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European comparisons in welfare state legitimacy - its relationship to social control attitudes, attitudes towards immigrants and social trust

Tiina Likki, University of Lausanne

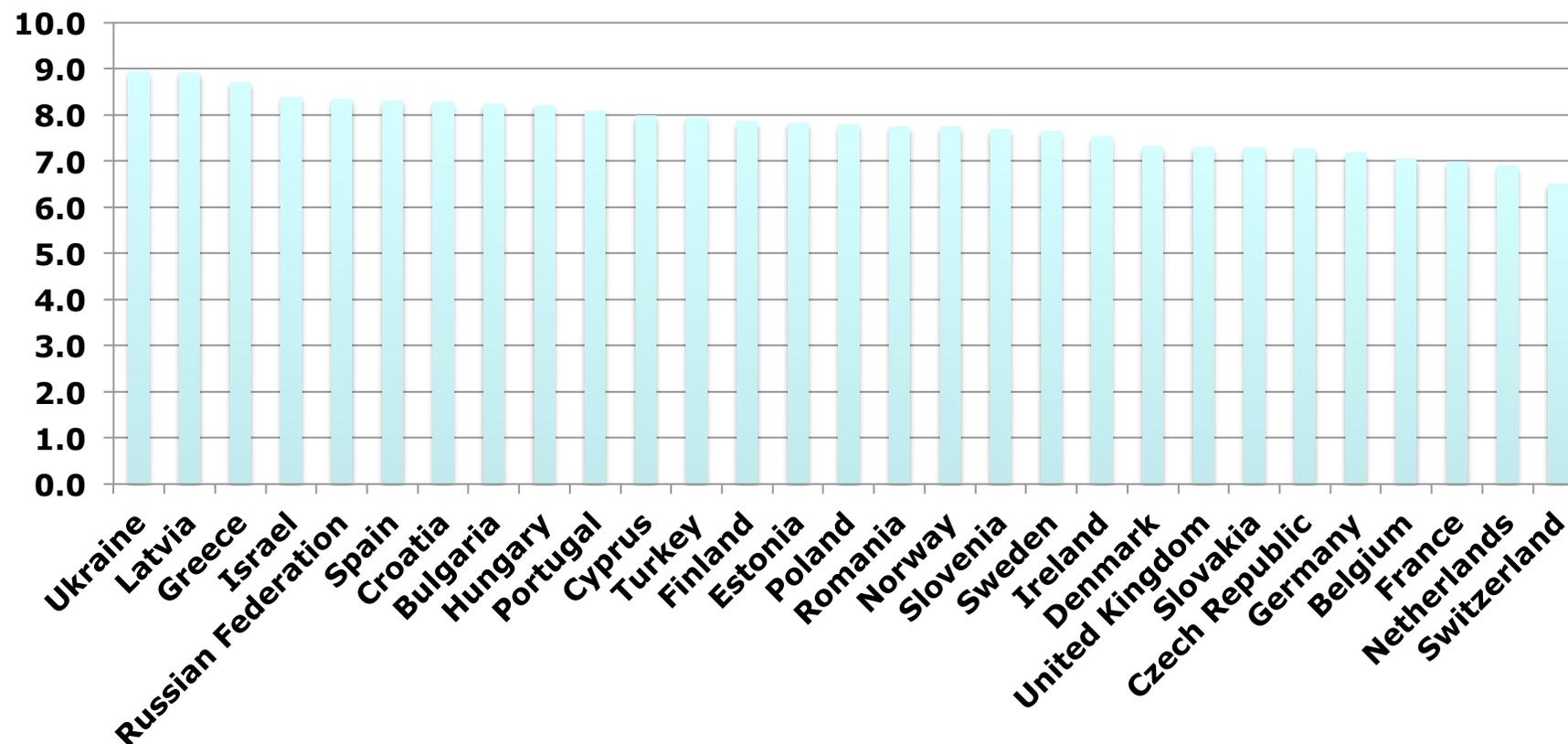
October 23rd, 2013

CASE Welfare Policy and Analysis Seminar

Outline

- Context: welfare attitudes in Europe
- Normative approach: normative beliefs as predictors of welfare attitudes
- Part I: Between-country differences in welfare attitude formation
 - Attitudes towards immigrants
 - Distrust
- Part II: Within-country differences in welfare attitude formation
- Conclusion: Welfare attitudes in context

