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Four Interpretations of Social Capital: An Agenda for Measurement

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FOUR INTERPRETATIONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL: AN AGENDA FOR MEASUREMENT

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by

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ABSTRACT

This paper looks beyond the broad notion of social capital – which has been applied to a number of different phenomena –in order to clarify (i) the range of different elements that are encompassed by the term; and (ii) what needs to be done to further statistical research and development in order to lay the groundwork for establishing guidelines for better comparative measures in the future. The paper starts by describing the origins of the concept of social capital and the evolution of different approaches in the literature on this subject: it argues that there is not one single interpretation of social capital but rather several different approaches, which need to be more clearly distinguished in order for research and measurement to advance. The paper identifies four main ways in which the concept of "social capital" has been conceptualised and measured -- i) personal relationships; ii) social network support; iii) civic engagement; and iv) trust and cooperative norms -- reflecting different views of what social capital 'is' and implying different research agendas. The paper then looks at each of these four area in turn, assessing their meaning, functionings, and areas of policy relevance. Finally, the paper looks at measurement issues, providing examples of the measures on each of the four areas from national and international surveys. Recommendations for further statistical work in the field of social capital measurement are supported by a database of the survey questions used in around 50 surveys worldwide, available at www.oecd.org/std/social-capital-project-and-question-databank.htm.

RÉSUMÉ

Ce rapport va au-delà de la vaste notion de capital social – qui a été employée pour qualifier un nombre de phénomènes différents – afin de définir (i) l'ensemble des éléments qui sont inclus dans ce terme ; et (ii) la feuille de route à suivre pour poursuivre la recherche statistiques et développer les principes à suivre capables d'améliorer la comparabilité des indicateurs dans le futur. Dans une première partie, ce rapport s'attache à décrire les origines du concept de capital social et l'évolution de la littérature sur les différentes approches qui lui sont associées : ce papier démontre qu'il n'y a pas qu'une seule définition du capital social, mais plutôt différentes approches qui doivent être clairement distinguées dans une perspective de recherche et de mesure. Ce rapport identifie quatre directions dans lesquelles la notion de « capital social » a été conceptualisée et mesurée : i) les relations interpersonnelles ; ii) la qualité des liens sociaux, iii) l'engagement civique et iv) la confiance et les normes de coopérations. Cette grande diversité reflète la variété des approches sur ce qu' « est » le capital social et implique différents programmes de recherche. Ce rapport détaille ensuite ces quatre approches en étudiant pour chacune d'elle, sa signification, son mode de fonctionnement et les champs d'action politique qui lui sont associés. Dans une dernière partie, ce document de travail s'intéresse aux questions de mesure pour chacune de ces approches en offrant des exemples de mesure tirés d'enquêtes nationales et internationales. Les recommandations proposées pour la poursuite des travaux statistiques s'appuient sur une base de données recueillant les questions d'une cinquantaine d'enquêtes réalisées dans le monde entier et qui est disponible sur www.oecd.org/std/social-capital-project-and-question-databank.htm.

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PART 1. WHAT IS SOCIAL CAPITAL?

1.1. Introduction

This paper is the final output of a project undertaken by the OECD Statistics Directorate, and financed by the European Commission (DG Employment), to review the concept and measurement of social capital. The aim of this activity has been to look beyond the broad notion of social capital – which has been applied to a number of different phenomena – and to clarify (i) the range of different elements that are encompassed by the term; and (ii) what needs to be done to further statistical research and development in order to lay the groundwork for establishing guidelines for better comparative measures in the future.

This exploratory work has been considered necessary because, despite the huge amount of academic and policy interest given to the concept of social capital in the last quarter-century, it remains in many ways a black box, encompassing a very heterogeneous range of phenomena. Such heterogeneity may be interpreted as evidence of the 'vitality' of the concept, i.e. of its capacity to bring light to a diverse range of phenomena, drawing on the perspectives of a broad range of disciplines. However, it may also have slowed down efforts in developing policy-relevant measures of the underlying concept. One of the obstacles to such development has been the lack of agreement over how to define the concept. The term 'social capital' has been used by different authors to refer to very different underlying concepts. The approach taken in this report is to sidestep the semantic debate as far as possible, and to take an open-minded look at the many different aspects of social relations that have been linked to the concept of social capital, such as contact with friends and family, informal support, trust, social norms, volunteering, and more. Much more work is needed to understand their determinants and functioning (i.e. pathways of influence, direction of causality, etc.), and how best to design policies that take these issues into account. This report suggests that, rather than using the label of social capital as an all-encompassing term referring to the productive value of all types of social relations, it is necessary to be more specific about *what exactly* is being measured and, just as importantly, *why*.

The paper is structured as follows. Part 1 provides the context for the project by, first, describing the origins and evolution of different approaches to the study of social capital in the literature, The main conclusion of Part 1 is that there is not one single interpretation of social capital but rather several different ones, which are used alongside each other in the literature in this field. Part 2 identifies four principle areas of focus: (i) personal relationships; (ii) social network support; (iii) civic engagement; and, (iv) trust and cooperative norms. These four conceptions of social capital reflect different views of what social capital 'is' and they imply different underlying research agendas. To move forward, work is needed to explore in more detail issues specific to each of the four areas. Part 2 therefore looks at each area of focus in turn, explaining their meaning, examining their potential functioning, and setting out the key areas of policy relevance. Part 3 concludes the report by looking at measurement issues: providing examples of existing measures from national and international surveys, and setting out an agenda for further statistical and analytic work in this field.

1.2. Why is it important to measure social capital?

If defining and measuring social capital is so difficult, why should we care at all about its measurement? Is it realistic to quantify something as complex and elusive as the value of human interaction? While measuring social capital certainly represents a challenge for statistical producers, there

are a number of compelling reasons why it is important to persist in identifying policy-relevant measures in this area.

First of all, it is important to be clear what *is* social capital? In the broadest sense, social capital refers to the *productive* value of social connections, where productive is here understood not only in the narrow sense of the production of market goods and services (although this, as will be shown below, is an essential component) but in terms of the production of a broad range of *well-being* outcomes. Just as the concept of 'human capital' enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the drivers of productivity, in a similar way the term social capital conveys the idea that human relations and norms of behaviour (beyond the intrinsic pleasure that social connectedness brings) have an *instrumental* value in improving various aspects of people's life. Instinctively, including a social element in the analysis of how economic and other well-being outcomes are produced makes a great deal of sense. People's relationships and societal norms of behaviour play an important role in shaping individual and aggregate well-being outcomes. The general idea of social capital recognises this intuition, offering the potential for incorporating the value of social relationships into a broad range of analytical models.

Measures of social interaction such as trust in others or frequency of socialising have been linked to a wide range of outcomes, from individual happiness to health status and government performance (see, for example, Putnam 1993 and 2000). The links between measures of social capital and economic performance have received particular attention. Putnam (1993) provided evidence of strong links between indicators of social capital and economic performance in Italian regions, while later work has shown this link to hold in international comparisons (Whitely, 1997; Knack and Keefer, 1997; La Porta et al. 1997). The World Bank has made considerable efforts to value the 'true wealth' of nations, taking into account economic and natural capital, as well as 'intangible' productive capital, which is regarded as consisting primarily of human, social and institutional capital (i.e. governance structures; World Bank, 2011). The World Bank estimates that intangible capital may make up between 60% and 80% of total wealth in most developed countries.

Overwhelmingly, therefore, this evidence suggests that there is *something* important and worth investigating, and that researchers and policy makers interested in understanding the drivers of well-being would be wrong to ignore or to take for granted the productive capacity of social connections and behaviours. However, the relationships implied by the data do not provide enough information to identify which aspects of social interaction are the most important for different outcomes. Further, correlations and associations between different phenomena do not imply causal pathways, and they fail to shed much light on how the different aspect of social capital are maintained and strengthened through individual and collective actions.

In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the need to move beyond an imprecise, 'catch all' treatment of social capital as a single concept and to focus efforts on measuring the productive value of different social phenomena, particularly within the context of efforts to more accurately measure the drivers of current and future well-being. For example, the influential report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress (chaired by Joseph Stiglitz, Amartya Sen and Jean-Paul Fitoussi) made specific recommendations to develop better measures of Social Connections and Social Capital (Stiglitz et al., 2009).[1] The OECD has also included social connections and civic engagement (both commonly considered to be aspects or proxies of social capital) as two of the eleven dimensions of current well-being identified in the OECD *How's Life?* framework (OECD, 2011). In addition, the need to develop better measures of social capital for evaluating the sustainability of well-being has been underlined by the recommendations of international task forces that have relied on capital-based models for assessing sustainability (UNECE/Eurostat/OECD 2009; UNECE, 2012) as well as by the World Bank and by the OECD (Box 1.1).

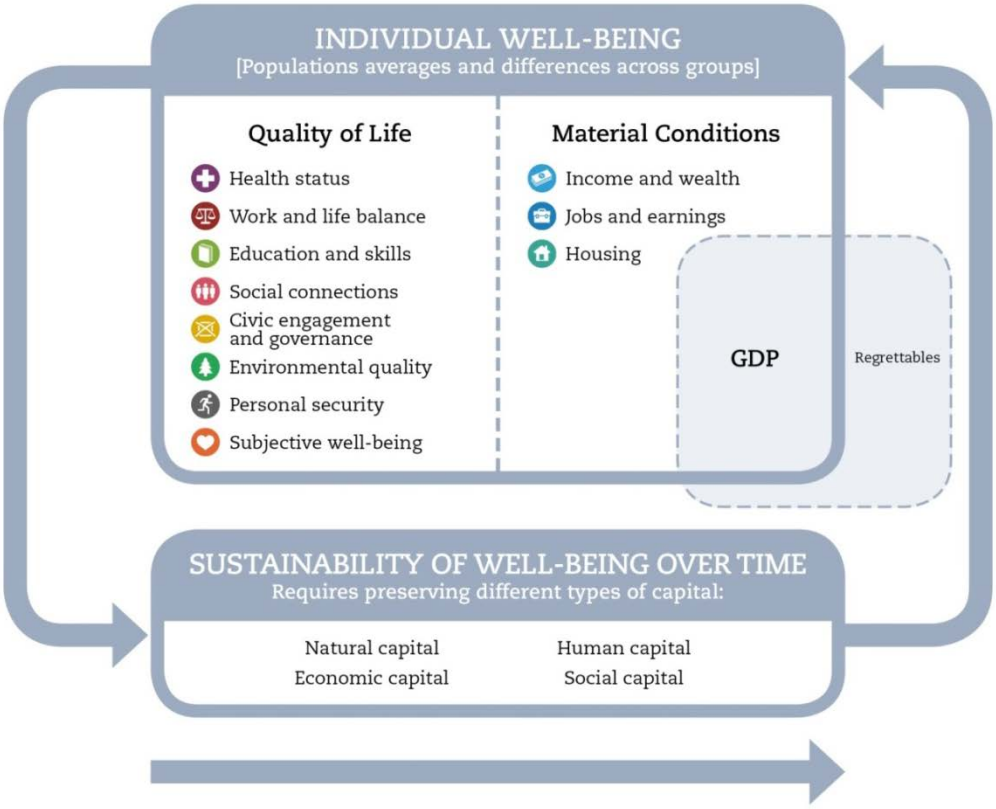
Box 1.1 How's Life? The OECD 'Better Life Initiative' and framework for measuring well-being

In recent years, the OECD has put the notion of human well-being at the core of its reflections and policy advice. Defining well-being is obviously challenging, as it requires looking at many aspects of people's lives, as well as understanding their relative importance. Although there is no single definition of well-being, most experts and ordinary people around the world would agree that it requires meeting various human needs, some of which are essential (e.g. being in good health), as well as the ability to pursue one's goals, to thrive and feel satisfied with their life. On the occasion of the OECD's 50th anniversary in 2011, and in response to the emergence of well-being measurement as a priority in national and international statistical and political agendas, the Organisation launched the OECD Better Life Initiative. Building on a long tradition of work on social indicators and quality of life, this initiative represented a first attempt at the international level to present a set of comparable well-being indicators for OECD countries and other major economies. The OECD flagship publication, How's Life?, is underpinned by a framework based on three pillars for understanding and measuring people's well-being: (i) material living conditions; (ii) quality of life; (iii) and sustainability (see Figure 1.1).

This approach distinguishes between current well-being (i.e. well-being today) and the sustainability of well-being over time. For the former, (current well-being) it identifies 11 key dimensions that are critical to either people's material conditions (their opportunities for consuming material goods and services) or to their quality of life (the attributes of individuals and of the communities where people live and work). These eleven dimensions are: income and wealth; jobs and earnings; housing; health status; work and life balance; education and skills; social connections; civic engagement and governance; environmental quality; personal security; and subjective well-being. For the latter (sustainability), it identifies a number of forms of capital that need to be preserved for the well-being of future generations: natural capital; economic capital; human capital; and social capital.

The main features of the How's Life? are that (i) it puts the emphasis on households and individuals, rather than on aggregate conditions for the economy as a while; (ii) it concentrates on well-being outcomes, as opposed to well-being drivers measured by input or output indicators; (iii) it looks at the distribution of well-being across individuals, alongside measures of average outcomes for various countries or constituencies; and (iv) it considers both objective and subjective aspects of well-being, i.e. aspects that cannot be observed by third parties but where only the person in question can report on his or her feelings and evaluations.

(Box 1.1 Cont'd) Figure 1.1 The How's Life? framework for measuring well-being and progress



Source: OECD (2011), How's Life?: Measuring Well-being, OECD Publishing, doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264121164-en.

Finally, whether or not a social capital label is used, there is a great deal of interest from statistical agencies, official or otherwise, in measuring a range of concepts that have been linked to social capital at one time or another. As part of the OECD project that underpins this report, a survey 'databank' has been compiled, bringing together relevant questions from national and international surveys. Around 50 surveys have been identified, including the World Values Survey, the Gallup World Poll, the International Social Survey Programme, the European Social Survey, the European Quality of Life Survey, and the European Survey of Income and Living Conditions, as well as national surveys from Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In addition many ongoing projects are looking into the measurement of specific interpretations or aspects of social capital such as the project led by the US National Academy of Sciences to evaluate best practices in the measurement of "Civic Health and Social Cohesion"[2], and a recent UNECE in-depth review of the measurement of political participation and other forms of civic engagement (UN ECE, 2013.

However, despite the high level of interest in social capital and related concepts, there is little agreement about the best way to define and measure it. This has hampered the development of internationally comparable data collection. The remainder of Part 1 will argue that the reason for this impasse is that there is not one unitary concept of social capital, but rather a number of distinct concepts which have been grouped together under social capital as an umbrella term. The following section sets out the main differences between different approaches by describing the origins of social capital scholarship,

focusing on the work of Pierre Bourdieu, James Coleman, and Robert Putnam. These three authors each made important contributions to the understanding of how social networks provide value; yet the type of networks and the type of value considered in their respective work differs significantly.

1.3. Not one social capital, but many

The term "social capital" has been applied to a vast range of situations. These include: the links between trust and civic engagement within a country, on the one hand, and economic performance, on the other (Putnam, 2000; Whitely, 1997; Knack and Keefer, 1997); the links between trust, reciprocity and civic participation within a neighbourhood and residents' health status (Lochner et al. 2003); the impact of parental involvement on the educational outcomes of individual schoolchildren (Coleman, 1988; Valenzuela and Dornbusch, 1994; Furstenburg and Hughes, 1995, OECD, 2011b), and the impact of the size and composition of a person's individual network on their professional status (e.g. being employed, higher pay, promotion) (Goldthorpe, Llewellyn and Payne, 1987; Sprengers, Tazelaar and Flap, 1988; Burt, 1992; Podolny and Baron, 1997).

Despite using the same term, these studies explore different phenomena. While it can be argued that they all have a common focus (in that, in one way or another, they explore the value of social networks), understanding social capital in such broad terms risks depriving it of much of its analytical power (Portes, 1998; Dasgupta, 2000; Farr, 2004; Kadushin, 2004; Fine, 2000, 2010). For example, Durlauf and Fafchamps (2004, p. 3) state that "social capital is not a concept but a *praxis*, a code word used to federate disparate but interrelated research interests and to facilitate the cross-fertilization of ideas across disciplinary boundaries". However, while this bridging function has been welcomed by some (Woolcock and Narayan, 2000), it has also been criticised as a "McDonaldisation" of the social sciences (Fine, 2000; 2010), where a range of pre-existing ideas, each with their own academic lineage have been "colonised" by social capital theorists. It has been referred to as an "umbrella concept" (Hirsch and Levin, 1999), and as having a "circus-tent quality" (De Souza Briggs, 1997). Durlauf and Fafchamps state that the conceptual vagueness surrounding social capital has been "an impediment to both theoretical and empirical research of phenomena in which social capital may play a role" (2004, p. 3).

When surveying the many different interpretations of social capital, it is possible to identify a number of themes and tensions which can help to differentiate amongst several approaches. It is worth highlighting these tensions as they are not often explicitly addressed by individual studies; instead each piece of research tends to set out its own definition, without acknowledging that other interpretations exist. These areas of tension include:

- The different types of networks that are considered important sources of social capital (e.g. family, circles of friendship and acquaintance, professional and business networks, voluntary associations, etc.) and the types of relationship that matter the most (e.g. bonding/bridging/linking, strong vs. weak ties, etc.)

- The relative importance of structural/behavioural components of social capital (i.e. social networks and the activities and behaviours contributing to their creation and maintenance) and intangible components (i.e. norms, values, attitudes and beliefs).

- The scale/ size of a network where social capital can exist, i.e; micro-level (family, school, organisations, interpersonal networks), meso-level (communities, neighbourhoods, business clusters), macro-level (regions, countries), or existing across multiple levels.

