

Editorial

Vážené čtenářky a vážení čtenáři,
Dear readers,

This issue of Socioweb is the second English language edition, and I would very much like to take this opportunity as editor to welcome you to the Czech Republic's leading web based sociological magazine. Socioweb provides a window for presenting current research into topics that span the range of questions examined with the social sciences and public policy making.

As the winds of autumn begin to gather and the harvest season approaches, we have a veritable feast of knowledge to share with you. While the focus in this issue is on showcasing some of the state-of-the-art social science research undertaken within the Institute of Sociology: all of the themes addressed here form part of more general debates vexing the minds of the great and the good. It is the sincere hope of both this month's contributors, and the editorial board of Socioweb that you will find something of interest in the articles contained in this issue.

Last year I argued that an English language version of a Czech sociological magazine such as Socioweb was important for three reasons. First, it represents a "coming of age" and demonstrates the growing power and confidence of Czech social science. Second, as contemporary social science is international in scope and nature, there is much to be said for bringing Czech social research onto the global stage and ensuring that this country plays a full and equal role in shaping opinion among citizens and decision makers. Third, many of the key themes and debates in the social sciences are by definition international, one need only think of hot topics such as 'globalisation', 'global climate change', and the 'war on terror' to see that discussion and debate of these issues should be undertaken on an international stage.

These general principles are given life in the twelve articles that are presented in this month's issue of Socioweb. In the first English language edition of Socioweb the leitmotif was human decision-making. This year our focus shifts to demonstrating how social science research tackles problems within the real world. Quite often one hears the opinion that academic disciplines such as sociology and political science have little to say that is of use in daily life.

Rather than just simply argue that such views and comments are unfair, it is more useful and perhaps convincing to demonstrate the utility of

current social science research through example. Moreover, to those younger readers contemplating studying one of social science disciplines at an institution of higher education the articles presented in this edition of Socioweb facilitate looking over the shoulders of social scientists and seeing exactly what it is they do.

It is undoubtedly true that the world only needs a relatively small number of social researchers. However, the methods used by social scientists and taught in universities form the foundations of much work that is undertaken within public administration and the business world. Consequently, the methods described in the articles that follow demonstrate some of the valuable skills that can be learned by embarking on a course of study within the social sciences.

As an aid to exploring the many issues covered in this month's edition of Socioweb, a brief overview of each contribution is presented to whet the reader's appetite.

In our first article, **Josef Bernard** explores through a recent survey the extent to which the Czech economy is suffering from a brain drain. Quite obviously within a global economy the mobility of capital and labour are at a premium, and help determine the relative success of national economies. However, if small open or developing economies lose skilled labour to larger and richer national competitors there is the danger of failing to maximise on indigenous talent. In this article the experience of research scientists who have emigrated from the Czech Republic is used to explore this important issue.

In the following article the theme of employment is examined in terms of Czech women's participation in the labour force. **Marta Vohřídalová** explores how the Czech government's current policy of promoting part-time employment may have very undesirable consequences for women, and most especially for women with children. The chief danger identified is the potential that women might be pushed out of the full-time job market and compelled to accept less well paid and desirable positions.

The third article written by **Eva Soukupová**, deals with another key facet of government policy – social welfare spending. This contribution explores a specific facet of how European governments are dealing 'New Social Risks'. The focus here is on how states provide financial support for the family. Cross-national differences in how Child Benefit Packages are distributed among different family types in Europe exhibit contrasting patterns. This fact makes generalisation difficult and this has important implications for assessing progress toward goals set down by the UN.

Thereafter, **Michael Smith** switches our focus to the issue of corruption. Using a unique and innovative survey dataset this article asks is corruption seen as a distinct strategy for success in life within the Czech Republic? The answer seems to be yes, although other factors such as ascription, merit and discrimination also play a role. The fact that many Czechs think that corruption is an important factor in explaining success in life has important implications for efforts aimed at creating a more fair and just society.

Our fifth article also explores perceptions within Czech society. Here **Julia Häuberer** looks at the link between job status and how close people feel to others with the same or different occupations. This research is based on concept of Social Distance, the fact that a person feels closer to some individuals and groups more than others. Using the 'like me principle' and the 'prestige effect' the evidence presented demonstrates that citizens in contemporary Czech society do feel closer to those who have similar jobs to themselves. However, it is also true that Czechs tend to feel closer to those with jobs that have high rather than low prestige. These results demonstrate that the mechanisms underpinning social cohesion and stratification operate in complex ways.

The following article by **Jiří Šafr** builds on some of the ideas presented in the previous two articles. Here the focus is on the importance of individual citizen's network of contacts. While depending strongly on personal contacts may be seen as a social pathology if this breeds corruption. However, social networks are also the glue that holds societies together. In this article the focus is on the link between how an individual's circle of contacts determines their ability to secure access to collective goods. Here we see that the size and effectiveness of personal networks depends on age, level of education, and social class. This implies that a person's social network is an important resource, and such resources provide valuable information about the nature and extent of inequality in society.

The theme of inequality is a key topic in our sixth contribution from **Petr Sunega** and **Martina Mikesová**. In this article the relationship between differences in the affordability of housing across the Czech Republic is examined in terms of differences in economic conditions across the country's fourteen regions. The central idea here is that the economic context in which citizens reside should be associated with the cost of local accommodation. Looking at a number of economic and housing cost trends the evidence presented does not reveal any strong relationships. This finding is surprising and indicates the need to gather data for a longer time period and at a lower level of aggregation.

Our regional focus is continued in the subsequent article by **Václav Houžvička** who examines the nature of cross-border developments between the Czech Republic and

Germany. Here much emphasis is placed on the role of the European Union and various facets of the integration process. This article concludes that a fruitful way of evaluating the effectiveness of cross-border relations is through the insights offered by a multi-level governance perspective.

In the ninth article, **Jindřich Krejčí** addresses the important question of whether mass survey results are biased because increasing numbers of people refuse to be interviewed. It is well known that those who refuse to be interviewed for survey research have different attitudes and preferences to all others. Consequently, there is the danger that surveys with low response rates do not reflect all public opinion, but only those who agree to be interviewed. This article maps out the scope of this problem within the Czech Republic and cross-nationally and outlines what strategies have been developed to counter this form of selection bias in social research.

In the following contribution the question of whether the mass media has the power to influence the public agenda over the long term is examined. **Tomáš Trampota** and **Markéta Škodová** outline the research that has been undertaken in the field of Agenda Setting. This theory of media effects argues that the mass media is powerful because it chooses which stories citizens are exposed to on a daily basis. Overall, evidence in support of this theory has been mixed and this has led to the adoption of a wide range of research methods. Most recently the focus has moved toward using qualitative techniques.

In the penultimate article, our attention shifts to the international stage and an event that has shaped the early twenty-first century. Here **Alžběta Bernardyová** explores the United States counter-terrorism policy both before and after 9/11. The attacks of September 11 changed not only ordinary American's perceptions of the risks of terrorism, but also the whole institutional framework of defence and security. Some seven years into the War on Terror it is reasonable to ask: has America's new counter-terrorism strategy been successful? The simple answer is that America has neither lost nor won the War on Terror.

The final contribution by **Alžběta Bernardyová** and **Pat Lyons** continues the theme of security, but focuses instead on Czech security policy during the twentieth century. Czechoslovakia from its foundation in 1918 to its dissolution 1993 was invaded by foreign forces on two occasions (1938, 1968), liberated in 1945 only to have its liberal democratic government subverted with Soviet help in 1948. Given their strategically central position in Europe, Czechs and Slovaks have attempted to develop effective security strategies to forestall periodic invasions and other forms of foreign interference. As this is the fortieth invasion of the Warsaw Pact forces of Czechoslovakia in 1968 this is a timely reminder of the events of August 20-21 and their importance for the search for security today.

I would like to conclude this introduction with an expression of gratitude and thanks to all of the contributors to this issue. It has been a pleasure for me as editor to facilitate in the presentation of the ideas and research contained in this second English language issue of Socioweb. Všem mnohokrát děkuji.

Příjemné čtení Vám přeje

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« **Overview of Current Research Undertaken at the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences, Prague** »

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Draining Away or just Circulating?

Key words: international migration, economic development, employment, researcher, brain drain, employment experience

Researchers are a mobile and valued resource within a global economy. Scientist's knowledge and skills represent a significant investment in human capital, which is rightly considered to be a key resource underpinning economic growth. Within many countries there are a variety of policies aimed at both attracting researchers from abroad, and enticing expatriate researchers to return home (Kostecká, Bernard and Kostecký 2007).

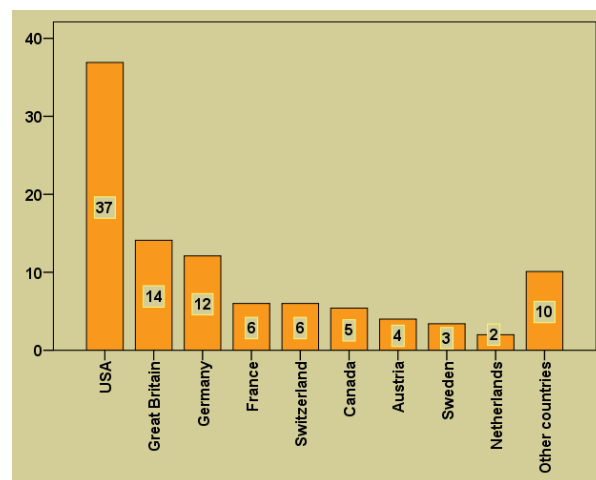
Current research on the impact of researcher migration argues that the departure of scientists and researchers doesn't necessarily mean a definitive loss for their country of origin. Scientific stays abroad are an important part of a researcher's career him or her to gain important experience and additional qualifications. National innovation and research systems can achieve high standards only if their members have spent some time in other countries, and are able to make use of their experiences and contacts. The key question with regard to the impact on the country of origin of migrating scientists is: are the science boffins likely to return to their mother country, or permanently emigrate to pastures new?

Which brain travelling type are you?

Two kinds of researcher mobility patterns are generally distinguished. A "brain drain" is a non-reversible outflow of researchers from one country to another. In contrast, a "brain circulation" involves temporary stays abroad that increase the competencies of researchers who after a specified period return to their country of origin. Since both patterns have

completely different impacts on the situation of research in the home country, the question of how many scientists return from work contracts abroad is an important issue for a variety of social scientists such as economists, sociologists and geographers who evaluate the relative merits of high skill migration.

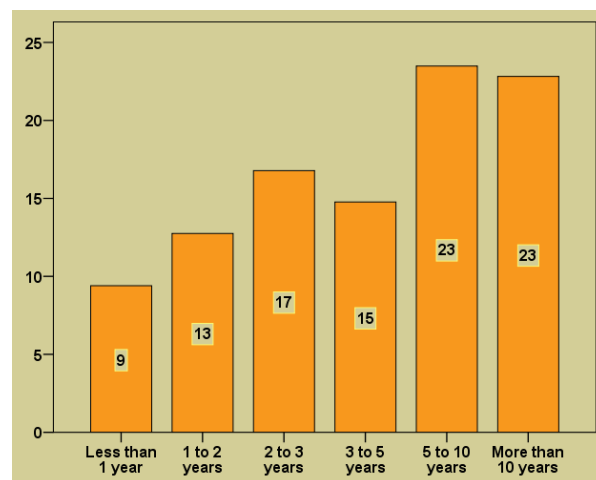
Figure 1. Destination of Czech researchers in 2008 (per cent)



Source: Survey of Czech Researcher Emigration 2008, (N=149). Columns sum to one hundred per cent, subject to rounding error.

Only rigorous empirical research can address important questions such as: How many researchers working abroad have returned home? How long do researchers tend to stay abroad? Why do migrant researchers decide to return home or stay abroad? Which types of scientist tend to emigrate permanently? What kinds of jobs do returning scientists secure when they do return home?

Figure 2. Duration of Czech researchers stay abroad in 2008 (per cent)



Source: Survey of Czech Researcher Emigration 2008, (N=149). Columns sum to one hundred per cent.

Reliable data on the migration patterns of highly qualified workers are rare. And rarer still are data on the motivations of highly skilled workers regarding temporary or permanent emigration. One of the most effective means of gathering such information is through the application of specially targeted personal surveys. Under the

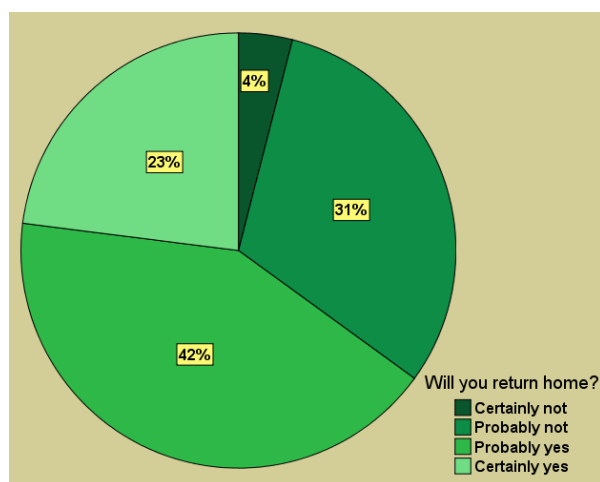
auspices of the Institute of Sociology, Czech Academy of Sciences, a survey of researchers and PhD students of Czech origin who currently work abroad, or who have worked abroad and returned home was conducted during the Spring of 2008.

Within this survey a total of 149 Czech research scientists and doctoral students who are working abroad or who have done so in the recent past were interviewed. The main goal of this survey was to inquire about factors influencing decisions to return to the Czech Republic or remain working in a host country.

The data presented in Figure 1 illustrates the countries where these researchers were residing at the time of the survey. In contrast, the evidence shown in Figure 2 reports the duration of respondents work related stays abroad.

Unsurprisingly, the probability of a persons' likelihood of returning home is very difficult to assess, as respondents are being asked to predict the future. In this survey of skilled migrants a subjective indicator was employed. This item simply asked the person to estimate the likelihood of returning home to work at the time of the interview. The probability of return was estimated on a simple four point scale ranging from certain return home to permanent emigration. The results for this question are shown in Figure 3.

Figure 3. Intention of Czech researchers to return home in the future (per cent)*



* Question: "Do you intend to return to the Czech Republic?" Source: Survey of Czech Researcher Emigration 2008, (N=149).

The results in this table reveal that a majority of almost two-in-three of those interviewed stated that they intend to return home in the future. The top part of Figure 3 also reveals that less than one-in-twenty (4 per cent) admitted that were likely to leave the Czech Republic permanently.

Decisions, decisions

The evidence shown in Figures 1 and 2 indicated that the general attitude among Czech researchers working abroad is positively disposed towards returning home. Having

established that short or medium term migration is the prevailing pattern it is natural to ask why skilled workers would want to return home? In answering this motivational question a number of factors would seem to be at work.

Working conditions: Relative differences in working conditions and the possibility to develop skills abroad are obvious reasons for deciding to emigrate in the first instance. Once abroad, a similar calculus is likely ceteris paribus to lead a Czech researcher to be less enthusiastic about returning home. However, with greater skills and experience there is always the possibility that an emigrant's elevated job status will improve the work conditions they can demand upon returning home.

Initial plans: At the beginning of stays abroad, most emigrants tend to make initial plans concerning intentions to return home. These plans are often not definitive. However, initial plans probably have a strong influence on the probability of return through the early decisions an emigrant makes with foreign employers with regard to length of contract, etc.

Settling down: Much of the evidence on skilled worker emigration suggests that the longer a person lives abroad the more likely they are to emigrate permanently. More specifically, the process of "settling down" to start a family is likely to have a very strong effect on decisions to remain abroad or return home.

Employment opportunities at home: Emigrants with a pre-arranged job waiting for them upon their return home are more likely to implement such plans. Here various psychological mechanisms such as inertia, framing and risk aversion are likely to ensure that working abroad will be a short to medium term phenomenon.

Personal reasons: A person may suffer from homesickness or have other compelling personal reasons for making their stay abroad of limited duration. Therefore, instrumental reasons for immigration are not the only factors that need to be considered.

Within the survey discussed earlier a set of indicators were designed to measure each of the five factors noted above. The relative quality of working conditions in the Czech Republic and elsewhere was measured with two questions. First, respondents were first asked to evaluate the extent to which working abroad allowed them to develop their skills. Second, those interviewed were asked if their work abroad was more interesting to that undertaken in the Czech Republic. Surprisingly, it seems that the answers on these two questions are not correlated with attitudes towards returning home.

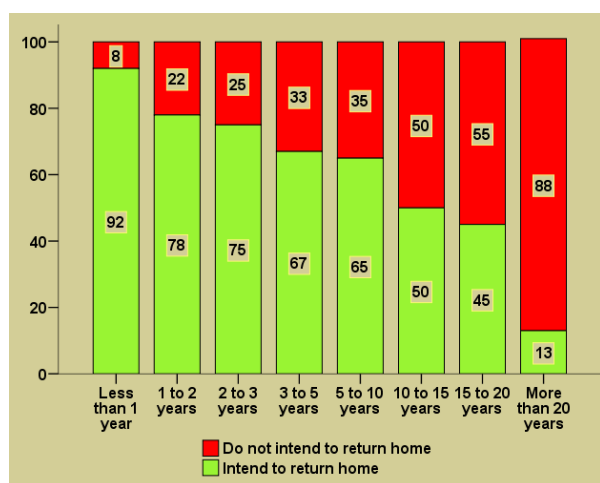
However, having initial plans is an important factor in explaining the decision to emigrate permanently. Almost three-in-four of those people who planned a temporary stay abroad wanted to return home, whereas only about half of the respondents who openly considered an unlimited stay abroad intended to return to the Czech Republic. Perhaps it is not surprising to

find that the survey evidence reveals how uncertain and changeable initial plans can be.

Decisions about settling down considerations are also an important determinant of intentions to return home. The data shown in Figure 4 highlights the strong relationship between intentions to move back home and length of stay abroad.

Perceptions of employment opportunities within the Czech Republic also have important consequences. Almost nine-in-ten researchers working abroad who have a guaranteed job upon their return to the Czech Republic say that they want to return. In contrast, among their colleagues without such a position just three-in-five gave a similar answer.

