initiate and engage in cross-CRP activities such as training courses, workshops, short-term visits and dissemination events, sometimes involving external experts, and often embedded in larger events. Besides enriching the research being carried out within the CRPs, these joint activities have helped to create new links and networks, build capacity in the field, contribute to the training of doctoral and post-doctoral researchers, and widen the dissemination of results. The programme also offered an opportunity to strengthen links between the social sciences in Europe and North America, with three research teams based in the USA and one Associated Partner in Canada. A complete list of the networking, training and dissemination events undertaken by the programme members is given in Annex 1.

Programme evaluation

The programme was evaluated at two points in its lifespan, at the mid-term stage in March 2010 and finally in September 2011. On both occasions the programme was evaluated by members of the international Review Panel which made the selection of Collaborative Research Projects (Annex 3).

Programme website
www.esf.org/humvib

2.

Overview of the Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs)



FP-001 – Gender Inequality in a Comparative Perspective (EQUALITY)

Project Leader

- **Professor Tanja van der Lippe**
Department of Sociology/ICS (Interuniversity Centre for Social Science Theory and Methodology), Utrecht University

FP-002 – Welfare Attitudes in a Changing Europe (WAE)

Project Leader

- **Professor Stefan Svallfors**
Department of Sociology, Umeå University

FP004 – Voter Turnout and Abstention in Context (VTAC)

Project Leader

- **Professor Richard Sinnott**
Public Opinion and Political Behaviour Programme, Geary Institute, University College Dublin

FP007 – Representation in Europe: Policy Congruence between Citizens and Elites (REPCONG)

Project Leader

- **Professor Sylvia Kritzinger**
Department of Methods in the Social Sciences, University of Vienna

FP010 – The Timing of Life: Understanding Cross-National Differences in the Organisation of the Life Course in Europe (LIFETIMING)

Project Leader

- **Professor Aart Liefbroer**
The Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI)

FP011 – Happiness, Political Institutions, Natural Environment and Space (HAPPINESS)

Project Leader

- **Dr Susana Ferreira**
College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Georgia (previously University College Dublin)

3.

Highlights of the Collaborative Research Projects



Gender Inequality in a Comparative Perspective (EQUALITY)

Funding organisations

DFG, NSF, NWO, OTKA

Project duration

September 2008 – September 2012

Project Leader

- **Professor Tanja van der Lippe**
Department of Sociology/ICS (Interuniversity Centre for Social Science Theory and Methodology), Utrecht University, The Netherlands
 - Dr Ineke Maas (Co-PI)
 - Anja Abendroth, *PhD candidate*

Principal Investigators

- **Professor Sonja Drobnic**
Institute of Sociology, University of Hamburg, Germany
 - Andreas Techen, *PhD candidate (until 2009)*
 - Sascha Peter, *PhD candidate*
 - Michael Zochowski, *PhD candidate*
- **Dr Eva Fodor**
Department of Gender Studies, Central European University, Budapest, Hungary
- **Professor Judith Treas**
Department of Sociology, University of California, Irvine, United States
 - Zoya Gubernskaya, *PhD candidate*
 - Dr Tsui-o Tai, *post-doctoral researcher (now at the University of Queensland, Australia)*

Website

www.uu.nl/EN/faculties/socialsciences/organisation/Departments/CAS/research/equality/Pages/default.aspx

About the project

The broad objective of the EQUALITY project was to integrate sociological, demographic and economic insights to increase understanding of the persistent inequality between men and women in Europe and the US, and to investigate the various, sometimes contradictory, effects of societal contexts on different dimensions of gender inequality, i.e., market success, division of household tasks, poverty and civic engagement.

Overall, the CRP has shown the importance of macro-micro interactions in understanding gender inequality, although variations exist as to which macro and micro factors are most important and the extent to which they influence gender inequality.

The project has shown how the institutional context of countries buffers or reinforces the career disadvantages associated with motherhood depending on the family model they are facilitating and the labour market outcome in question. This illustrates that family-friendly policies can counteract each other in their positive or negative influence since policies facilitating a dual earner family or a traditional male breadwinner family coexist. Moreover, these findings increase our understanding of the paradox that family-friendly policies enhance women's economic independence by facilitating their participation in the economy, but that employment supportive policies also create new gender inequalities. Policies facilitating the male breadwinner family such as child benefits and the availability of part-time work negatively affect working hours of employed mothers. Policies facilitating the dual-earner family such as publicly funded childcare or leave arrangements show a positive relationship with working hours of employed mothers in some countries. Similarly, high publicly



Tsui-o Tai, Ineke Maas, Judith Treas, Tanja van der Lippe, Eva Fodor, Sascha Peter, Anja Abendroth, Sonja Drobnic, Andreas Techen.

funded childcare provision seems to buffer the motherhood penalty to occupational status around birth. In contrast, decreases in occupational status for mothers are greater in countries with a high availability of part-time work. The project further shows that not only the country context, but also the workplace and family context play a role for labour market inequalities between men and women in different European countries. The availability of supportive workplace arrangements and family support seem to have a positive impact on working hours of employed mothers, while the partner can be a resource or restriction to female income developments depending on the country context. The different sources of support (workplace, family, state) appear to be complementary.

Although most research on the division of household labour has focused on its individual- and household-level determinants, the project confirms the value of a multi-level, cross-national approach that incorporates macro-level conditions to explain inequalities in domestic arrangements [see Treas and Drobnic, *Dividing the Domestic* (2010)]. For example, project results point to national differences in extended family influences (the strength of family ties, the lasting influence of employed mothers) as previously neglected factors determining the level of household gender equality. The project made substantive contributions (extending housework to consider the allocation of household management tasks) and innovative methodological applications (Mokken scaling of male performance of female-typed household tasks).

Information, help, emotional or financial support are valuable resources which individuals can access through their contacts to social networks; however,

access to social networks and the potential to mobilise embedded resources, captured in the concept of social capital, are unequally distributed among individuals. This *relational* form of social inequality may generate and amplify social inequality in other fields such as income, occupational prestige, power in public life and in the household, and in this way underline and enhance gender inequality. So far, only very few cross-national comparative studies explicitly considered gender differentials in formal groups, such as voluntary associations, even though we know from other fields of inquiry that some countries or groups of countries are more gender-egalitarian than others. Research in IP 3 reveals a complex relationship between societal contexts and the gender gap in associational involvement, thus confirming the importance of macro-micro interactions. There are systematic variations across countries in both membership level and the gender gap. To systematically assess these differences, the project introduces an adapted version of the non-profit regime typology. Women in the social democratic non-profit regime have the highest participation rates, followed by conservative and liberal non-profit regimes. In Mediterranean and post-socialist non-profit regimes, women face a dual disadvantage. Their average number of voluntary association memberships is low, both in absolute terms and in comparison to their male counterparts.