Support for the welfare state in Europe

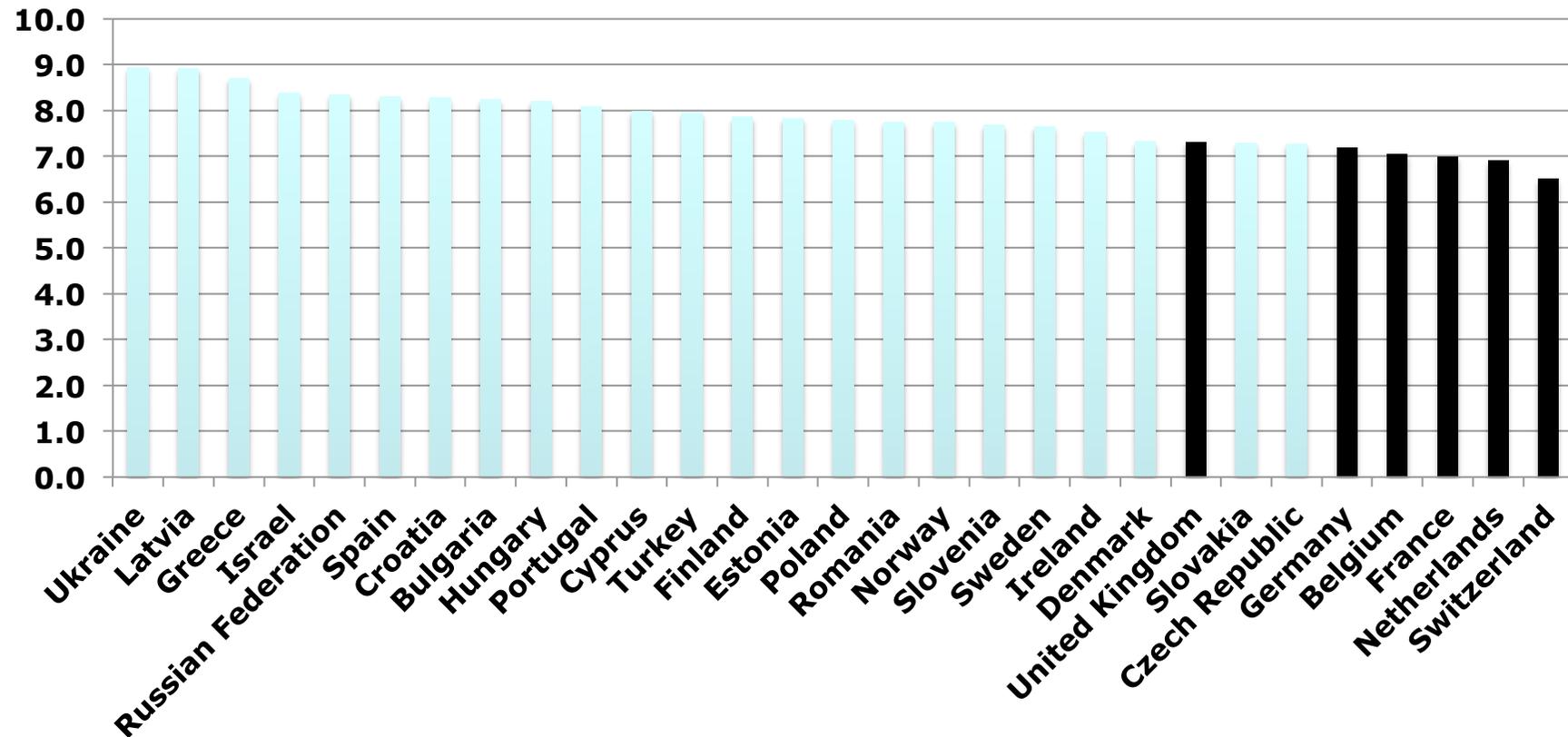


Source: European Social Survey, 2008

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Support for the welfare state in Europe