Figure 4. Relationship between intention to return home and length of stay abroad in 2008 (per cent)



Source: Survey of Czech Researcher Emigration 2008, (N=149). Columns sum to one hundred per cent, subject to rounding error.

Unsurprisingly, practical considerations are not the only things that researchers and scientists contemplate when thinking about their careers. Personal factors such as missing family and friends at home also play a key role in decision making. Quite obviously those who have problems with adjusting to their new surroundings will be much more inclined to return home to the familiar comforts of close personal relationships.

In addition to the five factors examined above the survey research undertaken threw up another important determinant of the decision to emigrate for a short or long period. The type of job that a Czech researcher does abroad also has non-trivial effects. More particularly if a researcher has moved into another sphere of employment this tends to reduce the probability of returning home in comparison to those who remain working within the field of scientific research.

Home for the holidays or home to stay ...

Overall, it seems that Czech scientific researchers working abroad are more positively disposed toward returning home than equally

well qualified colleagues working in other fields. The typical profile of a highly qualified emigrant likely to return home is a person who has a job waiting from them in the Czech Republic and has not spent a long time abroad. Curiously, personal factors play a more important role in comparison to work related factors in shaping decisions to stay abroad or go home.

This is an interesting finding because a majority of the respondents interviewed are highly critical of: (1) Czech research institutions in general; (2) prevailing working conditions; and (3) the overall career structure open to scientists in the Czech Republic. Nonetheless, such dissatisfaction with the Czech system of scientific research does not strongly discourage researchers from planning to return home.

Why the heart rules the head in such matters undoubtedly requires more research. However, one message seems clear: prudent public policy makers should not take the loyalty of Czech scientists to their homeland for granted.

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Part-time Work: A Promise or a Trap?

Key words: work/life balance, employment, part-time work, gender, childcare, Czech Republic

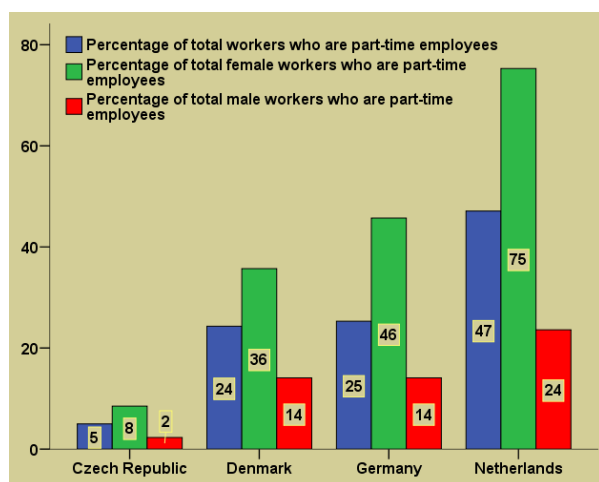
The question of "work-life balance" has been a 'hot topic' in Europe and the United States over the last three decades. Much effort has been expended on figuring out what are the best strategies within specific contexts. Within these debates increasing attention has been put on the role of part-time employment. For some part-time work represents an important means for addressing the difficulty involved in combining work and family commitments.

The spread of part-time work especially among mothers with children is often uncritically accepted as a panacea for both reducing unemployment and alleviating the tension between professional life and childcare. However, only rarely is mention ever made of

the negative effects of this form of employment for women.

Figure 1 reveals that within Europe the Czech Republic has one of the lowest rates of part-time employment. At present only one-in-twenty of all those employed in the Czech Republic are part-timers. The overall rate of part-time employment is considerably higher in other European countries such as Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands. Figure 1 also demonstrates that there is an important gender differential, where women are more likely to have part-time jobs than men.

Figure 1. Who is a part-time worker?



Source: Romans and Hardarson (2008). Data are from the fourth quarter of 2007.

In general, the term “part-time work” often corresponds to working for half as long each week as full-time employees. In the Czech Republic the average number of hours worked by part time employees per week is 22.9 hours. Elsewhere, in Sweden part-time workers average 24.8 hours, while in Denmark it is somewhat less at 18.9 hours, and in Germany it is 18 hours a week (Eurostat estimates for 2006). Such evidence indicates that attitudes toward part-time work are different in the Czech Republic than elsewhere.

Why is part-time work so under used in the Czech Republic?

There are a number of explanations given as to why the part-time employment rate is so low in the Czech Republic. The first is that the prevailing economic conditions are not conducive because of persistent low wages. A second explanation emphasises the tradition of women working in full time jobs. A third reason often given stresses the limited availability of part-time work, and most especially the limited availability of financially viable part-time work.¹ Of course, the preferences of Czech women themselves also play an important role. In their value hierarchy, employment occupies a relatively high position and it is one of the priorities in life.²

The Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs is currently trying to promote greater support for

part-time work as an effective solution to the problem of achieving a better work-life balance, with the added benefit that such a policy would lower the unemployment rate among women with children. For these and other reasons, Petr Nečas in his role as Czech Labour Minister proposed introduced tax incentives for creating part-time work for: (a) parents coming to the end of maternity or parental leave, (b) for people over the age of fifty-five years, (c) for the physically disabled, and (d) for people caring for a physically disabled or elderly family member.

Under this proposed scheme employers offering jobs with part-time hours would be able to deduct 1,500 CZK from their social insurance contributions for each employee with a part-time contract. If one leaves aside people with health problems or other impediments toward holding employment, the main target of these proposals is women. In short, the current Czech administration would like to see more women undertaking part-time work.³

While the economic benefits of such an initiative have been lauded in the media, there is reason to think that this employment policy represents a dangerous precedent that could have counter productive consequences. A good example of the likely risks of emphasising the potential role of part-time employment for a national economy comes from the former East Germany.

Here it seems that “... every second mother in [part-time work] in a Micro-census in April 2002 indicated that they were unable to find full time work” (Matějková and Palonciová 2003: 104). In this light, attempts by the Czech Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs to stimulate the employment of women with young children through supporting part-time employment may be seen as short-sighted for similar reasons.

Ignoring the real question

Much of the debate on promoting part-time employment and increasing the economic potential of the Czech labour force is one sided. Quite often the larger question of why mothers with young children experience relatively high levels of unemployment is ignored. One simple and practical answer to this question is that when women have children they drop out of the labour force for relatively long periods. As a result, they lose their competitive edge within the labour market.

Compounding this problem is the fact that if mothers with young children would like to work they find it difficult to secure affordable childcare facilities. For both of these reasons mothers who would like to work encounter discrimination from potential employers. Seen in this light, the promotion of part-time work by the Czech government as a means of reducing unemployment among women is short sighted, as it ignores the true causes of unemployment among women with children. Therefore, it seems likely that increasing the number of part-time jobs may only have a marginal effect on the

overall unemployment rate among women, and most especially those with children.

Any job is better than no job ...

Significantly, experts who have examined the impact of part-time employment initiatives on overall rates of employment have found that promoting part-time work can in fact lead to a dangerous trap of low wages, involuntary under-employment, job insecurity and discrimination (Štěpánková 2003, McGinnity, McManus 2007, Beck 2000). For example, one commentator has argued that the progressive introduction of part-time work in the United States and elsewhere has been transformed from a strategy originally intended to accommodate the demands of employees into a means of reducing employers costs by making workers more flexible (Kalleberg 2000: 344).

Studies in places such as America and Britain have also demonstrated that the hourly wages of part-time workers are often lower than the hourly wages of employees working full time (Kalleberg 2000: 354; McGinnity and McManus 2007: 128-130). Notwithstanding, wage differentials there is also the important issue of job quality. Again studies in the USA and UK have revealed that part-time employment tends to be concentrated among the low skilled, poorly paid, and low-prestige professions, e.g. care, sales, cleaning, etc. (Kalleberg 2000).

Overall, the experience of promoting part-time employment in other countries suggests that Czech decision-makers need to be aware of the less desirable facets of securing overall higher levels of employment through an increase in the uptake of part-time positions. The available evidence suggests that arguments such as "any job (such as a part-time one) is better than no job at all" can be misguided.

It is undoubtedly true that part-time employment has the potential to facilitate combining a productive working life with caring for children. However, thinking that part-time work should be the preserve of women or mothers with small children is likely to be counter-productive. There is the danger that part-time employment can become an occupational "ghetto" from which women find it difficult to escape. Furthermore, it should be kept in mind that not every woman and mother wants to work part-time. Adherence to principles such as gender equality underscore the argument that support for part-time work should not limit in any way the opportunities open to women to participate in the 'standard' labour market.

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Notes:

1. For most Czech citizens their current wage levels are insufficient to allow them to maintain a comfortable living standard with one and one half salaries.
2. An examination of public opinion toward the position of women in the labour market in 2003 found that equal numbers of men and women assigned equal importance to both family and work (96 per cent). There were little differences on the basis of gender to level of support for expressing preferences for either work or family. Earlier research undertaken in 1997 which examined the young generation's attitudes toward work found that employment and professional success were considered very important by today's middle aged generation (Kučera 2000: 46-47).
3. For example, see the article 'Part-time Work for Mothers with Young Children Looks Promising' available at <http://www.mpsv.cz/cs/5142> which refers to "part-time work for parents."

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Value Orientations in Society Department

Who Supports Whom? Family Policy in Light of 'New Social Risks'

Within each country there are particular emphases within national family policy plans on different types of families. Some states adhere to the belief that only the poorest need government help, while others like to support all families with children no matter what their income status. In some states it is large families that receive the most generous 'Child Benefit Packages' (CBP); whilst in others there is no differentiation between families on the basis of size.¹ Furthermore, in some countries, special attention is given to potentially vulnerable lone parent families, whilst in other countries the state promotes the institution of marriage and stable two parent households. Such differences within the context of the current debate on "New Social Risks" have started to attract increasing attention (Taylor-Gooby 2004, Bonoli 2007).

We will ignore here the rather academic debate if New Social Risks generated are: (1) really "new", (2) really social, and (3) really fulfil the definition of risks.² What is undisputable is that significant changes in the demographic and social structure of countries have resulted in the call for fundamental changes in European welfare systems. One reform, strongly encouraged by the EU's Employment Policy, is a shift toward promoting active participation.²

In the field of the family support, this means putting increased emphasis on "activating measures" that enable parents to reconcile work commitments with responsibility for childcare. Proponents of this perspective argue that it is children from families where parents do not work who are most likely to experience poverty and social exclusion (Esping-Andersen 2002; Kamerman et al. 2003).

The goal in this article is to focus on the impact of just one family policy strategy used to influence social welfare outcomes. More specifically, this analysis will use 'Child Benefit Packages' (CBP) to see how different countries have responded to New Social Risks. A key advantage of using this particular measure is that it is possible to illustrate how family policies in seventeen European countries deal with New Social Risks through the financial support given by governments to families with children.

Response to New Social Risks

Most experts agree that post-industrial society provides new opportunities as well as new

problems for the welfare state. New Social Risks may be understood as situations in which individuals experience welfare losses due to socio-economic transformations associated with post-industrialism (Bonoli 2007:498). The changes occurring in these transformations are usually described in terms of four main factors: (1) De-industrialization, (2) Massive entry of women into the labour force, (3) Increased volatility in family structures, and (4) De-standardization of employment. These processes generate risks in the areas of reconciling work and family life, securing satisfactory employment, and career development (Taylor-Gooby 2004).

European welfare states have responded to these new challenges with varying levels of commitment. All European states have, however, recognized that adjustments have to be made in social policies in the areas of care of the vulnerable; equal opportunities; activation of labour markets; support for low pay; "Flexicurity"; and training.³ In general, traditional welfare state policies focused on providing security for men, older workers and elderly people. In contrast, new welfare state policies target women, the young, and low skilled. These disadvantaged groups are the main beneficiaries of policies such as parental leave, family benefits, childcare services, in-work benefits, and active labour market policies.

One of the means by which welfare states have responded to New Social Risks is through the cash benefits given to families with children. A recent UNICEF report following the example of the Swedish welfare state, proposed that all other national welfare states should concern themselves with:

- Emphasizing work, full employment and high rates of female participation in the labour force
- Stressing universal rather than means-tested measures
- Emphasizing services to facilitate women's employment, as well as cash benefits
- Promoting the importance of two wages, and income transfers as supplements to earnings

While such policy prescriptions are of course laudable, a central question is: Do European governments try to implement some of these UN recommendations for reducing New Social Risks? In attempting to answer this very broad question it make sense to specify more detailed expectations as to what we might reasonably hope to see if countries were to follow the UN's guidelines. These more detailed expectations may be summarised as follows.

- (1) There will be greater support for two income families than traditional male-bread winner households
- (2) Greater help will be given to the "working poor" rather those living solely on social assistance
- (3) Increased financial provision for lone parent families in comparison to all others should be observed

If a single parent decides to work and earns more than half of the average national, then wage social welfare benefits should not drop dramatically during the transition to employment and increased income

In order to reduce the inherent complexity of demonstrating if wide swathes of European countries are adopting family policies geared toward reducing New Social Risks, use will be made of graphical representations of how specific features of social spending are related to family structure.

A picture is worth a thousand words

First expectation: In the top left window in Figure 1 one can see that in most of the countries examined the financial support provided by the state to single income families (who earn an average income) does not substantially differ from that provided to two income families where one parent earns an average income, and the other earns half of the average income.

This figure also shows that in the Czech Republic, Iceland, and Italy, CBP drops markedly. Unlike Italy which is not particularly generous to any type of family, the Czech Republic provides relatively generous support to single income families. However, this generosity falls when a second income comes into play. This Czech tendency to promote the male bread winner family model is particularly salient. This fact puts the Czech Republic in clear opposition to countries like France, Belgium and Holland who tend to promote the entrance of a second parent (usually women) into the labour market.

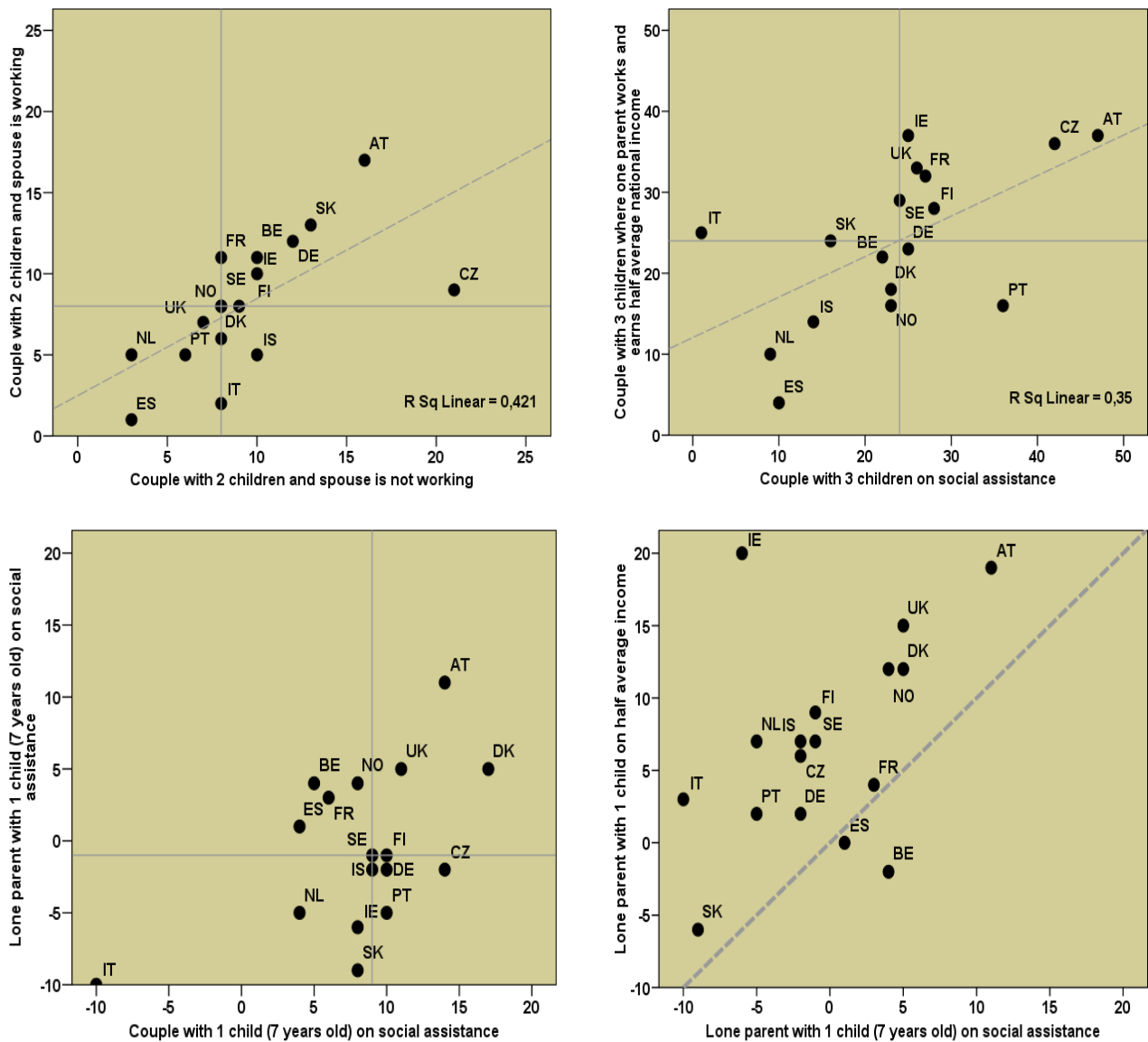
Second expectation: In the top right window of Figure 1 our attention is now turned to the second expectation. Here comparison is made between the CBP for poor working couples and those who are unemployed and claiming social assistance. For the sake of comparison both family types are assumed to have three children. Such large families are more likely to fall into poverty if none of the parents work. While countries like Ireland, the UK, Sweden, France and Italy tend to help the working poor more than those on social assistance; Portugal and Spain have adopted the opposite policy stance. It should be noted that the Czech Republic stands much closer to the somewhat protectionist position evident in Austria, than to the more liberal system prevailing in Slovakia. The difference in family policies between these two neighbouring post-communist states appears even more starkly when one looks at the support of two income families and their unemployed counterparts (both with three children). Within Slovakia, CBP for a large two-earner family is very generous as is also the case in France and Belgium. In contrast, within the Czech Republic the focus seems to be geared toward protecting the unemployed rather than

promoting the emergence of more two income households.