The project also explored the impact of economic development and other macro-level factors on gender inequality at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In the relatively homogeneous context of Central and Eastern Europe, we found a positive relationship between gender inequality and fast-paced, foreign investment-led growth. Women did worse

in countries which followed neo-liberal structural adjustment edicts more closely. This is in line with research on Latin American countries but opposite to expectations for post-communist societies, where women's position in the labour market had been stronger at the start of global integration. The project highlighted the impact of economic processes and restructuring on gender inequality. In addition, we found that welfare states, rather than labour markets, provide support for women in times of poverty: states with high levels of welfare spending and spending on family policies suffered less gender inequality. This suggests the extreme importance of state policies for alleviating gender inequalities in other areas as well.

Selected outputs

- Abendroth, A.-K., Huffman, M. and Treas, J. (submitted) Revisiting the Motherhood Penalty: Occupational Status Developments in 13 European Countries.
- Fodor, E., Lane, L., Schippers, J. and van der Lippe, T. (2011) Gender differences in quality of life. In: Back-Wiklund, M., van der Lippe, T., den Dulk, L. and van Doorne-Huiskes, A. (Eds), *Quality of Life and Work in Europe: Theory Practice and Policy*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Treas, J. and Drobnič, S. (Eds) (2010) *Dividing the Domestic: Women, Men and Household Work in Cross-National Perspective*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Treas, J., van der Lippe, T. and Tsui-o Tai. In press. The Happy Homemaker? Married Women's Subjective Well-Being in Cross-national Perspective. *Social Forces*.

Welfare Attitudes in a Changing Europe (WAE)

Funding organisations

AKA, DFG, FAS, MICINN, NSF, NWO, SNF

Project duration

January 2009 – December 2011

Project Leader

- **Professor Stefan Svallfors**

Department of Sociology, Umea University, Sweden

- Dr Annette Schnabel, *Associate Professor*
- Joakim Kulin, *PhD candidate*

Principal Investigators

- **Professor Helena Blomberg**

Swedish School of Social Science, University of Helsinki, Finland

- Dr Johanna Kallio, *post-doctoral researcher*
- Professor Olli Kangas (*Co-PI*)
- Dr Christian Kroll
- Dr Mikko Niemelä

- **Professor Clem Brooks**

Department of Sociology, Indiana University, United States

- **Professor Steffen Mau**

Bremen International School of Social Sciences, University of Bremen, Germany

- Dr Jan Mewes, *post-doctoral researcher*
- Christoph Burkhardt, *PhD candidate*

- **Professor Luis Moreno Fernandez**

Institute of Public Goods and Policies, Council for Scientific Research (CSIC), Madrid, Spain

- Dr Ines Calzada, *post-doctoral researcher*
- Dr Javier Moreno-Fuentes

- **Dr Christian Staerklé**

Institute of Social Sciences, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

- Tiina Likki, *PhD candidate*

- **Professor Wim Van Oorschot**

Department of Sociology, Tilburg University, The Netherlands

- Dr Bart Meuleman, *post-doctoral researcher*
- Dr Tim Reeskens, *post-doctoral researcher*
- Dr Ruud Luijkx (*Co-PI*)

About the project

This project established a comprehensive research programme on citizens' attitudes towards welfare policies across European countries. The project was mainly, but not exclusively, based on a jointly produced dataset, the Welfare Attitudes module for the European Social Survey 2008.

Our analyses have broadened and specified the dependent variable(s) in the analysis of welfare attitudes. Previous research has to a large extent focused on what might be termed general welfare state support, regardless of what method was chosen to measure it. In our analyses, we go beyond a focus on only welfare attitudes in this restricted sense; we also take into account welfare state evaluations, welfare chauvinism, and age- and class-specific policy areas. This widening of focus brings some interesting insights. We find, for example, that although support for state intervention is strong in Europe, satisfaction with how well the welfare state performs its tasks is much lower, and highly varied across Europe. If there are legitimacy problems in the European welfare states, they rather refer to these kinds of considerations and evaluations than to any principled resistance against state intervention.

A second theme relates to ethnic and cultural diversity as a new challenge to nationally organised welfare policies. Our analyses add several important observations in this regard. One concerns the conditional, and highly varied, support for including immigrants into the welfare state. We show that support for including migrants into the welfare state under the same conditions as the autochthonous population varies dramatically across Europe. Nowhere do we find a majority prepared to grant newcomers access to benefits and services immediately on arrival. On the other hand, pure welfare chauvinism, as expressed in the view that immigrants should never receive the same kind of access as those born in the receiving country, is clearly a small minority position. Instead, mainstream views about the inclusion of migrants seem to rest on a kind of reciprocal thinking: once 'they' have contributed, they can be granted rights. In regard to existing research, our findings imply that the focus on ethnic fragmentation *per se* may be slightly misplaced. It is rather the policy response and degree of difficulties in the labour market that matters for attitudes toward the inclusion of newcomers in the welfare state.

A third theme to which the project has contributed concerns the explanatory mechanisms behind welfare attitudes, and between categorical locations and such attitudes. Much research in the field has

been based on an explicit or implicit assumption that self-interest is the mechanism that links social location with attitudes. However, self-interest is in no way close to the full story behind the patterning of welfare attitudes. More broadly, it is clearly the case that beliefs, values and notions of deservingness all affect attitudes toward redistribution and welfare policies. Their impact may vary across groups and among countries, but it is nevertheless clear that attitudes toward the welfare state entail notions of social order and legitimacy in the widest sense.

A fourth set of results concerns the impact of macro-variables on micro-level processes and outcomes. The relation between indicators at the macro-(country-)level and welfare attitudes is a complex and highly contingent one. Any notion that certain structural macro-variables could in general be linked to specific levels of or associations among welfare attitudes is a fantasy. Instead, the impact of macro-variables is highly diverse, depending on the attitudinal outcomes in question as well as the proposed mechanisms.

A further contribution is our extending of the analyses beyond the traditional 'three worlds of welfare capitalism'. In addition to adding specific interesting findings, this approach also highlights some general shortcomings and blind spots of existing research. In particular, the characteristics of the former communist countries of East-Central Europe are worth noting. These countries seem to combine a highly combustible combination of attitudes to and evaluations of the welfare state. High demands for state intervention and redistribution are combined with fairly low social trust, very low satisfaction with performance, high perceived risk, comparatively large and growing class differences in attitudes, and more widespread authoritarian dispositions and welfare chauvinism than elsewhere. In combination, such a mindset seems highly conducive to the kind of ruptures and eruptions many countries in Eastern Europe have experienced in the recent past.

Selected outputs

- Brooks, C. and Svallfors, S. (2010) Why Does Class Matter? Policy attitudes, mechanisms, and the case of the Nordic countries. *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility*. 28, 199-213.
- Brooks, C. and Calzada, I. (submitted) Why does Policy Feedback happen? Insights from Survey Experiments, *Social Forces*. Working paper 02/2011 of the Institute for Public Goods and Policies, CCHS-CSIC.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10261/32708>
- Kulin, J. and Meuleman, B. (2011) The impact of basic human values on attitudes towards government responsibility in Europe. Working paper.
- Svallfors, S. (Ed.) *Contested Welfare States. Welfare Attitudes in Europe and Beyond*. Forthcoming at Stanford University Press, 2012.