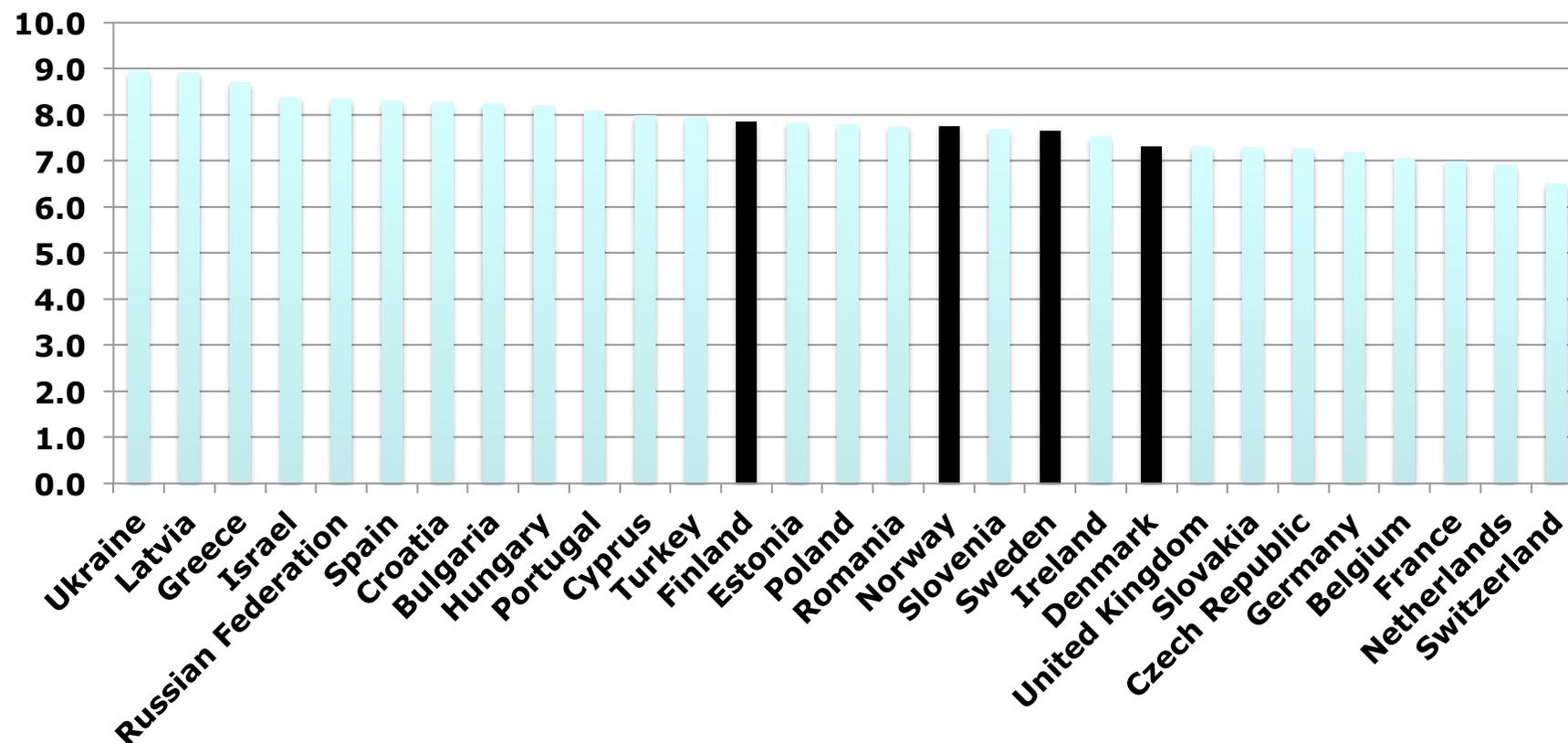


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Support for the welfare state in Europe