Third expectation: In the bottom left window of Figure 1, one sees how European countries differ in their support of the long-term unemployed. In order to test the third expectation comparison is made between lone parents and couples. While most of the Nordic countries, Germany, and the Netherlands are relatively speaking equally generous to single parent families as to married couples with children, other countries are clearly different. Once again, the difference between the Czech Republic and Slovakia is quite striking. If judged by the UN's standards of what should be an appropriate response to New Social Risks then Slovakia, Ireland and Portugal are not up to muster. Their financial support for the unemployed, and most especially lone parents whose families are at most risk of poverty, is well below the European (median) standard. One could argue that this is an example of what might happen when Flexicurity loses its security component. The Czech Republic is also not especially generous to single parent families. However, its support to unemployed couples is above the general European (median) level. The Czech case exhibits little consistency in its treatment of persons susceptible to New Social Risks. In contrast, other countries such as Denmark, Austria and the UK are more generous to families where there is children and unemployment. In the case of the UK, special efforts are made toward helping single parent households. Lastly, the data shows that single parent families in contrast to their two-parent counterparts attract most financial support from the state in Belgium, France, Norway and Spain.

Fourth expectation: Turning now to the bottom right window of Figure 1, one observes the importance of unemployment status. It is this factor which discriminates most strongly between households with one or two parents. The data suggest that if a single parent takes on work, even if it is badly paid, state benefits decline in Belgium and Spain, or remain the same in France. In Slovakia, the already miserable plight of single parent families only improves slightly. Such evidence clearly contradicts the key UN policy goal of labour market activation through greater participation. On the opposite end of the spectrum, stand Ireland, the UK, Austria, and the Nordic countries. These states offer a large increase in financial support once a parent enters the labour market. Things are somewhat different in Austria. The government in Vienna is generally quite benevolent toward families regardless of parental status. Notwithstanding this caveat, many members of this cluster of countries have a strong tradition of gender equality in the labour market. Looking at the Czech Republic which lies in middle of the figure, one observes an eight percentage point increase in CBP if a single parent decides to enter the labour market.

Figure 1. Scatterplot of CBP rates for different income types for families composed of either couples or lone parents



Legend: Austria (AT), Belgium (BE), Czech Republic (CZ), Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), France (FR), Germany (DE), Iceland (IS), Ireland (IE), Italy (IT), Netherlands (NL), Norway (NO), Portugal (PT), Slovakia (SK), Spain (ES), Sweden (SE) and United Kingdom (UK).

Note the figures represent the value of the Child Benefit Package (CBP) in terms of the percentage of average earnings. Lines in the chart represent the median value of the CBP. In the case of the window on the bottom right the line in the chart represents the value of the CBP should the CBP stay the same after parent's transition into the labour market.

New Social Risks, different policy directions

The central goal of the research presented here has been to see: (a) if states financial support for families in Europe reflects the threats posed by New Social Risks, and (b) if European governments have been adhering to the guidelines promoted by UNICEF.

Before spelling out some conclusions, it is important to state that the evidence presented here is too brief to capture the full complexity of the current situation. Moreover, the analysis shown in Figure 1 focuses on many countries at a single time point, i.e. 2004, in order to make the investigation tractable. Ideally, one would like to track social welfare spending changes across time. Notwithstanding these limitations,

the data presented does provide a valuable snapshot of the cash benefit system across much of Europe in the early twenty first century.

The evidence shows that there are no clear winners or losers on the basis of the four criteria used to see if countries are following the UN's advice. There are no clear country clusters, and it seems that each country displays, with regard to specific aspects of family support, different tendencies. Of course some generalisations can be made. Those countries within the Anglo-Saxon welfare state tradition tend to be strong in promoting paid work in general and this is evident in the relative level of subsidies given to the working poor and most especially single parents. A similar pattern is also evident in the Nordic states.

Perhaps the most striking country examined in this analysis is Slovakia. It exhibits a rather low level of support for single parents notwithstanding their position in the labour market. Moreover, Slovakia provides similarly low levels of support to families living on social assistance regardless of the number of children in the family. This is rather surprising because between 1948 and 1989 Slovakia had the same social welfare system as the Czech Republic. While the Czech Republic has retained a rather protectionist family policy, Slovakia has effectively abandoned it. In addition, there are cross-national differences in policies that promote increased labour force participation. Slovakia has embraced this principle. In contrast, the Czech Republic (as of 2004) adhered to the male bread winner model, and through a cash-benefit system more or less directly shelters the long-term unemployed.

In summary, recognition of New Social Risks has not resulted in identifiable cross-national patterns in CBP provisions in Europe. It seems that the criteria for best practice put forward by the UN have not been embraced in any systematic manner by European governments. To get a better sense of how governments are tackling New Social Risks more extensive analysis using additional social welfare indicators and data from multiple time points is required. Given the complexity of social welfare policy making across Europe, embarking on such research will require considerable resources and most likely a cross-national team of experts.

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Notes:

- 1 'Child Benefit Package' (CBP) is the difference in the net disposable income (after accounting for the impact of various benefits and taxes) of a childless couple compared to a family with children on the same income level. CBP estimates the effect of children on a household's net disposable income.
- 2 The definition of 'New Social Risk' is especially questionable in the case for former communist countries. This is because some of the key defining features of New Social Risks such as high female participation rates in the labour market and high divorce rates have been present in Central and Eastern Europe for several decades (Bonoli 2007).
- 3 'Flexicurity' is a welfare state model that promotes increased 'flexibility' for employers where it is easy for them to both hire and fire workers, and greater 'security' for workers should they be made unemployed.

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Is Corruption a Strategy for Life Success in the Czech Republic?

Key words: corruption, economic development, employment, post-communist, negative social capital

Due to the strong redistributive policies and egalitarian ideology of the communist regime (1948-1989), Czechs tend to be highly sensitive to the presence of economic inequality.¹ Perceptions of inequality are partly based on the belief that the criteria for achieving social and economic rewards are unjust. Consequently, strategies for getting ahead in life are often based on unjust criteria such as corruption, rather than more just criteria such as hard work and talent. The more Czechs believe that economic success is rooted in practices like having political connections for personal gains, dubious privatization deals and shady government contracts, the more likely that the overall system of social and economic distribution will itself be perceived as unjust.

The political, social, and economic transformation after 1989 undoubtedly also led to a radical transformation of the criteria for achieving social and economic rewards. In the early 1990s, having a college education and establishing one's own business were strong predictors of increases in income.² Expanding economic returns to education over the course of the 1990s strengthened the importance of education as a basis for life success during the period of transformation. Adherence to meritocratic principles undoubtedly strengthened after 1989. However, perceptions of the persistence of injustice and inequality suggest that attitudes condoning corruption and other forms of unethical behavior may also have strengthened during the post-communist era.

Corruption, redistribution and social capital

If Czechs see corruption as an alternative way of attaining distributive justice, then corruption would constitute a distinct channel through which people seek 'success' in life. Is this true? One way of finding an answer to this question is

Table 1. Principle component analysis of the perceived means of achieving success in life

<i>Factor of success:</i>	<i>Western countries</i>			<i>Post-communist countries</i>		
	<i>Ascription</i>	<i>Discrimination</i>	<i>Merit</i>	<i>Ascription</i>	<i>Discrimination</i>	<i>Merit</i>
Wealthy parents	.706	.330	-.057	.793	.087	-.075
Educated parents	.798	.108	.012	.717	.091	.289
Knowing the right people	.547	.303	-.007	.560	.151	.040
Nationality, race	.190	.770	.069	.124	.778	.051
Religion	.021	.680	-.062	-.008	.802	.082
Gender	.181	.718	.069	.303	.518	-.129
Good education	.631	-.210	.338	.423	-.037	.609
Ambition	.136	.052	.790	.080	.031	.711
Hard work	-.057	.017	.826	-.089	.018	.735
Eigenvalue (% of variance)	28.5	16.6	12.6	25.4	16.3	12.1
N	13,392			9,311		

Source: ISSP 1992. Western countries include Australia, Austria, Canada, Germany (West), Great Britain, Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Sweden, and the USA. Post-communist countries include Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia (split as Czech and Slovak), Germany (East), Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Slovenia. Note that is analysis used the Varimax rotation method, extracting components with Eigenvalues over 1.

to simply ask people what they think in national surveys. Questions on the perceived determinants of life success have been asked in a number of Czech ISSP modules. This set of surveys provides a very useful starting point for exploring if corruption really is a life strategy. The main question posed in the ISSP set of surveys was:

How important are the following things for a person in the Czech Republic to achieve success in life?

The respondent was then presented with a list of about ten factors that are generally seen to promote success. Each of these factors was rated by the respondent on a simple five point scale that ranged from: (1) Essential; (2) Very important; (3) Important; (4) Somewhat unimportant; to (5) Quite unimportant. It should be noted that some factors were not asked in all surveys. For example, questions that explored bribery and evading the law were posed for the first time in a pilot survey in late 2007 for the Czech wave of the International Social Survey Project (ISSP) to be implemented in 2009. According to these surveys, the perceived role of meritocratic principles, such as hard work and talent, quickly reached Western levels in the 1990s. Curiously, popular support for the role of one's own education in achieving success in the Czech Republic continues to lag behind levels observed in the West. Moreover, the perceived role of having wealthy parents has strengthened significantly over time among Czechs, with the number of respondents claiming that it is "essential" and "very important" nearly doubling from 20 per cent in 1992 to 37 per cent in 2007.

In a similar manner, the role of political connections also increased from 12 per cent in 1992 to 42 per cent in 2007 in the Czech Republic. In 2007, nearly 20 per cent of those

interviewed also believed that both bribery and evading the law are essential or very important means of life success in the Czech Republic. In general, the survey evidence suggests that meritocratic ethics and principles based on what might be called "negative social capital" (i.e. getting ahead in life on the basis of corrupt political connections) are perceived to be the dominant strategies for being successful within the Czech Republic over the last decade. Table 1 shows the results of a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) of the questions on perceived life success asked in the ISSP survey of 1992. In simple terms, PCA (also known more generically as 'Factor Analysis') uses the correlation between answers to different questions to see if the common variation observed can be explained by a smaller set of more general features (Lewis-Beck 1994: 157-246). A good example of a general feature, or factor, is intelligence where correlations between test scores in word fluency, reasoning and memory can be used to construct a 'general' measure of intelligence such as the Intelligence Quotient (IQ).

A similar strategy is being followed here. The results shown in Table 1 reveal that all of the nine items asked to respondents about life success may be reduced to three underlying or latent factors. These factors may be called (1) Ascription, (2) Discrimination, and (3) Merit. It is important to explain what exactly these three terms mean in this context.

Ascription contends that economic and social outcomes are based on factors that are directly linked to individual's backgrounds, such as the level of wealth and education of one's parents. In contrast, *discrimination* is based on the idea that economic and social outcomes (whether positive or negative) are based on specific qualities of the individual, such as his or her

Table 2. Corruption as an independent factor explaining life success

Factors of success:	Corruption	Discrimination	Ascription	Merit
Knowing the right people	.761	.138	-.001	.231
Political connections	.819	.142	.134	.076
Bribery	.812	.201	.106	-.165
Evading the law	.792	.186	.105	-.185
Nationality, race	.213	.774	.084	.028
Religion	.049	.818	.074	-.041
Gender	.297	.688	.112	.028
Good education	-.041	-.014	.776	.345
Educated parents	.217	.227	.830	-.053
Wealthy parents	.531	.173	.524	-.120
Ambition	.186	-.003	.136	.835
Hard work	-.223	.011	.016	.820
<i>Eigenvalue (% variance explained)</i>	<i>34.2</i>	<i>15.1</i>	<i>10.7</i>	<i>9.2</i>

Source: A pilot survey undertaken in the fall of 2007 as preparation for the Czech Wave of ISSP (2009). The total variance of the variables explained by the four components is 69.2 per cent. These results are based on an analysis of the correlation matrix, extracting Eigenvalues over 1, and the estimates reported are derived from a Principal Components Analysis (PCA) of survey items designed to explain perceptions of life success. The data are factor loadings.

gender, ethnicity, religion or political beliefs. Lastly, *Merit* refers to the notion that economic and social outcomes correspond to a person's specific achievements or inputs. Typical examples of merit based activities are hard work, ambition, and ability.³ With these three concepts it is possible to explore in greater detail how citizens perceive corruption.

Corruption and success

To see if corruption constitutes a distinct strategy for achieving life success, several questions on the role of bribery, evading the law, and political connections were added to the pilot ISSP questionnaire asked to a sample of Czech citizens in the fall of 2007. While only one of the three questions in this survey is specifically about corruption, the other two questions do capture important facets of what people typically think is corrupt behaviour. Here one may think of: (1) the use of political connections in one's dealings regardless of their legal or ethical aspects; and (2) attempts to get around the law, such as avoiding paying taxes or side stepping government regulations in some manner.

The expectations being examined here may be summarised in two points. First, the three questions asked should be strongly associated with each other. Secondly, the inter-correlation between these three items should facilitate using PCA (as shown earlier with Table 1) the construction of a single latent variable that may be called "corruption." Ideally this corruption measure will exhibit statistical characteristics that indicate it is distinct from the concepts of ascription, merit and discrimination discussed earlier. If this is the case, then it is possible to argue that corruption is indeed a distinct strategy for achieving life success. A preliminary examination of the correlations among the

questions posed in the 2007 pilot ISSP study look very promising indeed. In fact, the patterns evident in the correlations between all items reveal that there is almost no association between the questionnaire items used to construct the merit and corruption measures. The results of the Principal Components Analysis for the Czech Republic are displayed in Table 2. This table reports what are technically known as factor weights based on a varimax rotation. Without getting into the technicalities of what these numbers really mean, it is enough to understand that variables with high values are "hanging together" quite well with one another and this pattern of variables "hanging together" makes substantive sense.

The latent variable labelled "corruption" in the second column of Table 2 not only constitutes a distinct strategy of life success, but also explains a large portion of the variation (34 per cent) from among all the factors identified. Consonant with the correlation matrix, the association between bribery and political connections is stronger than the association between ambition and hard work, or for that matter between being educated and having wealthy parents.

Corruption is also the most coherent of the four components, as it accounts for roughly half of the explanatory power of the entire model. What is even more striking is that the variable "knowing the right people" is typically understood as a measure of social capital, and is thus linked to ascription. However, the results presented in Table 2 demonstrate that perceptions of the utility of "knowing the right people" have no association with ascription at all, and should in fact be understood as a measure of "soft corruption."

This analysis also suggests that respondents have a more clear idea of what "corruption" is than most analysts give them credit for. While

social scientists have sought to define corruption in very narrow and circumscribed ways, it may be inferred from the evidence presented in Table 2 that respondents maintain a coherent, but broader notion, which includes the use of connections and evasive behavior. In a Principal Components Analysis that includes additional items relating to bribery, evasion of legal sanctions, political connections and knowing the right people, the underlying concept of "corruption" accounts for a majority of the total variation (69 per cent) evident within these four indicators. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that in the minds of ordinary Czechs these four activities are closely interlinked, constituting a description of corrupt behavior ranging from 'soft' to 'hard.'

Corruption as a way of getting on

Overall, the survey evidence presented demonstrates two things: (1) the coherence of a broader notion of corruption in the minds of many Czech citizens, and (2) corruption constitutes a major strategy for achieving success in life that is both independent of, and exists along side, strategies based on merit. Perhaps the perception of corruption as a strategy for personal social and economic advancement is based on Czechs' knowledge or experience of corruption during mass privatization program of the nineties. Alternatively, this view may stem from the perception that some of the richest Czechs have either dubious or outright criminal financial backgrounds. Regardless of the origins of these beliefs, the fact that corruption is associated with success is likely to remain a key obstacle in efforts to create a fairer and more just society within the Czech Republic in the coming years.

Notes:

- 1 For example, in the 2006 International Social Justice Project (ISJP) survey, there were 1,438 Czech respondents who answered the question "What do you think about income differences in the Czech Republic today?" 42 per cent indicated that they are "too large," 44 per cent indicated that they are "rather large," 12 per cent indicated that they are "appropriate," 2 per cent said they are "rather small," and only one tenth of a per cent (2 respondents) said that they are "too small."
- 2 Matějů P. and Řeháková B.: 'Education as a Strategy of Life Success in the Post-communist Transformation: The Case of the Czech Republic,' *Comparative Education Review*, 1996, 40(2), 158-176.
- 3 There are 13 variables in the dataset that could be analyzed. But in order to indirectly compare the data with Table 2 below, only 9 variables that were repeated in 2007 were used in the analysis. The exclusion of four variables does not change the overall results, as all 13 variables crystallize into three principle components.

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Birds of a Feather Flock Together ... Does my job determine how I see myself and others?