The roots of these competing perspectives can be traced back to the key contributions of Pierre Bourdieu, Robert Putnam, and James Coleman, and the different conclusions reached by these authors. The

work of these three authors is often presented together in order to show how contemporary research on social capital does not have a simple, linear heritage but rather has evolved from multiple, and sometimes contradictory, streams of thought (Schuller et al., 2000; Caroll and Stanfield, 2003; Gauntlett, 2011). Bourdieu was primarily concerned with how membership in certain social networks allowed the members of those networks access to resources (including status and power). Coleman saw social capital as a "variety of different entities" but focused on community networks, and introduced the idea of social capital as a public, as well as private good. Finally, Putnam's work has been the most influential in bringing the idea of social capital to prominence in policy discourse, focusing on the impact of networks of civic engagement and norms of reciprocity on economic development. The remainder of this section looks into the contribution of these three authors in more detail.

Pierre Bourdieu: Social Capital as an individual's access to networks

A French sociologist, Bourdieu's interest lay in the way that power relations and hierarchies are maintained in an unequal society. Bourdieu argued that these imbalances could not be explained by economic reasons alone, and proposed the concept of cultural capital to describe how certain skills, knowledge, values and behaviour providing a social advantage to individuals are transmitted by privileged parents to their children in order to preserve the next generation's position in the elite (Bourdieu, 1984). Bourdieu went on to develop the concept of social capital (Bourdieu, 1986, 1992), defining it as " the sum of the resources, actual or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992, p. 119). The idea that membership in social networks can bring access to valuable resources – material or otherwise – is central to much of the social capital literature. However, Bourdieu's emphasis was very much on the use of social networks to exclude non-members and to prevent social mobility. Bourdieu's use of the concept of social capital remained largely metaphorical rather than analytical (Schuller et al. 2000). Thanks to Bourdieu, the idea of social capital began to garner academic interest, particularly amongst sociologists.

James Coleman: Social capital as a "variety of entities"

James Coleman, an American sociologist, began to analyse the concept of social capital at almost the same time as Bourdieu, although seemingly independently.[3] Coleman's interest in the concept came from its capacity, as he saw it, to combine sociological and economic approaches of analysis. Coleman felt that purely sociological approaches tended to see individuals too much as products of their environment, without "internal springs of action", while purely rational choice approaches ignored the importance of social context in shaping people's behaviour (Coleman, 1988, p. 96).

Coleman's principal area of interest was in the area of education, and he used social capital as a way to shed light on the links between social inequalities and academic performance. After a longitudinal study of the performance of a selection of high schools in the United States, he noticed that students in Catholic schools performed notably better than those in state schools. He concluded that the factor which made the difference for students in Catholic schools was the high degree of support they received from their families and communities, and the close relationships between parents and the schools, which encouraged students' achievement (Coleman, 1988). Coleman, like Bourdieu, saw social capital as a resource for individuals, but took a broader, more optimistic view, focusing on the capacity of social networks to generate positive-sum outcomes for members.

Coleman's definition of social capital, as "a variety of different entities … that consist of some aspect of the social structure" and that "facilitate certain actions of individuals who are within the structure", (Coleman, 1990, p.302), has been criticised by Portes (1998) as too vague. However Coleman's view of

social capital has been hugely influential, not least in the work of Robert Putnam. Coleman's contributions to the conceptual evolution of social capital include the following ideas (Coleman, 1988):

- While social capital is a resource for individuals in a network, unlike other forms of capital it is not "owned" by a person but rather exists within social relationships.

- Social capital can exist in a range of different networks (including families, communities, and schools), not just within homogenous, class-based networks as proposed by Bourdieu.

- Social relations constitute useful forms of capital for individuals through processes such as establishing obligations, expectations and trustworthiness, creating channels for information, and setting norms backed up by efficient sanctions.

- As such, social capital is not only a private good, but has features of a public good, with the actions of individuals having positive (as well as potentially negative) externalities for the wider group.

Robert Putnam: Social Capital as networks of civic engagement and norms of reciprocity

An American political scientist, Robert Putnam's initial interest was in better understanding the factors contributing to democratic performance and good governance. He used the 1970 decentralisation reforms in Italy as an opportunity to compare the functioning of regional government over the next two decades, using an index of institutional performance combining different measures of efficiency of public service provision. Putnam identified a very clear pattern, with governments in the Northern regions of the country being consistently more successful than those in the South. After exploring a number of possible explanations, Putnam concluded that the main reason for this contrast was a stronger sense of "civic community" in the North. Putnam used Toqueville's definition of a civic community as one where citizens pursue "self-interest properly understood" (Toqueville, 1969), i.e. self-interest that is "defined in the context of broader public needs" and "alive to the interests of others "(Putnam et al., 1993, p. 88). For Putnam, this public-mindedness manifested itself through a vibrant associational life and expectations that other members of the same community will probably follow the rules; in other words, "social capital, in the form of norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement" (Putnam et al., 1993, p. 167). Putnam also highlighted trust as an essential component of social capital (Putnam et al.1993, p. 170).

Civic engagement is at the heart of Putnam's view of social capital. Putnam stated that social networks are usually made up of a mix of "horizontal" (i.e. bringing together agents of equivalent status and power) and "vertical" (i.e. linking unequal agents in asymmetric relations of hierarchy and dependence) relationships. Active participation in civic-minded groups such as neighbourhood associations, choral societies, cooperatives, and sports clubs promotes primarily horizontal relationships. This in turn facilitates collective action by, in the language of game theory, increasing iteration and the interconnectedness of games. In other words, when individuals in a community interact frequently on an equal footing, their reputation for being trustworthy, responsible, and cooperative becomes important and they are more likely to behave accordingly. This, according to Putnam, fosters norms of reciprocity and trust within the civic community (Putnam et al. 1993, pp. 173-174), as well as endowing engaged individuals with a sense of shared responsibility, skills of cooperation and a greater tendency to get politically involved (Putnam et al. 1993, p. 90).

In his comparison of the Italian regions, Putnam highlighted important historical differences in patterns of civic engagement going back hundreds of years as the principle reason for differences in institutional performance in the northern and southern parts of the country. Traditional practices of horizontal cooperation in the North of Italy such as mutual aid societies, where poor communities self-organised themselves to provide welfare support, led to a virtuous cycle of solidarity, ultimately bolstering

the performance of democratic institutions in these regions in the 20th century. On the other hand, in the southern regions of Italy, where vertical patron-client relations had been the norm, the relative absence of civic engagement and norms of generalised reciprocity and trust led to corruption and institutional inefficiency. Further, Putnam extended his analysis to draw a link between market performance and government performance, arguing that levels of civic engagement also predict differences in economic development between Italian regions.

Seven years after first setting out the links between social capital and economic and democratic performance in *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam applied this framework to a comprehensive assessment of social capital in the United States in *Bowling Alone* (Putnam, 2000), building on an earlier influential article (Putnam, 1995). Broadening the concept of social capital to include different forms of interpersonal networks (workplace connections and informal socialising), as well as social engagement (political, civic and religious participation), and norms and values (reciprocity, trust and altruism), Putnam linked social capital to democracy and economic prosperity of different US states, as well as to their education outcomes and child welfare, neighbourhood safety, health status, and subjective well-being. The main message of the book was that, by all discernible measures, social capital had been steadily declining in the United States since the middle of the twentieth century and that such decline brought with it a range of negative consequences for individuals and community life.

The legacy of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam

Together, the work of Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam provide the conceptual roots for much of the social capital literature. However, in some key respects, their contributions are too different to be able to be combined together to form a unified theory. Bourdieu's perspective, in particular, uses the concept of social capital in a relatively narrow sense to explain societal inequalities and class-based hierarchies; therefore this focused on social capital as something whose benefits accrued to individuals and offered advantages in an essentially zero-sum competition. Nevertheless, his interpretation of social capital as access to resources (e.g. information, influence, opportunity, financial assistance) has become a central element of social capital research. For Bourdieu, the amount of social capital that an individual can access also depends on the size of his or her network and on the sum of financial, human and cultural capital possessed by each member in that network. Although Bourdieu's work has generally been less widely acknowledged in the English-speaking world than that of Coleman and Putnam, recent years have seen a movement towards "bringing Bourdieu back in" to mainstream analysis (Fine, 2010). This entails an increased focus on power relations, inequalities and political/socio-economic context in understanding the functioning of social capital. Bourdieu's ideas have been particularly influential amongst scholars using network analysis to understand social structure and behaviours (e.g. Burt, 1997; Lin, 2000). [4]

There are similarities between Bourdieu and Coleman's approaches to social capital. Both treat the notion as having a certain level of fungibility (i.e. obligations created in one context can be translated to others, within certain limitations) and as created by individual investment (both deliberate and non-deliberate) in social relationships that provide benefits for the individual at some point in time. There are also differences, however. Coleman, in particular, focused on the unconscious creation of social capital, arguing that as it is often "a by-product of activities engaged in for other purposes" and that, as such, it risks underinvestment (Coleman, 1990, p. 312). Both Bourdieu and Coleman looked at group-level social capital, yet where Bourdieu focused on how homogenous elite groups used social capital to maintain their social position, Coleman took a more general approach, extending the concept to all social groups (i.e. not just elites), and introducing the idea that social capital can exist within more heterogeneous networks such as neighbourhoods and communities. Coleman was an important influence on Putnam, although the latter emphasised the public good aspect of social capital over the private good aspects. Putnam's arguments regarding the positive links between civic engagement and norms of reciprocity, on the one hand, and

many positive social outcomes, on the other, has been one of the principle factors behind the social capital research 'boom' of the last 25 years.[5]

The main points of each of the three perspectives can be summarised as follows:

- Bourdieu's approach to social capital focuses on *networks*, and specifically on the payoff from network membership in terms of *access to resources* and opportunities. As such he focused on the exclusionary, *private good* aspects of access to resources embodied in personal networks. His approach has influenced a range of research on the links between *micro-level* networks and positive *individual* outcomes, particularly in the context of professional advancement and labour market status (Lin, 2001; Burt, 2005)

- Coleman opened up the concept of social capital to a much wider range of applications, by arguing that it is "defined by its function" (Coleman, 1988, p. 98). He looked at both *micro-level* and *meso-level* networks, examining both the role of interactions within families on *individual* outcomes such as educational attainment, and the role of *community* relationships, *norms* and sanctions on group outcomes. Coleman therefore recognised both the *public good* and *private good* aspects of social capital. However, he also noted that when networks diffuse harmful norms (e.g. devaluing academic achievement in some communities), social capital can also act as a private 'bad'. Due to his emphasis on education and childhood development, Coleman's influence is most visible in fields of research related to family and education policy (Schuller, et al. 2000).

- Putnam focused on social capital as something that operates at the *macro* and *meso*-levels of society. Putnam's conception of social capital emphasised that it is a *public good* and defined it in terms of *networks of civic engagement, trust and norms of reciprocity*. In more recent years, Putnam adopted a "lean and mean" definition of social capital, i.e. "social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity" (Putnam, 2004).

In the light of these roots of contemporary social capital theory, the ongoing ambiguity surrounding the meaning of the concept becomes a little more understandable. Although certain key elements - such as networks and shared values – are referred by all three, assumptions about their nature and functioning are quite different.

One of the main differences in the perspective of these three authors, and in the social capital literature in general is whether social capital is a resource for the individual who 'owns' it (i.e. whether it is a private good) or whether it generates benefits for other members of society (i.e. a public good). This divide is evident in most definitions of social capital (see Box 2). For example, definitions that focus on social capital as a private good include Boxman, De Grant and Flap (1991) and Baker (1990). These definitions tend to include aspects referring to the *structure* of people's networks as well as focusing on the *resources* that can be mobilised by the networks.On the other hand, other definitions focus on the collective benefits of social capital (e.g. Brehm and Rahn, 1997, as well as OECD, 2001), encompassing both structural and cognitive aspects of social capital, although recognising that these are conceptually distinct. In this perspective, structural elements refer to "various aspects of social relationships that can be explicitly described and modified", such as networks and the activities that contribute to their creation and maintenance (Uphoff and Wijarayatna, 2000), while cognitive aspects refer to forms of social capital that are "more internal and subjective", such as the norms, values, attitudes and beliefs that predispose people to cooperate (Uphoff and Wijarayatna, 2000). While norms of trust and reciprocity are probably the aspects of cognitive social capital which are most-commonly referred to in research in this field, Uphoff and Wijaratanaya argue that values of truthfulness, attitudes of solidarity and beliefs in fairness are also important for creating an environment conducive to mutually beneficial action (2000). Other relevant

values and norms include social altruism and tolerance of those different to you (Inglehart, 1997; Brewer, 2003).

Box 1.2 Definitions of social capital from the literature

Definitions of social capital that present it primarily as a resource for individuals tend to be concerned with social capital as a micro-level phenomena and how people access support and opportunities through network membership. Examples include:

- *Boxman, De Grant and Flap: "the number of people who can be expected to provide support and the resources those people have at their disposal" (1991, p. 52).*
- *Burt: "friends, colleagues, and more general contacts through whom you receive opportunities to use your financial and human capital" (1992, p. 9).*
- *Knoke: "the process by which social actors create and mobilize their network connections within and between organizations to gain access to other social actors' resources" (1999, p. 18)*
- *Baker: "a resource that actors derive from specific social structures and then use to pursue their interests; it is created by changes in the relationship among actors" (1990, p. 619)*
- *Portes: "the ability of actors to secure benefits by virtue of membership in social networks or other social structures" (1998, p. 6).*

Box 1.2 Definitions of social capital from the literature (continued)

The above definitions have in common their focus on the positive benefits for actors that are part of the networks (i.e. social capital as a private good). Portes' and Baker's definitions in particular position these resources/benefits as the true stock of social capital. Another group of definitions focus on social capital as a resource for facilitating co-operation at the group, community or societal level. Examples include:

- *Brehm and Rahn: "the web of cooperative relationships between citizens that facilitate resolution of collective action problems" (1997, p. 999).*
- *Inglehart: "a culture of trust and tolerance, in which extensive networks of voluntary associations emerge" (1997, p. 188).*
- *Fukuyama (a): "the ability of people to work together for common purposes in groups and organizations" (1995, p. 10).*
- *Fukuyama (b): "the existence of a certain set of informal values or norms shared among members of a group that permit cooperation among them" (1997).*
- *Thomas: "those voluntary means and processes developed within civil society which promote development for the collective whole" (1996, p. 11).*
- *Ostrom: "the shared knowledge, understandings, norms, rules and expectations about patterns of interactions that groups of individuals bring to a recurrent activity" (2000, p. 176).*
- *Putnam: "connections among individuals – social networks, and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" (2000, p. 19).*
- *Grafton: "an all-encompassing term for the norms and social networks that facilitate co-operation among individuals and between groups of individuals" (2005, p. 754).*

The definition put forward by the OECD in 2001 also belongs to this group: "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups" (2001, p. 41).

Definitions of social capital can be grouped according to other criterion than the private/public nation of the benefits stemming from it. For example, Partha Dasgupta, states that social capital can be understood in narrow terms, purely as "interpersonal networks, nothing more" (Dasgupta, 2005, p. S10). Other definitions bypass the network aspect completely and focus purely on trust or "the density of trust" to define social capital (e.g. Paldam and Svendsen, 2000).

Finally, a further distinction is between definitions of social capital that include institutions, alongside networks and norms, and those that do not. The World Bank is foremost in this approach, defining social capital as "the institutions, relationships, and norms that shape the quality and quantity of a society's social interactions" (World Bank, 2011). In this perspective, institutions include "the most formalised institutional relationships and structures, such as government, the political regime, the rule of law, the court system, and civil and political liberties" (World Bank, 2011).

Most definitions therefore focus on *either* the private/individual elements (i.e. Bourdieu's view) of social capital, *or* on its collective/public good elements (i.e. Putnam's view). However, within the private good approaches, social capital tends to be defined as consisting of both network *structure* (i.e. the people you know and your relationship with them) as well as the benefits or *resources* stemming from those relationships. Similarly, within the public good approach, social capital is usually defined as a combination of the *structural* – i.e. networks – and the *cognitive* – i.e. shared norms and trust – which can themselves be seen as a form of collective *resource*.

When it comes to operationalising social capital for analytical purposes, the combination of structural and resource aspects becomes problematic. While closely linked, the structural and resource-related aspects of social networks are not one and the same, even though they are often treated as such. For example, it may be more likely that someone who knows a lot of people and socialises often with them (i.e. has a solid network *structure*) is also able to easily call on his or her friends for emotional, material and professional support (i.e. has access to a large variety of positive network *resources*). However this is not always the case. On an aggregate level, it may be more likely that a society characterised by strong community and collective network *structure*, as evidenced through high levels of civic engagement, also benefits from strong collective *resources* stemming from high levels of trust and cooperative norms, but again, this is not necessarily the case. Many studies simply make the assumption that strong structural elements of social capital will equate to strong resource-related elements (and vice versa). This implies that the complex interplay between the two is rarely examined, which prevents understanding of exactly how social networks create value.

In order to develop policy-relevant measures of social capital the distinction between the structural and the resource-related aspects of social capital needs to be made sharper. In this context, this report proposes four main approaches to conceptualising and measuring social capital.

1.4 Four interpretations of social capital

Table 1 presents a classification of social capital into four categories: those in the upper row focus on *individual*, private activities and outcomes, while those in the bottom row focus on *collective*, public activities and outcomes; similarly, the categories on the left column correspond to the *structure* of networks and to the *activities* that create and maintain them, while those on the right embody the different types of *resources* and outcomes generated by networks. Many or even most approaches to measuring social capital effectively combine two or more of these categories into a higher level, multi-dimensional construct. The problem with this overarching approach is that the different elements of social capital can operate in fundamentally different ways; conflating them into a single construct may have proved a barrier to statistical measurement and analytical understanding.