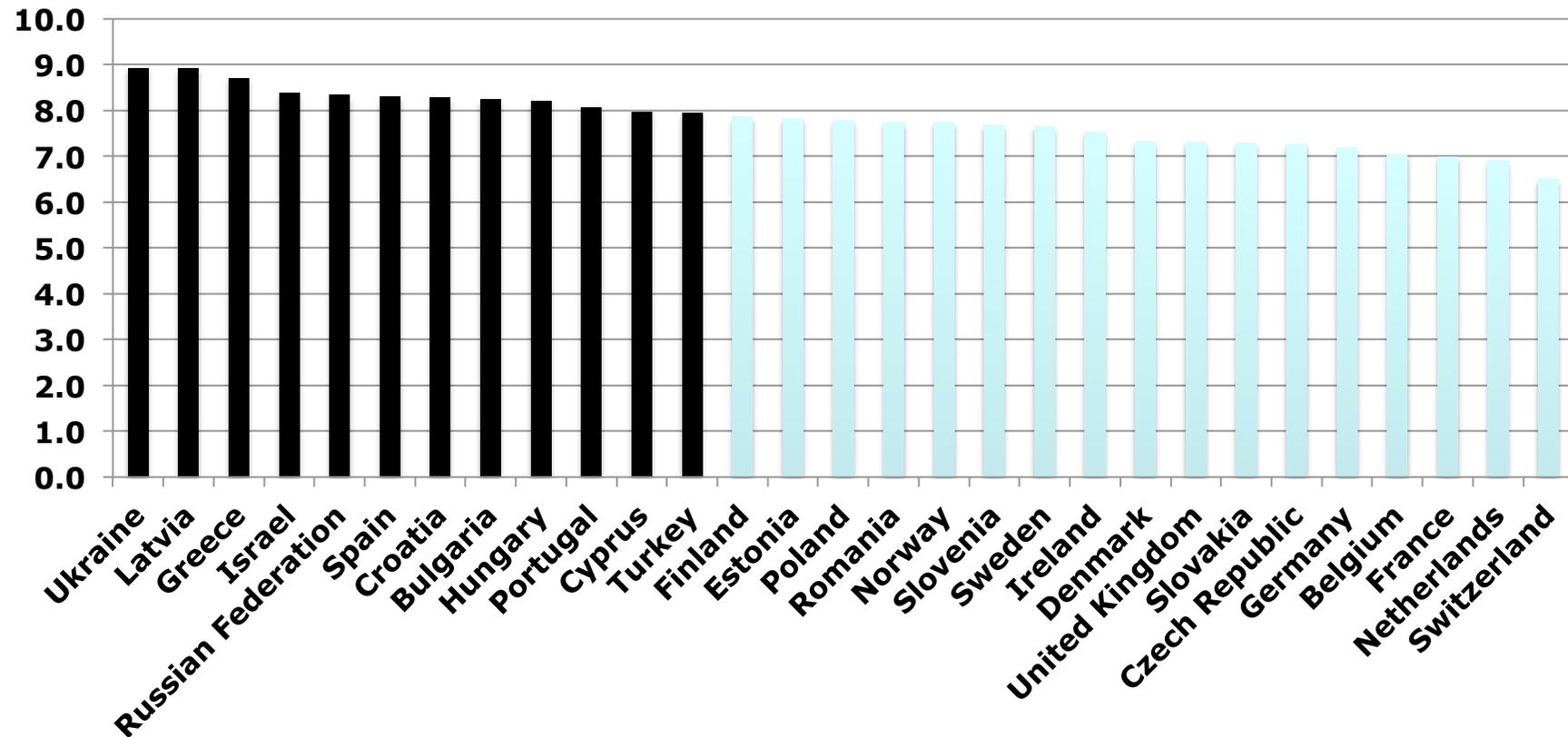


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Support for the welfare state in Europe