Key words: Social distance, like-me hypothesis, prestige hypothesis, Bogardus Scale, ISEI

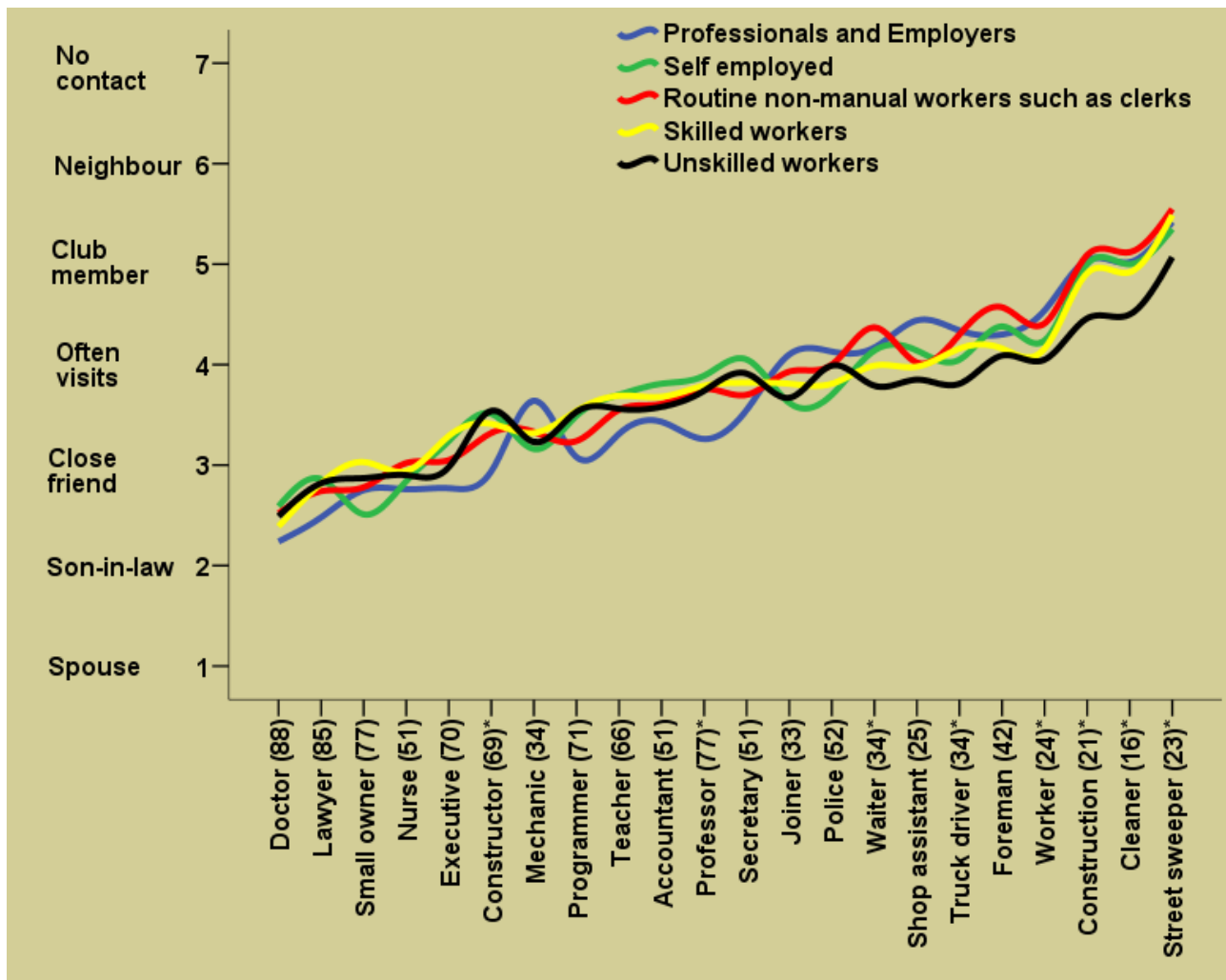
In our daily life we all experience social distance. It happens not only when we meet foreigners, but it also happens when we meet people we don't know very well or who have a different social status than us, e.g. a student meets a professor. We all experience some perceived distance from others on a daily basis. In sociology this phenomenon is called *Social Distance*. It denotes "the grades and degrees of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations generally" (Park 1924: 339). In other words, Social Distance describes the personal feelings that individuals have towards seeing others as being alike, or somehow different.

If individuals have the feeling of shared experiences, of common group affiliation, and common identity, then the level of Social Distance is likely to be rather low. In this case the other person is met with sympathy, openness and comprehension. If a distinct sense of distance is connected with a certain unease or apprehension then a high social distance prevails. It is important to keep in mind that sense of Social Distance is not focused on particular individuals, but on categories. Often these feelings of Social Distance are linked to religiosity, social class, or ethnicity (Steinbach 2004: 17).

Social Distance and job status

Unsurprisingly, sociologists often examine Social Distance in terms of status positions in society. In this respect, a distinction is made between Subjective and Objective Social Distance. Subjective Social Distance can be defined "as an attitude of ego toward a person (alter) with a particular status attribute (such as occupation) that broadly defined the character of the interaction that ego would be willing to undertake with the attitude object." In contrast, Objective Social Distance is "the actually

Figure 1. Mean difference among social classes in the Czech Republic on the Bogardus Scale



Source: Survey of Social Distance in the Czech Republic 2007, N=1,197. * Mean social distance among the social classes is significant ($p \leq .05$) estimated using one-way ANOVA. This is true for constructors, professors, waiters, truck drivers, factory workers, construction worker, cleaners, and street sweepers. Figures in parentheses on the horizontal axis denote ISEI score.

observed differential association of persons of different status attributes in various social relationships" (Laumann 1966: 29, 30).

Here the focus will be on Subjective Social Distance and we will examine the question: is the Subjective Social Distance felt by Czechs related to the high or low social status attributed to specific types of jobs? And if so, who are the reference groups who are seen to be the lowest and highest in terms of social status? In order to be able to answer these two questions we need to have a theory as to how individuals assess Subjective Social Distance. Laumann (1966) has argued that Subjective Social Distance is constructed via two distinct mechanisms.

The first mechanism operates on the logic of the 'like-me principle'. According to the 'like-me principle' people prefer to establish intimate contacts with persons of equal status. Therefore, we would expect to see people with professions that are similar, or who come from the same social class, to have the lowest sense of Subjective Social Distance. The second mechanism adopts the logic of the 'prestige effect.' Here a person exhibits the least

Subjective Social Distance with a person who has the highest social or occupational status. In short, both explanatory theories of Subjective Social Distance propose very different observable effects.

Testing the 'like-me principle' and the 'prestige effect'

To test whether the 'like-me principle' or the 'prestige effect' best explains Subjective Social Distance a special survey examining 'Professional Groups in the Czech Republic' was undertaken in 2007 to test these explanatory theories. The Subjective Social Distance of a respondent to a specific profession was measured using a modified version of what is called a 'Bogardus Social Distance Scale'.¹ Survey respondents were asked the following question:

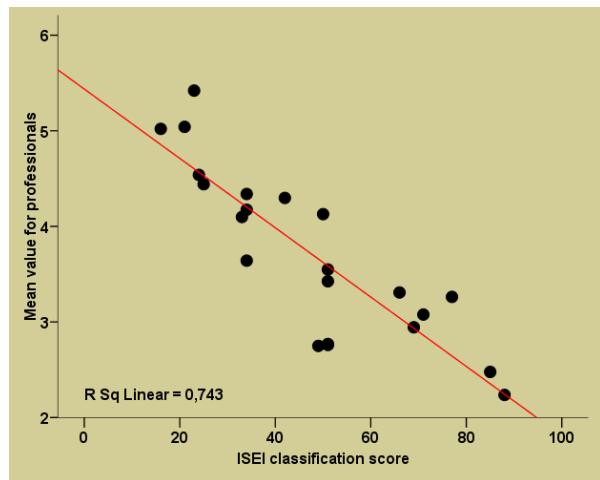
I will now read you out the names of different professions. Please tell me for each of them, if you would like him or her as ..."

The response options were: (1) Husband or wife, (2) Daughter-in-law or son-in-law, (3) Close friend, (4) Somebody who visits you often, (5) Member in your sports club or interest group, (6) Neighbour, (7) I do not want to have anything to do with him or her. Unsurprisingly, a '1' is interpreted as indicated a low social distance while a '7' indicates high social distance.

Figure 1 shows the mean social distances of the five social classes and the prestige-scores assigned to all twenty two professions assessed by the respondents using a slightly modified version of the International Socio-Economic Index (ISEI) are shown. This index is a measure of the socio-economic status of an occupation is estimated using international data combining both level of income and education. It ranges from 16 (denoting a cleaner) to 90 (a judge).

For the analysis reported in Figures 1 to 3 all respondents were grouped into five social classes, i.e. professionals, self-employed, routine non-manual or clerical, skilled workers, and unskilled workers according to the social class scheme developed by Erikson Goldthorpe and Portocarero (EGP). For members of each of the five social classes a mean social distance score on the Bogardus Scale was calculated for all twenty two occupations.

Figure 2. Regression of ISEI scores on mean values for the professional class on the Bogardus Scale



Note the (red) line passing through the scatterplot is a based on a bivariate regression that explains almost 75 per cent of the total variance.

Within Figure 1 job statuses have been ordered on the basis of mean social distances. It is clear that social distance to the occupational stimuli is strongly associated with job prestige (ISEI score) regardless of the respondent's own social class. This demonstrates in a simplified way that the prestige effect has a stronger impact than the like-me principle. However, there are no significant differences among the lower status jobs (i.e. waiter to street sweeper) because the unskilled and routine non-manual social classes perceive less social distance to these blue collar professions. Such evidence suggests that the like-me principle is important in shaping the

willingness of the lower social classes to interact amongst themselves.

The data analysis methodology employed is quite straightforward. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis was used to see if the ISEI score of a specific occupation was a good predictor of mean Subject Social Distance of a particular class using the Bogardus Scale values.

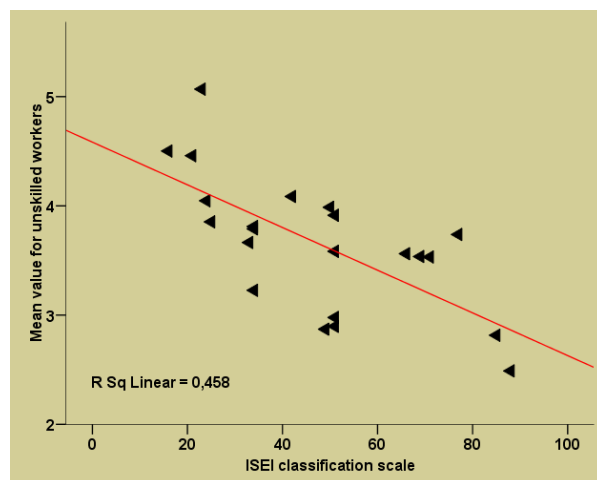
The OLS regression models for all five social classes show a significant negative relationship between ISEI occupation and mean value on the subjective social distance scale. For professionals the standardised (beta) coefficient is $-.86$ and somewhat lower values were estimated for the self-employed ($-.68$), routine non-manual or clerical ($-.77$), skilled workers ($-.75$) and unskilled workers ($-.67$).²

It is important to keep in mind when interpreting these statistics that the negative (beta) coefficients values indicate that respondents exhibit low social distance to occupations with high prestige, and conversely high social distance to occupations with low occupational status.

Such evidence suggests that the 'prestige effect' explanation of Subjective Social Distance matches with the patterns observed in the survey data. Turning our attention now to the alternative explanation based on the 'like me principle' we will again use the results of a simple OLS regression model (using the unstandardised coefficients this time).³

With exception of the self-employed there is a consistent negative relationship between ISEI job status and subjective social distance across all of the other four social classes. To illustrate these relations Figures 2 and 3 shows the results obtained for the professional and unskilled worker classes.

Figure 3. Regression of ISEI scores on mean values for the unskilled worker class on the Bogardus Scale



Note the (red) line passing through the scatterplot is a based on a bivariate regression that explains almost 46 per cent of the total variance.

Comparison of the negative trends in these two figures (i.e. the red lines running from top left to

bottom right) exhibits a steeper slope in the case of the professional class when compared to unskilled workers. This difference in slopes may be interpreted as indicating that the professionals shown in Figure 2 have a higher sense of subjective social distance (indicated by a high mean value on the Bogardus Scale) in comparison to the unskilled working class.

In contrast, Figure 3 shows that among the unskilled working class there is a lower sense of subjective social distance toward those scoring lower on the ISEI job status scale. And conversely, there is a greater sense of social distance (denoted by a low mean value on the Bogardus Scale) toward those in high prestige jobs. In short, the patterns evident in Figures 1 and 2 indicate the operation of the 'like me principle' among the Czech public interviewed in our survey in 2007.

Birds of a feather flocking together?

The survey evidence presented demonstrates that most Czech people think there is a smaller social distance between themselves and those who hold high prestige jobs. This finding is supportive of the prestige-effect explanation of Subjective Social Distance. Here birds of a feather do not flock together presumably because of social desirability effects.

Nonetheless, there is still evidence that birds of a feather do flock together. A comparison of the patterns evident in Figures 2 and 3 demonstrate that people from the lower classes with low-prestige jobs see a greater (subjective) social distance between themselves and those with more prestigious positions. This pattern is supportive of the operation of the 'like me principle.'

Of course the next step with this analysis is to see which of these two explanations of Subjective Social Distance is the strongest and most pervasive within contemporary Czech society. Answering this question will allow us to make some important inferences about the nature and extent of social stratification within the Czech Republic. Such information is potentially very useful in the formulation of public policy in the realms of social welfare, employment and education.

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Notes:

1. The social distance scaling method was developed by Emory S. Bogardus in 1925 to explore attitudes toward different nationalities. In general, a social distance or Bogardus scale attempts using a series of statements to establish how willing a person is to associate with members of groups that are different. A modified Bogardus scale was developed by Laumann (1966) to explore the perceptions of individuals towards people

with different types of jobs. This is the basis of the social distance scale reported here.

2. Within OLS regression modelling beta coefficients indicate the difference in a dependent variable (subjective social distance in this case) associated with an increase or decrease of one standard deviation in an independent variable (ISEI job status score). Standardised or beta coefficients facilitate comparison of the effects of independent variables that have different scales such as age (in years) and income (thousands of Czech crowns).
3. An unstandardised regression coefficient represents the relationship between a dependent variable (Subjective Social Distance) and an independent one (ISEI job status score). For example, a coefficient of $-.65$ indicates in this context that for every unit increase on the ISEI job status scale Subjective Social Distance as measured on the seven-point Bogardus Scale decreases by $.65$ points.

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How inter-connected are citizens in society, and why does it matter?

Key words: social capital, access to social capital (ASC), ego network, ego, alters, position generator (PG), ISEI, social stratification

We as individuals live our lives encapsulated within our personal social networks. As a result, not only are our choices restrained and influenced by others, so also is our access through our personal network of friends and acquaintances to common resources. Unsurprisingly, inter-personal networks cons-

titute the foundation of many processes through which individuals gain access to diverse forms of social resources. For example, social networks are a key resource when searching for a job, seeking emotional aid, or securing help with day-care. Of course, not all social networks are the same. Often within social research they are distinguished on the basis of level of information available.

A 'complete social network' is represented by a matrix of relationships representing an entire social system where A informs on B, B informs on A, and so forth. In contrast, a 'personal egocentric network' is derived from the self reports of respondents in social surveys. Social networks are often used within the social sciences to examine a concept called 'Social Capital'. In simple terms, social capital refers to the links within and between social networks. High levels of social capital are seen to be desirable, as they are indicative of productive cooperation between individuals.

Technically speaking, there are two main approaches to measuring social capital using network analysis. This first method termed 'topological' examines the shape of networks often using full network data. The second method called 'connectionist' focuses on the attributes associated with egocentric networks. A key question is: how is it possible to measure resources inherent within social networks from a common population where the respondents generally do not know each other? One straightforward answer to this question is to ask a person in an interview to map out their family, friends, and acquaintances. Construction of such egocentric networks may be undertaken using a standard questionnaire survey implemented on a national sample.

Egocentric network – interpersonal network data

An 'egocentric network' is simply a list of people a person knows, or more formally is the network of a single actor. Using this approach each person's (or ego's) network constitutes a world in itself. Respondents (egos) are asked for a set of contacts (termed alters) and their attributes. By constructing an ego network in this way, we can investigate the range, density, multiplexity of resources such as prestige, or the informational potential of relationships of an ego with their alters. The level of diversity of personal contacts yields valuable information on the degree of social heterogeneity within personal networks. At present, there are three main ways to measure the social heterogeneity of ego networks in nationally representative sample surveys: (a) name, (b) position, and (c) source generators. Here the focus will be on exploring the results of applying the second approach called the 'Position Generator' (PG) within a recent survey in the Czech Republic.

How does the Position Generator work?

In a name generator we ask about respondent's friends and their attributes. With a position

generator a respondent is asked whether he or she knows a person holding a certain position (generally speaking this is a job) in society. These occupational positions vary according to their social status or prestige, and the relative access individuals have to holders of such desired jobs. Also, some other attributes such as strength of tie typically denoted by kinship or friendship, level of intimacy, or length of contact are also asked. This information provides multi-dimensional measures of the degree to which social capital is associated with socioeconomic status within a person's ego network. Data from Position Generators (PGs) are very useful for comparative studies of social capital. The reason is that, compared to the name generator which measures strong ties such as friendship, PGs facilitate measuring weak ties and give better estimates of network sizes (for a more detailed comparison see Van der Gaag et al. 2004).

Social resources in personal networks were investigated in a survey of social distances that was undertaken in 2007 that is representative of Czech adult population. The question asked was:

I will show you a list of professions. For each job, please tell me whether you know anybody who works at that position? If you know more people mention the one whom you have known the longest. How long have you known this person? What is your relationship to that person? Is that person a relative, friend or an acquaintance? What is the person's gender?

Respondents were asked to report if they knew any person who holds any one of the occupations on a list of eighteen shown to the respondent. For example, a respondent was first asked did they know anyone who is a factory worker and they replied yes or no. Then they were asked if they knew anybody who is a nurse and again they replied yes or no. This procedure was repeated for all eighteen occupations. In addition, the respondent's own occupation was also recorded by the interviewer.

After the interview each occupational position mentioned by the respondent was assigned a score on the ISEI scale. The ISEI scale refers to relative job prestige. The scale varies from 'low' with a score of 16 to 'high' with a value 90. ISEI job prestige scores are estimated using average level of income and education within a specific occupation (see, Ganzeboom and Treiman 2005).

Table 1 shows the occupational profile of the data obtained from a Czech survey undertaken during 2007. The range of occupations asked of the respondent cover the entire socio-economic status range present within the Czech labour market. The job positions and their relative rankings in terms of contact are shown in Table 1. Professions most accessed are those which are broadly represented in the population. There is a high association of accessibility with socioeconomic status ISEI of job positions (the correlation is .48). The most restricted access is to professions which feature high prestige and socioeconomic status, e.g. a computer programmer, lawyer, or top executive in a large

firm. This implies that in our personal networks there is an embedding of scarce resources. In short, knowing somebody with high prestige is one form of social capital. Another social advantage is to have a wide circle of contacts (i.e. having an extensive ego network), or having a central or pivotal position within single or overlapping social networks. Practically speaking, such resources could be of great benefit in searching for a job for example.