Voter Turnout and Abstention in Context: A multi-level analysis of the factors affecting voter turnout and abstention in systems of multi-level governance (VTAC)

Funding organisations

IRCHSS, MICINN, NSF

Project duration

June 2008 – December 2011

Project Leader

• Professor Richard Sinnott

Public Opinion and Political Behaviour Programme, Geary Institute, University College Dublin, Ireland

– Stephen Quinlan, *PhD candidate*

Principal Investigators

• Professor Eva Anduiza-Perea

Institute of Government and Public Policy, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain

– Aina Gallego, *post-doctoral researcher*

– Guillem Rico, *post-doctoral researcher*

– Carolina Galais, *PhD candidate*

– Jordi Muñoz, *PhD candidate*

– Joan Font, *senior researcher*

• Professor Karen Jusko

Department of Political Science, Stanford University, United States

– Molly Cohn, *PhD candidate*

– Alex Kuo, *former PhD candidate, current Juan March Institute post-doctoral scholar and assistant professor at Cornell University*

Associated Partners

• Professor Soren Thomsen

Department of Political Science, University of Aarhus, Denmark

• Professor André Blais

Department of Political Science, University of Montreal, Canada

About the project

This project tackled the persistent problem of low/declining voter turnout. The fact that a handful of countries have managed to evade the problem, or that a certain country may occasionally experience a sudden rise in turnout, only serves to sharpen the analytical puzzle and the policy conundrum. Building on the achievements of and confronting the problems in the existing literature, the project focused on the application of multi-level modelling

to the analysis of turnout in systems of multi-level governance. Using a common conceptual framework, the project analysed the effects on turnout, and on the individual-level determinants of turnout, of varying institutional configurations, social structures and political cultures with specific reference to aspects of community cohesion, civic duty, political knowledge and poverty and social exclusion.

Jusko (Stanford) and Sinnott (Dublin) examined how a new group dimension might fit within the facilitation-mobilisation framework that underpins the research. In a significant development of the framework, they argue that the facilitation-mobilisation variables that affect voter turnout can be located not just at two but at three levels, namely institutional, group and individual. Accordingly, rather than having a fourfold typology of the factors affecting turnout, there are six. The two new types are aspects of groups that make them worthwhile targets of voter facilitation and aspects of groups that make them worthwhile targets of voter mobilisation. In a second, related, research programme, Jusko has begun to examine the implications of historical electoral geography on party system development:

Important progress was made towards understanding political parties' strategic incentives to mobilise low-income citizens, both in the contemporary and historical context. Focusing first on contemporary party politics and voter turnout, a system-level dataset was built and revised to report the share of seats that can be elected by low-income citizens, if all low-income citizens turn out to vote and all low-income citizens cast ballots for the same political party. This measure of 'electoral power' reflects the joint geographic distribution of legislative seats and poverty across electoral districts, and reflects the extent to which a country's electoral system favours the representation of socially-excluded citizens. The analysis indicates that the relationship between social exclusion (i.e., low-income status) and voter turnout reflects cross-national variance in the electoral power of a low-income voting block.

With former Stanford PhD candidate, Alex Kuo, Jusko has built a dataset that describes the mobilisation efforts of the German SPD, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Within a framework that is similar to Jusko's contemporary analysis, Jusko and Kuo link the SPD mobilisation dataset to historical census data, in an attempt to understand the structure of the SPD's strategic mobilisation of working-class voters.

The Spanish team focused on the interaction between contextual data and individual variables

to explain turnout levels and changes. One line of research looked at the influence of institutional features and party system characteristics on levels of voter turnout and on the effect of individual factors. A long-standing puzzle in electoral research is why the disproportionality of electoral systems has a negative effect on voter participation in established democracies, but not in new democracies. The Spanish team proposed a learning theory of electoral system's effects, and tested it in a cross-national analysis and by using Spain as a case study. The results confirm that electoral disproportionality is unrelated to voter participation in early elections after democratisation, but the relationship is increasingly visible as democracies grow older. The case study uncovers two mechanisms: small parties optimise their mobilisation strategy only after the first democratic elections, and supporters of small parties increasingly fail to vote in small districts over time.

Recent scholarship has demonstrated that personality affects political behaviour. According to the mediation hypothesis, which is proposed by Gallego and Oberski (Barcelona) in an article in *Political Behavior*, the effect of personality on political participation is mediated by classic predictors, such as political interest, internal efficacy, political discussion, or the sense that voting is a civic duty. The paper outlines various paths that link personality traits to two participatory activities: voter turnout in European Parliament elections and participation in protest actions. The results clearly confirm that the effects of personality traits on voter turnout and protest participation are sizeable but indirect. They are mediated by attitudinal predictors.

Selected outputs

- Blais, A., Anduiza, E. and Gallego, A. (2010) Decentralization and Voter Turnout, *Journal Environment and Planning C*.
- Blais, A. and Achen, C. (2009) Duty, Preference, and Turnout. Paper presented at the General Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research, Potsdam, 10-12 September 2009.
- Jusko, K. and Sinnott, R. (2011) A Group-Based Model of Voter Turnout. UCD Public Opinion and Political Behaviour Working Paper Series.
- Jusko, K. (2011) Electoral Geography, Strategic Mobilization, and the Implications for Voter Turnout. Working paper.
- Jusko, K. and Kuo, A. (2011) The Strategic Mobilization of Low-Income Voters: The SPD and the 'Agricultural Proletariat'. Working paper.
- Lefkofridi, Z. and Gallego, A. (2011) Policy congruence and abstention in European democracies. Paper presented at the General Conference of the European Consortium for Political Research, Reykjavik, 25-27 August 2011.

Representation in Europe: Policy congruence between citizens and elites (REPCONG)

Funding organisations

DFG, FWF, IRCHSS, SNF

Project duration

July 2008 – January 2012

Project Leader

- **Professor Sylvia Kritzinger**
Department of Methods in the Social Sciences, University of Vienna, Austria
– Dr Zoe Lefkofridi, *post-doctoral researcher*
– Dr Alice Ludwig, *post-doctoral researcher*

Principal Investigators

- **Professor Thomas Bräuninger**
Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Mannheim, Germany
– Dr Nathalie Giger, *post-doctoral researcher*
– Julian Bernauer, *PhD candidate*
- **Professor Georg Lutz**
Swiss Centre of Expertise in the Social Sciences, University of Lausanne, Switzerland
– Dr Kathrin Kissau, *post-doctoral researcher*
– Jan Rosset, *PhD candidate*
- **Dr Gail McElroy**
Department of Political Science, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland
– Caroline McEvoy, *PhD candidate*

Website

<http://repcong.univie.ac.at/>

About the project

In real-world representative democracy, policy congruence between citizens and those elected to represent them is partial, for various reasons: representatives may deviate from what they originally promised when electoral sanction is unlikely, parties have informational advantages, or the nature of party competition in mass elections distorts the multi-dimensional character of citizen and party preferences. Yet, we know very little about the actual extent, the determinants and consequences of policy congruence between citizens and elites in Europe, at the national or European Union levels. The project is investigating these issues by focusing on: (1) the determinants of policy congruence and the impact of political institutions and direct democracy, in particular; (2) how policy congruence impacts on people's perception of representation

and their satisfaction with democracy as well as the perception of specific representative institutions, such as national parliaments/governments and European institutions.