Table 1.1 Four interpretations of social capital

	NETWORK STRUCTURE AND ACTIVITIES	PRODUCTIVE RESOURCES
INDIVIDUAL	*Personal Relationships*	*Social Network Support*
COLLECTIVE	*Civic Engagement*	*Trust and Cooperative Norms*

All of these interpretations of social capital have potential policy relevance. However, each of them concentrates on a different phenomenon, relies on different theoretical frameworks about drivers and

outcomes, lends itself to answering different sorts of question, and has different implications for measurement and data collection

Personal relationships refer to people's networks (i.e. the people they know) and the social behaviours that contribute to establishing and maintaining those networks, such as spending time with others, or exchanging news by telephone or email. This category concerns the extent, structure, density and components of individuals' social networks. As such, it takes people's social relations as the subject of interest, and addresses questions relating to the impacts – good or bad – that a given personal structure of social relations has on a range of well-being outcomes. While people's relationships are a direct source of social network support (see next category), the focus here is on the level and nature of social contacts rather than what people get out of those relationships.Also, while interaction at the individual level may have positive spillover effects at an aggregate level, the opposite may also be true. The negative effects of personal relationships are sometimes labelled as the 'dark side' of social capital.

Social network support is a direct outcome of the nature of people's personal relationships and refers to the resources – emotional, material, practical, financial, intellectual or professional - that are available to each individual through their personal social networks. The strength and quality of each person's social network support can have an immense impact on individual social and economic outcomes. This category places emphasis on the support people are able to access and focuses on questions relating to the causes and consequences of being able to access such support. The extent and quality of personal relationships is one driver of social network support, but not the only one. Social network support can help people both to "get by" in times of need or to "get ahead", by improving their position both in absolute and relative terms.

Civic engagement comprises the activities through which people contribute to civic and community life, such as volunteering, political participation, group membership and different forms of community action. Civic engagement focuses on the nature and extent of collective activities. This category facilitates analysis of the impact of civic engagement on other outcomes as well as identifying the drivers of civic engagement. High levels of volunteering and civic action can contribute to institutional performance as well as being a driver of levels of trust and cooperative norms within a society (see next category). However, civic engagement can also impact on individual well-being by allowing opportunities to meet new people, and bringing enjoyment, a sense of purpose and even new skills to participants. Further, civic engagement may be seen as desirable in its own right regardless of whether it is an important determinant of how other social and economic outcomes are 'produced'.

Finally**,** *trust and cooperative norms* refers to the trust, social norms and shared values that underpin societal functioning and enable mutually beneficial cooperation. The concept is fundamentally concerned with those intangible factors embodied in people's social norms and expectations that contribute directly to better social and economic outcomes. Although trust and cooperative norms are highlighted, the scope of this category may be extended to cover any social institutions that contribute to better social and economic outcomes at the collective level. This category addresses the question of what elements of the informal structure and functioning of society have a 'productive' role, where the term productive is understood in both economic and social terms. This category is clearly a collective resource (i.e. it is an enabler of collective action) and is significantly correlated to a number of important outcomes of government policy, such as economic growth, government performance, environmental stewardship and social cohesion.

Part 1 has made a case for the differentiation of four distinct interpretations that have tended to be subsumed under the broader heading of social capital. Part 2 will now look into each of the four aspects of social capital in more detail, i.e. their meaning, functioning and measurement.

PART 2. FOUR INTERPRETATIONS OF SOCIAL CAPITAL: MEANING AND FUNCTIONING

2.1 Personal Relationships

The meaning of Personal Relationships

Personal Relationships refer to the structure and nature of people's *personal networks*. It is concerned with describing the connections between people who know each other in one way or another, from the most intimate relationships with loved ones, family and friends, to looser ties with neighbours, colleagues and other forms of acquaintance. The key feature distinguishing personal relationships from other forms of social capital is that it is the *structure* of people's networks itself that is considered to be fundamental, and not the consequences or use of these networks.

Personal networks can be understood as the web of connections between a given individual and all the people that he or she knows. Not all networks consist of people who know each other personally; individuals can also belong to networks spanning several degrees of separation, such as geographic or interest-based communities, and voluntary or professional organisations. Putnam (2000) distinguishes between formal and informal social networks. Formal networks refer to the ways in which people connect with the wider community through organised and established groups such as political parties, civic associations, churches, and unions. In the classification proposed here, these formal civic networks are included in Civic Engagement.

Personal networks can comprise of different types of relationships, with varying degrees of intimacy and intensity. There are different ways of categorising these differences but the simplest is Granovetter's distinction between "strong" and "weak" ties. Granovetter (1973) argued that the strength of a tie is a "combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutually confiding) and the reciprocal services which characterize the tie" (p. 1361). Strong ties – i.e. people's closest circle of friends and family – are important for many reasons, not least for providing a sense of identity and common purpose within a group (Astone et al. 1999), as well as emotional and material support throughout the life course. However, Granovetter argued that those on the periphery of people's social networks – the personal and professional acquaintances making up a person's "weak" ties – also play an important role, as "those to whom we are weakly tied are more likely to move in circles different to our own and will thus have access to information different from that which we receive" (p. 1371). A further category is that of 'linking' ties – which refer to relationships characterised by access to power and influence (Woolcock and Sweetser, 2002; Halpern, 2005). They describe a vertical, hierarchical relationship linking individuals with other individuals (or, in the case of civic networks, with organisations and institutions) of greater status or resources (Woolcock, 2001; Mayoux, 2001).

One important dimension of personal networks is the different ways that people form and maintain ties with others people in their lives. This can occur through time spent together, but also through other forms of contact such as email, telephone calls and letter-writing. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter have also emerged in recent years as important ways of meeting people and staying in touch with others, although opinions differ on whether the virtual creation and maintenance of these relationships has as much value as more traditional forms of contact.

The functioning of Personal Relationships

As the saying goes, "it's not what you know but who you know". Personal relationships embody this perspective. Although this approach views social capital as being concerned with the structure of personal

networks themselves, much research on personal relationships focuses on the *consequences* of people's networks for other outcomes. Of particular note is the role of social networks in contributing to:

- Social network support
- Positive externalities
- Social connectedness

Social network support

Beyond the intrinsic value of being socially connected, personal relationships can impact on individual well-being through the different kinds of support that social networks provide. Spending time with others, or in contacting others, takes time and effort so there is an opportunity-cost inherent in social behaviour. In this perspective, social behaviour can be seen as a form of *investment* on the part of the individual in order to maintain and enhance the *stock* of their networks. Social network support can therefore be seen as one of the *returns* on that investment. As the following section will address in more detail, people's personal relationships can provide support in a number of ways, ranging from emotional support in a crisis, to practical help such as helping out an invalid neighbour or family member with housework, to more material support such as financial help in a time of need. Social network support can also take the form of information and access to opportunities, especially in the context of career advancement and labour market status. Of course, when people decide to visit loved ones or write a message on Facebook, it is unlikely that they think of it as a form of investment, but social network support is often a direct outcome of personal relationships.

Indeed, as mentioned previously, the link is sometimes so strong that some interpretations of social capital - especially those that focus on the individual rather than on communities – tend to treat notions of personal relationships and social network support as one and the same. This report treats the two as conceptually distinct. Although social network support is strongly dependent on the extent, composition, density and intensity of people's relationships, it is only one of the possible outcomes of personal relations. Personal relationships are complex, and despite their intrinsic value, they can generate a range of outcomes, i.e. both positive and negative externalities that go beyond the immediate returns to the individual. Furthermore, people's own networks can bring with them obligations as well as resources. The negative externalities and personal liabilities are described in Box 3. The possible positive externalities resulting from personal relationships are briefly described below, and addressed in more detail in the section on trust and cooperative norms.

Positive externalities

Coleman (1988) noted that "most forms of social capital are created or destroyed as by-products of other activities". This can be seen in the fact that people's main reason for spending time with others and participating in group activities is usually not to 'invest' in their social capital, however that may be understood, but because of the enjoyment and sense of well-being that this interaction provides. Aside the direct returns to the individual from personal relationships, interaction with others can also bring about positive externalities for society. These externalities can be considered as public goods. Because no one person is responsible for creating them and no one person 'owns' them the benefits can be enjoyed even by those who are not part of the network. While this public good perspective is examined in more detail in the sections on Civic Engagement and on Trust and Cooperative Norms, the special role of Personal Relationships in creating these positive externalities should be recognised here.

Box 2.1 The 'dark side of social capital': negative externalities and personal liabilities

One common criticisms of the notion of social capital is that it tends to focus on the positive outcomes of networks and social interactions, sidelining the fact that they can also have negative effects. These negative impacts have been termed the "dark side" of social capital (e.g. Portes, 1998) and include a range of outcomes such as the mobilisation of networks for nefarious aims, such as terrorism or organized crimes; the use of networks to foster 'in-group, out-group' dynamics, resulting in social inequality, exclusionary and nepotistic practices, social stratification, and corruption (i.e. the type of effects stressed by Bourdieu); and the over-reliance on personal 'bonding' networks at the expense of broader, 'bridging' ties. Where high levels of bonding social capital exist with only weak or absent bridging social capital, this may result in the kind of insular, untrusting societal relations typified by the Southern Italian regions described in Putnam's work, leading to economic and social stagnation (Bebbington et al. 2006).

Beyond these undesirable societal outcomes, networks can also be harmful for their individual members, bringing potential personal liabilities as well as limiting their access to resources. For example, individuals can come into contact with norms of behaviour and peer pressure which can lead to negative life outcomes, such as criminality, dropping out of education, substance addiction, or other outcomes. Furthermore, research has shown that a range of phenomena from depression, to obesity and smoking can spread through networks even between people who do not spend time together (i.e. at several degrees of separation) (Christakis and Fowler, 2009).

The existence of these negative externalities and liabilities has prompted some to argue that social networks cannot be considered as forms of 'capital'. However this perspective overlooks the fact that all forms of capital can be used for both negative and positive ends. Ultimately, aside the intrinsic pleasure and well-being they bring, personal relationships are value-neutral, and 'more' (i.e. more friends, more time spent with others) is not necessarily 'better': the quality and purpose of people's personal relationships matter just as much as their quantity. Dasgupta (2005) definition of social capital as "interpersonal networks, nothing more" says: "The advantage of such a lean notion is that it does not prejudge the asset's quality. Just as a building can remain unused and a wetland can be misused, so can a network remain inactive or be put to use in socially destructive ways. There is nothing good or bad about interpersonal networks; other things being equal, it is the use to which a network is put by members, that determines its quality" (p. 10).

Interactions within personal networks typically transcend the specific nature of personal relationships and translate into the more generalised trust and cooperative norms. For example, dense networks with high degrees of closure (i.e. where everyone knows everyone else) allow information on people's reputations (or gossip) to flow between parties, thereby encouraging trustworthy behaviour and shoring up generalised trust (Putnam, 2000; Burt, 2005).

Additionally, while personal relationships are important at the individual level, they can also create positive externalities for firms and organisations, particularly in a business context. Business 'clusters' such as Silicon Valley in California enable companies in the same sector to work closely together, providing access to information as well as opportunities to collaborate, thereby leading to greater creativity and competitive advantage. Research has found that relationships within successful business networks are as much social as professional in nature (Araujo, Bowey and Eastern, 1998) and that for the cross-fertilisation of information and expertise to translate into innovation and success, firms have to allow freedom and opportunities of contact between employees. Halpern (2005); Saxenian, (1994) and Putnam, (2000) argue that the business cluster on Route 128 in Boston may have failed precisely because it maintained traditional norms of hierarchy, secrecy, self-sufficiency and territoriality.

Determinants of personal relationships

An individual's background and personal characteristics can have a significant impact on their personal relationships. Relevant factors include: gender, age, socio-economic status (including education and income level), family background, personality and social skills. Men and women tend to have different networking and socialising styles. For example, data from a 2006 special module of the European Statistics of Income and Living Standards survey (EU-SILC, 2006) show that while socialising with friends is around the same for both genders, more women make time for seeing relatives at least once a week than men (OECD, 2011). The same survey also shows that age and income also have an important impact, with

elderly people more likely to be socially isolated from friends; and the poor being twice as likely as the non-poor to never get together with friends or family from outside the household (OECD, 2011A). Family background can also shape an individual's 'endowment' of personal relationships, in terms of the networks passed on from parents to children (Wintrobe, 1995). Finally, an individual's personality and social skills will impact on the extent and quality of his or her personal relationships. Personality traits such as introversion or extroversion are directly linked to an individual's sociability levels. Glaeser et al. (2000) go as far as to conflate personality and personal relationships, defining an individual's social capital as "social skills, charisma and the size of his Rolodex".

Aside from an individual's innate characteristics and endowments, the way they behave and the activities they participate in also play a role in shaping the opportunity for, and context of, personal relationships. Participation in the labour market and in civic engagement activities can change the size and composition of people's networks, bringing them into contact with a much larger pool of potential contacts, with a greater diversity of backgrounds and interests. The way people choose to use their time is also highly relevant here. If people prefer solitary activities over those shared with others, then they will have less time to invest in social connections. Putnam (2000) proposed the rise in hours of TV watching in the United States as one reason for the decline in informal socialising and other forms of civic and social engagement over recent decades.

Finally, environmental and contextual factors also play a role in people's willingness and ability to socialise with others. These factors can include cultural norms and preferences for socialising with friends, family, colleagues, etc. as well as more policy-amenable issues, such as working hours, access to transportation, urban planning, economic climate, and neighbourhood characteristics (such as levels of trust, feelings of safety, and crime levels.

Social connectedness

Humans have an innate need for contact with other people. People with more social engagements tend to report higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction, even when controlling for other factors such as marital status, income, gender, age, education, labour market status and health (Lelkes, 2010; Helliwell, 2008). Socially isolated people, on the other hand, are more likely to suffer from depression when under stress, and to remain depressed for longer, than people with strong social networks (Sherbourne, Hayes and Wells, 1995). Risky behaviours such as smoking, drinking, physical inactivity and poor diet are also more prevalent amongst socially isolated people (Berkman and Syme, 1979; Berkman and Glass, 2000). Personal relationships bring intrinsic pleasure and also act as a buffer from loneliness and social isolation. They therefore represent, in and of themselves, a necessary element of well-being, as is reflected by the inclusion of 'Social Connections' as a key dimension of well-being in the OECD framework.

The policy relevance of personal relationships

Personal relationships are a private matter, and it may seem inappropriate to think of policies aiming to influence the way people build and maintain their intimate connections, friendships, and other sorts of social contact. Nonetheless, monitoring patterns and modes of interpersonal social interaction should be an issue of concern for policy makers. Data on the strength and composition of personal relationships, and on the activities contributing to them, can be used for a range of purposes:

- *Identifying socially isolated and vulnerable groups.* Inequality is a multi-dimensional issue, affecting well-being in a range of domains beyond (and in addition to) income and wealth. Being well-connected socially can provide a buffer or safety net (through access to different forms of social network support) to people in times of need, and is an essential component of well-being. Social isolation is likely to disproportionately affect those who are already disadvantaged – low-

income people, the unemployed, the elderly, people with mental or physical health problems – and so identifying these people can assist with the targeting and design of policies to help vulnerable groups.

- *Understanding the impact of societal trends on social interaction.* Given the importance of personal relationships for people's well-being, it is important for governments to understand if and how important societal trends or events can influence how people socialise and make connections. For example, anecdotal evidence suggests that the economic crisis may have led to a reduction in face-to-face socialising (because of its financial cost) and an increase in 'sofalising', where people use online social networks while sitting at home rather than going out.[6] The internet itself has also fundamentally changed the way people interact, and generational differences may also play a role in changing patterns of social interaction. Long-term, comparable data on personal relationships will allow for a better understanding of the impact of these trends on personal relationships.

- *Understanding the role of personal relationships as a driver of well-being.* Personal relationships are a source of social connectedness and of a range of forms of social network support, which in turn can have an enormous impact on subjective well-being as well as on health, educational attainment, jobs and earnings, and even work-life balance. Furthermore, interaction at a personal level may well be one way that trust and cooperative norms are generated. Better data are needed to understand the strength and nature of the linkages between personal relationships, on the one hand, and well-being outcomes on the other, links that can be either direct or mediated through the creation of social network support and trust and cooperative norms.

2.2 Social Network Support

The meaning of Social Network Support

Social network support refers to a range of different kinds of assistance and advantages facilitated by people's social ties. A key aspect of this category of social capital is that it focuses on the benefits accruing to the individual 'owning' or 'investing' in the stock of social relationships, rather than on the spill-overs for other individuals. However, the key difference from the 'personal relationships' is that social network support defines a person's stock of social capital in terms of the *level of resources or support that a person can draw from their social contacts* rather than in terms of the extent or composition of the person's social networks (i.e. their personal relationships). There are many different types of support that an individual can potentially access through their networks. These include:

- Information and advice (e.g. for business opportunities, job searches, for a life decision)
- Emotional support (e.g. in the event of divorce or loss of a family member)
- Financial support (e.g. being able to borrow a given amount of money in an emergency)
- Practical help (e.g. helping out with housework, caring or home maintenance)
- Material support (e.g. receiving a house, borrowing a car)

The functioning of Social Network Support

The types of support available to an individual through their network are largely dependent on the nature of their personal relationships: who they know, how they know them and what their relationship is like. However, a number of factors might impact a person's ability to make use of the resources available through their personal relationships, which are related to either the characteristics of the individuals concerned or to contextual factors.

The different types of social support available to people are a major determinant of well-being across a number of domains. Social network support can be seen to play a clear role in a number of the areas in the OECD *How is Life?* framework, such as health status, education, subjective well-being, jobs and earnings.

- There has been a large amount of research undertaken around the role of social support in influencing health outcomes. People with strong family and friendship offering emotional and practical support are more likely to have better mental health (Kawachi and Berkman, 2001; Baum et al. 2000; Veenstra, 2000), to be less affected by stress (Williams et al. 1981), to more successfully recover from heart attacks (Case et al. 1992) and to live longer in general (Berkman and Glass, 2000). Much of this impact has been put down to the role of supportive networks in reducing stress. Social ties are therefore seen to impact subjective or psychological well-being through two pathways: the 'main effect' model, which represents the intrinsic worth of being socially connected, and is captured by the personal relationships described in the previous section; and the 'stress-buffering' model, providing necessary support in times of need (Kawachi and Berkman, 2001).