Table 1. Overview of links between the ISEI professions evident within the responses to the position generator (per cent)

Profession	ISEI Score	Yes (%)	Family (%)
Worker in a factory	24	61	29
Nurse	51	60	30
Shop assistant in a supermarket	25	57	26
Auto-mechanic	34	56	21
Waiter	34	55	17
Truck driver	34	48	26
Teacher at elementary school	66	45	22
Accountant / wages clerk	51	44	23
Physician (doctor)	88	41	17
Owner / manager, small store	49	40	19
Policeman	50	38	18
Secretary	51	38	27
Cleaner	16	37	21
Joiner	33	37	21
Unskilled construction worker	21	30	16
Programmer / IT specialist	71	29	24
Lawyer	85	24	20
Top executive of a large business firm	70	18	21

Source: Survey of Social Distance in the Czech Republic 2007, N=1,197. Note that the column labelled 'yes' refers to percentages who gave a positive response. Similarly, 'family' denotes the percentage of respondents having a family member within a specific ISEI grouping.

Using the data on job positions created by the PG it is possible to estimate three key measures that represent 'access' to social capital. These are: (1) *Extensivity*: the total number of job positions to which the respondent has access; (2) *Upper Reachability*: the highest social status known to a respondent; and (3) *Range*: the difference between the highest and lowest social statuses identified by a respondent from within their ego network.

A key question with regard to these measures for any country such as the Czech Republic: What are the distributions of these three measures of social capital in a society?

Extensivity: From the eighteen employment positions reported by respondents those interviewed had access to an average of eight different holder's job positions on the ISEI job prestige scale shown in Table 1. A majority of job status contacts are through weak ties, typically through friendship, because on average only one fifth of the contacts are through strong kinship ties. The mean of contact status on the ISEI scale is 44 (with a standard deviation of 9).¹

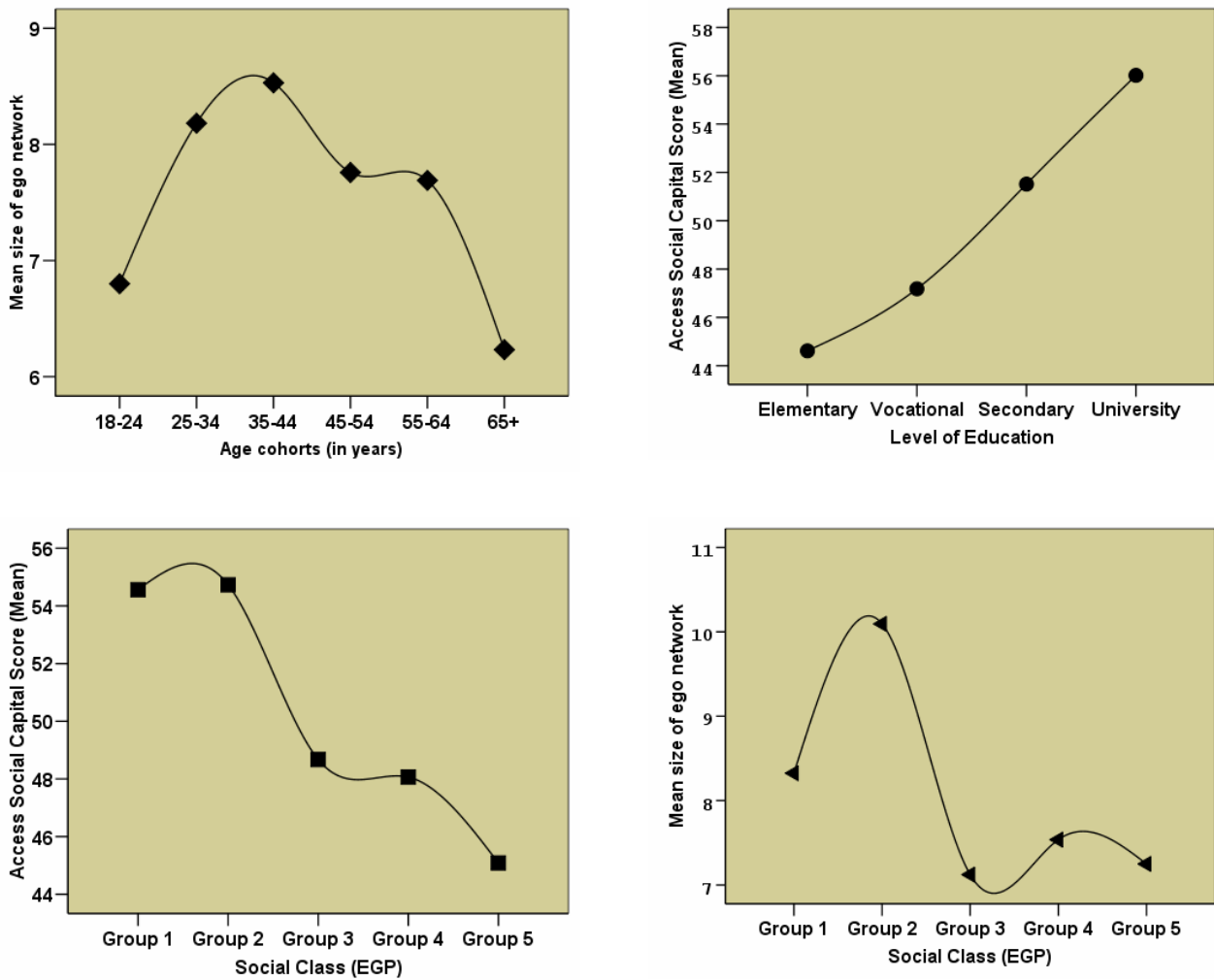
Upper Reachability: The highest status recorded on the ISEI job prestige scale was 88, and this score was achieved by 41 per cent of the sample. The wide prevalence of such a high score was primarily due to identifying a medical doctor as a contact. Some other professions that have wide contact with the public such as shop assistants, waiters, nurses and teachers also attracted high levels of contact from within the sample examined. When one ignores contact with doctors access to a prestigious profession such as a lawyer (second highest position recorded after doctors) declines considerably. Among those interviewed less than one-in-ten (8 per cent) knew a lawyer.

Range: The average range of occupational statuses known to respondents (alters) within the ego networks mapped is 48 (with a standard deviation of 20). Turning our attention now to the dispersion of access to social capital in Czech society, it appears to be influenced by the mean status position of all contacts identified by a respondent. Higher mean ISEI scores are associated with greater variations in access to occupants of prestigious jobs (the correlation, $r=.51$). This means that people who know individuals in higher positions (and their own status is also high) also tend to have broader networks. Moreover, such people also know more contacts with those who have lower prestige jobs as well. This is not a trivial finding. This is because high prestige job occupant's level of social capital is boosted by: (a) their access to people working in highly desired professions, and (b) their openness to contacts with occupants of less desirable positions such as crafts people who are of course indispensable in daily life.

Why measure a person's social network?

It is quite reasonable to ask if the three measures of social capital are substantively important – in short what are the social consequences of having access to a wide range of useful and powerful contacts? Our attention here, for the sake of brevity, will be restricted to consideration of impact of having an extensive social network. Differences in level of network extensivity have direct consequences in at least three domains: (1) private instrumental action as indicated by a person's level of income or success in a job search; (2) personal sense of well-being which may be measured using a variety of life satisfaction indicators; and (3) overall social cohesion which is observable in indicators of general social trust. Fortunately, the survey data used to estimate data for our

Figure 1. Comparison of two social capital measures by age, education, and social class



Note that the Erikson, Goldthorpe and Portocarero (EGP) Social Class schema is represented as follows: Group 1 - professionals and employers; Group 2 - the self-employed; Group 3 - routine non-manual workers such as clerks; Group 4 - skilled workers; and Group 5 indicates unskilled workers and routine manual employees. The mean estimates of access to social capital are derived from a Principal Components Analysis (PCA).

position estimator facilitates examining each of these three facets of differences in the extensity of ego networks. With regard to private instrumental action the overall ASC composed of extensity, upper Reachability and range (see below) correlates weakly with job mobility over the past five years ($r=.15$); and rather poorly with length of unemployment ($r=.08$) and level of current income ($r=.09$).

Turning now to individual's sense of well-being, correlation between ASC and a standard survey measure of life satisfaction is also rather low ($r=.09$). Moreover, network extensity is also not associated with life satisfaction as would be expected from current theory. Equally, frustrating is the fact that none of the structural measures of social capital are strongly associated with overall social cohesion as measured in standard indicators of social trust.

When control is made for respondent's occupational status a majority of effects of ego network composition disappear. It is not surprising since social status of alters is strongly interrelated to ego's. The correlation between

respondent's ISEI score with mean value of contacts is moderately strong ($r=.43$). One might explain such a relatively strong correlation on the basis of key mechanisms driving human interaction such as the "like-me principle." The central idea here is that people who see themselves as alike tend to interact more with one another than with all others. In short, similarity breeds connection (See the previous article by [Julia Häuberer](#) in this issue for an exploration of this phenomenon using the same survey data).

So, why is it important to measure personal social networks? Would social scientists not manage quite well with just knowing a person's social status? There are two answers to this question. First, access to social resources highlights the importance of the relational dimension to social stratification – a fact that is often under appreciated. All of the empirical evidence shows that access to social resources is most definitely not equally distributed within any modern society. Second, the evidence on private instrumental action (as indicated by occupational

mobility and income) demonstrates that social resources are valuable.

Overall, there is quite obviously the need for a more detailed examination of the partial network measures (namely the relationship between an ego's deviation from their alters in the PG) obtained using the position generator. One central consideration here is that access to social capital is a multi-dimensional phenomenon, and different facets of a social (ego) network undeniably have different impacts on our daily lives.

Inequality in social capital

The research work presented earlier may be extended by creating and testing a composite measure of 'Access to Social Capital' or ASC. Using a standard data reduction procedure called Principal Components Analysis (PCA) all three measures of ASC were reduced to a single underlying or latent factor.² With this composite ASC measure it is possible to map out how access to social capital varies on the basis of key structural factors, that is age, sex, level of education, and social class.

The top left window of Figure 1 shows the relationship between membership of different age cohorts and mean size of a person's (ego) network. The pattern in these figures indicates that as citizens get older there is still the potential to meet new people. However, there is a limit to this life-cycle effect. Those in the 35 to 44 years cohort have the most extensive social networks. Older people and especially those who are of retirement age seem to retreat back into the familiar as network extensity decreases after middle age. A similar pattern is observed for the upper reachability criterion of ASC.

A preliminary analysis of the relationship between the position generator results obtained in the Czech Republic and gender are different. In contrast to elsewhere, where there are significant differences in access to prestigious occupations this is not the case between Czech men and women (cf. Lin et al. 2001). One reason for such gender equality is the relatively high level of economic activity among women in the Czech Republic.

With regard to level of education and social class, the top right and bottom two windows of Figure 1 demonstrate there are significant differences between citizens. One might argue that with educational differences stem from higher levels of social contacts that are an inherent feature of attending schools of various types. Furthermore, having a higher level of education increases the probability of interaction with people of high occupational status. A similar argument could be made for the patterns associated with social class. Interestingly, those who are self-employed have more extensive social networks presumably this is a product of their business activities.

Who's connected?

The evidence from the implementation of an innovative method to measure access to social capital in the contemporary Czech Republic clearly demonstrates that not all citizens are the same. There are clear differences in the level and importance of social contacts, and these tend to favour those with greater levels of economic and social resources. In addition, there is evidence of differences in access to social capital that occur through the life cycle where there is a distinct curvilinear effect.

In contrast, the relationship between access to social capital, level of education, and social class are linear. A similar pattern (depending on whether a person is highly resourced or not) is also evident with the social class measure. Self-employed and professionals exhibit the highest level of access to social capital and this would seem to be primarily due to the nature of their work where they cultivate some of the most extended social networks.

In summary, personal resources (age, education, class) and motivation (as shown by the self-employed) have a strong impact on explaining differential access to social capital. In addition, the brief references to research work undertaken elsewhere illustrate the importance of national institutions. It is obvious that future research should focus on identifying the key mechanisms within countries, such as the Czech Republic, that drive access to social capital. And this work should be complemented by comparative research.

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Notes:

- 1 Standard deviation is a statistical measure of dispersion in a dataset. Technically, if the data is normally distributed (i.e. bell shaped around a mean) then two thirds of the data will be found within plus or minus one standard deviation scores of this mean score. In this specific situation these figures should be interpreted as follows. Two thirds of the Czech respondents interviewed in 2007 had access to people with ISEI scores lying between 35 and 53 on the job prestige scale. Lower standard deviation scores indicate lower levels of dispersion in the data, and indicate that the mean or average is a good summary of the data being examined. The converse is true for higher standard deviation estimates.
- 2 Principal Components Analysis (PCA) is one of a group of statistical techniques known often as Factor Analysis for exploring the relationship between a set of variables through an estimation of underlying concepts predicted by theory. Specifically, PCA transforms a set of variables that are

correlated into a smaller group of (un)correlated variables, or latent factors.

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Diversity in housing affordability and regional economic disparities – Is there a link?

Key words: housing, affordability, regional disparities, post-communist transition, economic and housing indicators

Economic change over the last two decades in the Czech Republic has resulted in substantial qualitative and quantitative changes in housing supply. This is especially evident in the extent and type of new houses constructed, and in patterns of household expenditure on housing.

The relative expenditure of Czech households on housing almost doubled from 1990 to 2003. Relative expenditure on housing is defined as the average amount spent on housing out of total household budget each month (and expressed as a percentage). In fact, housing expenditure has gradually become one of the main items of spending within Czech households since 1990. Moreover, since 2000 there has been a substantial increase in the level of inequality in this form of spending between the richest and poorest households (Lux et al. 2005). Differences in household spending also

differ among Czech citizens on the basis of other criteria such as region.

Regions in the Czech Republic are generally defined in terms of the official administrative divisions used by Eurostat, a specialist branch of the European Commission. Eurostat's 'NUTS 3 Regions' divide the Czech Republic into fourteen units where Prague due its large population is treated as an independent region. As Figure 1 demonstrates these fourteen regions exhibit considerable economic differences in economic performance as measured by criteria such as unemployment rate and relative per capita Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Moreover, it is important to note that these inter-regional economic differences increased during the economic transition process of the 1990s (Hampl 2001, Blažek, Csank 2007).

Link between economic and housing inequalities

As regional economic inequalities have increased there has also been a simultaneous growth in regional differences in the market price of owner-occupied and cooperative housing. A similar trend has also occurred with "market rent." Both of these trends in the housing segment of the economy have directly contributed to the emergence and growth in regional disparities in the financial affordability of housing. This factor will hereafter be referred to as "housing affordability." Excessively high regional disparities in housing affordability could have a number of important effects such as: (1) impede labour mobility; (2) influence the demographic behaviour of young people in terms of natality, household formation etc.; (3) increase the likelihood that more people will find housing to be unaffordable.

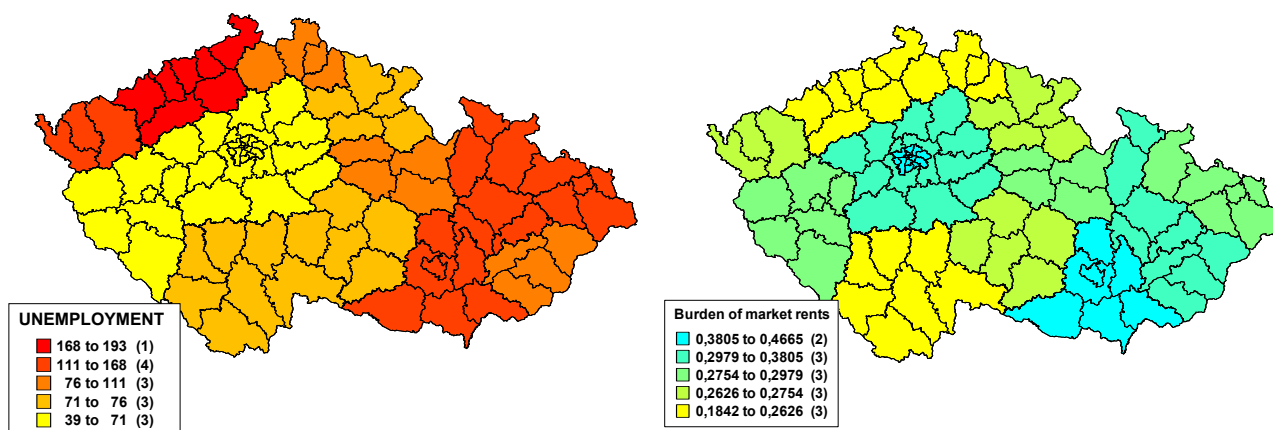
In this article we will focus on one key aspect of this process. The goal here is to see if regional disparities in housing affordability are greater than the economic disparities observed between regions. This examination will be undertaken using data from 2000 to 2006 period. In addition, the question of if there is some association or link between regional differences in housing affordability and economic performance will be explored.

Figuring out what's affordable

There are essentially three basic methods of analysing housing affordability: the indicator, reference, and residual approaches (Hui 2001).

The *Indicator Method* measures the financial burden on households represented by expenditures on housing. The indicators used are generally ratio measures of housing expenditure as a proportion of total household income. From this perspective, "households face a housing affordability problem ... when the ratio of expenditures for securing adequate housing to total net income exceeds a certain percentage threshold." The most common indicator used for estimating the affordability of rental housing is

Figure 1. Regional differences in level of unemployment and the burden of market rents in the Czech Republic in 2006 (Czech Republic=100)



Source: Czech Statistical Office, Institute for Regional Information, and the authors own calculations.

the percentage spent on (net) rent or housing as a percentage of total household expenditure. This measure is denoted here as the 'Expenditure burden.' In contrast, the *Reference Method* does not use an absolute measure of housing affordability as is the case with Expenditure burden measure. The Reference Method adopts a comparative or relative approach to measuring housing affordability. Typically, this method compares (a) the financial situation in two housing sectors, or (b) the affordability of housing for two segments of the population. Consequently, the reference method creates housing affordability measures based on comparative criteria such as the average level of rent in the private sector, or the funds required to secure housing for a specific household type such as a family where the main earner is an unskilled worker on low wages and there is more than one child in the household. The *Residual Method* is based on estimating the amount of "residual income" within a household. Residual income is the amount of net household income left over once housing expenses have been paid.