The objective of Team Dublin was to explore policy congruence and its effects with a particular focus on the European Union. Work undertaken included the collection of national party manifestos in the 2009 European Elections and the construction of a database of expert placements of European Parliament political groups in the policy space. In addition, empirical research was conducted to explore several key issues concerning policy congruence in the EU. This included a detailed exploration of the policy positioning of voters and EU representatives in the policy space, an exploration of the determinants of policy congruence in the EU's multi-level governance structure and an examination of how the level of policy congruence impacts on the degree of voter support for the EU and its institutions. The empirical research undertaken by this project made extensive use of available EU-level data on the policy preferences of voters and political representatives including EES, Eurobarometer, ESS, expert surveys and party manifestos for EP elections.

The research focus of Team Lausanne lay on the parameters that increase or inhibit policy congruence, including direct democratic procedures as opposed to a purely representative framework. To support all REPCONG research on this topic Team Lausanne set up a contextual level database on political systems in Europe. Using a comparative perspective it studied how policy spaces of elites and citizens differ and how citizens evaluate policy congruence. Focusing on the direct democratic framework, the policy preferences of elites and citizens in general and specifically on fiscal issues were analysed. Additionally, Team Lausanne focused on differences in policy congruence between societal groups, e.g., voters and non-voters; high and low income; young and old; women and men.

A key contribution by Team Mannheim was the development of an improved method of scaling mapping of individual and party positions into a common political space. This method, operating through the estimation of an individual transformation parameter for each individual, allows for more meaningful comparisons of citizens' and elites' position on multiple issues, which will be of great value for the study of policy congruence in the future. Moreover, Team Mannheim established a new platform for election manifestos, where currently about 1,000 party manifestos from 18

European countries are made available to an interested public (www.polidoc.net). Importantly, the team also applied multi-level models to the study of representation and policy congruence. These models are of particular value when studying sub-constituency representation as we can easily identify socio-structural subgroups of the population (e.g., women, the poor) and are relevant for cross-country comparisons as they account for composition effects.

Team Vienna coordinated and provided support to the entire project, and was responsible for the organisation of events and meetings. It initiated the CRP's research journey by assessing data availability and its compatibility to the CRP's research goals at the infant stage of the project and constructing a database with all relevant survey questions from different international mass surveys. Moreover, in cooperation with Team Lausanne, it reviewed existing literature and discussed major theoretical and methodological challenges faced by the REPCONG project. Team Vienna scrutinised democratic representation in the EU by analysing congruence in a setting of multi-level governance and by specifically examining formerly neglected EU issues. More specifically, drawing on normative models of representation, Team Vienna established varied levels of policy congruence in different dimensions of political conflict (left-right, European unification, immigration), as well as differences in congruence degrees achieved at distinct levels of governance (regional, national, EU) through several empirical analyses of European countries and the EU as a whole.

Selected outputs

- Bernauer, J., Giger, N. and Rosset, J. (2010) Do Proportional Electoral Systems Close the Gap in Representation between Women and Men; Poor and Rich? Under review at *Political Studies*. Joint research paper by REPCONG Teams Lausanne and Mannheim.
- Giger, N., Kissau, K., Lutz, G. and Rosset, J. (2009) Explaining the Variance of Subjective and Substantive Representation. Paper presented at ECPR General Conference, Potsdam (10-12.09). Joint research paper by REPCONG Teams Lausanne and Mannheim.
- Giger, N., Rosset, J. and Bernauer, J. (forthcoming) The poor representation of the poor in a comparative perspective. *Representation*. Joint research paper by REPCONG Teams Lausanne and Mannheim.
- Kritzinger, S. and McElroy, G. (2010) Voter perceptions of Left and Right. Paper presented at Midwest Political Science Association Annual Conference (21-25.04). Joint research paper by REPCONG Teams Dublin and Vienna.
- Lefkofridi, Z., Gallego, A. and Giger, N. (2011) Policy Congruence and Abstention. Paper presented at ECPR General Conference, Reykjavik (25-27.08). Joint research paper by REPCONG Teams Vienna and Mannheim and VTAC Team Barcelona/California.

The Timing of Life: Understanding cross-national differences in the organisation of the life course in Europe (LIFETIMING)

Funding organisations

NWO, OTKA, RCN

Project duration

October 2008 – February 2012

Project Leader

- **Professor Aart C. Liefbroer**
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– Dr Arieke J. Rijken, *post-doctoral researcher*

Principal Investigators

- **Professor Gunhild Hagestad**
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– Dr Tale Hellevik, *post-doctoral researcher*
- **Dr Zsolt Spéder**
Demographic Research Institute, Hungarian Central Statistical Office, Budapest, Hungary
– Livia Murinko, *PhD candidate*
– Réka Geambasu, *PhD candidate*

Associated Partners

- **Professor Arnstein Aassve**
Dondena Centre for Research on Social Dynamics Bocconi University, Milan, Italy
– Bruno Arpino, *post-doctoral researcher*
- **Professor Francesco Billari**
Dondena Centre for Research on Social Dynamics Bocconi University, Milan, Italy

About the project

The broad objective of the Timing of Life project was to explain variations in the views of European men and women on the organisation of the life course. To do so, three main research questions were posed: to what extent is the life course perceived as a structured sequence of life stages, and which events mark the transition from one stage to another? Do social norms concerning the life course exist and, if so, to what extent are these norms backed by sanctions? To what extent and in what ways do individuals engage in active life planning? These questions were tackled from a comparative perspective, making use of data from the Timing of Life module in the 2006 wave of the European Social Survey.

One of the key questions of the CRP was to examine the extent to which age- and sequencing norms

are still operative within Europe. It is often assumed that such norms are weakest in more individualised societies, like Scandinavian ones. One of the key findings is that – although such norms in general are indeed weaker in Scandinavian countries than in many other parts of Europe – new norms seem to be emerging in Scandinavia as well. For instance, there are stricter norms in Scandinavian countries about the timing of leaving home than in many other countries. Such findings question the idea that individualisation simply implies the weakening of norms, but rather suggest that new norms (e.g., one should not stay in the parental home too long, or one should not marry without prior cohabitation) are replacing older ones.