- The links between supportive social networks and educational outcomes as described in Coleman's work. Coleman focused on school completion, but other studies have shown that children's academic success is also dependent on the extra support they receive from their family. The OECD PISA survey has found that students do better when parents are actively engaged and interested in their child's education, and that teachers pay more attention to students with high levels of parental involvement (OECD, 2012).

- Finally, one of the most important areas in which the resources an individual can access through their networks can lead to positive outcomes is in the labour market. Information provided through social connections is an important factor in job search and career advancement. People with more extensive networks are more likely to be employed (Aguilera, 2002), to have better career progression (Podolny and Baron, 1997; Lin, 2001) and to be paid more (Goldthorpe et al, 1987). Information is likely to be the most important resource in the labour market context, by improving the efficiency and effectiveness of people's job searches (Stone et al. 2003). However, access to influence and the status of network contacts are also relevant: the employment and occupational status of the people in an individual's informal network are likely to affect the quality of a job fund through informal channels (Lin 1999, 2001). [7]

Finally, while the individual's ability to access support can provide a range of benefits for individuals, it can also have important social externalities, both positive and negative. On the positive side, if social support network improves outcomes in health, education, or for financial support, this will reduce the burden on public spending in these areas. On the negative side, mobilising personal network resources to get a job obviously results in other candidates not getting that job. They benefit an individual by influencing the allocation of goods, but have no direct impact on aggregate well-being. The reliance on personal networks to allocate jobs can even evolve into clientelism and nepotism, undermining positive social norms of meritocracy.

Determinants of social network support

Different people have varying capacities to tap into, and profit from, the resources available in their networks, depending on their individual characteristics and behaviours. For example, some people will just be more willing to ask for help or favours than others. Cultural capital, in Bourdieu's sense, is also important: shared cultural values passed on from parents to children (on political beliefs, cultural tastes and even style of dress) can act as signalling factors allowing access to certain network resources which may be

barred to others. Finally, gender is also an important factor. Women tend to be more adept at creating and maintaining supportive networks than men, mobilizing more support during times of stress, and providing more frequent and effective emotional support to others (Belle, 1987). On the other hand, men are much more successful than women at extracting benefits, such as opportunities for employment and career advancement, from their professional networks (Lin, 2001; Metz and Tharenou, 2001).

In addition, there are a range of contextual factors that influence people's access to network resources. Proximity is an important factor. While it is possible to speak to close relatives and business contacts over the telephone or internet, and to send and receive money at a distance, most forms of support require proximity to social contacts. This is why, first-generation immigrants, cut off from established networks at home, tend to replicate these networks by creating enclave communities based around informal institutions for support and exchange such as rotating credit unions (Waldinger, Aldrich and Ward, 1990; Sanders, Nee and Sernau, 2002).

Norms of obligation and dependency also influence which resources people can access from their networks. Indeed, sometimes norms of obligation can be a barrier for people entering into a relationship or network where access to certain resources is accompanied by prohibitively high expectations of reciprocity in the future. This is the case sometimes in family or ethnic networks where first-generation migrants are subsequently joined by relatives and friends from home, with newcomers putting an increasing burden on those already established in the country. These increasing expectations are one reason why long-term resident immigrants may later leave the enclave and reduce dependence on ethnic or family ties in order to protect their assets (Halpern, 2005).

The policy relevance of social network support

When considering the current well-being of individuals, the different types of support provided by people's networks are of crucial importance. While measures of people's personal relationships (i.e. the structure of the networks, and associated social behaviour) can be a useful proxy for social network support, direct measures of social network support would give a far more accurate picture of the contribution of people's social connections to well-being. Many of the reasons for measuring social network support are similar to ones already listed in the previous section. However collecting data on both the *structural* elements of personal relationships and the *resource-related* elements encompassed by measures of social network support would allow researchers and policy makers to better understand the interplay between the two and their respective impact on well-being. Reasons for the policy interest in better measures in this field include:

- *Monitoring the strength or weakness of social network support amongst different socio-economic and population groups.* Just as social isolation (i.e. weak or absent personal relationships) can be a source of deprivation, an inability to access material and emotional resources can also increase people's vulnerability to negative well-being outcomes. These two issues may be linked, as a person cannot access social network support without a social network, however this may not always be the case. For example, someone may know lots of people but still feel unable to confide in anyone in times of need.

- *Understanding the role of social network support in social mobility.* While social network support can help people to 'get by' in a time of need, it can also potentially help them in 'getting ahead' in life by providing opportunities for social advancement (e.g. access to jobs) that would not otherwise be available. Measures of the professional, financial or intellectual support provided to people, and of the subsequent impact of this support on labour market status or income, for example, may help to explain patterns of social mobility (or stagnation).

- *Understanding the role of social network support in determining individual well-being outcomes.* As mentioned above, different types of social network support can have a significant influence in determining well-being outcomes, particularly those related to subjective well-being, educational attainment, health status, jobs and earnings, income and wealth.

2.3 Civic engagement

The meaning of Civic Engagement

Civic engagement refers to actions and behaviours that can be seen as contributing positively to the collective life of a community or society, as well as to the characteristics of these civic networks themselves. Few definitions of social capital explicitly refer to civic engagement, and yet this notion is at the heart of most mainstream approaches, with many authors treating the concepts of social capital and civic engagement as almost synonymous. Many of these activities and behaviours which contribute in some way to community life or society may overlap with measures used to describe other aspects of social capital, as people join groups, or undertake community-minded actions for a range of reasons, including for the opportunities to socialise that they provide. However, the focus of this category is on the level and extent of civic participation rather than the motivation for, or the consequences of it.

In the social capital literature, many types of civic engagement have been discussed. These include: associational membership, volunteering, political participation, donating money and other types of civic-minded activity such as donating blood or taking part in jury duty.

Civic networks

At the macro-level, civic engagement is loosely connected to the concept of "civil society", which has been defined as "The set of (1) formal or informal organizations or structured relationships among people that are (2) private (i.e. not part of the apparatus of the state), (3) not profit-distributing, (4) self-governing, and (5) voluntarily constituted and supported" (Salamon and Sokolowski, 2004).[8] In this view, while different organisations may have competing objectives and methods, not all of which can be seen to be socially beneficial, the existence of a vibrant civil society, consisting of multiple civic networks, can be regarded as providing an intermediary infrastructure between citizens and the state and as an essential component of democratic functioning (Fukuyama, 2001). Examples of the different activities contributing to the creation and maintenance of civic networks include: associational involvement; volunteering; political engagement; and other forms of civic engagement, such as jury duty.

Associational membership

Robert Putnam placed associational membership at the heart of his work on social capital. This perspective was strongly influenced by the writing of Alexis De Toqueville, a 19th century French political thinker who, in his travels in the United States, had been strongly impressed by what he saw as the vibrancy of associational life there. He wrote:

> "Americans of all ages, all stations in life, and all types of dispositions are forever forming associations. There are not only commercial and industrial associations in which all take part, but others of a thousand different types – religious, moral, serious, futile, very general and very limited, immensely large and very minute..Nothing, in my view, deserves more attention than the intellectual and moral associations in America (cited in Putnam, 2003, p. 48).

Putnam understands associations in broad terms. In "Bowling Alone", Putnam states that "Americans today are actively involved in educational or school service groups like PTAs, recreational group, work-

related groups, such as labor unions and professional organizations, religious groups (in addition to churches), youth groups, service and fraternal clubs, neighbourhood or homeowners groups, and other charitable organizations" (2000, pp.48-49). Associations can also include amateur sports clubs, cultural groups such as amateur theatre associations, hobby-based organisations, and any organised group that operates on a voluntary, not-for-profit basis.

Putnam argues that what matters is "active and involved" membership rather than nominal membership. That is to say, there is more social value in attending meetings, being on a committee, or taking a leadership role than in more passive forms of so-called 'chequebook' membership, which involve paying a subscription fee but little real investment in terms of time or effort. However, other authors have argued that passive membership can be just as effective as active membership for promoting civic attitudes (Selle and Strømsnes, 2001; Wollebæk and Selle, 2002).

Volunteering

Volunteering refers to the provision of time and unpaid labour, generally to people or causes outside the immediate household. The 2001 United Nations General Assembly stated that "the terms volunteering, volunteerism and voluntary activities refer to a wide range of activities, including traditional forms of mutual aid and self-help, formal service delivery and other forms of civic participation, undertaken of free will, for the general public good and where monetary reward is not the principal motivating factor" (UNGA, 2001). The United Nations Volunteer Report highlights three features of volunteerism: i) it should be carried according to the individual's free will and not as a legal obligation, contract or academic requirement; ii) the primary motivation should not be financial reward; and iii), the action should be for the common good (UNV, 2011).

Volunteering defined in this way is a broader notion than associational membership as it takes into account both formal and informal types of voluntary work. Formal volunteering can be understood as voluntary work undertaken within an established organisation or group, which can encompass different kinds of 'active' associational involvement as described above. Informal volunteering, on the other hand, is more spontaneous, consisting of help or time freely given to people in an unstructured way, outside the context of formal organisations or groups. Such voluntary assistance can be given to people within the volunteer's own personal networks (therefore overlapping with the personal relationships and social network support categories) or to strangers (and therefore potentially reflecting the presence of trust and cooperative norms).

Political participation

Political participation encompasses forms of associational involvement, volunteering and other actions that are aimed at influencing elections, public policy or the distribution of public goods (UNECE 2013). This can include voluntary work undertaken for a political party, lobby, or other political organisation as well as more spontaneous actions such as signing a petition, consumer boycotting, organising or participating in a protest demonstration, contacting a newspaper or politician, or signing up for nominal membership (without active involvement) of a political organisation or trade union.[9]

An understanding of political participation may also be broadened to incorporate forms of wider *democratic participation*, such as voting in elections, although there is some debate as to whether voter turnout and other indicators of democratic participation can be seen as *components* of civic engagement or as *outcomes* of it.

Other forms of civic engagement

Civic engagement can take on other forms aside associational involvement, volunteering and political participation, such as donating money, taking part in jury duty, spontaneously picking up litter in a public place, or donating blood. Many of these actions take relatively little time, but represent significant civic-mindedness and concern for the common good. Even taking the time to be informed of current affairs through newspapers, news websites, radio and TV programmes signifies a level of interest in society or community issues that may indicate a predisposition towards civic-minded collective action.

The functioning of Civic Engagement

This section briefly describes the main channels through which civic engagement can impact on well-being outcomes. There are four potential pathways: i) through fostering trust and cooperative norms; ii) improving the performance of formal institutions; iii) having a direct impact on individual well-being; and iv), by building networks and civic skills.

Trust and Cooperative Norms

For Putnam, civic engagement is a central element of his interpretation of social capital as the horizontal civic networks embedded within associations and other forms of community involvement foster trust and norms of cooperation, such as tolerance and generalised reciprocity. While Putnam (2000) made a strong case for the link between civic engagement and trust in the United States, showing that levels of both declined in tandem over the last half of the XXth century, other evidence on the matter is mixed (Dekker and van den Broek , 2004; Wollebæk and Strømsnes, 2008; Allum et al. 2010). Nevertheless, the idea that civic engagement generates social trust and co-operative norms is firmly entrenched in the literature.

However, while this idea has become widely-accepted and underpins much of the social capital research literature, there is very little information on exactly *how* civic engagement generates trust and socially-useful norms. Even Putnam states "The causal arrows among civic involvement, reciprocity, honesty and social trust are as tangled as well-tossed spaghetti. Only careful, even experimental research will be able to sort them apart definitively" (2000, p. 137).

Newton and Norris (2000) outline three theories about the proposed relationship between civic engagement and trust. The first of these, termed the 'social and cultural theory', posits that "the ability to trust others and sustain cooperative relations is the product of social experiences and socialisation, especially those found in the sort of voluntary association of modern society that bring different social types together to achieve a common goal (Newton and Norrism 2000, p.6). In other words, face-to-face contact with a wide range of different, civic-minded people through community engagement and other collective activities strengthens people's willingness to trust others. This is an appealing argument, but has been criticised for failing to explain how trusting others within specific civic networks can then translate into a more generalised form of trust that is also extended to people outside those networks (e.g. Uslaner, 2002).

Civic engagement is also thought to generate broader norms of co-operation, such as tolerance and reciprocity, as well as trust. This argument is linked to the notion of 'bridging' social capital and suggests that the contact between people of different backgrounds (nationality, ethnicity, socio-economic status, age, etc.) allowed by civic engagement, will broaden people's horizons, help to socialise civic attitudes in general, and serve to break down barriers between different social groups. However, not all types of associational involvement are equally valuable from this standpoint (Stolle and Rochon, 1998). Hooghe (2003) points out that associations can be both civic and un-civic in nature; for example, some associations

will pursue goals and put forward attitudes that are anti-democratic, self-serving and exclusionary in nature rather than pursuing the common good. He provided evidence to show that not all voluntary associations automatically produce democratic attitudes.

In the second and third theories, civic engagement is seen as more of a dependent than independent variable. The second theory, based on the performance of government institutions, states that "Government institutions that perform well are likely to elicit the confidence of citizens; those that perform badly or ineffectively generate feelings of distrust and low confidence" (Newton and Morris, 2000, p. 7). Good government, in this view, provides an enabling environment which fosters not only confidence in government but also citizens' willingness to trust one another, thereby fostering civic participation. This top-down theory, which sees civic engagement as an outcome of trust (in institutions and in others) rather than the other way around has been put forward by a number of political scientists (Uslaner, 2002; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2006).

Finally, the 'social psychological' theory focuses on individual personality traits: "Feelings of inner goodness, trust in others and oneself, and optimism form a 'basic trust' personality trait that is formed in the first stages of psychological development as a result of the mother-baby feeding experience. Basic personality traits, it is argued, are enduring and general, influencing many aspects of behaviour" (Newton and Norris, 2000, p.5). In this view, people who are more civically engaged are also more trusting, not because of any relationship between trust and civic engagement, but because civic attitudes and trusting behaviour are driven by the same underlying personality traits. Research by Stolle and Hooghe (2004) suggests that many pro-social attitudes are indeed established by adolescence and remain stable throughout the life course.

Institutional Performance

The previous section outlined the 'top-down' perspective on the relationship between civic engagement and institutional performance. However the direction of causality may also run the other way: communities characterised by higher levels of civic engagement are seen to foster more efficient and less corrupt public governance institutions and to improve institutional performance (Putnam, 1993, 2000). For example, civil servants in societies characterised by higher civic engagement will be more involved in social groups and associations with other members of the community, and will therefore take greater interest in honest and effective administration as their work can impact directly upon members of their social networks (Woodhouse, 2006). Putnam (1993) argues that associational life teaches citizens the cooperative norms and organisational skills needed to better participate in community and political life. Boix and Posner (1996, 1998) examine the role of civic engagement in encouraging good government and propose a list of possible pathways through which this connection may operate. They propose that civic engagement can:

- Make citizens 'sophisticated consumers of politics' and offer more fora through which their demands can be expressed and heard;
- Facilitate co-operative norms between bureaucrats (just as between citizens in general), thereby improving institutional efficiency;
- Encourage more generalised, community-orientated outlook, as opposed to one based mainly on self-interest amongst the population, thereby facilitating the implementation of policy;
- Encourage 'consociational' democracy, enabling agreement and government action across deep-set social divides.

In the field of development studies, civic engagement has been regarded as playing a key role in enabling government provision of public goods (e.g. public health and universal education) and rule of law (e.g. property rights and freedom of speech). As summarised by Woolcock and Narayan (2006) "States,

firms and communities alone do not possess the resources needed to promote broad-based sustainable development; complementarities and partnerships forged both within and across these different sectors are required". So, although the state bears the ultimate responsibility for the provision of public goods and the rule of law, civic associations and engaged citizens within communities can support these efforts and to help in "creating the conditions that produce, recognize and reward good governance" (Woolcock and Narayan, 2006). Similarly, Evans (1996a and 1996b), concludes that synergy between government and citizen action is based on *complementarity* (i.e. the existence of mutually supportive relations between public and private actors) and *embeddedness* (which describes the nature, density and extent of ties connecting citizens and public officials). These 'vertical' relationships (i.e. relationships that connect people of different levels of power or social status) are examples of 'linking' ties (as described in the section on personal relationships).

Individual Well-being

Civic engagement is also linked directly to individual well-being. Civically engaged people tend to be happier (Morrow-Howell et al., 2003), report better health status (Borgonovi, 2008), and have a greater sense of purpose in life (Greenfield and Marks, 2004). [10] While the direction of causality may be debated (i.e. healthier people may be more likely to volunteer, rather than volunteering being a source of good health) a range of studies do indicate that volunteering does help people to live longer and healthier lives (see Wilson and Musick, 1999 for a review).

Subjective well-being and good mental health are also sometimes identified as rewards of volunteering. In general, most survey respondents say that helping others makes them feel good (Wuthnow, 1991). Musick and Wilson (2003) list the reasons this may be so, which include: social recognition and gratitude; acting in accordance with one's own fundamental values (e.g. 'making the world a better place'); the intrinsic rewards from fulfilling what some may see as a civic obligation; gaining a sense of mission and purpose from working towards a common good; gaining a sense of security from the increased trust resulting from social participation; being engaged in organizational settings and social interactions that are usually positive and emotionally warm; having the opportunity to use personal skills and strengths of which the individual may be proud, or to develop such aptitudes, thereby enhancing a sense of self.

However, while the links between volunteering, on the one hand, and physical and psychological well-being, on the other, are well-established, the causal direction is not and it may run in both directions, i.e. health, happiness and life satisfaction can be both predictors and outcomes of an individual's involvement in volunteer activities (Li and Ferraro, 2005; Thoits and Hewitt, 2001; Mellor et al. 2009).