Czech Republic sui generis?

The analysis of housing affordability in the Czech Republic is unique three main reasons.

- Legacy of housing policy from the Communist era (1948-1989)
- Inadequate reform of the rental housing market after 1989
- Privatisation of publicly owned domestic properties (municipal flats) to occupants for prices that did not reflect their true market value

Each of these three factors are important because they divided Czech society into two basic groups on the basis of (a) access to housing, and (b) financial ability to secure affordable accommodation.

The first group is composed of households enjoying the advantages of "privileged" housing.

This group includes people paying 'regulated rent'; those who acquired their owner-occupied or cooperative housing before 1989; and individuals who had the opportunity to buy their own housing as part of the privatisation of municipal flats, where such properties were (and still are) sold far below their market value.

In contrast, the second group lives in "unprivileged" housing. This group includes people that are paying needlessly high market rents. Such rents are high because of rent regulation provisions in the law. As a result of such market distortions landlords opt for fixed term leases where rent is set on the basis of supply and demand and tenants enjoy less protection under law from unscrupulous landlords. In addition, the unprivileged housing group also includes divorced couples and adult children who share accommodation with others because of low incomes or failure to inherit "privileges" from parents. Lastly, there are those who people who acquired their owner-occupied or cooperative housing under market conditions and paid a market price for it.

In the Czech Republic there are unfortunately no up-to-date data files that would enable a simple analysis of regional disparities in housing affordability, i.e. an analysis of real disparities based on information about real households and their real expenditures and incomes. It is possible to obtain a national picture of housing affordability by using the Family Budget Survey (FBS) or Statistics on Income and Living Conditions from the Czech Statistical Office. However, this data has important limitations due to the relatively small sample sizes and quality of data produced from using a quota sampling methodology. In short, such data is not useful for studying regional disparities.

A new methodology

An alternative approach was therefore used to analyse the regional differences in housing

affordability. Here we created types of households and types of housing, and an “adequate” type of housing was assigned to each type of household. In order to measure the affordability the following strategies were adopted.

- For “privileged” and “unprivileged” rental housing the ‘Expenditure burden’ indicator was used
- For “unprivileged” owner occupied housing the ‘price-to-income ratio’ and the ‘lending multiplier’ was used

The ‘price-to-income ratio’ is the ratio of the price of average flat sold on the market in a given period to the average annual net household income in a given period. In contrast, the ‘lending multiplier’ is the ratio of total costs that a household would spend on the purchase of an average flat or house. Here mortgage payments are compared to average annual net household income.

The methodology for calculating the indicators of housing affordability and “tracking” such disparities in housing affordability across both regions and time is in theory a straightforward task that may be summarised as follows:

1. Create a typology of households
2. Calculate net household incomes
3. Create a typology of housing types
4. Determine average values for market prices and rents
5. Assign housing types to household types
6. Estimate indicators of housing affordability
7. Analyse regional disparities

While the technical detail in undertaking each of these tasks involves consideration of a number of important details, such technical issues will not concern us here for the sake of brevity. Our key interest is to (a) determine the relative sizes of regional economic and housing affordability disparities, and (b) see if there is any association or link between both types of disparities.

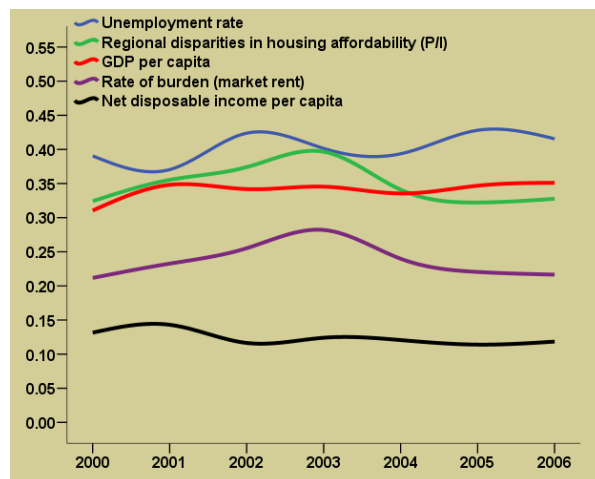
Evidence of distinct regional effects?

In order to compare the changes in value of all our measures of regional economic and housing affordability disparities a Coefficient of Variation measure is used. This summary statistic is defined as the ratio of the standard deviation to the mean, and this measure is used when comparing datasets with different units or very disparate mean values. A coefficient of variation is a dimensionless number implying that it must be interpreted in terms of the mean value of the data examined. The two main disadvantages of this summary statistic are its sensitivity to small changes when the mean is close to zero, and it cannot be used to construct confidence intervals.

Figure 1 presents trends in the coefficients of variation for (a) the expenditure burden on “market” rent, (b) the average affordability of owner-occupied housing (P/I), (c) per capita GDP, (d) net disposable income, and (e) unemployment rate. One key feature evident in Figure 1 is that the coefficient of variation values for all the economic indicators, except the per capita net disposable income of households indicator, are higher than the values of the coefficient of variation for the expenditure burden on rental housing.

This pattern may be interpreted as showing that regional disparities in economic performance between 2000 and 2006 were greater than the regional disparities in the potential affordability of “market” rental housing. On the other hand, regional disparities in the affordability of owner-occupied housing (P/I) are higher than regional disparities in economic performance. The only exceptions here are the regional disparities in the unemployment rate, and in 2005-2006 the regional disparities in per capita GDP.

Figure 1. Trends in regional variations in housing affordability and economic performance



Source: Czech Statistical Office, Institute for Regional Information, and the authors own calculations. Note that estimates are coefficients of variation across the fourteen regions of the Czech Republic calculated annually.

Significantly, the coefficients of variation for housing affordability and indicators of economic performance do not share the same trend over time. To explore why this is the case, we calculated Pearson correlation coefficients for the coefficients of variation for our indicators of housing affordability indicators of economic performance.

Having undertaken this analysis, it is not possible to identify a specific type of association or link between regional disparities in housing affordability and regional disparities in general economic performance. This is a surprising and somewhat perplexing result which will be examined in further research. However, one possible explanation for this ‘lack of pattern’

could be that the time series data on which these correlations were examined is simply too short to yield robust results. In summary, the link between housing affordability and regional economic conditions remains an open question for the time being.

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Notes:

1 For more information, see <http://www.disparity.cz>

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Good Fences Do Good Neighbours Make: Czech–German Cross Border Cooperation in the Extended European Union

Key words: European integration, border, cross-border cooperation, Czech Republic, Germany, Europeanization

One of the central features of the European integration process in Western Europe is its facilitation of the free transfer of capital, services and people throughout the entire territory of the European Union (EU). Political

integration, however, has fallen behind the onward march of economic integration. This disconnection has had important consequences because while the role of the nation state has been decreasing, the strength of national and regional identities has endured. This is not to suggest that such identities are unchanging, there has been a continuous process of change in identity with the growth of globalisation.

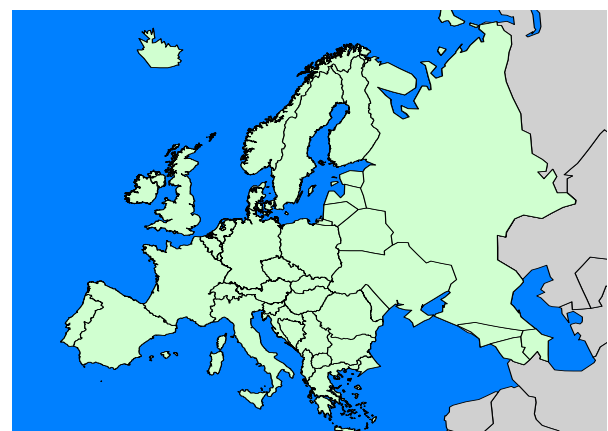
Following the fall of communism in 1989, the borders of the countries on either side of (and indeed within) the "Iron curtain" such as Czechoslovakia and the two Germany's fell. Notwithstanding, key developments such as the re-unification of Germany in 1990 and the Velvet Divorce yielding the disintegration of Czechoslovakia in 1993, common borders in Central Europe began to evolve new roles from 1990. This process of change is particularly evident in the case of relations between the Czech Republic and Germany.

More generally, one may say that borders within the Europe Union today serve primarily as a frame of reference for an evolving system of both trans-national and multi-level governance. From the Czech perspective this process reached its peak at the end of 2007 when the Czech Republic joined the Schengen system. Now it is possible to travel across many borders within the EU without the need for multiple border checks. Such developments have important consequences for the effectiveness of the EU.

Collapsing borders and a new political culture

What is needed today is a 'new' political culture that is better adapted to a situation in which the EU now operates. Whereas the 'old' political culture favoured a linear evolution, top-down harmonization, and a monopoly of policy ideas; the 'new' political culture aims to support diversity and competition as organizing principles of the emerging European polity (Majone 2007).

Figure 1. Europe and its mosaic of borders



Such trends do not belie the fact that the EU consists of a heterogeneous group of twenty-seven members. One need only think of the differences between neighbours such as Germany and the Czech Republic. Although there is a common heritage of political and

cultural values, nonetheless each member state maintains its own unique institutional, cultural and political traditions that underpin member states' distinct political positions and opinions.

This heterogeneity is especially evident today following the last two enlargements of the EU in 2004 and 2007. Within the last three years twelve additional states have entered the European Union. Importantly, a majority (ten) of these new member states have undergone both political and economic transition processes over the last two decades. Because of the significant differences between East and West, the EU has had to invest a lot of resources to moderate and overcome political differences. In some respects, this process of equalisation has been an important facet of creeping Europeanization.

Europeanization, borders and history

The gradual Europeanization of relations across the EU is also evident in current relations between ordinary Czech and German citizens. These links generally centre on civic and institutional forms of cross-border cooperation. Despite considerable progress in this process of rapprochement, the effects of a Europe divided along Cold War lines continues to shape the nature and extent of relations between citizens on either side of the Czech-German border.

One very influential European sociologist has made the important point that boundaries not only separate, they also link (Luhmann 1982). Euro-regions established along the Czech-German border have helped to generate social capital and increased inter-personal trust, creating the *conditio sine qua non* for the dynamic development of local communities within the framework of opportunities offered by the process of European integration at both the local and regional levels (note, Kazmierkiewicz 2004). The limits of such cross-border dynamism are often linked to three key factors: (1) language, (2) prevailing beliefs, attitudes and values, and (3) economic differences.

Notwithstanding, the limiting effects of these three factors and the often divisive legacies of the past cross-border cooperation has been increasing across the EU. One interesting example of such progress is the 'Czech-German Declaration' of 1997. This document was signed after an extensive and sometimes emotionally charged debate. Historical memory and distinct ethnic identity, or otherness, continue to impede closer Czech-German relations.

In general terms, difficulties in improving cross-border relations stem from a number of difficulties. For example, it is rather difficult for any cross-border partner to both understand and anticipate a neighbour's problems. Furthermore, access to resources to attenuate the source of such cross-border difficulties is often problematic. Clearly it is much easier to overcome gaps in factual knowledge such as language skills, educational curricula and textbooks, etc. than it is to reduce the socio-psychological barriers that have their origins in

long standing beliefs, attitudes and values. Within Czech-German relations the memories of the past continue to play an important role in cross-border developments.

For those who advocate the benefits of integrating domestic and foreign policies, the Czech-German system of relations provides a good case study of where improvements could fruitfully be made. For Czechs mention of the Sudeten Germans expelled from Czechoslovakia at the end of the Second World War, and restitution of their confiscated property, often leads to much rhetorical and unhelpful bluster. Perhaps this is not all that surprising as the tendency to recount past sins and engage in 'blame games' is a widespread feature of inter-group relations of all types. One scholar has argued in this respect, that of all the continuities in the factors which influence foreign policy, historical memory is probably the least consistent (Patterson 1996).

Regional cooperation and Cross Border Cooperation (CBC) efforts are not only determined by historical legacies, but are also strongly influenced by decentralization initiatives. Such initiatives are in turn determined by changes in national, European and global trends. In fact, it is vitally important to recognise that the domestic processes of nation building, economic transformation and democratization are equally important as contextual factors as the EU and globalization are for promoting cross-border cooperation (Kirchner and Sperling 2000).

Bringing neighbours together

Within Central and Eastern Europe regional forms of cooperation among states with common economic, political, and cultural ties are fundamentally important. For the Czech Republic such networks of cooperation are an essential building block in its domestic, foreign and security policies. With the growth of cross-border links often going hand-in-hand with Europeanization the nature of Czech-German relations have been transformed. Moreover, for the first time in modern history the Czech Republic and Germany are now members of the same military alliance within NATO and the European Security and Defence Policy.

While there are many institutional frameworks that bind the governments and citizens of the Czech Republic and Germany together there is still much progress to be made. In this respect, one may argue that there are three factors that characterize the attitude of Czech citizens toward increasing cross-border cooperation with Germany:

- (1) Active support for cross-border cooperation
- (2) Suspicion and wariness toward 'too much cooperation'
- (3) Recognition of the importance of closer ties with Germany, while attempting to down play some of the pessimism associated with this fact

The many different forms of cross-border cooperation often also act as key components in regional cooperation programmes. Such programmes aim to reduce economic, cultural and social divides. These initiatives have increased greatly since the collapse of communist rule. Within this framework the opening of borders among Central and East European states has contributed immensely to accelerating these states integration into the wider supranational framework of the European Union prior to accession.

The increasing importance of cross-border and regional cooperation has in turn led to increasing autonomy for both regional and local governments. These lower tiers of governance co-operate on sub-national and trans-boundary projects, thereby effectively managing parts of a states foreign policy at the local level. Consequently, using insights from research on multi-level governance would seem to be a fruitful approach to the formal study of the European integration project. Within the study of cross border relations the way in which multi-level governance operates through sub-national actors and political elites represents an important avenue for future research (Grix and Houžvička 2005).

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Czech Sociological Data Archive (SDA)

Does Who You Ask Determine the Answers You Get?

Key words: sample surveys, response rate, non-response, item non-response, data quality, response trends

The capacity of any quantitative analysis to provide evidence about social reality depends largely on the quality of the data gathered. Mass surveys based on interviewing samples of the population are among the most commonly used sources of data, and the quality of their analysis derives directly from how well these surveys represent their target populations. The level of representativeness depends on a number of factors. The level of coverage of the target population, the size of the sample, and the appropriateness of the sampling method used are key concerns. Moreover, the degree to which researchers are able to reach and interview the selected respondents is of fundamental importance. Consequently, survey response rates are one of the key indicators of the quality of all survey data.

The majority of surveys involve attaining the voluntary cooperation of respondents. However, practical considerations such as (a) the unavailability of appropriate sampling frames, and (b) regulations pertaining to the protection of personal data in many countries, require the application of complicated sample designs. In addition different groups in the population maintain lifestyles that make it difficult to contact their members. There are also a number of organisational factors that can result in the failure to interview selected respondents. Therefore, achieving a satisfactory response rate can pose quite a problem. The successful processing of all the distributed questionnaires thereby achieving a one hundred per cent response rate rarely occurs in practice.

Measuring the degree of participation

General response rate essentially involves the ratio of the number of completed survey questionnaires received back and processed in comparison to the total number of questionnaires distributed to eligible addresses in the sample. Complementary survey non-response is the failure to obtain data from the entire sample selected for interview. There are two main types of survey non-response. Firstly, there is "item non-response" where some respondents do not answer specific questions in an interview. Secondly, there is "unit non-response" where specific individuals (or households) selected for interview, but who do not take part in the survey. Here the focus will be on unit non-response as this represents the most salient problem for all survey research.

Eligibility of addresses depends critically on the accuracy of the sampling frame. This involves ascertaining the number of incorrect, non-existing, and non-residential addresses. These

deficiencies in the sampling frame are not used into calculation of response rates. However, all other reasons resulting into failure to interview selected units are counted as non-response. Different methods of calculation of general response rate differ in dealing with partial interviews and units of unclear eligibility.

The standard measures are codified in rules published by the associations AAPOR and WAPOR (AAPOR/WAPOR 2006) and basic formula for calculation of the response rate is the following:

$$RR = \frac{I}{I + P + R + NC + O}$$

Where:

RR	=	Response Rate
I	=	Interviews completed
P	=	Partial interviews
R	=	Refusals
NC	=	Non-Contacts
O	=	Others that are eligible

There are several sources of non-response with potentially different impacts on the quality of survey data. Consequently, in addition to general response rate several other measures are also used to evaluate particular problems associated with why specific people selected for interview do not participate in a survey:

- *Non-Response Rate* is the inverse of the response rate, i.e. 1-RR, and it is the proportion of all eligible units from the sample that do not participate in a survey
- *Co-operation Rate* refers to proportion of completed interviews from all contacted units from the sample. In surveys on individuals, it is often measured on both the level of the household and the individual. This measure gives information on the willingness of the population to participate in a survey
- *Refusal Rate* is the number of cases (respondents or households) who refused to co-operate in the survey or withdrew their co-operation during the interview as a proportion of all eligible units in the sample
- *Contact Rate* is a ratio of all non-contacts from all eligible units in the sample

All of these measures are often reported in a percentage format. It should be pointed out, that complex monitoring of response rates is only possible in probability surveys. In reality, many important surveys are based on quota samples. Although the number of refusals can be reported also for quota samples, it gives only limited information on the non-response problem. Moreover, in quota surveys interviewers are less motivated to interview hard to reach and less compliant members of the public. Therefore, the potential for error is greater in quota than in probability samples. Greater uncertainty about the non-response problem and its potential impact on data quality

are some of the arguments put forward against the use of quota sampling (Kaase 1999).