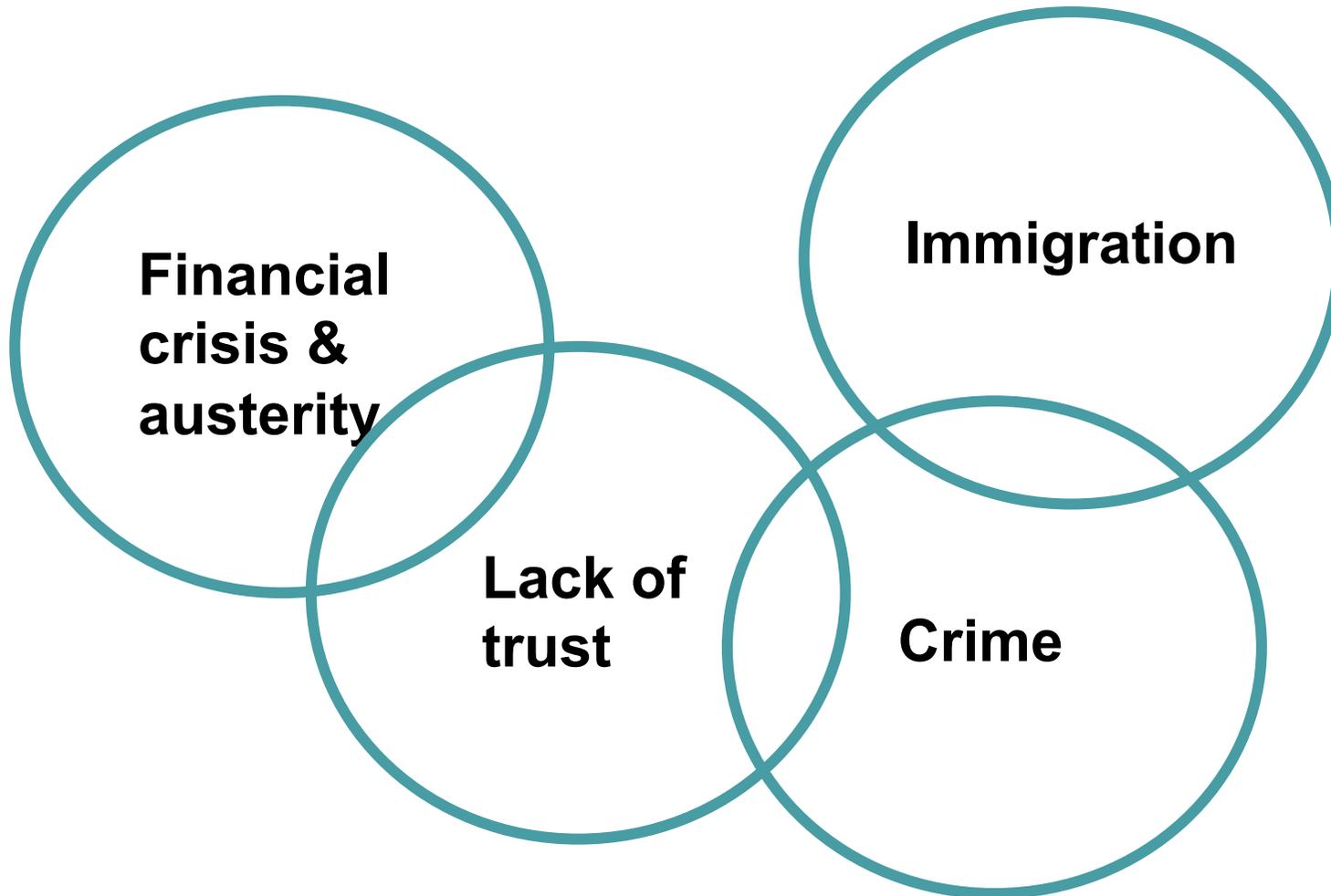


Source: European Social Survey, 2008

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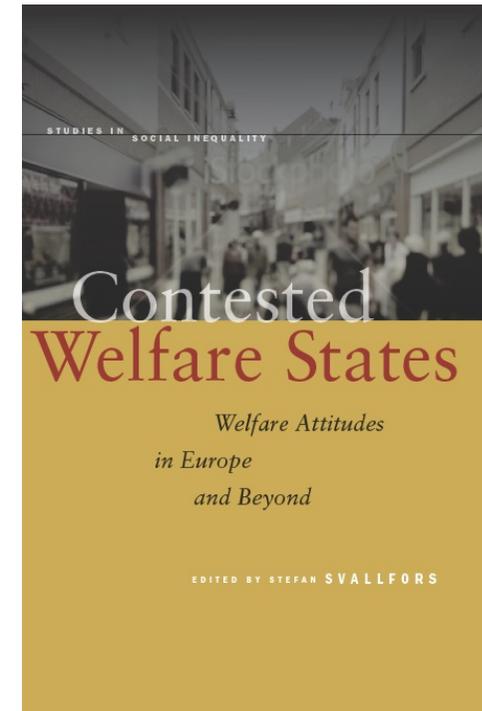
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Welfare states under pressure



Normative beliefs as predictors

- Different factors related to policy attitudes
- Normative beliefs as shared views about social relations, constitutive of social reality
- Ethnocentrism: immigrants seen as a threat
- Social control: need to control deviance and crime
- Distrust: others cannot be trusted



Staerklé, C., Likki, T., & Scheidegger, R. chapter in Svallfors (2012)

Part I: Country comparisons

- European Social Survey 2008
- 28 countries, N = 54 988
- Government responsibility measure:

People have different views on what the responsibilities of governments should or should not be. Is it the government's responsibility...

- *...to ensure a job for everyone who wants one?*
 - *...to ensure adequate health care for the sick?*
 - *...to ensure a reasonable standard of living for the old?*
 - *...to ensure a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed?*
- Overall alpha: .79, (.62-.87)

Social position

- **Education level**
- **Material vulnerability:** Perceived likelihood of life course events with negative material consequences occurring in the next 12 months
 1. *getting unemployed and looking for work*
 2. *not having enough money for household necessities*
 3. *not receiving health care in case of illness*
 4. *having less time for paid work than desired because of the care given to family members*

Multilevel analysis: Level-1 Effects of Social Position on Welfare Attitudes (scale 0-100)

	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	76.96***	(1.11)
<i>Social Position</i>		
Age	.63***	(.07)
Female	1.36***	(.14)
Education	-1.20***	(.08)
Material Vulnerability	1.34***	(.08)

- **Ethnocentrism**

(overall alpha = .88, .76-.91)

- *Is it generally bad or good for [country]’s economy that people come to live here from other countries?*
- *Is [country]’s cultural life generally undermined or enriched by people coming to live here from other countries?*
- *Is [country] made a worse or a better place to live by people coming to live here from other countries?*



- **Social control** (overall alpha = .56, .33-.64)
 - *People who break the law should be given much harsher sentences than they are these days*
 - *Schools must teach children to obey authority*
 - *If a man is suspected of planning a terrorist attack in [country], the police should have the power to keep him in prison until they are satisfied he was not involved*

- **Distrust** (overall alpha = .81, .68 - .85)