The CRP also examined the extent to which family-related norms for men and women differed. For instance, do people disapprove as much of men experiencing a divorce while they have young children as they do of women divorcing in that same situation? If not, a double standard exists. Both men and women hold double standards regarding divorce involving young children: both sexes are more disapproving of divorcing men than of divorcing women, though women's double standard is about twice as large as men's is. The existence and strength of double standards vary substantially across Europe. The double standard regarding divorce and non-marital cohabitation is related to the country's level of gender equality: the higher the level of gender equality, the stronger the double standard. This might seem counter-intuitive, but given the fact that in Europe these double standards generally are in favour of women, it is not so surprising. Apparently, people in gender egalitarian countries are especially tolerant towards family decisions of other women.

Another topic examined by the CRP is the extent to which people engage in life-planning with regard to their future life-course. Relative to younger and older age groups, individuals in their twenties and thirties are more likely to engage in life planning. But the extent to which people engage in life-planning strongly depends on the level of economic security encountered. At the country level, young adults who live in societies with less favourable conditions plan more than those who live in societies with more favourable conditions. At the individual level, in contrast, young adults who have more favourable personal conditions are more likely to plan than those who do not. The negative relationship between secure societal conditions and life planning is a provocative one. It suggests that young people who live in more favourable societal

circumstances may actually plan less because they can generally take for granted a stable future or specifically envision multiple possible pathways into adulthood and ample opportunities for making their way, and that young people who live in less favourable societal conditions need to plan more precisely because their social lives are not as stable or predictable.

Selected outputs

Billari, F.C., Goisis, A., Liefbroer, A.C., Settersten, R.A. Jr., Aassve, A., Hagestad, G. and Spéder, Z. (2011) Social age deadlines for the childbearing of women and men. *Human Reproduction*, 26, 616-622.

Billari, F.C. and Liefbroer, A.C. (2010) Towards a new pattern of transition to adulthood? *Advances in Life Course Research*, 15, 59-75.

Happiness, Political Institutions, Natural Environment and Space – A comparative analysis of the influence of environmental conditions, environmental regimes and political context on subjective well-being (HAPPINESS)

Funding organisations

FAS, IRCHSS, MICINN

Project duration

October 2008 – June 2012

Project Leaders

• Dr Susana Ferreira

College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Georgia, USA (previously University College Dublin, Ireland)

• Dr Finbarr Brereton

University College Dublin, Ireland

- Tine Ningal, *PhD candidate*
- Professor Alun Jones, *senior researcher*
- Professor Peter Clinch, *senior researcher*

Principal Investigators

• Professor Juncal Cuñado

Department of Economics, Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona, Spain

- Professor Fernando Pérez de Gracia
- Professor Luis A. Gil-Alaña
- Dr Stella Salvatierra

• Professor Peter Martinsson

Gothenburg University, Sweden

- Professor Olof Johansson-Stenman
- Dr Alpaslan Akay (*Institute for the Study of Labour, IZA, Bonn*)

Associated Partner

• Dr Mirko Moro

Division of Economics, University of Stirling, UK

Website

www.ucd.ie/happy



About the project

The overarching objective of HAPPINESS was to shed light on how multi-level heterogeneity helps explain the variation in subjective well-being (SWB) across European countries and regions. The focus was on two important sources of spatial heterogeneity and their interactions: (i) environmental heterogeneity (including objective environmental conditions and environmental attitudes and policies); and (ii) institutional and political heterogeneity (including characteristics of the institutional and political context and individual socio-political interests and orientations). The units of analysis are two: regions at a micro level and countries at a macro level.

The project collected data on a variety of environmental indicators that previous literature suggested has an impact on SWB in order to study the role of location-specific factors on SWB across Europe, regarding environmental quality and pollution, climate, land use, regional socio-economic and socio-demographic characteristics and political/institutional context.

Environmental and institutional data were merged with individual-level European Social Survey (ESS) data using Geographical Information Systems (GIS). Further work concerned an estimation strategy and econometric analysis, using the datasets created above to produce an all-inclusive, comprehensive paper that links the regional variation in SWB across Europe to differences in all the location specific factors for which we have collected data.

The project has made two main methodological contributions so far. Our project has pioneered the use of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) for the spatial representation of data and to link data on environmental conditions at the regional level with individual-level data from the ESS. This is necessary to account for the wide variation of individual life-satisfaction scores across countries and, particularly, among different regions within the same country (as is evident from our case studies of Ireland and Spain).

The results of our research investigating day-of-the-week effects on self-reported SWB can offer valuable lessons for survey design and analysis of SWB data. First, we find that SWB is affected by the day of the interview (with Sundays being the 'bluest' day of the week). Second, we find that both interviewers and interviewees may self-select them-

From left to right: Fernando Perez de Gracia, Susana Ferreira, Alpaslan Akay, Finbarr Brereton, Peter Martinsson, Stella Salvatierra, Juncal Cunado and Mirko Moro.

Selected outputs

- Akay, A., Brereton, F., Cuñado, J., Ferreira, S., Martinsson, P. and Moro, M. (in progress)
Life Satisfaction and the Environment: The Case of Europe.
Akay, A. and Martinsson, P. (2009)
Sundays Are Blue: Aren't They? The Day-of-the-Week Effect on Subjective Well-Being and Socio-Economic Status, IZA Discussion Paper No. 4563.
- Brereton, F., Clinch, J.P. and Shahumyan, H. (2011) Environment, Land-use and Well-being: A pan-European perspective. Presented at the 'New Directions in Welfare' OECD Universities' Joint Congress, Paris, 6-8 July 2011.
- Calzada, I. and Brereton, F. (in progress)
Perceptions of Society and Happiness: An analysis of material and subjective determinants of life satisfaction across European countries.
- Ferreira, S. and Moro, M. (2011) Income and Preferences for the Environment: Evidence from Subjective Well-Being Data. Presented at the 'New Directions in Welfare' OECD Universities' Joint Congress, Paris, 6-8 July 2011.

4.

Looking ahead: Understanding cross-national differences in values, attitudes and behaviour



Understanding the diversity of human values, human institutions and human behaviour across the European Union (and beyond) is a major challenge. Countries differ in their economic, cultural and institutional ‘make-up’, and these differences often have strong historical roots. Understanding this complexity is a major scientific and societal challenge. The ESF has to be praised for stimulating this understanding through the EUROCORES programme HumVIB. The programme allowed the application of new methodological tools (multi-level analysis, GIS), and the use of new datasets (ESS) to tackle existing and new substantive questions.

As the summaries of the different HumVIB projects show, the different projects have come up with a host of interesting findings – and more are to be expected, as many projects have not concluded yet. As their evaluation attests, the Review Panel largely shares this opinion. At the same time, it is fair to state that the HumVIB programme should be viewed as a ‘kick-off’ for empirical research into European diversity rather than as its final word.

During the final HumVIB conference in Berlin, the concluding session was devoted to the question of what was needed for social research on European differences to flourish in the future. My personal summary of what was discussed would emphasise three points: (a) substantive imagination, (b) a solid data base, and (c) methodological innovation.