Building personal networks and skills

Civic engagement can also indirectly impact well-being by allowing people to strengthen and extend their social networks, creating both new "strong" and "weak" ties, and bringing a subsequent increase in the resources available to the individual in the form of social network support and information (see the section on Personal Relationships). Finally, as indicated by Musick and Wilson (2003), civic engagement is also linked to skills development. As well as bringing intrinsic and social benefits, the skills developed through civic engagement can potentially also be used to improve the individual's employability.

The determinants of Civic Engagement

Levels of civic engagement, as measured by such indicators of volunteering and associational involvement vary widely between countries and regions (OECD, 2011a). There are a number of possible

explanations for these differences including cultural differences, government policy, and area/regional characteristics.

In *Making Democracy Work*, Putnam (1993) argued that the significant differences in levels of civic engagement between the North and the South of Italy had their roots in features of social and political life dating back hundreds of years. For example, co-operative peasant initiatives were stamped out by a predominantly feudal social structure in the South, but were given greater space to flourish in the North. These historical determinants led to diverging paths for the two regions, which continues to shape differences in civic culture to this day. In this account, norms of civic engagement are seen as self-reinforcing and can lead to either a vicious or virtuous cycle depending on the historical circumstances of the regions under consideration.

Although practices of civic engagement can be seen as the result of culture and social practices dating back centuries, this does not imply that government policy cannot have an impact on them. There are few studies on the issue, but some governments have made concerted efforts to encourage levels of volunteering. One example is the 'Big Society' initiative launched by UK Prime Minister David Cameron during the 2010 election campaign, which included the encouraging of volunteering and support of local charities and co-operatives amongst its priorities (Norman, 2010). An area of government policy which is particularly important for civic engagement is education. A study based on European Social Survey data found that differences in educational attainment explained 14% of cross-country variations in volunteering rates, and 21% of variations in the level of interest in politics (Borgonovi, 2010). Area characteristics can also have an impact on levels of civic engagement. For example, high levels of income inequality and ethnic diversity in the area considered have been associated with low levels of civic participation (Costa and Kahn, 2003).

At the individual level, there is some evidence to suggest that gender and age are important factors influencing an individual's level of participation in volunteering and other forms of civic engagement. For example, evidence shows that, in several countries, women are less likely to volunteer than men (Denny, 2003) and are also less likely to participate in associations and groups (Putnam, 1993, 2000; La Ferrara, 2000). However, it also seems that women and men tend to choose different kinds of group and volunteering activities, with women being more likely to engage in informal associations related to family and children, for example (OECD, 2010).

Also, older people tend to spend more of their time volunteering (OECD, 2011a; Putnam, 2000). One possible explanation for this pattern is that elderly people seem to derive greater increases in life satisfaction, and greater improvements in perceived health status, as a result of their time spent volunteering than younger people (Van Willigen, 2000). However, Putnam (2000) argued that this pattern may reflect a generational rather than a life course issue, implying that the replacement of the more civic minded World War II generation with the 'baby-boom' generation may have acted as a major explanation for the decline in civic engagement in the United States over the post-war period.

The policy relevance of civic engagement

'Civic engagement and governance' is one of the eleven core dimensions of the OECD's *How is Life?* well-being framework. There is a strong policy rationale for measures of civic engagement. These include:

- *Measuring non-market services* provided by volunteers and associations that do not enter into the System of National Accounts, in order to have a better picture of the true economic production of a nation.

- *Gaining a better understanding of how trust and cooperative norms* are generated within a society, by looking at the role of civic engagement as a *determinant* of trust and shared norms.

- *Understanding the relationship between institutional performance and civic engagement* (and particularly, political engagement).

- *Understanding the impact that civic engagement has on individual well-being*, particularly in the areas of subjective well-being, health status, skills acquisition, and personal relationships.

2.4 Trust and Cooperative Norms

The meaning of Trust and Cooperative Norms

Trust and cooperative norms comprise the cognitive factors that shape the way people behave towards each other and as members of society. While intangible, these elements can be powerful and determine people's *willingness* to freely cooperate with one another.

By facilitating mutually beneficial co-operation, trust and cooperative norms bring positive-sum, non-exclusionary benefits for all members of a community or society. These benefits may transcend personal relationships and obligations, and shape how people relate to unknown individuals and groups that are part of the same community, as well as to broader social structures, thereby underpinning the very functioning of society. The concepts most commonly associated with this aspect of social capital include generalised trust (i.e. in others), trust (or confidence) in government and other institutions, generalised reciprocity, altruism, and tolerance.

Generalised trust

Trust in others is the foundation of cooperation. Trust and trustworthiness are not the same concept, although they are often conflated for measurement purposes. Trust is about perceptions and expectations of others, while trustworthiness refers to the honesty and integrity of people's actual behaviour. Both are important (as high levels of social trust cannot persist for long in the presence of low levels of social trustworthiness), but trust is easier to measure than trustworthiness.

An important distinction in the theoretical literature is that between trust between people who know each other well, and trust between strangers. Putnam (2000, p. 136) terms the former "thick trust" and the latter "thin trust" (Putnam, 2000, p. 136). The first category of trust is also sometimes referred to as "particularised" trust and the latter is often termed "generalised" or "social" trust. There is some overlap between this distinction and that between the concepts of "bonding" and "bridging" social capital (see Box 4). Whatever the label, it is important to recognise that particularised or thick trust based on personal ties is a different concept than that of generalised of thin trust.

Box 2.2 Bonding and bridging ties

The terms 'bonding' and 'bridging' (Gittell and Vidal, 1998) are commonly used in the Social Capital literature to distinguish between two types of relationships: those existing among strongly-tied, inward-looking groups of people of similar background and outlook (bonding), and those fostered by weakly-tied, outward-looking networks bringing together people of different backgrounds (bridging). Putnam characterises bonding ties as the "glue" of society, allowing individuals within close groups to stick together and provide mutual support, and he describes bridging ties as the "oil", smoothing any potential friction between distinct groups and fostering broader norms of cooperation. While the bonding-bridging analogy, like many metaphors in the 'social capital' literature, seems to provide a useful way to describe social relationships, its practical application is more challenging. In reality, individuals have multiple 'identities', for example, as a woman, as a teenager, as a member of a certain ethnic or socio-economic group, as a supporter of a particular football team, as a person of a given nationality, etc. Identifying whether a particular relationship can be understood as bonding or bridging is therefore not straightforward, as a tie can link two people who are alike in some ways and different in others. Decisions about what constitutes bonding or bridging are therefore highly context-dependent, and can sometimes seem somewhat arbitrary.

Particularised trust in friends, family and acquaintances does not necessarily translate into broader social outcomes. Uslaner terms this strategic trust because it is based on the actual experience of each individual, and because it involves an informed assessment of the risk of trusting the other person (Uslaner, 2002). This assessment can be based on emotional attachment and intimacy, knowledge about the other's integrity and values, or informal control through reputation and sanctions embedded in networks (Torche and Valenzuela, 2011). Particularised trust is probably better understood as an aspect of social network support (i.e. a private good), stemming from people's personal relationships, rather than as a public good.

Generalised trust, on the other hand, encompasses trust in strangers. A certain amount of distrust in strangers can be healthy in many circumstances. However, when people are unwilling to cooperate with those they do not know personally, this may prevent a great deal of productive social interactions from taking place. Arrow (1971) writes that "In the absence of trust, it would become very costly to arrange for alternative sanctions and guarantees, and many opportunities for mutually beneficial co-operation would have to be foregone" (p. 22). Generalised trust is not based on actual knowledge of each individual's likely trustworthiness so it must have other foundations. Uslaner (2002) argues that generalised trust reflects the existence of fundamentally shared values and norms of behaviour. He uses the term "moralistic trust" to describe trust in strangers as it represents a belief that others share your fundamental moral values, and can be captured in the expression "A trusts".

Farrell presents a so-called 'mid-level' explanation for trust in strangers, which may be less based on shared values than on understandings based on particularised trust in individuals, being extended to groups of people with similar characteristics. He refers to Hardin's model of trust, which states that the general form of all trusting relationships is of the type "A trusts B to do X". In Farrell's interpretation, person A may not know B personally but may consider (based on experience or other considerations) whether B belongs to a broader "Group B" that has a reason to behave in a trustworthy manner towards a broad "Group A" when performing a particular action or range of actions X. In this model, people may choose to trust some strangers but not necessarily all based on group characteristics such as age, race, socio-economic status, gender, nationality, etc.

A further explanation for the existence of trust in strangers is that people may have a general confidence in the formal and informal institutions underpinning society. If people believe that strong enforcement mechanisms are in place that discourage cheating or other forms of uncooperative or socially harmful behaviours, then they will be more likely to trust others in general. In this case, trust in others can be seen less as a function of interpersonal interactions than as a reflection of the perceived functioning of societal institutions (both formal and informal, Knack and Keefer, 1997; Rothstein, 2000; Beugelsdijk, 2006). Trust in strangers can therefore be seen as emerging from a complex combination of factors,

including a belief in shared values ("moralistic" trust), the experience of repeated interpersonal interaction with different groups ("mid-level" strategic trust), and confidence in the functioning of societal institutions (both formal and informal). This latter consideration shows that there is some intersection between interpersonal and institutional trust.

Trust in Institutions

Trust in institutions is an important public resource. Just as an individual's level of trust (or distrust) in another person will affect their willingness to partake in cooperative action, the same is likely to be the case for their trust in institutions. Trust in government, for example, may shape people's willingness to pay taxes, to accept policy reforms, to support military objectives, and to comply with social service programmes (Braithwaite and Levi, 1998). As in the case of generalised trust, however, the characteristic of a trusting relation are likely to be specific to the type of actions being considered, i.e. some people may trust governments to take the best course of action when considering national security and not trust them when considering actions pertaining to environmental protection or social justice.

In the social capital literature, institutional trust most often refers to trust in the government or political systems, i.e. political trust. Miller and Listhaug define political trust as the "judgement of the citizenry that the system and the political incumbents are responsive, and will do what is right even in the absence of constant scrutiny" (1990, p. 358). Blind (2006) offers a more specific break-down of political trust into three categories: (i) diffuse or system-based trust; (ii) specific or institution-based trust; and (iii) micro-level or individual political trust. The first category (diffuse political trust) refers to the citizens' evaluation of the performance of the overall political system and the regime. Specific political trust is directed to distinct and identifiable institutions such as municipality government or the police force. Finally, individual trust describes the political trust directed towards individual political leaders.

Institutional trust, while principally related to citizens' judgement of the responsiveness and integrity of the executive and legislative branches of government is often interpreted in a broad sense to take into account trust in systems over which the government may only have partial control. Trust in the education and healthcare systems of a country, in media institutions, in the military, in the judiciary system or even in business, banks and markets are often included in survey measuring institutional trust. The term "confidence" is also often used when referring to institutional trust, to differentiate the concept from interpersonal trust. Confidence can be seen to relate to "bigger or wider systems or entities that we can hardly influence and that are more or less inevitable" (Beugelsdijk, 2006).

Cooperative Norms

People's actions are determined not only by individual preferences but also by the understanding that certain types of behaviours are expected from them and that the failure to behave in a certain way will have negative consequences in the short- or long-term. These expected behaviours are known as *norms* and are diffused throughout a group by model roles, socialisation (including formal education), and the use of sanctions (i.e. formal or informal punishment, such as social ostracisation) in the case of non-compliance. The types of norms that are prevalent within a society, and the level of conformity with those norms, are determined by the *values* of the community or of the society in question, and shape *expectations* about how other people should and will behave.

Not all shared norms are socially useful. For example, a community where the prevalent norms support the use of violence against women, or discourage the educational attainment and healthy lifestyle choices of children, is unlikely to foster the well-being of its inhabitants. Public Resources, in the context of social capital, are considered to encompass the shared norms, values and expectations that enable *mutually beneficial co-operation* and that have positive spill-over effects for society as a whole.

Norms, values and expectations that encourage co-operation may be seen as being intrinsically desirable from a moral or ethical point of view. Individuals and groups can attach importance to behaviour underpinned by norms of solidarity, honesty, generosity, kindness, politeness, equity, social justice, or tolerance, for example, as these can be seen to enshrine fundamental values of a "good" society. While such judgements about the moral worth of different norms are inherently subjective, and dependent on the culture and ideology of different countries, regions or communities, many of these norms will have an instrumental role in generating a range of benefits that go beyond economic productivity to also include a range of positive impacts on other well-being outcomes.

Social norms that encourage co-operation can take a number of forms. The norm of generalised reciprocity is often cited as a key element of social capital. Reciprocity can be defined as a social dynamic whereby persons give, receive, and return (Torche and Valenzuela, 2011). Mauss' seminal work (1954) outlined the importance of reciprocal gift exchange as underpinning solidarity and bonding networks closer together through linkages of mutual obligations. Putnam (1993) contrasted generalised reciprocity with balanced reciprocity: whereas balanced, or specific reciprocity entails an immediate, mutual exchange of gifts or favours, generalised reciprocity refers to "a continuing relationship of exchange that is at any given time unrequited or imbalanced, but that involves mutual expectations that a benefit granted now should be repaid in the future" (1993, p. 172). In other words, "I help you out now in the (possibly vague, uncertain and uncalculating) expectation that you will help me out in the future" (Taylor, 1992, p. 28). Whereas balanced reciprocity tends to take place between people who know each other (and, like particularised trust, is a form of private good), generalised reciprocity can characterise exchanges between strangers.

People may help each other out for reasons other than generalised reciprocity, however. For example, Putnam (1993) gives the example of living in a neighbourhood where residents are expected to rake up their own fallen leaves before they blow into surrounding gardens, with non-compliance being met with ostracism from local social life (p. 171). While this specific case may be interpreted as an example of generalised reciprocity, it could also be regarded as a signal of norms of conforming behaviour, or fear of disapproval from neighbours (Abbott and Freeth, 2008), rather than from a general sense that people should help one another.

Norms of tolerance and non-discrimination towards people and groups of different background, appearance or beliefs are essential for fair and inclusive co-operation. Côté and Erickson (2009) state that tolerance comprises a range of aspects, covering "cognitive elements, such as recognition of the real problems of discrimination; evaluative elements, such as feeling that minorities fit into the host society and make positive contributions to it; and political elements, such as willingness to welcome more immigrants or to support minorities" (p. 1665).

The functioning of Trust and Cooperative Norms

In the literature, many claims have been made for the important role of social capital in shaping a range of societal outcomes, especially those related to the performance of governments and markets but also expending to individual well-being. Overwhelmingly, the studies looking at these macro-outcomes tend to focus on trust and cooperative norms.

Countries with high levels of generalised trust tend to be wealthier (Fukuyama, 1995; Whitely, 1997; Knack and Keefer, 1997; La Porta et al., 1997). In a cross-country analysis, Zhao and Kim (2011) documented a positive link between generalised trust and institutional trust and levels of Foreign Direct Investment. Daude et al. (2012) have also documented a strong link between institutional trust and willingness to pay taxes. Knack and Keefer (1997) analysed responses to the World Value Surveys across about 30 countries, finding a positive correlation between measures of citizens' confidence in government and objective indicators of bureaucratic efficiency. Communities with higher levels of

trust and where people are more willing to get involved in community problems also experience lower levels of crime (Sampson, 2012).

The positive correlation between measures of trust and cooperative norms and outcomes such as economic growth, health status and subjective well-being, and the negative correlation with outcomes such as crime, suggest that trust and cooperative norms have a powerful influence on social and individual well-being. However, very little is known about the nature of the causal pathways that underpin these correlations. In a broad sense, cooperative norms and behaviours are likely to make other forms of capital more efficient through increasing the productivity of individuals and groups (Putnam, 2000). The section below spells out some of the ways in which trust and cooperative norms impact well-being, looking at their influence through four main channels: (i) reducing transaction costs; (ii) ensuring the efficient allocation of resources; (iii) favouring social control; and (iv) impacting directly on individual well-being.

Reducing transaction costs

Whenever two parties enter into an exchange, there is likely to be an information asymmetry, which leads to the possibility of one or other of the parties exploiting the situation for their own advantage. Formal legal agreements can help to reduce the risk of this occurring, but are costly. Where high levels of trust exist, the need for such formal contracts is reduced, thereby reducing transaction costs. "Individuals in higher-trust societies spend less to protect themselves from being exploited in economic transaction" (Knack and Keefer, 1997).

Trust is therefore a means of reducing transaction costs. In high-trust societies, there is less dependence on third-party enforcement through formal institutions and people are more willing to work together freely and spontaneously, and therefore more productively. This is likely to encourage economic growth for a number of reasons. First of all, the overall cost of doing business will be lower where transaction costs are reduced. Second, people and firms will have more incentive to collaborate and connect ideas across networks, thereby increasing the potential for creativity and innovation. In order to translate innovation at the micro-level of people's networks to the macro level, more people need to take risks to engage in innovative practices or high-risk economic activities, which are more likely to happen in societies characterised by high levels of trust (Woodhouse, 2006). Third, as people are more likely to take risks when they see other people and institutions as more trustworthy, then investment and other forms of economic activity will be more likely in high-trust communities, regions or countries.

The reduction of transaction costs is also relevant for exchanges outside the economic sphere. For example, Knack (2000) argues that trust can facilitate agreement, collaboration and innovation in government bureaucracies. This idea also formed the central point of Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* (1993), which argued that "trust as part of social capital is not a substitute for effective public policy but rather a prerequisite for it and in part a consequence of it". Government and market performance are obviously closely interlinked, as good government is also a strong driver of economic growth.

Efficient allocation of resources

Societies demonstrating stronger norms of non-discrimination are likely to display greater equity and efficiency in how they allocate resources. In extreme cases, where economic actors refuse to engage in economic transactions, or to offer employment to people of different ethnic, religious or other identifiable characteristics this will results in a productive loss to the economy as a whole as well as a well-being loss to the individual or group being discriminated against. While studies attempting to estimate the economic losses arising from norms of discrimination are inevitably subject to a wide margin of error, they do indicate that the costs are significant (Patrinos, 2004; Birdsall and Sabot, 1991). Tolerance and norms of non-discrimination can be seen to be a core determinant of the inclusiveness and cohesiveness of societies.