*You can't be too careful with people
Most people try to take advantage of
you*

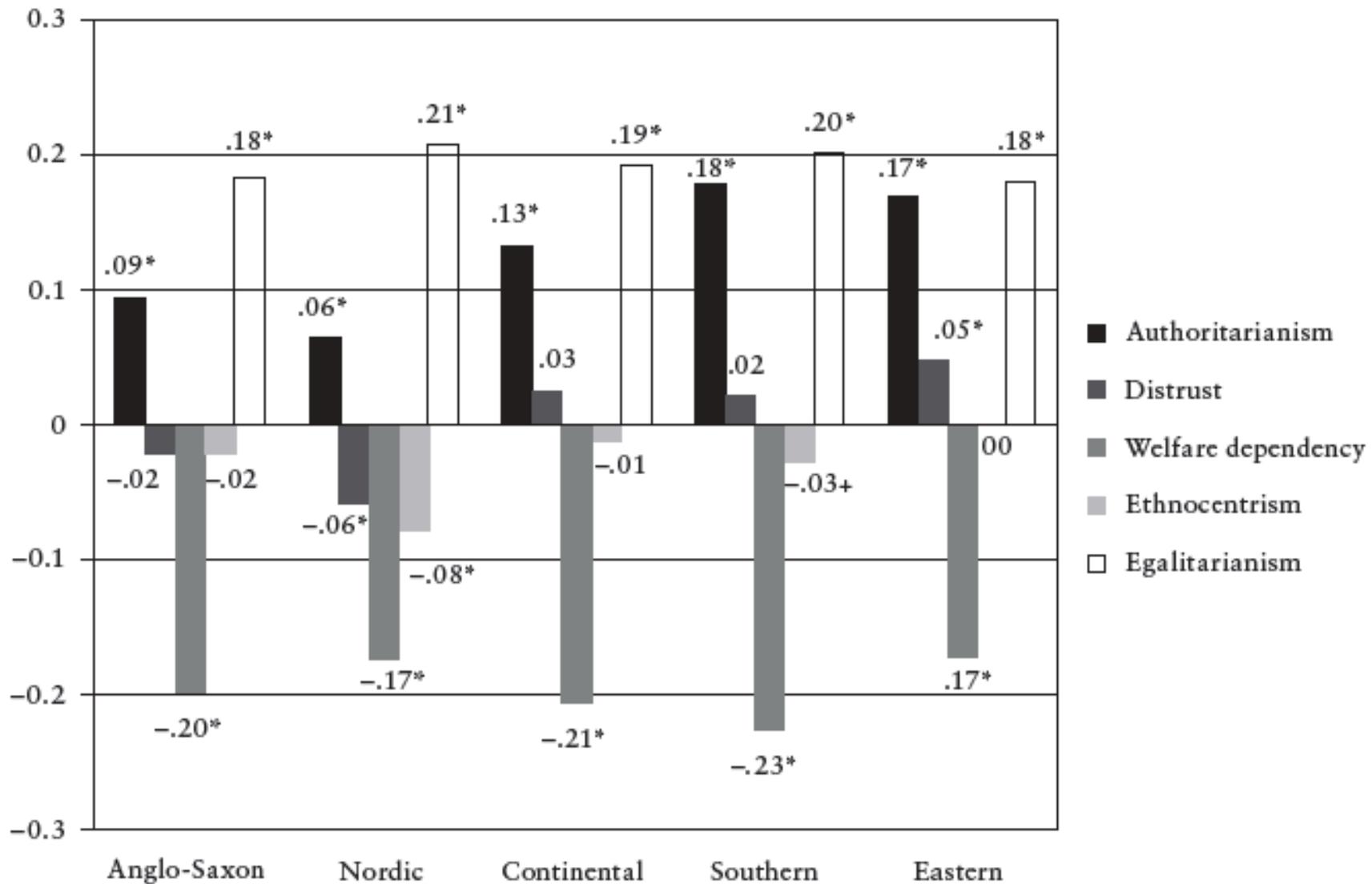
People mostly look out for themselves



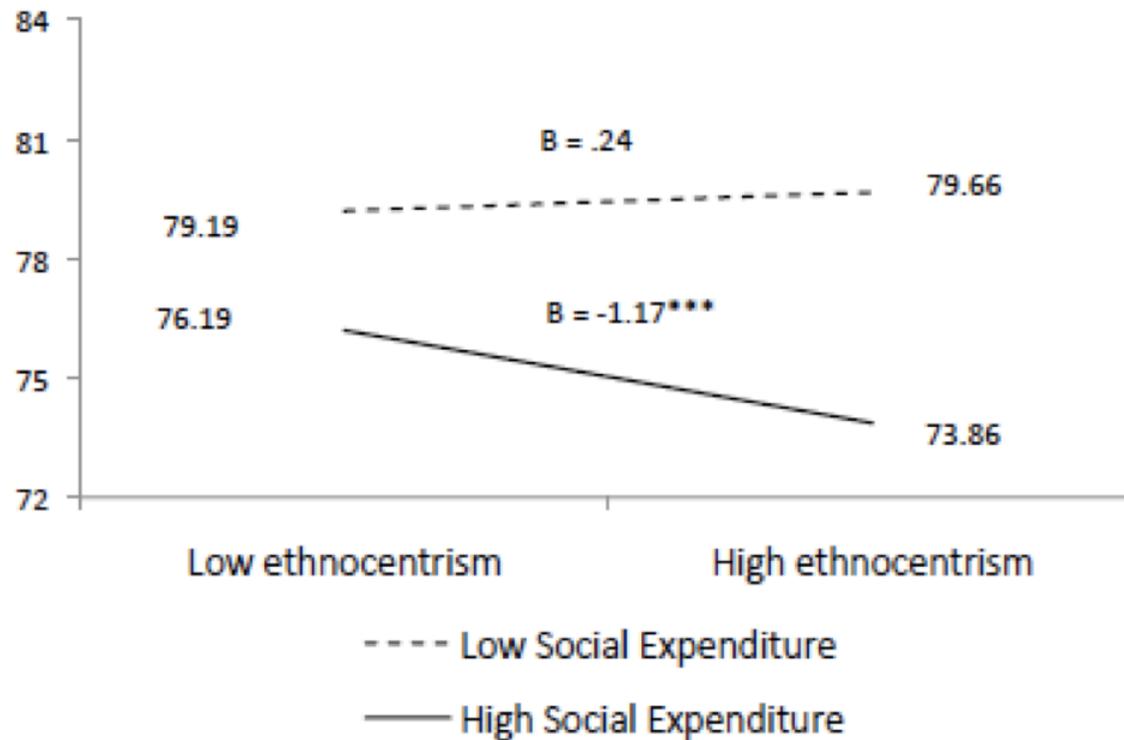
- **Welfare dependency** (overall alpha = .79, .71-.84)
 - *Social benefits and services in [country]*
 - *...make people lazy?*
 - *...make people less willing to care for one another?*
 - *...make people less willing to look after themselves and their family?*
 - *Most unemployed people do not really try to find a job*
 - *Employees often pretend they are sick in order to stay at home*
- **Egalitarianism**
 - *For a society to be fair, differences in people's standard of living should be small*