Substantive imagination

Our understanding of cross-national differences is often only sketchy. A main lesson that I have drawn from the HumVIB programme is that we should beware of over-general explanations, and rather look beyond the obvious. One example is a study that has been conducted within the EQUALITY project¹. In this study, it was found that – all other things being equal – working women are more likely to move to positions of authority within the workplace in countries where part-time work is common than in countries where part-time work is uncommon. At first sight, this seems counter-intuitive, as most scientists have argued that part-time work reduces women’s chances of upward mobility. The researchers, though, argue that if women in such countries work full-time, this is interpreted by employers as a clear sign of their commitment to a career, and thus could improve their chances of moving up to positions of authority within the workplace. We need more studies like this one in which existing theories are tested, but also new ideas are developed and put to the test.

A solid European database

During our final conference, Max Kaase sketched the hard work it took to develop the European Social Survey into a solid European data infrastructure. The importance of the ESS as a major

1. Abendroth, A.-K., Maas, I. and van der Lippe, T. (in press) Human Capital and the gender gap in authority in European Countries. *European Sociological Review*.

source of scientific information is uncontested. At the same time, it is clear that the European social science data infrastructure is only rudimentary. The current situation, with just two data projects (ESS and SHARE) being part of the European Roadmap for Research Infrastructures, lacks an overarching vision of what kind of data are needed to answer the main scientific and societal research questions that allow comparative European social science to flourish. The ESF and other European scientific bodies should put some effort into formulating such an overarching vision to capitalise on the unique opportunities that the European ‘laboratory’ offers.

Methodological innovation

New methodological developments, in particular multi-level analysis, have a lot to offer to enhance our understanding of European diversity. It is clear that major improvements are still possible in our application of these new tools. At the same time, it is also important that we be aware of its limitations. For instance, the number of country-level variables that can be included in multi-level analyses is inherently limited. Researchers should be very transparent in their description of which variables they include and why they include these, and not others. In my view, the major promise of multi-level models is their ability to test so-called cross-level interactions, i.e., interactions between an individual-level variable and a macro-level variable. The main advantage of testing cross-level interactions is that one will only start looking into them if one has clear theoretical ideas that such an interaction could be present. Thus, it makes it possible to combine methodological innovation and substantive imagination.

The field of comparative social science research is a burgeoning one, and European scientists are at its forefront. The HumVIB programme has made an important contribution to this development. To consolidate and improve the strong position of European social science in this field, efforts should focus on formulating an overarching vision on the data needed to understand European diversity and on stimulating researchers to combine methodological innovation and substantive imagination.



Aart Liefbroer
HumVIB Scientific Committee

Annexes

Annex 1: **Networking, training and dissemination activities**

Networking events supported through European Commission contract

Launch meeting

2-3 October 2008, Dublin, Ireland

Organiser: ESF, with local host University College Dublin

The launch meeting provided an opportunity for the six Collaborative Research Projects to be presented to all the Principal Investigators and was the beginning of exchange and cooperation across the CRPs.

Networking events supported by the participating national funding organisations

Training course: Multi-Level Modelling in the Social Sciences

17-19 September 2009, University of Vienna, Austria

Organiser: Dr Zoe Lefkofridi (on behalf of REPCONG/VTAC), University of Vienna

This workshop brought together PhD students and young scholars from all CRPs for advanced training in multi-level modelling in the social sciences, with Professor Marco Steenbergen. The Training Course addressed practical (as opposed to purely mathematical) aspects of MLM, and focused on issues of problem identification and solving, using available REPCONG and VTAC datasets. The event offered the first opportunity for the younger generation of researchers in the programme to meet each other, within and across CRPs.

Workshop: Comparing European Countries: Multi-Level Analysis of the Organisation of the Life Course and Gender Inequality

26-27 November 2009, Utrecht University, The Netherlands

Main organiser: Dr Ineke Maas (on behalf of EQUALITY/LIFETIMING), University of Utrecht

This workshop brought together 18 programme members, mainly from the EQUALITY and LIFETIMING CRPs but also from WAE, to discuss common problems connected to analysis of European Social Survey and comparable data on European countries and for mutual discussion of each other's papers. Professor Tom Snijders acted as discussant. A follow-up workshop was planned for 2010.

Training course: Pooling, Sharing and Linking: Spatial Representation of Data Using Geographical Information Systems

22-24 March 2010, Urban Institute Ireland, University College Dublin, Ireland

Main organiser: Dr Finbarr Brereton (HAPPINESS), University College Dublin

This workshop included i) an opportunity for members of all CRPs to engage in data sharing and to cooperate on data collection efforts and ii) an overview of the basic principles and techniques in GIS which underpin research applications in the social sciences, using European Social Survey data. Additionally, due to the participation of Dr Mirko Moro from the University of Stirling and Kirstine Kolsrud and Atle Jastad, Senior Advisers at the Norwegian Social Science Data Service (NSD), participants received a detailed overview of the ESS and had the opportunity to ask detailed ESS-related questions. The final day of the workshop consisted of a participant-driven lab session using ESS data.

Workshop: Comparing European Countries: Multi-level, Cross-time

16-17 December 2010, University of Hamburg, Germany

Main organiser: Professor Sonja Drobnic (EQUALITY), University of Hamburg

The purpose of this event was to discuss common problems and solutions in applying longitudinal methods to comparative research and multi-level modelling, and to share experiences in the analysis of European Social Survey and other comparable data on European countries, as well as propose and discuss solutions developed in individual CRPs. By bringing together a critical mass of researchers who address dynamic longitudinal issues within the multi-level framework, the workshop aimed to address two state-of-the-art methodological issues in current scholarly debates. Professor Tom Snijders again acted as discussant.

Special session: Inequality and representation in Europe

13-14 January 2011, University of Basel, Switzerland

Main organiser: Kathrin Kissau (University of Lausanne) and Zoe Lefkofridi (University of Vienna)

The purpose of this workshop, held in the framework of the Joint Conference of the Austrian, German and Swiss Political Science Associations (Dreiländertagung DVPW, SVPW and ÖGPW), was to bring together and connect the scattered European research on inequalities of representation. The workshop allowed for an interdisciplinary exchange of ideas with other researchers on the topic of 'inequality' in Europe,

Annex 1: **Networking, training and dissemination activities**

with participants from four HumVIB CRPs as well as external researchers. In sum, the workshop served as an important medium to disseminate findings of HumVIB CRPs to the broader academic community, to increase the visibility of the research done within the various participating CRPs, in Europe and beyond, and on the substantive side to advance understanding of unequal representation.

Special session: Gender inequality in comparative perspective

13-16 April 2011, University of Essex, UK

Main organiser: Ineke Maas (EQUALITY), Utrecht University

This special session of the EQUALITY CRP comprised presentations from all national teams at the 2011 Spring Meeting of the International Sociological Association's Research Committee on Social Stratification and Mobility (RC28). This high-level event was an excellent opportunity to present the HumVIB programme and disseminate the findings of EQUALITY to scholars in the field. Given the focus of the RC28 spring meeting on comparative and longitudinal issues in stratification research, the overall aims and previous work of EQUALITY clearly matched the RC28 focus. The four papers presented will be included in a special issue of a journal being prepared by the EQUALITY CRP.