Another way in which trust and cooperative norms can contribute to the efficient allocation of resources is through encouraging forms of collective action that can supplement market- or state-based approaches. For example, communities where people are more likely to help and look out for each other, are also more likely to be able to mobilise common resources when needed, such as in the aftermath of a disaster or of an extreme weather event (Murphy, 2007). More co-operative communities are also likely to be better organised in terms of achieving common goals, thereby bolstering the effectiveness of public institutions and increasing the chances of successful investment strategies in public health, safety, housing, economic development and education (Warren et al., 2001). Finally, informal collective action strategies based on trust and cooperative norms can often provide the most efficient way to manage common resources such as agricultural land or fisheries stocks (Pretty, 2003).

Social control

Sanctions arising from non-compliance with social norms can help to maintain social control. Sanctions can be formal (such as legal action and imprisonment) or informal. Informal sanctions, in turn, can be both direct (e.g. disapproving glances, expressions of anger or disapproval) or indirect (e.g. through gossip and reputational damage, Halpern, 2005). Coleman showed how the use of social control to uphold norms supportive of educational attainment helped to keep school dropout rates low in certain communities (1988). Sampson et al. (1997) showed how neighbourhoods where people were more willing to intervene to uphold public order experienced lower levels of crime.

Whether or not social control represents a public good depends on the norms that are prevalent within a society or community. Social control that discourages gender equity or educational attainment, for example, is likely to hamper rather than foster individual and aggregate well-being, and consequently should not be considered as a form of social capital.

Direct impact on individual well-being

Trust and cooperative norms, in addition to contributing to well-being through the pathways outlined above, may also have a direct impact on individual well-being, especially in the areas of health and subjective well-being. People living in places characterised by high levels of trust in others tend to have higher levels of subjective well-being (Helliwell and Putnam, 2004; Helliwell and Wang, 2010). People living in countries with higher levels of institutional trust also show higher levels of subjective well-being (Hudson, 2006). This may be because people put intrinsic, moral value on living in a high-trust environment, or because the improved functioning of markets and the public sector due to higher levels of generalised and institutional trust positively impacts other dimensions of well-being, or because higher trust reflects the existence of stronger social networks (personal and community) which have an independent effect on subjective well-being.

There is evidence to suggest that generalised trust correlates positively with better health outcomes for individuals (Boreham et al. 2002; Ginn and Arber, 2004; Stafford et al. 2004). Hamano et al. (2010) studied around 200 neighbourhoods in Japan and found that high levels of social trust, (along with high levels of associational membership) were associated with better mental health after adjusting for age, sex, household income, and educational attainment. A study of Chicago neighbourhoods showed that high levels of reciprocity, trust, and civic participation were associated with lower death rates and rates of heart disease, after controlling for neighbourhood material deprivation (Lochner et al., 2003).

However, as with trust and subjective well-being, the causal pathways are unclear. One possible explanation is that less trusting individuals may have a tendency towards social isolation, thereby depriving themselves of many of the positive health benefits of supportive social networks (Glass and Balfour, 2003). Another possible explanation is that people living in higher-trust communities or societies have lower

levels of social anxiety, and thus lower levels of chronic stress (Wilkinson, 2000). Much more research is needed to better understand the causal pathways between trust and cooperative norms, on one side, and health outcomes, on the other (Abbott and Freeth, 2008).

The determinants of trust and cooperative norms

The creation of trust, cooperative norms and attendant values is a slow and complex process and little empirical evidence is available relating to how exactly how they are formed. However, it is likely that a combination of interpersonal, civic, historical/cultural, socio-economic and demographic factors play a role.

Trust, norms and values are formed over time through repeated interaction between and within different social networks. Personal relationships and civic engagement together represent important sources of network interaction, and thus contribute towards the forming of trust and cooperative norms. Historical and cultural factors are identified by Fukuyama (1995) as being amongst the most important factors explaining the high degree of variation in levels of trust between countries, and can be explain why levels of trust in a region or country seem to be relatively stable over time (Halpern, 2005).

Putnam (2006) looked at the impact of ethnic diversity and population heterogeneity on aspects of social capital, finding evidence of a negative correlation between community heterogeneity and levels of trust in the short-term. The same negative association has been confirmed by other studies (Glaeser et al. 2000, Alesina and La Ferrarra, 2002). There is also a growing field of research looking at the impact of income and other types of inequality on social capital variables such as trust and norms of reciprocity, with evidence suggesting that more unequal and divided societies and communities tend to be less trusting ones (Knack and Keefer, 1997; Knack, 1999; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; Uslaner, 2003).

The policy relevance of trust and cooperative norms

Trust and cooperative norms contribute to economic production, social cohesion and stability, capacity to undertake collective action, democratic participation, good governance, as well as having a direct impact on individual happiness and health.

For all of these reasons listed above, measures of trust and cooperative norms are highly policy relevant. However, above and beyond their contribution to current well-being, trust and cooperative norms can also be seen as the aspects of social capital that bear most directly on the *sustainability* of well-being into the future. The capital-based approach has been proposed as the most promising way forward in the measurement of sustainable development and well-being sustainability by several international initiatives and task forces on sustainable development indicators (UNECE/Eurostat/OECD 2009; OECD, 2011; UNECE, 2012). However, identifying appropriate measures of social capital in a sustainability context has proved challenging.

Trust and cooperative norms represent the most appropriate concept to be considered social capital in a sustainability context for a number of reasons. First, they contribute to collective and individual well-being in an unambiguously positive manner, and can be seen as a purely public good, as individuals cannot be excluded from their use, and as use by one person does not reduce availability to others. Second, trust and cooperative norms are also relatively persistent over time, implying that they may be considered as stocks that can be transmitted across generations and that, when depleted, are difficult to restore. Third, as a significant part of the *productive intangible capital stock* of nations they contribute to the functioning of societal systems – markets, states, societies – which in turn underpin economic performance, social stability and other key aspects of societal progress. Hence, they play a role in shaping outcomes in almost every dimension of well-being as set out in the *How's Life?* framework (OECD, 2011).

Trust and cooperative norms are also directly linked to the 2001 OECD definition of social capital as "networks together with shared norms, values and understandings that facilitate co-operation within or among groups" (OECD, 2001). The main difference from the 2011 OECD definition is that they focus solely on the "norms and understandings that facilitate co-operation", and viewing the networks as one potential causal factor in building such norms and understandings.

PART 3. FROM CONCEPTS TO MEASUREMENT: EXISTING MEASURES AND THE STATISTICAL AND RESEARCH AGENDA AHEAD

The aim of this report has been to clarify the meaning of the concept of social capital in order to point the way forward for measurement efforts and statistical development. However, as has been argued in Parts 1 and 2, there are several distinct interpretations of social capital, and it is helpful to be explicit about what aspects of social capital are of primary interest when considering measurement.

Rather than trying to force different concepts of social capital into a single over-arching framework, this report identifies four main interpretations of social capital that, explicitly or implicitly, have informed almost all work undertaken under the social capital label in the past two to three decades and which have distinct implications for what is measured. There is likely to be some overlap in terms of the measures used in each case, but the nature of that role is likely to be different. For example, a measure on 'helping out a neighbour' could be relevant in any one of the four frameworks: for personal relationships as a measure of the strength of an individual's neighbourhood connections; to approximate social network support within different population groups; for civic engagement as a measure of informal volunteering; and, finally, even as a proxy measure of cooperative norms.

Each of the four different interpretations of social capital presented in this report informs different research questions and will be relevant to different policy questions. Ideally, measures pertaining to all four interpretations should be included in the same survey, in order to better understand causal relationships and inter-linkages, particularly when looking at broader issues of well-being and quality of life. However, this may not always be possible and so the choice of which measures to include in a survey will therefore depend on the purpose of the survey. The remainder of this section will look in more detail at the implications for measurement of the four interpretations of social capital identified earlier and identify existing measures that are relevant in each case. The section will conclude by setting out the statistical and research agenda ahead.

3.1. The social capital question 'databank'

In addition to an extensive review of the literature, the background work for this paper has included the compilation of a 'databank' of relevant questions from surveys around the world pertaining to social capital.[11] Surveys were identified through desktop research and through enquiries to national statistical offices in OECD member countries. Although it is likely that there are many more surveys that have not as yet been incorporated into the databank, the survey represents a very wide range of official and non-official data sources. The databank itself is intended as a tool for statisticians and researchers interested in the measurement of personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement or trust and cooperative norms, allowing users to search for different question formulations by theme, country, survey name, etc. At the time of writing, the databank consisted of around 1200 questions from almost 50 surveys and survey modules.

In the United States, a special module of the Current Population Survey measures civic engagement, and a project led by the National Academy of Sciences is currently evaluating best practices in the measurement of 'Civic Health and Social Cohesion', with a view to proposing more comprehensive means of data collection. Questions related to the different categories of social capital are a core part of General Social Surveys in Australia, Canada, Germany, Israel, and New Zealand. In the United Kingdom, areas of social capital are assessed by the new "Understanding Society" survey (and previously in the Citizenship Survey). In Europe, a range of surveys gather relevant data, including an ad hoc module of EU-SILC and

some non-official surveys (including various modules of the European Social Survey, and the European Quality of Life Survey). In addition, a large number of national surveys have measured very specific aspects of social capital such as generalised trust, political engagement, or volunteering. Overall, Australia, Canada, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, New Zealand, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the United Kingdom, and the United States seem to have conducted surveys in recent years to evaluate at least some aspects of personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement, or trust and cooperative norms.

Despite this widespread interest, making international comparisons of any of aspect of social capital remains a challenge as questions are rarely harmonised, terminology and focus differ from country to country, and data remain scarce. The only sources of international data based on comparable questions are non-official, including several modules of the International Survey Programme, the World Values Survey, and the Gallup World Poll. However, there are other data quality issues with these surveys that limit their usefulness in important ways.

The following sections take each of the interpretations presented in Part 2 in turn, exploring the existing measurement approaches from surveys in the databank. As already noted, there will be some overlap in terms of the measures used. The final section sets out the statistical development agenda ahead and provides recommendations for work in each area.

3.2. Existing measures

Personal relationships

Personal relationships are varied and complex, and there are a number of different ways of approaching their measurement. Amongst the most common types of question are those related to frequency and mode of social contact, but some surveys also include questions that measure the *quality* of personal relationships and people's feelings about their social connections (there is some overlap here with measures of social network support). A few surveys also aim to measure the composition and diversity of people's networks, as well as the source of their friendships (i.e. the places/contexts within which they meet people).

Frequency and mode of social contact

In general, questions that measure the frequency of social contact tend to distinguish between two types of contact: (i) face-to-face; and (ii) other types of remote contact such as telephone, email, letter, internet, etc. Questions also tend to focus on two distinct groups: friends and relatives (living outside the household). For example, the European Statistics of Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC) 2006 special module on Social Participation asks:

- *"How often do you usually get together with relatives [outside the household] during a usual year?"*
- *"How often do you usually get together with friends [outside the household] during a usual year?"*
- *"How often are you usually in contact with relatives [outside the household] during a usual year, by telephone, letter, fax, email, sms, etc?*
- *"How often are you usually in contact with friends [outside the household] during a usual year, by telephone, letter, fax, email, sms, etc?"*

For this type of question, phrasing and reporting periods can differ. For example, some surveys ask "in the last 12 months" (the French Resources and Quality of Life Survey), some "in the last 3 months" (Australian General Social Survey) some "in the last month" (Canadian General Social Survey, Social Networks module), some ask for a response "on average" (the European Quality of Life Survey), and some give no reference period at all (Finland's Leisure Survey).

The level of detail in the types of questions can also differ greatly. For example, the US Civic Engagement Supplement to the Current Population Survey asks the very broad question: "During the last 12 months, how often did you see or hear from friends or family, whether in person or not?". On the other hand, other surveys ask separate questions for specific individuals or groups of individuals, such as the International Social Survey Programme's module on Social Relations and Support Systems which asks about frequency of both face-to-face and remote contact with people outside the household for each of the following categories: siblings; adult children; father; mother; uncle/aunts; cousins; parents-in law; brothers/sisters-in-law; nieces/nephews; god-parents; work colleagues; people living in the local area/neighbourhood; best friends. Additionally, some surveys treat the mode of contact with much greater level of detail, such as the UK Harmonised Question Set proposed in Harper and Kelly (2003), which asks distinct questions on the frequency of: (i) speaking on the phone; (ii) writing a letter; and (iii) texting, emailing or using internet chat rooms to communicate, with friends and with relatives, rather than grouping all forms of remote contact together.

In summary, while questions on frequency and mode of social contact are amongst the most common types of measure people's personal relationships, there is a high degree of variation in question phrasing, reference period, and level of detail.

Time Use

Time use surveys provide another means of measuring the amount of time people spend in specified social activities. In certain cases, time use surveys ask the respondent to note who they were with for each diary entry, thereby providing detailed information on all activities performed in the company of others. The databank does not include a full range of time use surveys for the moment, although some more general questions on time use have been included.

Size, composition and diversity of social networks

Aside from questions on frequency of social contact and time use, an alternative method for measuring the structure of people's personal relationships is by asking direct questions on the size, composition and diversity of social networks. While this approach is less common, it does appear in some surveys.

Asking people a straight question about the size of people's networks is difficult: few people have a precise idea of the number of people they know. Questions on network size therefore tend to focus on specific types of relationships. For example, the Finnish Leisure Survey focuses on people's relatively close relationships by asking "How many friends or acquaintances do you keep in fairly regular contact with?"; the Canadian General Social Survey (GSS) module on Social Networks asks about more extended relationships with the question, "Not counting your close friends or relatives, how many other friends (or acquaintances) do you have?", as well as asking the location-specific question: "How many of your close friends live in the same city or local community as you?"

Some surveys ask detailed questions on people's relationships with very specific groups of people in order to get an idea of the composition and diversity of people's networks. For example, the Canadian GSS module on Social Networks asks respondents to "Think of all the friends you had contact with in the past

month, whether the contact was in person, by telephone, or by email." It then goes on to ask "Of all these people: how many have the same mother tongue as you?" as well as asking similar questions for the following criteria: "from an ethnic group that is visibly different from yours"; "are the same sex as you"; "are the same age group as you"; "have roughly the same level of education as you"; "from a similar household income group as you". The same survey also asks the whether people know men or women (the questions are gender-specific) in a long list of professions, including: social workers; fire-fighters; food or beverage servers; labourers in landscaping or grounds maintenance; managers in sales, marketing or advertising; computer programmers; instructors or leaders in recreation and sport; security guards; engineers; farmers; nurses; janitors or caretakers; accountants or auditors; graphic designers or illustrators; delivery or courier drivers; early childhood educators or assistants; sewing machine operators; and, carpenters. This method is known as the "position generator" and provides an additional proxy measure of the socio-economic diversity of people's networks.

The U.S. Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, developed by the Harvard-based research group the Saguaro Seminar, has a series of questions which uses a frequency of socializing approach to measure people's network composition. It asks the question, "About how many times in the past 12 months have you been in the home of a friend of a different race or had them in your home?" It also asks a similar question focused on people from different neighbourhoods, as well as whether the respondent has been in the home (or had over to their home) "someone you consider to be a community leader". This last formulation of the question could provide a measure of 'linking' relationships between the respondent and people in a position of authority or power.

Feelings about personal relationships

Another category of measures related to personal relationships is concerned with measuring people's feelings about, and the perceived *quality* of, those relationships. While these are not direct measures of the structural aspects of people's networks *per se*, they do give an indication of the strength of people's relationships. Again, these questions are rarer than straightforward questions on frequency of social contact, but they do exist in several surveys.

Questions can focus on specific groups. For example, Round 3 of the European Social Survey asks "Please tell me how much of the time spent with your immediate family is enjoyable?" and "Please tell me how much of the time spent with your immediate family is stressful?" The Israeli General Social Survey asks the question: "Are you satisfied with your relations with your neighbors?" The European Quality of Life Survey asks people to rate on a scale of 1 to 10 their level of satisfaction with both family and social life. It also asks respondents to state whether they would like to spend more or less time with family members, or in other forms of social contact.

The French Resources and Quality of Life Survey, conducted by INSEE, has an interesting approach to measuring people's attitudes towards different types of personal relationships by presenting respondents with a series of scenarios and asking them to rate their life satisfaction given different social conditions. For example:

> "John is single. He gets on well with his relatives. He has a large circle of friends with whom he often attends sporting events or goes out to restaurants. How would you assess John's situation with regard to his social life on a scale of 0 to 10, with 0 being the worst situation and 10 the most favourable situation."

The World Values Survey includes questions on particularised trust (i.e. trust in specific groups as opposed to generalised trust in 'most people') in friends and family, with the question: "Could you tell me

for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all?" in reference to "your family" and "people you know personally".

Asides these more specific questions, some surveys also ask questions about general feelings of loneliness or social isolation, such as the question, "Please tell me how much of the time during the past week you felt lonely?" in Round 3 of the European Social Survey, or the question in the New Zealand General Social Survey:

> *"Some people say they feel isolated from the people around then while others say they don't. They might feel isolated even though they see family or friends every day. In the last four weeks, how often have you felt isolated from others?".*

Questions that are related to the quality of people's personal relationships, either directly or indirectly, such as the above questions on trust in friends and family, and social isolation, can also be potential proxy measures of social network support. People with low levels of trust in the people around them, or who feel socially isolated regardless of their level of social connectedness, are unlikely to be able to count on high levels of social network support.

Finally, a group of measures that can shed some light on the quality of people's personal relationships are those related to social network support, explored in a separate section below.