On the other hand, there is reason to think that this difference between probability and quota sampling is overdrawn. This is because with both probability and non-probability sample surveys, researchers are required to deal with the same set of methodological questions. The main difference that arises is that researchers have different resources at their disposal to evaluate the technical features of data quality (Groves 2006: 667-668).

Impact of non-response on the quality of survey data

A low response rate is often regarded as one of the main sources of variable variance and bias in mass survey estimates. However, the linkage between non-response rates and survey errors is not direct, and this link can in some situations be absent (Groves 2006).

From the perspective of statistical inference survey non-response has an impact on point estimates, in terms of introducing bias and inflating variance (Dillman et al. 2002: 4-6; Särndal and Lundström 2005, Groves 2004: 158-159). However, it must be stressed that estimations of error caused by non-response are theoretical, as any precise assessment of their impact is usually problematic. This is because non-response error does not stem from non-response rate as such, but is the result of the extent of differences between the attitudes and characteristics of respondents and non-respondents in respect to the measured phenomenon. At the same time the relevant data on non-respondents is by definition missing.

If the attitudes of respondents and non-respondents are the same then a low response rate does not matter. Several empirical studies confirm this fact describing situations when higher non-response did not lead to higher biases (Keeter et al. 2000; Merkle and Edelman 2002: 253-255; Groves 2006). However, many analyses have shown that response rates are correlated with population characteristics. Therefore, high non-response rates are likely to bias survey estimates.

However, the impact of these correlations does not usually invalidate the results of a survey, which can often be corrected through weighting (Stoop et al. 2000; Keeter et al. 2000). At the same time these relationships depend heavily on the research topic, and they do not affect all variables equally. In short, the impact of non-response rate on survey data quality cannot be generalised in any straightforward manner (Zaletel and Vehovar 1998; Joye 2004).

While non-response error cannot be ignored, it is often not possible to make any reliable estimate of its size. Although many researchers consider the sample survey method to be relatively robust, non-response has the potential to be the source of some unpleasant surprises.

One of the consequences of this lack of transparency is that non-response error is not usually taken into account in survey estimates and statistical tests. However, a low response rate is often regarded as sufficient reason for commissioning agencies, researchers, journal editors, and other users of data to question the accuracy of survey research results. This is reflected in the substantial effort invested in developing and applying methods aimed at increasing response rates and attenuating non-response error.

Non-response trends

There is a consensus among scholars and pollsters that response-rate trends have been declining, and that this fact poses one of the most serious problems affecting contemporary quantitative social science research (Bradburn 1992; Bogart 1987; Särndal and Lundström 2005: 11-15).

Two main reasons are most often cited as the cause of this decline in response rates. The first reason paradoxically stems from the boom in the research industry. The number of surveys undertaken each year has been increasing for decades. According to estimates in advanced industrial countries the majority of potential respondents have been surveyed often several times, and the population could be described as "over-surveyed". People moreover have difficulty distinguishing between surveys and direct marketing, which competes with survey research by infringing on the privacy of respondents. The result is an overall increase in refusals. The second reason relates to changes in lifestyle, which make it increasingly difficult to reach the respondents selected for interview, and this leads to an increase in non-contact rates.

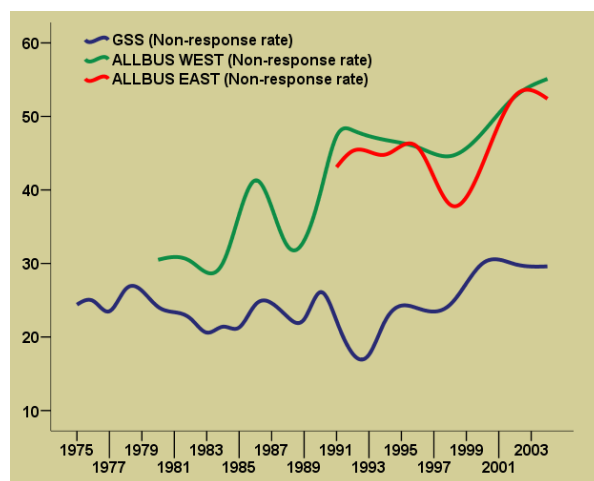
Steeh (1981) reports a large increase in the number of refusals in survey research in the United States between 1952 and 1979. This decline in response rates has subsequently been confirmed in numerous analyses focusing on different survey programmes in various fields of research and in various countries. However, it is not easy to document general trends because: (a) there are big differences in survey methods; (b) the situation varies across countries; and (c) different research topics exhibit different non-response rates. Furthermore, there have been few long-term research programmes based on a stable survey research methodology that would enable a deeper evaluation of this phenomenon. Those that do exist do not encompass all fields of research, and moreover their analyses have produced ambiguous results.

Several analyses of trends in response rates over time and cross-nationally have confirmed the existence of a general decline (Baim 1991; de Leeuw and de Heer 2002). In contrast, other studies while accepting the down turn in response rates, they express doubts about the continuity of this decline (de Heer 1999; Smith 1995; Steeh et al. 2001; Groves and Couper

1998: 156-172). According to survey practitioners it is still possible to attain high response rates, but it requires more effort and higher costs in organising the research (Sheatsley 1987).

This observation can be readily seen in the outcomes of surveys that emphasise the use of a rigorous data quality methodology. This is typical in the surveys conducted by statistical offices or by some academic research programmes (de Heer 1999; Groves 2004: 145-153; Smith 1995). These studies regularly achieve a response rate of at least 70 per cent in countries where a significant fall in response rates has been registered.

Figure 1. Non-response trends in the General Social Surveys of the United States (GSS) and Germany (ALLBUS)



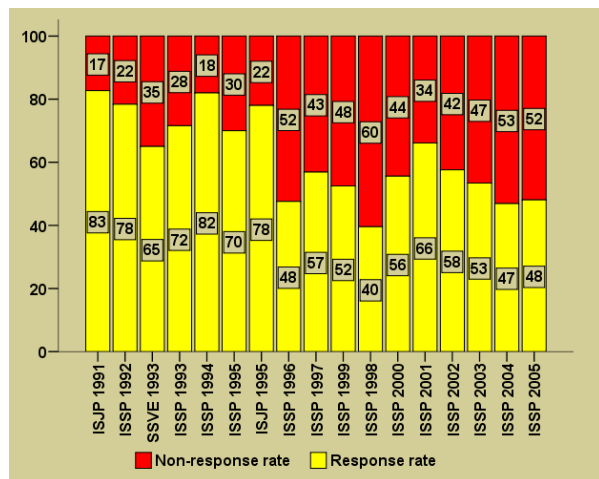
Source: ICPSR/NORC, Davis, Smith and Marsden (2005); and ALLBUS Datenservice (GESIS ZA). Data interpolated for years where no survey was undertaken. See note 5 for more details.

As an example Figure 1 shows non-response trends in two important survey programmes, the General Social Survey (GSS) in the United States, and the Allbus social research survey in Germany. For the sake of comparison the data presented in Figure 2 shows equivalent trends in non-response rates within the Czech Republic over the last two decades. It should be emphasised that the evidence shown in these two figures refers to academic research, where special care is taken with non-response rates. Non-response rates in commercial polls of the type reported in newspapers is likely to be much higher, although this fact is rarely reported.

However, there tends to be enormous differences in survey response rates when different methodologies are used. The Council for Marketing and Opinion Research (CMOR) conducts the 'Respondent Cooperation and Industry Image Study' and monitors the response rates of many different surveys.³ Among other things, its studies reveal that the response rates of commercial telephone surveys conducted in the United States is often below 25 per cent. Steeh et al. (2001) studied the response rate of commercial surveys conducted using Random Digit Dialling (RDD) method. According to Steeh et al.'s findings, in the 1960s

and 1970s there was a sharp increase in non-response and most especially in refusal rates. This trend subsided in the 1980s and 1990s, and now survey response rates appear to be stable. However, the nature of non-response has also been changing to the detriment of measurement accuracy. This has been caused by an increase in overall non-contact rates, and decreases in refusals especially in metropolitan areas.

Figure 2. Non-response in selected academic surveys in the Czech Republic, 1991-2005 (per cent)



Source: Sociological Data Archive, Institute of Sociology AS CR. See note 4 for explanations of the survey acronyms.

Treatment of the problem

Statistical theory and practice offer two basic approaches to addressing non-response: (a) imputation and (b) weighting. Imputation means substituting the values for missing units with estimates developed on the basis of auxiliary information obtained in the research or from other sources. But in the case of unit non-response this is often not feasible. The most frequently used weighting procedures are based on comparing the socio-demographic characteristics of surveys with those published from official statistical sources. On the basis of observed differences weights are assigned to cases in the data file with the objective of matching the profile of the sample dataset with the known composition of the target population. However, Joye (2004) has shown that variables such as propensity to participate in community activities and individual's degree of social integration have an indirect relationship to the "objective" criteria normally used in weighting. However, these participation and integration variables can be strongly correlated with the propensity toward non-response.

Post fieldwork adjustments of survey data can reduce the level of error, but such procedures cannot fully make up for data that is missing. However, there are a number of methods used to improve response rates, which are applied in the survey preparation phase and in the course of data collection. Among the most frequently used strategies are: (1) advance letters of

introduction; (2) providing incentives to respondents; (3) increasing the number of contact attempts and call-backs; (4) adopting techniques of refusal conversion; (5) adapting the timing of fieldwork to match respondents lifestyles; (6) constructing questionnaires with due regard to respondent burden and likely interest in the content of the survey interview; (7) improving interviewer selection and training; and (8) utilising mixed modes of interviewing, etc. (Biemer and Lyberg 2003: 91-115).

It should be borne in mind that the objective here is not only to increase the response rate, but primarily to reduce non-response error. Some methods can help increase response rates, but they can also have unintended consequences such as enlarging the level of bias in a survey. Techniques of refusal conversion, for example, do not help if the main source of bias is low representation of hard to reach groups within the population. Similarly, incentives to encourage respondents to participate must be applied cautiously, because different groups of the population respond to "prodding" in different ways.

It should also be remembered that a key issue of survey data quality is efficiency. In short, efforts devoted to securing survey accuracy need to be tempered by cost considerations. Therefore, careful thought needs to be given to the kinds of remedial methods implemented.

In summary, survey response rates are affected by a large number of mutually inter-connected factors. Some of these factors such as social context and the respondent's lifestyle are beyond the researcher's control, but they are important sources of potential biases caused by non-response. Addressing other factors such as the performance of interviewers is not only a task within the scope of how a single survey is organised, but is often the result of long-term efforts to improve data quality. Successful strategies for reducing non-response error are therefore usually based on the combined use of various methods, the selection of which depends on external circumstances.

Fortunately, there is a substantial literature on the effects associated with the use of various surveying methods. In addition, theories on survey participation provide the necessary conceptual foundations for assessing the strategies aimed at reducing survey non-response (Groves and Couper 1998).

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Notes:

- 1 More information can be found in the following article: Krejčí, J.: 'Non-Response in Probability Sample Surveys in the Czech Republic,' *Sociologický časopis/Czech Sociological Review*, 2007, 43(3), 561-587.

Available at: http://sreview.soc.cas.cz/upl/archiv/files/512_3-07%20krejci.pdf

- 2 AAPOR = American Association for Public Opinion Research, and WAPOR = World Association for Public Opinion Research.
- 3 See the research section of the CMOR Web site: <http://www.cmor.org/>
- 4 ISJP = Czech surveys within the International Social Justice Project; ISSP = Czech surveys within the International Social Survey Programme, SSVE = Czech survey within the Social Stratification in Eastern Europe project; ISJP 1991: Social Justice; ISSP 1992: Social Inequalities; SSVE 1993: Social Stratification in Eastern Europe After 1989; ISSP 1993: Environment; ISSP 1994: Family and Gender Roles; ISSP 1995: National Identity; ISJP 1995: Social Justice; ISSP 1996: Role of the Government; ISSP 1997: Work Orientations; ISSP 1999: Social Inequalities and Justice; ISSP 1998: Religion; ISSP 2000: Environment; ISSP 2001: Social Networks; ISSP 2002: Family and Gender Roles; ISSP 2003: National Identity; ISSP 2004: Citizenship; ISSP 2005: Work Orientations.
- 5 Before 1990 the Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften (ALLBUS) general social survey was implemented only in the Federal Republic of Germany. From 1991 the response rates have been reported separately for the East and West German states respectively and denoted here as ALLBUS East and ALLBUS West.

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The Public Opinion Research Centre (CVVM)

Does the Media Have A Long-Term Impact on the Public Agenda?

Key words: news, public agenda, agenda setting, media effects, Acapulco typology

An influential American writer, journalist, and political commentator Walter Lippmann, who was also an informal adviser to several US Presidents, relates in the first chapter of his book *Public Opinion* (1922) a story dating back to 1914 where inhabitants of a remote island receive news of World War I only six weeks after its started (Lippmann 1997). The Island's community of English, French and Germans had co-existed for more than a month not knowing that their countries had officially become enemies. They learned from newspapers about the declaration of war made more than forty days before. Lippman's story is now viewed as a classic example of the media's influence and its ability to form the reality we live in. This story also forms a useful base line for considerations about the potential of the media for setting the public agenda.

Strong or weak media effects

Ideas suggesting that the media has the ability to influence people's values, attitudes, and behaviour were put forward in both Europe and America during the twentieth century. In this respect, Bernard Cohen's (1963) conjecture that the "media need not be successful in determining what people should think, but what they should be thinking about." Here the emphasis is on the cognitive effects of media in contrast to its persuasive impact. However, this conjecture was not tested in an empirical manner until the late 1960s.¹ At this juncture, scholars rejected the idea that the media had strong short-term effects, because large studies carried out in the 1940s and 1950s did not support such an argument. Nonetheless, other media researchers argued that citizens are influenced by repeated exposure to mass

communication content (Lowery, DeFleur 1995). However, this type of media effect was difficult to demonstrate.

The basis for new research on the cognitive effects of the media were laid in the late 1960s, by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, in the United States. Their first project funded by the National Association of Broadcasters was based on a simple idea.² They decided to compare the media content in the 1968 presidential election campaigns run by Hubert Humphrey (D) and Richard Nixon (R).³ More specifically, McCombs and Shaw focused on the campaign issues that the voters (or media consumers) thought were most important.

Agenda setting and the Acapulco typology

This pioneering research laid the foundations for the well-known concept of *Agenda Setting*. The Chapel Hill Study (1968) analysed the content of a twenty four day sample of TV, newspaper and new magazine. In addition, a sample of one hundred respondents who declared themselves to be "undecideds" were also interviewed about the campaign. This research was later criticised largely because of the selection bias inherent in the choice of respondents. Consequently, this campaign effects study was repeated four years later using a more sophisticated research methodology. In the Charlotte Study (1972) a greater emphasis was put on (a) the identification of information resources used by the electorate, and (b) the influence of respondent type on receptivity to messages carried in the media.⁴

Figure 1. The Acapulco typology

<i>Measure of public salience</i>		
<i>Focus of attention</i>	<i>Aggregated data</i>	<i>Individual data</i>
<i>Entire agenda</i>	Perspective 1: Competition	Perspective 2: Automaton
<i>Single item on the agenda</i>	Perspective 3: Natural history	Perspective 4: Cognitive portrait

Source: McCombs (2004: 31).

The concept of agenda setting has remained influential in the intervening forty years within many social science disciplines such as political science, sociology, and media studies. Moreover, the agenda setting research program has expanded and adopted a wide range of differing methodologies. An overview of research exploring the inter-connections between media and public agendas may be represented in a succinct manner with the "Acapulco typology" (McCombs 2004) as shown in Figure 1.

The original Chapel Hill Study (1968) investigated the agenda as a whole, and aggregated respondents. As Figure 1 illustrates within the first perspective the focus is on competition. Here group of issues are seen to

compete for a place on the public agenda. The second perspective, called automaton, is similar to the original studies of McCombs and Shaw (1968, 1972), but the focus here is centred on what individual citizens see as being the most important public issues. This process is called automaton since it is built on a simple view of how citizens are strongly influenced by media messages and, in its own way, it represents a reiteration of the 'hypodermic needle theory' (McCombs 2004).

This typology is based on the assumption of two bipolar dimensions. The first dimension highlights differences between the media agenda and the complete public agenda. The second dimension draws attention to the significance of issue salience and focuses on distinguishing between collective and individual level measurements of the relative importance of different issues.

Figure 1 shows that within the third perspective research centres on the role of single issues on the public agenda. This perspective is similar to the first one in that it makes use of aggregated data. Its name ("natural history") refers to the fact that it deals with the development of a single issue within the media and public agendas. Lastly, the fourth perspective looks at the individual level where the factors determining the salience (or importance) of specific issues are explored.

McCombs (2004: 32) points out that agenda setting research over the last four decades has gathered lots of evidence from the first and third perspectives, and he concludes from this fact that:

Perspective 1 provides useful, comprehensive descriptions of the rich, ever-changing mix of mass media content and public opinion at particular points in time. This perspective strives to describe the world as-is. Perspective 3 provides useful descriptions of the natural history of a single issue, but at the expense of the larger social context in which this issue exists.

However, it is important to note that the Acapulco typology, as shown in Figure 1, does not exhaust all research options for studying agenda setting. However, for McCombs (2004) this typology has the merit of introducing a certain system into the traditional quantitative approach to this stream of research.

To Acapulco and Beyond ...

For example, Nečas (2006) contends that in the Czech context, agenda setting research has also involved qualitative approaches dealing with mechanisms known as "priming" and "framing."⁵ The study of priming and framing effects are strongly based on approaches used in psychology. Here it is argued that the media's influence over citizens derives from the way issues are presented by the media to the public. This is evident in the selection, ordering and presentation of stories. Moreover, media

consumers are seen to respond to those facets of an issue that are emphasised by the media, and also to the overall way in which an issue is presented (Trampota 2006).

In other words, what is the interpretive framework used by the media as shown by their use of headings, subheadings, photographs and their inscriptions and highlighted quotations? This particular stream of research which focuses on these qualitative aspects of issue presentation is called "Attribute Agenda Setting." In this respect, McCombs (2004) has noted that "Frames have been described as 'schemata of interpretation'. Attribute agenda setting focuses on the ability of the media to influence how we picture objects."