Short-term visit: Ines Calzada (WAE), Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

May 2011

Host: Dr Finbarr Brereton (HAPPINESS), University College Dublin

Research pursued during the visit, in preparation for a joint paper, included:

- A comparative analysis of the Irish and Spanish systems of values, welfare systems and the relationship between values and attitudes to the welfare system in both countries;
- An analysis of the influence of objective welfare criteria (unemployment, social benefits, etc.) on attitudes to the welfare system;
- An analysis of the influence of cultural identification [e.g., Irish (Gaelic) speakers and Basque] on i) political ideology and ii) well-being;
- Analysis of the impact of political ideology on well-being at the micro level (the respondent's own ideology), meso-level (impact on well-being when the individual lives in an area where the elected representatives are/ are not of the individual's own ideology) and macro-level (country comparison of Ireland to Spain).

Special session: Happiness and the Environment 6-8 July 2011, Paris, France

Organiser: Susana Ferreira (HAPPINESS)

This special session of the HAPPINESS project was organised in the framework of the 'New Directions in Welfare' Conference, which gathered researchers and practitioners working on the theoretical or empirical economics of Health, Development, Social Policy, Environment, Labour, Education, Childhood, Ageing, Migration, Culture, Happiness, Equality and Equity, Behavioural Economics and Lifecourse issues. The representatives of the CRP presented key findings of their research on the impact of environmental amenities on self-reported subjective well-being. The papers presented will subsequently be submitted to an international peer-reviewed journal. This conference was an ideal venue to present research on Happiness and the Environment in Europe, while also giving an overview of the HAPPINESS CRP and presenting the objectives of the HumVIB programme to the wider international scientific community.

Panel: Voter turnout and political representation 25-27 August 2011, Reykjavik

Organiser: Dr Eva Anduiza (VTAC), Autonomous University of Barcelona

This panel at ECPR 2011 was an opportunity to disseminate major findings of the VTAC and REPCONG projects both to the members of the other CRP and to the wider academic community. The link between electoral representation and participation is at the core of democratic theory. Elections are the main mechanism via which citizens can select representatives. Representative democracy works because competition motivates parties to offer policy programmes articulating citizens' demands and preferences. Elected representatives have incentives to represent voters' opinions in the policy-making process, since they need their support to be reelected. However, in real-world politics congruence between the policy preferences of voters and politicians is far from perfect. Moreover, policy makers have stronger incentives to represent voters' than non-voters' interests. In many countries, voter turnout rates are low. What is more, many advanced industrial democracies have witnessed their steady decline in the last decades. Low turnout may signal that there is a problem with how democracy works for several reasons.

Annex 1: **Networking, training and dissemination activities**

Panel: Public opinion and the politics of retrenchment

25-27 August 2011, Reykjavik

Organiser: Ines Calzada (WAE), Spanish National Research Council (CSIC)

This panel at ECPR 2011 was an opportunity to disseminate findings of the HumVIB CRPs WAE, REPCONG and EQUALITY to the wider academic community. The panel dealt with the interrelations between retrenchment of welfare programmes on the one hand, and citizens' attitudes to the WS (and to its reform) on the other hand. The panel was connected with current political debates and tried to answer questions of a clear political interest such as: What would be citizens' reactions to certain welfare reforms? What kind of reforms are citizens willing to accept? What effect can welfare retrenchment have on the overall legitimacy of the European Social Model?

Symposium: Her and his adulthood: contemporary European patterns

26-27 August 2011, Oslo

Organisers: Gunhild Hagestad and Tale Hellevik (LIFETIMING)

For social scientists with an interest in how the organisation of society influences people's lives, understanding the variation in the ways in which people's life courses across Europe are structured is a key issue. This structuration of the life course, however, differs substantively across Europe. The aim of this international symposium was to explore the gender dimension in the structuration of the life course, by 'fusing' knowledge gained from the HumVIB project on 'The Timing of Life' – with its focus on cultural patterns of life-course structuration – and insights provided by key experts, including from the EQUALITY CRP, on other aspects of the gender-society interrelationship.

Short-term visit: Zoe Lefkofridi (REPCONG), University of Vienna

September 2011

Host: Professor Karen Jusko, Stanford University

The purpose of the visit was to work with Aina Gallego-Dobon (Voter Turnout and Abstention in Context-Spain) under the supervision of Professor Karen Long Jusko (Voter Turnout and Abstention in Context-USA) on a common research paper cutting across the interests and aims of the REPCONG and VTAC projects. The research investigates whether the policy preferences of non-voters are represented by parties in different systems across Europe and considers the effect of policy incongruence on abstention in elections.

PhD Colloquium

7 September 2011, Berlin

Organiser: Stefan Svallfors (WAE)

This colloquium was designed to help the PhD students in the various CRPs get to know each other's work in an informal setting. The focus was on presenting the core and some interesting findings from each PhD project, and each presentation from nine participants representing four CRPs was followed by a short Q&A session.

HumVIB Final Conference

8-10 September 2011, Berlin

Organiser: ESF

At the HumVIB Final Conference, the findings of the six CRPs were presented and discussed by other CRP researchers and invited guests. The conference also gave an occasion to reflect on how to make further progress in understanding European diversity in social institutions and behaviours, with respect to theory, data and methods. A panel of invited speakers closed the conference with a discussion of these issues and possible ways forward. A special session of the conference was devoted to presentations by early-career researchers.

See www.esf.org/humvib/conference.

Annex 2: **Review Panel statement**

The key assumption of the EUROCORES programme HumVIB was the idea of Europe as a ‘natural’ laboratory for the social sciences. The programme was conceived of as a concerted, pan-European interdisciplinary research effort into the question of how human values, attitudes and behaviour are affected by the characteristics of the states we live in. Notwithstanding the limited scale and timeframe of a EUROCORES programme, this high ambition seems to have been a source of inspiration for all those involved in the various Collaborative Research Projects (CRPs). From the research efforts and output it is clear that the programme has contributed to the realisation of the idea of Europe as a laboratory for the social sciences, through the utilisation of available large datasets with individual and contextual data for a large number of European countries (the European Social Survey and others), and by application of multi-level analytical techniques.

Progress/CRP integration/output

Overall, good progress has been made towards the objectives of the CRPs. Integration within the international project teams has generally been good, judging by the number of project meetings and joint publications or works in progress involving at least two IPs. Some CRPs were clearly more integrated than others, but in all CRPs senior and junior researchers met each other on several occasions, discussed ideas and proposals and cooperated in research and publication activities.

The CRPs have resulted in high quality research output; much of this output is understandably still work in press, under review or in progress. Consequently, it is too early to give a final evaluation of the CRPs’ contribution to knowledge, but the present state of the work is promising. The wider research community should greatly benefit from the published results and the other data-related outputs when they are made available.