Sources of personal relationships

Finally, a group of questions aims to ascertain *how* people create different types of personal relationships by asking about the different places and contexts within which they have met new people or made friends. For example, the ISSP survey of Social Relations and Support Systems asks about how many friends people have at "your work place", "in your neighbourhood or district" and "at clubs, church, or the like". Other survey questions focus on specific contexts such as the following from the Canadian General Social Survey special module on Time Stress and Well-Being:

> *"Is sport very important, somewhat important or not important in providing you with new friends and acquaintances?"*

Or these two from the Canadian GSS special module on Social Networks:

> *"Have you met new people through volunteering in the past 12 months?"*, and,
>
> *"In the past month, how many new people did you meet outside of work or school, that is people who you hadn't met before and who you intend to stay in contact with? How many of these people did you meet on the Internet?"*

As some of these questions show, by asking about contacts made through sports participation, volunteering or involvement with clubs and church, different types of civic engagement are often an important source of personal relationships, and these types of measures represent an overlap between the two frameworks.

The UK Citizenship Survey asks a series of questions about whether different social contexts have provided the respondent with opportunities to "mix socially with people from different ethnic and religious groups to yourself", including: "at your home or their home"; at "your work, school or college"; at "your child's crèche, school or college", at "a pub, club, café or restaurant", at "a sports club or social club"; at "the shops"; at "a place of worship"; in "the street or in public parks"; or in "public buildings such as community centres or libraries". While this question does not directly measure the type of personal

relationship created (e.g. close friendship), it nonetheless gives an idea the contexts in which people are given the opportunity to strengthen or maintain the diversity of their networks.

Social network support

Measures of social network support range from the very general to the very specific. Among the broad types of questions include "Do you know people that you can ask for help?" from the "Social Capital in the Region of the Czech Republic" survey, "Have you one or more friends on whom you can count in time of need?" from the Multipurpose Survey on Households special module on Household and Social Subjects conducted by Italian statistics office ISTAT, and from the Gallup World Poll, the question, "If you were in trouble, do you have relatives or friends you can count on to help you whenever you need them, or not?". Other questions go into more detail about the specific types of social support available to respondents. A category of measures which, as mentioned in the opening of this section, can have cross-cutting relevance across the different frameworks, depending on how the data is collected and interpreted, is that of unpaid help provision. While asking respondents about their provision of unpaid help to others is not necessarily a measure of their own levels of social network support, it could provide some useful indications. Finally, some surveys asked more detailed questions about the specific sources of social network support.

Different types of social network support

A few surveys go into more detail about the different kinds of support that people can count on. For example, the Australian General Social Survey asks questions about a wide range of social network support available to people in both "day-to-day life" and "in a time of crisis", including: looking after pets or watering your garden while away from home; collecting mail or checking the house while away from home; minding a child for a brief period; helping with moving or lifting objects; helping out in the case of sickness or injury (e.g. the flu or sprained ankle); borrowing equipment; providing advice on what to do; providing emotional support; helping out in the case of a serious illness or injury; helping in maintaining family or work responsibilities; providing emergency money; providing emergency accommodation; and providing emergency food.

This level of detail in surveys is rare, however. Surveys which do include such questions on specific types of social network support tend to focus primarily on emotional support or financial support.

Most questions in this category focus on people's *perceived* level of social network support, however, some surveys do include questions on actual social network support received. For example, INSEE's Resources and Quality of Life Survey, asks people directly: "Have you ever received financial or material assistance, or moral support from a friend, close one, neighbour, or family member (living outside of household)?"

Sources of social network support

A few surveys include questions asking about the sources of social support. These can be quite specific, by asking the respondent to name the individual they would turn to in different situations. For example the ISSP survey on Social Relations and Support Systems, asks respondents to name the person they "would turn to first", as well as the person they would turn to second, in the cases of having flu and needing help around the house, in the case of needing to borrow a large sum of money, and finally in the case of feeling a bit down and needing to talk. The European Quality of Life Survey also asks a similar series of questions, asking respondents to name to person they would turn to for help in a list of specific situations: Needing help around the house when ill; needing advice about a serious personal or family matter; needing help when looking for a job; feeling depressed and wanting someone to talk to; and needing to urgently raise £700 to face an emergency. The Polish Social Cohesion Survey approaches the

issue slightly differently, and instead of asking an open question about 'who' the source of support would be, asks a series of questions about whether or not respondents would turn to a) parents, b) children, c) siblings, and d) more distant relatives, for either material help or spiritual/emotional support.

Other surveys just focus on the sources of one particular aspect of social network support, such as from the Social Capital in the Region of the Czech Republic survey, which asks: "If you are looking for a new job, to whom would you turn to first?" The Australian General Social Survey asks a question about respondents' 'linking' relationships to support from people in positions of authority with the question: "Do you personally know a member of State or Federal parliament, or local government that you would feel comfortable contacting for information or advice?". The same survey also includes a follow-up question about respondents' ability to ask for information and advice from personal contacts in a list of organizations, comprising: state or territory government department; federal government department; local council; legal system; healthcare; trade union; political party; media; university/TAFE/business college; religious/ spiritual group; school-related group; big business; small business.

An alternative method of gauging the nature of the sources of social network support, is by asking respondents to think about the *number* of people they can ask for different kinds of help. Here the Australia GSS provides some more examples, with the question: "How many family members (living outside the household) can you confide in?", and a similar question about the number of friends respondents can confide in. The UK Harmonised Question Set suggested by Harper and Kelly (2003) includes a broader question along the same lines: "If you had a serious personal crisis, how many people, if any, do you feel you could turn to for comfort and support?".

Unpaid help provided

Questions on unpaid help are quite frequently included in surveys. A typical example includes the following question from the Households and Subjects module of the Italian (ISTAT) Multipurpose Survey on Households:

> *In the last 4 weeks, have you provided any of the following forms of unpaid help to anyone (relative or not) living outside your household?*

- *Economic assistance; health services (injections, medication, etc.);*
- *caring for adults (help with bathing, dressing, eating, etc.);*
- *childcare;*
- *help with household activities (washing, ironing, grocery shopping, preparing meals, etc.);*
- *accompaniment, companionship;*
- *completing paperwork (at the post office, bank, etc.);*
- *help in performing work outside the home;*
- *help with study;*
- *help in the form of food, clothing, etc.;*
- *other;*

- *none*.

Time use surveys can also provide useful information about the amount of time spent in unpaid work activities.

Providing unpaid help is not quite the same as the ability to count on social network support, however it is likely that the two are very closely related. Some surveys directly contrast help received and help provided by putting the two types of questions in close juxtaposition. For example, The European Social Survey Rotating Module on Family, Work and Well-being asks the question – "How much support in everyday housework or care do you *provide* for your grown up children or grandchildren who live apart from you?" before following it up with a contrasting social network support question: "How much support with your everyday housework or care do you currently *receive* from your grown up children or grandchildren who live apart from you?" (italics added). Similar questions are also asked on financial support. Usually, however, this contrast is not made explicit.

As mentioned previously, depending on the phrasing and the interpretation of the question, data related to unpaid help can be just as relevant for the other three interpretations of social capital aside social network support. Just as the ability to count on support from personal contacts can also provide qualitative information about the strength and nature of personal relationships, this is also the case for the provision of unpaid help. Further, where unpaid help is provided to people in the wider neighbourhood or community (rather than just to family members or other known personal contacts) then it is probably more appropriately seen as voluntary work within the framework of civic engagement (this issue will be addressed further in the next section), and such measures could also be potentially used as a proxy for more direct measures on generalised norms of cooperation.

Feelings about social network support

While much less frequent, a final type of measure is worth mentioning briefly, which is related to people's feelings about the social network support they provide or receive. For example, the ISSP survey on Social Relations and Support Systems ask the question: "Do you feel that your family, relatives and/or friends make too many demands on you?" Such approaches are interesting as they reflect the fact that support provided within the context of personal networks can also bring with them negative feelings of obligation and burden, in addition to the many positive benefits.

Civic Engagement

Measures related to civic engagement are probably the most widely-collected of all types of social capital measure. In particular, the measurement of volunteer work and volunteering seems to be the most developed at the international level, and methodological guidelines exist. The ILO's *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* responded to a United Nations General Assembly resolution calling governments to "establish the economic value of volunteering" (UN ECE, 2013). The *Manual* provides a methodology for countries to produce systematic and comparable data on volunteer work through regular supplements to labour force or other household surveys. Volunteering is only one sub-set of civic engagement, however, and other types of measures include those related to associational involvement in general, political and religious participation, different forms of community involvement, civic gestures (such as donating blood or money) and measures of interest in community or social affairs more generally.

Associational involvement

Involvement in groups, clubs, organisations and associations (whether understood in terms of voluntary work or not) is one of the most widely used indicators in the social capital literature, especially

amongst researchers inspired by Putnam. A common approach is to use administrative data to ascertain the density of associations of all kinds within different areas. However, these types of measures have been criticised on a number of levels, especially as they are an indirect measure of associational involvement that do not necessarily provide an accurate picture of people's actual behaviour and rates of participation (Stiglitz et al. 2009).

Questions on associational involvement that aim to provide a more direct measure tend to ask whether the respondent has been involved in one of a group of different organisations. For example, 2006 special module on Social Participation of the European Statistics on Income and Living Conditions survey (EU-SILC) asks the respondent if they have participated in any of the following types of organisations in the past year: political parties or trade unions; professional associations; churches or other religious organisations; recreational groups or organisations; charitable organisations; and, activities of other groups or organisations. The EU-SILC survey only asks for a Yes/No answer, however other surveys, allow for more detailed responses in order to have a better idea of frequency of participation. For example, the Finland Leisure Survey asks about a similar range of organisations but gives the following response options: Twice a week or more often; once a week; at least once a month; at least four times a year; at least once a year; less often; don't know.

'Participation' in this context is rather vague however as it does not provide information about the level or type of involvement. Other questions aim to provide more detail. For example, the European Social Survey Rotating Module on Citizen Involvement, addresses an extensive list of different types of associations, including: sports/out-door activity clubs; cultural or hobby-related organisations; trade unions; business, professional, or farmers' organisations; consumer or automobile organisations; organisations for humanitarian aid, human rights, minorities, or immigrants; organisations for environmental protection, peace or animal rights; religious or church organisation; political parties; science/education organisations or teach/parent associations; and social clubs for the young, retired/elderly and women. For each type of association, the survey asks whether the respondent has been involved as a member only, has participated in events/activities, has donated money, has volunteered, or has not been involved at all.

For respondents who have no associational involvement, some surveys ask for the reasons why. For example, the Australian GSS asks for the main reason for a lack of involvement in social, civic and community groups, providing the following response options: No transport; financial reasons; no groups in local area; no childcare available; not interested; not convenient; no time; discrimination because of ethnic or cultural background; health reasons; and other specified reasons.

Finally, some surveys ask questions about trends in individual and family patterns of associational involvement. The Canadian GSS module on Social Networks asks the question: "Over the past five years, would you say that your involvement in organizations has increased, decreased or stayed the same?". The Finland Leisure Survey asks about the respondent's parents' history of involvement in a range of leisure activities during the respondent's childhood, including organisational and political activities, religious activities and sports.

Volunteering

Volunteering is a sub-set of associational involvement that receives particular attention in certain surveys. Volunteering is sometimes separated into informal and formal volunteering, where the former refers to unpaid work given to individuals on a personal basis and the latter refers to unpaid work in the context of groups and organisations. Informal volunteering, understood in this way, is dealt with as unpaid work in the previous section. In the context of civic engagement, the primary focus is on voluntary work provided through groups and organisations. For example, the Australian GSS defines unpaid voluntary

work as "help willingly given in the form of time, service or skills to a club, organisation or association" and asks respondents about their contribution of voluntary unpaid work in the previous 12 months to a list of different types of organisation, including: arts/heritage; business/professional/union; welfare/community; education and training; parenting, children and youth; emergency services; environment; animal welfare; international aid/development; health; law/justice/political; religious; sports and physical recreation; other recreation or interest; and ethnic and ethnic-Australian groups.

Given the importance of volunteering for individual and country-level well-being outcomes, a few surveys look in great detail at the issue. The Canadian GSS special module on Giving, Volunteering and Participating focuses uniquely on civic engagement and asks some detailed questions about people's experience of volunteering. For example, it asks a question on the skills that respondents may have learned through volunteering:

> *In the past 12 months, as a volunteer, have you acquired any of the following skills: fundraising skills; technical or office skills such as first aid, coaching techniques, computer or bookkeeping; organizational or managerial skills such as how to organize people or money, to be a leader, to plan or to run an organization; increased knowledge of such subjects as health, women's or political issues, criminal justice or the environment; communication skills such as public speaking, writing, public relations or conducting meetings; interpersonal skills such as understanding people, motivating people, or handling difficult situations with confidence, compassion or patience; some other skill or knowledge?*

The Canadian GSS also asks about whether respondents feel that their voluntary experience has helped them to "get a job or start a business" or has helped them with their "chances of success in their paid job or business". Similar to questions on associational involvement in general in the Australia GSS, the Canadian module on Giving, Volunteering and Participating also asks respondents who are not involved in volunteering for their reasons why, providing the following potential reasons: work commitments; looking after children/the home; looking after someone who is elderly or ill; study; doing other things with spare time; too old; too young; not knowing any groups that need help; not hearing about opportunities to give help; new to the area; never thought about it; illness or disability that prevents involvement; and other specified reasons.

Political engagement

A group of questions focus on civic activities that have a political dimension. For example, the World Values Survey asks people about the political and social action they have taken in the previous year, listing the following range of options: boycotted, or deliberately bought, certain products for political, ethical or environmental reasons; took part in a demonstration; attended a political meeting or rally; contacted, or attempted to contact, a politician or a civil servant to express your views; donated money or raised funds for a social or political activity; contacted or appeared in the media to express your views; Joined an Internet political forum or discussion group; signing a petition; joining in boycotts; attending peaceful demonstrations; joining strike; any other act of protest. Similar questions are included in quite a few other surveys including the European Social Survey core module, the Australian GSS, the UK Citizenship survey, the ISSP survey module on Citizenship, the US Civic Engagement supplement to the Current Population Survey, the European Quality of Life Survey, the Italian ISTAT Multipurpose Survey on Households module on Aspects of Daily Life, and the Swedish Living Conditions Survey.

Other, less frequently used, questions explore issues related to political participation aside from direct actions. For example, the UK Citizenship survey asks a series of questions related to respondents' perceived ability to influence decisions in their local area, such as: "How important is it for you personally to feel that you can influence decisions in your local area?" The ISSP survey on Social Relations and

Support Systems asks the question: “To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement? People like me don’t have any say about what the Government does”. These questions on perceived political efficacy could be used to explain levels of political engagement, or they could also be used as a measure of attitudes toward government relevant to trust and cooperative norms.

Another group of questions ask respondents about their interest in politics, with questions such as, “How interested would you say you are in politics?” from the European Social Survey Core Module or, “How interested are you in politics and national affairs?” from the US Social Capital Community Benchmark survey short form. Other questions ask people about their frequency of talking about politics, or of keeping informed of politics and current affairs through reading newspaper, watching news programmes, or other means.

Finally, questions on voting in elections are often included in surveys and can potentially be used as a measure of political engagement.

Religious participation

Religious organisations are usually included in questions of associational involvement, however some questions focus exclusively on religious participation. For example, the Gallup World Poll asks, “Have you attended a place of worship or religious service within the last seven days?”

Community activities

Civic engagement can also include participation in one-off events within the community. Relevant questions include, “in the last 6 months “have you attended any event that bring people together such as fetes, shows, festivals or other community events?” from the Australian GSS and ”How often in the last 12 months have you organised, helped in the organisation of, or just participated in activities, events held at your place of residence or the area where you live?” from the Polish Social Cohesion Survey.

Donating

Finally, civic engagement can be measured by people’s actions of giving to others. The most common form of question is related to financial donations. For example, the Canadian Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating asks:

> *In the past 12 months, did you make a charitable donation by responding to a request through the mail; by paying to attend a charity event; by donating in the name of someone who has passed away, or 'in memoriam'; when asked by someone at work; when asked by someone doing door-to-door canvassing; when asked by someone canvassing for a charitable organization at a shopping centre or on the street; by responding to a telephone request; through a collection at a church, synagogue, mosque or other place of worship; by responding to a television or radio request, or a telethon; by approaching a charitable or non-profit organization on your own; by donating any stocks or stock options to a charitable or non-profit organization; by sponsoring someone in an event such as a walk-a-thon.*

The same survey also asks about non-financial giving, with questions related to the donation of food, clothing, toys or household goods to charitable or non-profit organisation. The US Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey also includes a question on blood donation.

Trust and Cooperative Norms

Generalised trust

The predominant measure of trust, is the standard question: "Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?". The World Values Survey (WVS) is the data source most often cited in comparative studies of national trust as it has international coverage and time series dating back over two decades. Many other national and international surveys also include variants of this question. The question is widely thought to be a measure of generalised (or 'social' trust).

There is some debate over what the question is actually measuring. First of all, respondents may interpret "most people" in different ways, with some thinking of friends and family, or other specific groups, rather than strangers. Culture may also have an impact on how people interpret the question. Delhey et al. (2011) show that the interpretation of the concept of "most people" varies considerably between countries; the perceived radius of trust is wider in wealthy countries but substantially narrower in so-called 'Confucian' countries in East Asia. They argue that this can provide misleading conclusions when making cross-country comparisons, if these cultural differences in interpretation are not taken into account. Some surveys address this by specifying an area in the question, for example the question "most people can be trusted in this neighbourhood" included in the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey. It has also been argued that rather than being a measure of trust in other *people*, what this question actually measures is people's confidence in the ability of social *systems* to ensure that non-trustworthy behaviour is discouraged and penalised ((Beugelsdijk, 2006). In this sense, the question can even potentially be seen as a measure of institutional trust, in the sense of "diffuse or system-based" institutional trust, as described by Blind (2006). This point highlights the fact that while generalised and institutional trust are usually treated as conceptually distinct, there is a high degree of overlap between the two.