Level-1 Effects of Social Position and Normative Beliefs on Welfare Attitudes

	Social Position		Normative beliefs	
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>
Intercept	76.96***	(1.11)	77.17***	(1.11)
Age	.63***	(.07)	.28***	(.07)
Female	1.36***	(.14)	.95***	(.13)
Education	-1.20***	(.08)	-.84***	(.08)
Material Vulnerability	1.34***	(.08)	1.01***	(.08)
Social control			2.42***	(.08)
Distrust			.53***	(.08)
Welfare Dependency			-3.24***	(.07)
Ethnocentrism			-.30***	(.08)
Egalitarianism			3.27***	(.07)

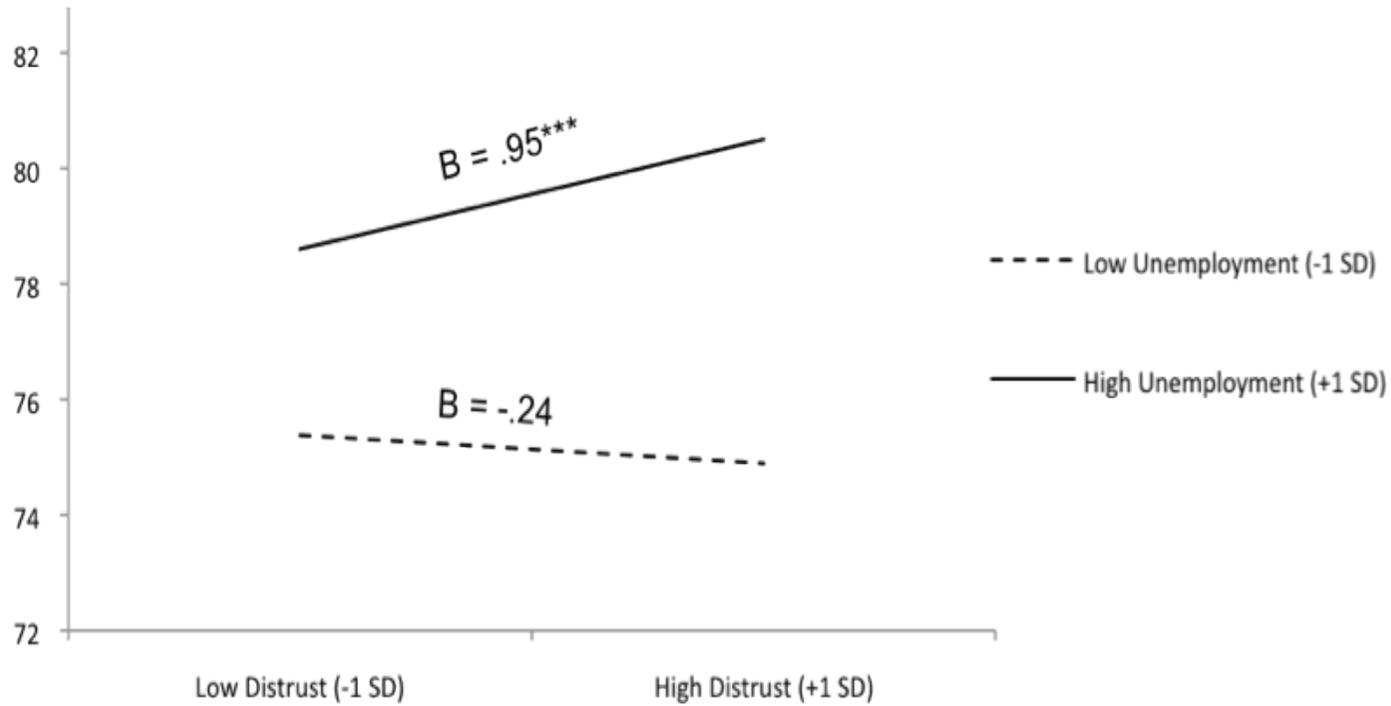


Social expenditure * Ethnocentrism



Ethnocentrism predicts welfare state opposition only in high social expenditure countries (e.g., *Belgium, Denmark, France, Finland, Germany*)

Unemployment level * Distrust



Part II: Attitude patterns within countries

Background:

- Culture of control (Garland, 2001); new punitiveness (Young, 2007)
 - Social control replaces redistribution as an answer to social problems
- What happens on the individual level? What is the relationship between solidarity and control? Is control replacing solidarity? If so, among whom?