Programme integration

All CRPs fit well into the HumVIB framework, i.e., understanding Europe as a laboratory for social research. In this regard the contribution of the CRPs to the programme has been very good. All CRPs produced research on human values, attitudes and behaviour within different institutional (European) contexts and as such contributed to knowledge and insights. In one case an individual CRP (HAPPINESS) has also pioneered the use of GIS for the spatial representation of data and developed a dataset of location-specific, spatially-referenced data at the regional level, facilitating the inclusion of the regional level in analyses both within the CRP and by other researchers.

Cooperation between the projects remained rather limited in scope and intensity, which had implications for the integration of the programme. The training courses and workshops in multi-level modelling and statistical analysis were highly appreciated and benefitted in particular the early-stage researchers. Opportunities for contributions beyond this methodological dimension may have been somewhat limited by the diversity of the substantive foci of the projects. However, there could have been more cross-CRP cooperation in multi-level modelling using shared data.

The added value of the programme for the CRPs was very good. Apart from the obvious benefit of receiving grants for research, of which a substantive part have been utilised for further development of young researchers, all the CRPs have benefitted from participating in the seminars and workshops organised by the programme. Being part of the programme made possible or at least substantially facilitated more contact, communication and cooperation between scholars in different countries. In this way young researchers in particular had the opportunity to work with senior and junior staff around Europe and the USA and to start building networks that will endure for years to come. Some cross-CRP collaborations have emerged from this and will produce joint publications. The programme and the facilities and opportunities it has offered have been a major investment that will yield scientific profits well into the future.

Networking, training and dissemination

Although some cross-CRP networking did take place, the opportunities for networking within and between CRPs were not fully exploited. Some CRPs with cognate substantive topics were more active in this regard than others, such as EQUALITY together with LIFETIMING, or REPCONG together with VTAC.

The training activities that were organised were highly valued among the CRPs: perhaps more of these training activities could have been offered to further raise the level of technical skills of the project members; the early-stage researchers might also have taken more advantage of the ESF’s Quantitative Methods in the Social Sciences (QMSS 2) programme.

Dissemination of results to the academic community through publications and conference presentations or special sessions was good. However, not all CRPs had an adequate website. And it seems that, with some exceptions, not very much attention has been paid to the dissemination of the research results to the wider public. Senior scholars could aim to put more effort into public outreach in the final stages of the projects.

Annex 2: **Review Panel statement**

General comments

Overall, the programme achieved much of its potential, which is laudable considering the limited scale and three-year timeframe of a EUROCORES programme. Senior and junior scholars took advantage of the opportunities to work collaboratively with scholars in different countries. This was very stimulating for all involved and will undoubtedly have contributed to the research efforts and results within the individual CRPs and the HumVIB programme as a whole. It is extremely unlikely that the quantity and quality of the research output would have been the same if the CRPs had not been part of the HumVIB programme.

Nevertheless, the programme gave further evidence that interdisciplinary and international collaboration is difficult, for various reasons. As was the case with all EUROCORES programmes, the projects were not selected with a view to how well they would integrate with each other, which indeed permitted the selection of substantively diverse projects. The CRPs were themselves international, and to a certain extent interdisciplinary, collaborations, which themselves demanded considerable efforts of coordination and integration. Further, individual researchers, and in particular pre- and post-docs, may suffer if obliged to engage in interdisciplinary research or collaboration when the reward system is based on disciplinary cultures and structures.

A suggestion for future EUROCORES programmes or similar schemes is to offer more support for intra-CRP cooperation, especially in terms of short-term visits, in tandem with support and encouragement for cross-CRP activities. Solid intra-CRP cooperation is a prerequisite for really fruitful cross-CRP cooperation. Another option would be to make more explicit in the original Call for Proposals the expectation that all successful CRPs should engage in and organise programme activities. This could be achieved by requiring suggestions for activities (workshops, data sharing, etc.) in the proposals and formally agreeing on these principles early in the programme. The ESF could also develop objective standards or criteria to assess the level of integration and collaboration, which would be explicit for the programme members.

Perennial problems for EUROCORES programmes are the lack of a common pot and the non-participation of major funding organisations, both of which had impacts on the final composition of projects and their funding. In some cases Individual Partners received their funds almost a year after the project had begun. In any future EUROCORES or similar scheme, these institutional problems should be resolved.

To conclude with a challenge for comparative social science research, the final reports of the CRPs

and the presentations and discussions at the HumVIB final conference suggest that the programme's overarching and ambitious goal of understanding of how human values and behaviour are influenced by the characteristics of the states we live in still faces substantial obstacles. While the CRPs have certainly produced valuable insights into how contextual characteristics affect certain values and behaviours, the projects have also demonstrated the practical difficulties of fulfilling the goals of the programme, including the production of unified explanations for micro-level effects. In particular, the paucity of regional and meso-level data has limited the possibility to take full advantage of the analytical opportunities of multi-level modelling and to explore the interaction between contextual and individual level characteristics. Under these circumstances more 'creative' or innovative ways of operationalising contextual factors may be necessary. The programme's focus on the utilisation of existing data rather than on the collection of new data may also have contributed to the difficulties as it entailed a focus on research questions that could reasonably be addressed using available data rather than on research guided by theoretical and substantive concerns. This is not to say that available datasets such as the European Social Survey (ESS) or the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems are not a superb resource, but simply that more scope for the collection of new contextual, and even individual-level, data might lead to greater advances. It is noteworthy that two project teams in the HumVIB programme (WAE and LIFETIMING) had utilised the opportunity provided by the ESS to add special modules (on a competitive basis) to the survey. The HumVIB programme therefore made some extensive analyses of theory-guided data collection possible.

In sum, the HumVIB programme provided a valuable opportunity to take significant steps towards understanding why contextual factors work variably in different places; at the same time, the work done within the framework of the programme has also helped to refine the challenges and indicate directions for future comparative social science research.

HumVIB Review Panel
September 2011

Annex 3: **Governing bodies, steering and administration**

National funding Organisations supporting the HumVIB programme

- **Fonds zur Förderung der wissenschaftlichen Forschung (FWF)**
Austrian Science Fund, Austria
- **Suomen Akatemia / Finlands Akademi (AKA)**
Academy of Finland, Finland
- **Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft (DFG)**
German Research Foundation, Germany
- **Országos Tudományos Kutatási Alapprogramok (OTKA)**
Hungarian Scientific Research Fund, Hungary
- **An Comhairle um Thaighde sna Dána agus sna hEolaíochtaí Sóisialta (IRCHSS)**
Irish Research Council for the Humanities and Social Sciences, Ireland
- **Nederlandse Organisatie voor Wetenschappelijk Onderzoek (NWO)**
Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research, The Netherlands
- **Norges Forskningsråd (RCN)**
Research Council of Norway, Norway
- **Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación (MICINN)**
Ministry of Science and Innovation, Spain
- **Forskningsrådet för Arbetsliv och Socialvetenskap (FAS)**
Swedish Council for Working Life & Social Research, Sweden
- **Schweizerischer Nationalfonds (SNF)**
Swiss National Science Foundation, Switzerland
- **National Science Foundation (NSF)**
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