There has also been some methodological discussion about the fact that the generalised trust question actually mixes up two concepts: trust ("would you say that most people can be trusted") and caution ("would you say that you need to be careful in your dealing with people"). It has been posited that by introducing the element of caution and risk into the question, this actually mixes a measure of generalised, moralistic trust in the first half, with a more strategic and particularised trust measure in the second (Bulloch, 2012).

Beyond the vagueness of *who* is being trusted, the standard trust question is also non-specific about the *situation*. Gallup World Poll has developed a 'wallet question' in order to be even more specific, asking the respondent to imagine losing a wallet and if they believe it would be returned if found by a stranger, the police, or a neighbour. This question arguably broadens out the meaning of the response beyond interpersonal trust to institutional trust, by referring to the police.

The issue also exists of whether this measure is actually a reliable reflection of the trustworthiness of others. Knack and Keefer (1997) refer to experiments conducted by the *Reader's Digest* (reported in The Economist in 1996) where wallets containing 50USD in cash were "accidentally" dropped in various American and European cities. There was a high degree of correlation between the number of wallets returned in each place and the level of generalised trust as measured in the WVS. Questions of construct validity aside, the WVS measure does seem to be capturing something important at a societal level, as it has repeatedly been shown to be correlated with a range of outcomes such as economic growth and government performance (Knack and Keefer, 1997; La Porta et al. 1997; Whitely, 1997). The European Social Survey special module on Economic Morality asks a series of questions directly relating to respondents' own trustworthiness, by asking about dishonest behaviour in a series of scenarios, such as

"How often, if ever, have you kept the change from a shop assistant or waiter knowing they had given you too much?"

Aside the standard trust question, some groups of questions have been included in the databank that do not necessarily reference trust directly but can nonetheless give an approximation of generalised trust by asking respondents, either directly or indirectly, about their expectations of the behaviour of others. For example, questions on perceived safety, such as "How safe do you or would you feel while walking alone after dark in the area surrounding your home?" from the Polish Social Cohesion survey, are a measure of the respondent's expectations of violent or criminal behaviour from people living in their area.

Trust in Institutions

The most straightforward measures of institutional trust are based on survey questions simply asking how much trust (or confidence) people have in specific institutions such as national or local government, the police force, the justice system, etc. For example, the European Quality of Life Survey asks, "Please tell me how much you personally trust each of the following institutions: UK Parliament; legal system; the press; the government; the local (municipal) authorities."

Other approaches provide less direct, but more nuanced measures of attitudes that pertain to trust through questions on the perceived integrity (or corruption), representativeness and performance of different institutions. For example, the European Social Survey core module includes a question on respondents' satisfaction with government. Measures of institutional trust can also look at the political system as a whole through questions related to political freedom and satisfaction with the state of democracy in a country.

Trust is directly related to the expectations people have about other people's behaviour. Questions which do not directly refer to institutional trust, but which measure people's perceptions regarding corruption in government are also relevant. For example, the Mexican INEGI National Survey of Quality and Governmental Impact asks:

> *How often do you think that corrupt practices occur in the following sectors? Churches; prosecutors; political parties; business people; deputies and senators; the Army; the Navy; public universities; police; Customs Offices; public hospitals; public schools.*

Cooperative norms

Most often, generalised reciprocity is measured through agreement or disagreement with statements related to the perceived helpfulness of others such as "Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?" from the European Social Survey core module.

Aside questions on people's attitudes towards helping others, another potential way of measuring norms of reciprocity and helpfulness is by evaluating the levels of informal help given to others outside the household. This can be measured either through questions on the frequency of help given to others, or on time use survey data. For example, the Gallup World Poll asks the question, "Have you done any of the following in the past month: Helped a stranger or someone you didn't know who needed help?"

The European Social Survey on Economic Morality asks a series of questions which could be used to measure norms of civic cooperation, by asking respondents how wrong they consider different types of dishonest behaviour to be, such as cheating on their taxes.

Questions related to tolerance and norms of non-discrimination are included in quite a few surveys. Survey questions tend to be specific about whether they are examining attitudes towards differences based

on ethnicity, language, culture, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, age, or other characteristics, and can either be very general (e.g. "Would you agree that people respect ethnic differences in this neighbourhood/ region/ country) or they ask people how they would feel in a specific circumstance such as having a neighbour or lodger of a different religion. For example, Mexico's National Survey on Political Culture and Citizen Practices asks people to imagine the scenario of renting out a room in their house, and whether they would accept any of the following types of people: a person with different religious beliefs; a homosexual person; an indigenous person; a person with different political preferences; a handicapped person; a person with addiction problems; a person with AIDS; an elderly person; a person from a different social class; a foreigner; and, a person with tattoos.

Attitudes towards immigration and ethnic diversity seem to be the most frequently included in surveys. For example, the Australian GSS asks, "To what extent do you agree that it is a good thing for a society to be made up of people from different cultures?" The UK Citizenship survey includes questions on perceived trends in racial prejudice, asking, "thinking about racial prejudice in Britain today, do you think that there is now: Less racial prejudice than there was five years ago; more than there was five years ago; or about the same amount?"

Surveys also often include questions directed to minority groups to measure their actual experience of discrimination, however these cannot be considered as measures of norms, but rather as an outcome of the presence or absence of relevant attitudes and norms.

'Sense of belonging', or identification with a certain community or nation can potentially be seen as relevant for the measurement of cooperative norms, particularly for norms of solidarity, and have been included in some surveys as measures of social capital. However, these measures can also be ambiguous as strong national or community identification could signify strong bonding ties (amongst homogenous groups) at the expense of bridging ties (within and amongst more diverse and heterogeneous groups) which could actually be a barrier to generalised cooperation.

Finally, measures of civic engagement can be useful as proxies for trust and cooperative norms.

3.3 The statistical and research agenda ahead

Despite the wide range of questions presented in the preceding section, there is still a pressing need to develop better and more harmonised measures of personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement, and trust and cooperative norms. At a European level, Eurostat have carried out a lot of work to further the harmonisation of the measurement of generalised and institutional trust (in the 2013 module on 'Well-being'[12]) and personal relationships (through the forthcoming 2015 module on 'Social and Cultural Participation'). However, there is much progress to be made in to achieve a suitable level of standardisation in measurement methods that would allow for international comparison.

General points

The key message of this report is that the different facets of social interaction that are usually grouped together under the heading of 'social capital', while closely interlinked, are distinct enough to merit being treated as individual concepts in their own right. If researchers and policymakers continue to measure and analyse 'social capital' as a catch-all, multi-dimensional phenomenon related to all things social, then knowledge about exactly how social interaction affects well-being is unlikely to advance. This being the case:

- Data collection initiatives should clearly identify the specific research questions of interest and identify the most relevant concepts to be measured. This needs to go beyond the measurement of

'social capital' generally, as the different concepts sometimes covered by the term social capital (personal relationships, social network support, civic engagement, and trust and cooperative norms) are conceptually distinct and are relevant to different research questions. The items on which information is collected should reflect the concepts most relevant to the research question only.

Personal Relationships

Existing measures of personal relationships tend to come either from household surveys that include questions on the frequency of face-to-face socialising and social contact (e.g. by telephone, email, letter, etc.) with friends and family, or from Time Use Surveys that include categories on time spent with friends and family.

While these measures are useful and fairly well-established, better data coverage and harmonisation of questions is needed, particularly in the following areas:

- *Response options and question phrasing on survey questions related to socialising and social contact.* While many countries do include these questions in household surveys, there is little or no standardisation in their formulation. Some surveys combine all forms of social contact together (i.e. face-to-face socialising together with telephone calls etc.), and some combine 'friends and family' together, rather than separating out the two. Response options related to frequency can also differ substantially, making international comparison difficult.

- *Harmonisation of Time Use Surveys and greater detail of activities carried out with or in the presence of others.* Time Use Surveys are a potentially rich source of information on personal relationships. More widespread introduction in data collection of questions on who activities were undertaken with, would provide for a much more informative picture of people's actual social behaviour. A UN ECE Task Force has been working on developing Guidelines for Harmonising Time Use Surveys, which should be finalised before the end of 2013.[13]

- *Better utilisation of social networking data.* With the rise of online social networking through sites such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as virtual chat rooms and blogs, extensive databases now exist focusing specifically on people's social connections. Social networking sites may provide a potential alternative source of data on the extent and nature of people's personal relationships in their own right, if handled with an appropriate respect for privacy and anonymity.

- *Better measures of the diversity and composition of social networks.* Measures of personal relationships tend to focus principally on ties to friends and relatives. There would be value in developing measures of different types of relationships, such as with neighbours, or colleagues in order to better understand the different sources of social network support. Other reasons for developing measures of the diversity and composition of people's networks include being able to better capture the nature and role of people's 'weak' ties (i.e. less intimate relationships such as professional contacts) and in order to understand the extent to which personal relationships within a given community or society can be considered as 'bridging' ties (i.e. linking people of different background or outlook).

Some of the key areas for research related to personal relationships include:

- Investigating how the impact of personal relationships and other well-being outcomes (e.g. health status, educational attainment) differs by type of network (e.g. 'strong' versus 'weak' ties) and by gender, age, socio-economic status, etc.

- Investigating the direction of causality between personal relationships, on the one hand, and individual outcomes/characteristics, on the other. For example, do personal relationships determine happiness, or are happier people just more likely to be sociable and to have stronger networks?

- Clarifying the linkages between personal relationships at the micro-level and the generation of trust and social norms at the macro-level.

Social Network Support

Most questions on social network support are focused on perceived social network support, as opposed to actual help received. In order to gain a better understanding of how different types of social network support relate to actual life outcomes, then a potential area for methodological development could focus on developing measures that compare real and perceived social network support. Although there is evidence to suggest that feeling that you have someone to count on can be as important (or even more important) than actually receiving support in some circumstances (Kamarck, Manuck and Jennings et al, 1991), measuring the actual level of social network support received (i.e. the amount of support, the contingencies under which support is provided, the nature of the person or network providing it) is challenging and constitutes an important measurement gap to be addressed in future work on these issues.

The key areas for research in this area are:

- Developing a better understanding of the mechanisms through which different types of social network support relate to the different dimensions of individual well-being (e.g. how having someone to confide in can lead to higher health status; how getting a job through personal contacts is related to professional advancement).

- Developing a better understanding of how the reliance on different types of social network support differs by socio-economic group, gender, ethnicity, age, etc. in order to identify potentially vulnerable groups.

Civic Engagement

Civic engagement is probably the category (out of the four identified in this report) where measurement is most developed. Manuals and guidelines on the measurement of voluntary work exist, but these tend focused on economic production rather than on the broader well-being outcomes associated to civic engagement. Many surveys include questions on associational membership; participation in formal and informal volunteering; political actions (such as contacting a politician or signing a petition); frequency of watching, reading and listening to the news; and incidence of financial or other donations (such as blood donations). Time Use Surveys also provide data on time spent volunteering or otherwise participating in associations.

The UN Economic Commission for Europe recently conducted an in-depth review of statistics, led by Mexico's national statistics office (INEGI), on 'political participation and other community activities, including volunteer work', which is close to the concept of civic engagement as presented here (UNECE 2013). The report highlighted a number of questions and challenges for statistical attention. These include:

- *The need to develop standardised and detailed measures of different forms of civic engagement beyond voluntary work.* The report uses the term 'participative solidarity' to encompass three broad types of civic engagement: (i) volunteer work; (ii) participatory actions (such as taking part in a demonstration or attending a public meeting); and (iii) donating money or goods to a

charitable organisation or cause. It recommends the more systematic collection of data on all forms of civic engagement/participative solidarity, especially for categories beyond volunteer, in order to better understand the motivations and outcomes for individuals that participate in different forms of civic engagement.

- *The need to forge a consensus around the definition and categorisation of different forms of civic engagement*, particularly clarifying which kinds of activities constitute 'volunteer work' and which are better understood as 'participatory actions' or 'donations'. The UNECE report raises the issue of appropriate survey vehicles for measuring the different forms of civic engagement (e.g. modules in labour force survey, Time Use Survey) but cautions against the possibility of duplicity or data gaps when using multiple data collection tools.

- *The need to place measures of civic engagement in a broader well-being framework* in order to better understand the contribution of civic engagement to well-being outcomes beyond aggregate economic productivity.

The key areas for research related to civic engagement are:

- Examining the role of different forms of civic engagement as drivers of the creation of trust, cooperative norms and institutional performance.

- Investigating the drivers of different forms of civic engagement and whether trends over time (e.g. declining levels of volunteering) can be identified and understood.

- Better understanding the links between civic participation on individual well-being (e.g. subjective well-being, skills development, health status).

Trust and Cooperative Norms

While widely-used measures of generalised trust and trust in institutions do exist, significant advances need to be made in order to reach a stage where statistical guidelines for policy-relevant measures could be developed.

One possible model for pursuing measurement work in this field is that provided by research on subjective well-being (SWB). Knowledge about what SWB captures, how to measure it, and its relationship with objective variables increased exponentially in the 1990s and early 2000s, largely due to three key factors: (i) a rapid increase in the availability of data (not necessarily from NSOs at first); (ii) multi-disciplinary work on the empirical nature of the concept and its determinants (especially joint work between psychologists and economists); and (iii) a virtuous feedback whereby interesting results generated further momentum, academic research, and eventually policy interest. Such knowledge, in turn, laid the foundations for the recent OECD initiative to develop *Guidelines for the Measurement of Subjective Well-Being*.[14] A similar model could be pursued in the case of measures of trust and cooperative norms, through the systematic compilation of the available information in a databank, so as to feed empirical research, and the provision of fora for discussions between statisticians, researchers and policy analysts with an interest in this field.

While the breadth of empirical evidence on the importance of trust is persuasive, it remains superficial. In particular, it is not yet clear whether trust is itself a causal factor or is rather a proxy for some other, as yet unidentified productive intangible capital stock. Key areas for statistical work include:

- Developing more wide-spread, comparable and ongoing measures of *generalised trust*, given its importance in predicting diverse economic and social outcomes.

- Develop better comparable measures of *trust in institutions*, and particularly trust in government.

- Develop better comparable measures related to *cooperative norms*, going beyond issues of trust to measure generalised reciprocity, tolerance, civic cooperation, etc.

The key areas related to research in this area include:

- Undertaking methodological work to better understand what the generalised trust measure is actually capturing, e.g. who are people thinking of with the phrase 'most people' and does this differ by country or region?[15]

- Better understanding the causal pathways between measures of trust and cooperative norms, on the one hand (and in particular, generalised trust) and different outcomes on the other, with a particular focus on economic productivity and subjective well-being.

- Reconciling 'top-down' estimates of intangible capital based on the World Bank's residual approach (World Bank, 2011) with 'bottom-up' estimates of generalised trust, in order to compare the two approaches

NOTES

1 The report uses the terms 'social connections' and 'social capital' more or less interchangeably.

2 See: http://sites.nationalacademies.org/DBASSE/CNSTAT/CurrentProjects/DBASSE_071199#.UcgNTDecEyI

3 Coleman and Bourdieu did not cite one another's work, despite having co-organised a conference in 1989.

4 Network analysis measures the size, density and composition of people's social networks and is particularly prominent in organisational analysis and management/business studies.

5 A search for the phrase "social capital" in JSTOR abstracts shows that while the use of the term was rare in the 1990s (with only four references in 1971-1980 and 13 in 1981-1990) it became much more widespread in later years, with 210 references between 1991-2000, and 587 in the period between 2001-2010 (based on a search conducted 30 May 2012). Forsman (2005, p. 128) found that papers referring to social capital could be found in over 60 disciplinary subject categories in 2002. Beginning in the 1990s and early 2000s, research and discussion also began to flourish within governments and international organisations. The World Bank began to look into the potential for 'social capital' to provide insight into ways of reducing poverty and vulnerability in the world's poorest countries (Woolcock, 1999), and the OECD launched a programme of work to assess how the concept could enhance comparative policy analysis in its member countries, leading to the OECD definition of 'social capital' (OECD, 2001). Several governments and statistical agencies also began work to evaluate national levels of 'social capital', including Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the United States, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom.

[6] http://schott.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/11/17/sofalising/

[7] It is important to note that different types of personal relationships can engender different types of social network support. For example, so-called 'strong' ties are more likely to provide emotional support or financial and practical help in times of need, whereas 'weak ties' are likely to be more helpful in professional advancement and employment opportunities (Granovetter, 1973).

[8] There is no single universally accepted definition of the scope of "civil society". However, the definition provided above captures the meaning of the concept as employed in this report .

[9] Robert Sampson, in a study of civic society and community events in Chicago, also identified a form of "hybrid" participation that blends civic and protest-based types of collective action. He argued that "Hybrid events typically exhibit a claim or grievance, but instead of a protest form (such as a march or a rally), hybrid events exhibit a form that is typically associated with civic action… [for example] a neighbourhood art fair that doubles as a protest regarding current AIDS policy" (Sampson, 2012).

[10] The Saguaro Seminar, a social capital research network set up by Robert Putnam, has the following quote on its website's homepage: "Civic engagement and volunteering is the new hybrid health club for the 21st century that's free to join and miraculously improves both your health and the community's through the work performed and the social ties built." www.hks.harvard.edu/saguaro.

[11] www.oecd.org/std/social-capital-project-and-question-databank.htm

[12] http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal/page/portal/income_social_inclusion_living_conditions/methodology/list_of_variables

[13] A description of the Task Force's work is available here: http://www.unece.org/statshome/areas-of-work/statsgender/methodological-work-survey-tools-guides-indicators.html

[14] www.oecd.org/statistics/guidelines-on-measuring-subjective-well-being.htm

[15] The issue of cross-cultural interpretation of questions is a relevant one for all four 'types' of social capital, in fact, but given the emergence of the generalised trust measure as the most predominant measure of the intangible elements of social capital, it is particularly important to gain a better understanding of what it actually captures.

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