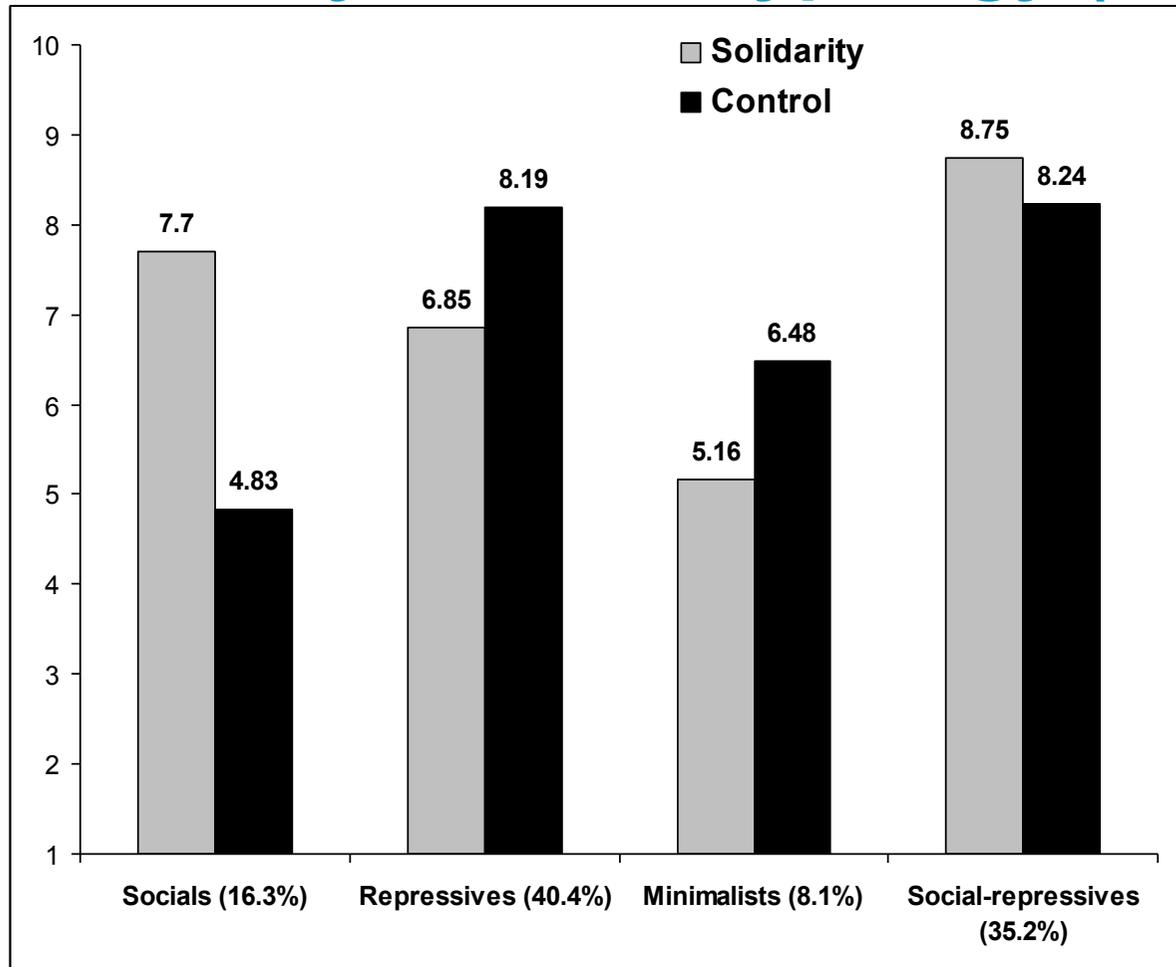
Typology of solidarity-control

	<i>Social control Low</i>	<i>Social control High</i>
<i>Solidarity High</i>	Social	Social-repressive
<i>Solidarity Low</i>	Minimalist	Repressive

Rokeach (1973): freedom and equality

	<i>Freedom High</i>	<i>Freedom Low</i>
<i>Equality High</i>	Socialism	Communism
<i>Equality Low</i>	Capitalism	Fascism

Hierarchical cluster analysis: Solidarity-Control Typology (UK)



Size of groups in UK, France and Germany (%)

	Socials	Repressives	Minimalists	Social-repressives	Total
UK	16.3	40.4	8.1	35.2	100
France	21.9	37.8	16.4	23.9	100
Germany	23.4	25.5	20.3	29.9	100

Characteristics of each group

- **Socials:**
Highly educated and well-off individuals with low levels of social distrust and physical insecurity
- **Repressives:**
Individuals with low education, but also low subjective material vulnerability, for whom the world is a dangerous place and others cannot be trusted
- **Minimalists:**
Carefree individuals with no material or security concerns
- **Social-repressives:**
Individuals who live in material, physical and social insecurity and call for protection in all these areas

Conclusion

- Normative beliefs are closely related to support for the welfare state
- However, the meaning they take on with regard to the welfare state differs 1) as a function of the country context and 2) as a function of individual characteristics
- The social reality individuals encounter determines the relationship between normative beliefs, such as social control, and welfare state legitimacy

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**Thank you for you
attention!**

tiina.likki@unil.ch