The addition of a qualitative dimension to the more traditional approaches to Agenda Setting research stems from a recognition that there are limits to existing quantitative research approaches. Qualitative approaches to agenda setting research involve not only differences in research methods, but also a different understanding of what is the essential nature of agenda setting itself. This is evident in: (a) The reformulation of concepts developed in other disciplines, e.g. use of the concept of "contextualisation" from literary analysis and linguistics; and (b) Connecting research on media message construction with study of the media consumers receive and interpret these messages.

Overall, the idea that the mass media have a strong influence on their audience through the choice of stories they consider newsworthy and the way in which they present the "daily news" has sparked a lot of research. While the empirical evidence indicates that agenda setting effects do exist, there has been controversy over the power of such effects. For this reason a variety of research approaches have been adopted. To date, there is no definitive answer as to whether the media have a long term impact on the public agenda.

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Notes:

- 1 Bernard Cohen gave this conjecture in his book *Foreign Policy* (1963).
- 2 This is an association of radio and television broadcasters and is primarily composed of private media organisations.
- 3 This research examined five daily newspapers, two television channels and two news magazines (ibid.).
- 4 The main analysis undertaken in the Charlotte Study consisted of 227 registered voters, who were questioned three times, and 24 African American voters, who were later added to the panel in October and November (Lowery and DeFleur 1995).

5 As pointed out by Entman (2008) "the essence of framing is sizing – magnifying or shrinking elements of the depicted reality to make them more or less salient."

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Catching Seriously Bad Dudes: US Counter-terrorism Strategies

Key words: terrorism, counter-terrorism, US, 9/11, Al Qaeda, anti-terrorism legislation, intelligence, WMD

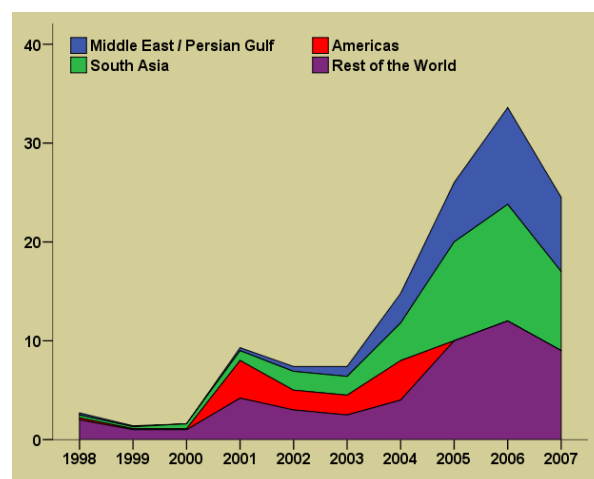
The terrorist attacks of the September 11, 2001 changed America's perception of terrorist threats, as well as of the phenomenon of terrorism itself. This form of violence was nothing new within America's historical experience. In fact, the record shows that the threat and use of psychological and physical force by individuals, sub-national groups, and state actors aimed at attaining political, social and economic objectives in violation of domestic and international law have challenged the United States many times in the past.

A brief examination of the level and location of deaths from terrorism over the last decade demonstrates that the most recent 'reign of terror' peaked in 2006, a fact driven in part by

the Taliban uprising. Figure 1 also shows that it is South Asia and the Middle East, rather than the Americas that have suffered most from terrorist activities over the last decade.

In global terms, such figures reveal that the American continent is a relatively safe region in which to live. However, the relatively low peak in the Americas data for 2001 masks the political importance of the events of 9/11 when some three thousand people died in a single day, live on global television.

Figure 1. Deaths due to Terrorism across the Globe



Source: *Global Terrorism Database, University of Maryland, USA, and The Economist*. The data is estimated cumulative death rate resulting from terrorist acts per one hundred thousand inhabitants.

This unprecedented action (in terms of its extent and brutality) against the United States carried out on the American soil, underscored the vulnerability and unpreparedness of the country for such an attack. In order to understand current counter-terrorism policy within the US, it is important to place the impact of 9/11 within the context of previous developments. In this respect, it makes sense to map out American counter-terrorism policy before and after the (second) attacks on the World Trade Center.

The Evolution of US Counter-terrorism Strategy prior to 9/11

According to one commentator "although the United States has been involved in counter-terrorism since the mid-1960s, it was only after the Iran hostage crisis of 1979 that this subject featured regularly on the presidential agenda" (Aldrich 2005: 908). After the takeover of the American embassy in Teheran by militant students, President Carter initially rejected the use of force to rescue the US diplomats held hostage.

But after six months of unsuccessful efforts that included sanctions against Iran at the United Nations and bringing Iran to the International Court of Justice, he decided to launch a military rescue mission. This action was also

unsuccessful. This failure prolonged the captivity of the hostages to 444 days and caused tremendous political humiliation to the United States. One expert notes that "it was not until the 1983 bombing of the US embassy and the Marine base in Beirut, killing some 270 Americans, that the US government for the first time in its history, seriously decided to develop a more coherent and pro-active strategy dealing with terrorism" (Gunaratna 2004: 213).

Two commissions were established immediately to investigate these Hezbollah backed attacks. The commission set up within the Department of Defense regarded terrorism as warfare and recommended in its report to undertake an effective counter-terrorism policy. However, these recommendations were not taken fully into account by the Reagan administration and other Hezbollah attacks of US targets in the Middle East continued throughout the 1980s and early 1990s. With the continuous kidnappings of American citizens in the 1980s President Ronald Reagan appointed his Vice President, George H.W. Bush, to chair a cabinet-level task force on fighting terrorism (Alexander 2006: 27).

With regards to the matter of hostages the Department of Defense Commission argued that the United States should not make concessions to terrorists, or strike a deal with them. In 1986, another tool in the United States' counter-terrorism strategy was unveiled with the proclamation of the Omnibus Diplomatic Security and Antiterrorism Act, which "enhanced extraterritorial jurisdiction to any terrorist act against US citizens or interests." Ultimately, this policy resulted in the placement of FBI legal attaches in US embassies abroad.

During the 1990s, terrorist attacks against the United States at home and abroad increased the salience of this form of security risk to both the public and US government officials. Thereafter, various strands of US counter-terrorism strategy evolved rapidly. As a response to the 1993 bombing of the World Trade Center and the 1995 Oklahoma City attack, President Clinton issued the 'US Policy on Counter-terrorism' in a Presidential Decision Directive (PDD) in 1995. The PDD designated the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) as the lead institution for investigating attacks against US citizens globally, and also proclaimed that any terrorist attacks would be regarded as both a criminal act and a threat to national security. The key goals of the PDD were "detection, deterrence and prevention of terrorism and apprehension of terrorists" (Wilcox 2002: 25).

The Anti-Terrorism Act of 1996 was also important in that it provided the financial and political resources for implementing these measures. It is important to recognize the role that the emergence of Osama bin Laden's Al Qaeda, and its increasing involvement in attacks against the United States made to increased security concerns, both nationally and globally during the second Clinton Administration.

During the 1990s, the linkage between international terrorism and so-called 'Weapons

of Mass Destruction' (WMDs) was also made explicit for the first time. According to one commentator "by 1998 the threat of terrorists using chemical, biological, and, to a lesser extent, nuclear or radiological WMDs had become a major concern to the US counterterrorist community" (Wilcox 2002: 32).

In 2000, the National Commission on Terrorism formed by the Clinton administration issued an important report entitled 'Countering the Changing Threat of International Terrorism'. This document contained seven key conclusions:

- International terrorism poses an increasingly dangerous and difficult threat for America
- Countering the growing danger of terrorism requires significantly stepping up US efforts
- US intelligence and law enforcement communities must use the full scope of their authority to collect intelligence regarding terrorist plans and methods
- US policies must firmly target all states that support terrorists
- Private sources of financial and logistical support for terrorists must be subjected to the full force and sweep of US and international laws
- A terrorist attack involving a biological agent, deadline chemical, or nuclear material, even if it succeeds only partially, could profoundly affect the entire nation
- President and Congress should reform the system for reviewing and funding departmental counter-terrorism programs to ensure that the activities and programs of various agencies are part of a comprehensive plan

However, these warnings and suggestions proposed in the Bremer Report (named after the Commission's chair, Ambassador L. Paul Bremer) did not prevent the October 2000 Al Qaeda suicide attack on USS Cole in Aden Harbor, Yemen, where seventeen sailors were killed; and a number of other Al Qaeda's actions in 2001 that culminated in fateful attacks on September 11. Nonetheless, the subsequent capture of Abd al-Rashim al-Nashiri who was the Al Qaeda mastermind behind the sea attacks in Aden and elsewhere does indicate progress in reducing security risks. Al-Nashiri may yet get the death penalty for the attack on USS Cole.

According to Stephen Zunes a security consultant, prior to the 9/11 attacks the Bush administration had in some ways pursued policies that seriously harmed international efforts against terrorism. This expert noted that during his "... first seven months in office, President George W. Bush reiterated his opposition to the establishment of an International Criminal Court, walked out of a conference designed to strengthen the 1972 Biological and Toxic Weapons Convention, and refused to support an effort by other advanced industrialized countries to strengthen regulations against tax havens and money laundering" (Zunes 2004: 237).

His administration also weakened a UN effort to control the transfer of small arms to irregular groups, thereby making it easier for terrorists to gain access to such weapons. Taking into account the nature of counterterrorist strategies prior 9/11, it is clear that the events of September 11 were the source of a profound qualitative and quantitative change in US counter-terrorism efforts.

Counter-terrorism in the Post-9/11 Era

The first striking change in America's approach to terrorism post 9/11 became apparent within a few days of the attacks when President Bush declared his now famous "War on Terror" when addressing Congress on September 20. This declaration is important, notwithstanding its rhetorical appeal, because it was the first time in history the United States had officially identified terrorism as a new and unprecedented form of warfare.

Thereafter, an international "coalition of the willing" was mobilized to fight in the first theatre of this war, i.e. Afghanistan, where the goal was to root out Al Qaeda bases and their Taliban supporters. The second theatre of operations opened in Iraq in March 2003 was somewhat different in the sense that it did not exhibit the same clear links with terrorism as was the case in Afghanistan.

Within the United States the immediate post 9/11 period witnessed the enactment of a number of key policies that have had a lasting impact. The central new pieces of legislation were undoubtedly (1) The USA Patriot Act, (2) the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security, and (3) the restructuring of the intelligence community. These three developments have become the pillars of current US counter-terrorism policy.

Turning first to The USA Patriot Act signed on October 26, 2001, it enabled "the US government to be better equipped to identify, investigate, follow, detain, prosecute, and punish suspected terrorists" (Alexander 2006: 37). Its main aim was to adapt the US government's capabilities to cope with the advanced technology and international money transfers used by the terrorists.

A neat summary of this legislation posted on the popular on-line encyclopaedia Wikipedia states:

... the Act increased the ability of law enforcement agencies to search telephone and e-mail communications and medical, financial and other records; eased restrictions on foreign intelligence gathering within the United States; expanded the Secretary of the Treasury's authority to regulate financial transactions, particularly those involving foreign individuals and entities; and enhanced the discretion of law enforcement and immigration authorities in detaining and deporting immigrants suspected of terrorism-related acts. The act also expanded the definition of terrorism to include 'domestic

terrorism', thus enlarging the number of activities to which the Patriot Act's expanded law enforcement powers can be applied.

From its inception, the Patriot Act has been criticized from both within and outside the US government. The main criticism of the Patriot Act was its potential to undermine personal rights and civil liberties. Even though most of the provisions were assigned a four year expiry date, the Act was re-authorized with only minimal changes in 2006.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was established on November 25, 2002. According to Haynes (2004: 369) the DHS

... combines at least twenty-two agencies and an estimated 170,000 employees including such disparate organizations as: the new Transportation Security Administration (Transportation), the Secret Service (Treasury), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FBI), and the Critical Infrastructures Assurance Office (Commerce).

Steps toward founding this inter-governmental organization were undertaken shortly after the attacks. Tom Ridge was appointed as the Assistant to the President for homeland security on October 8, 2001. A little later on October 29, 2001, two homeland security presidential directives were issued that anticipated the need for extensive coordination across a broad spectrum of federal, state and local agencies to reduce the potential for terrorist attacks and to reduce its damage if these attacks occur. Therefore, the creation of the DHS involved an extraordinary governmental reorganization whose main objective was effective intergovernmental cooperation at all levels of governance.

After the initial shock of 9/11 passed, a more wide-ranging debate ensued concerning the failure of domestic intelligence agencies to both recognize and prevent terrorist attacks. Most of these critics focused on shortfalls within the FBI. With growing terrorist dangers in the 1990s, the FBI was forced to devote more of its resources to counter-terrorism. However, this did not necessarily lead to a more systematic approach to this task. In this respect, some commentators have argued that "the FBI never developed a truly coordinated, systematic domestic counter-terrorism intelligence capacity" (Chalk and Rosenau 2003: 5). Also, the promotion of a greater human intelligence (HUMINT) capacity was not given the highest priority, and in fact became an underutilized tool within the FBI. Equally important was the fact that FBI field offices (FOs) lacked the means to communicate beyond their specific territorial borders thereby limiting their operation scope and effectiveness. Therefore, the character of the FBI's pre-9/11 information gathering operations remained for the most part decentralized in nature.

Unsurprisingly, the official investigation into 9/11 concluded that:

On September 11, 2001, the FBI was limited in several areas critical to an effective, preventive counter-terrorism strategy. Those working counter-terrorism matters did so despite limited intelligence collection and strategic analysis capabilities, a limited capacity to share information both internally and externally, insufficient training, an overly complex legal regime, and inadequate resources (US National Commission on Terrorist Attacks 2004: 12).

After 9/11, immediate changes were undertaken in order to re-organize and re-focus the FBI's counter-terrorism capabilities and overall improvement of the quality of US intelligence. These changes culminated by inception of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act in 2004, which "brought together some fifteen intelligence agencies under the Director of National Intelligence" (Alexander 2006: 41). Moreover, the establishment of the National Counter-terrorism Center in 2003 signified the structural changes in how the US Intelligence would operate in the future.

The most recent important statement of US counter-terrorism principles was issued in September 2006 in a document entitled 'US National Strategy for Combating Terrorism.' This strategy advocates for defeating terrorist organizations, through denying sponsorship for terrorist groups, diminishing the underlying conditions that cause terrorism, and defending the United States, its citizens, and interests from future attacks.

Winning or losing: the evidence to date ...

The nature of the September 11 terrorist attacks was so overwhelming that it resulted in a sea change in US counter-terrorist strategies. The definition of terrorism as a criminal activity has been replaced by the view that terrorism is better seen as a specific form of warfare. This change is plain in the raft of policies adopted after 9/11, and is especially evident in the establishment of the Department of Homeland Security.

In historical terms, the creation of this bureaucratic behemoth represents "the most significant transformation of the US government since 1947, when Harry S. Truman merged the various branches of the US Armed Forces into the Department of Defense to better coordinate the nation's defense against military threats" (Haynes 2004: 369).

However, the measures undertaken to deal with international terrorism such as The USA Patriot Act and the War in Iraq, have become central to the debate about best counter-terrorist practices. One central problem in detecting success or failure as noted by former US Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld in 2003 is that "we lack the metrics to know if [the US] is winning or losing the global war on terror."

As terrorist killing was peaking in 2006 America's National Intelligence Assessment on

terrorism stated that the war in Iraq was making matters worse because it was creating "deep resentment of US involvement in the Muslim world." And yet, a little more than two years later with changed tactics in Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere General Michael Hayden, Director of the CIA (Central Intelligence Agency) announced in an interview in *The Washington Post* on May 30 2008 the "near strategic defeat of Al Qaeda" in Iraq and Saudi Arabia (Warrick 2008). Similarly, Marc Sageman an independent counter-terrorism expert maintains that today Al Qaeda is "neutralised operationally." The main danger, he argues now comes from 'home grown' terrorism in Europe (Sageman 2008).

Other experts such as Bruce Hoffman of Georgetown University have taken a less sanguine view. He notes that predictions of the end of Al Qaeda have always been premature. For example, many terrorist activities in Europe have been shown to have links to strongholds in unstable areas such as the Afghan-Pakistan border where groups such as Al Qaeda plot and plan future attacks. A recent thoughtful report on Al Qaeda in *The Economist* concluded that with regard to success in the War on Terror "the best that can be said is that America has stopped losing but it is not winning yet."

In short, the jury is still out on what institutions and policies will be most effective over the long term in protecting the United States from terrorism. Whether the current decline in mortality due to terrorism is the start of a less bloody trend, or the hiatus before a change in terrorist tactics, remains to be seen.

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When Security Fails: the Czech Experience of Invasions and Takeovers in 1938, 1948 and 1968

Key words: security policy, Czechoslovakia, Cold War, USSR, Prague Spring 1968, invasion, public opinion

In recent times there has been considerable debate over security policy in the Czech Republic. The immediate reason for such debates centres on allowing an American radar tracking base for missile defence to be located on Czech territory. While the Czech Republic is a member of multilateral security organisations such as NATO and the common foreign and defence components of the EU – successive Czech governments have endeavoured to develop a closer relationship with the United States.

In essence, the perception among many post-communist states is that the most reliable guarantor of international security is the USA. This helps to explain the willingness of Central and Eastern European states to help America in its War on Terror. For many post-communist states, especially those in the Baltic area, there is considerable unease toward a resurgent Russia who has shown itself on more than one occasion both willing and able to pursue its international interests in a forceful manner.

Evidence for this comes from its use of energy supplies to Europe for political purposes.

Within a few days of the signing of the Czech-US Radar Base Treaty on July 11 2008 supplies of oil from Russia declined by 15 per cent below contracted levels. This event followed threats from Moscow that Russia would respond to the placing of a long-range military radar base in a region it considers part of its sphere of influence. Such posturing brings to mind similar defensive considerations that were used to justify the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia forty years ago this month.

In order to understand the Czech-US radar base debate, it is important first to appreciate the development of Czech security policy through World War II and the following Cold War. As it is the fortieth anniversary of the Prague Spring and the military invasion of August 21-22 1968 it seems appropriate to look back at this central event in contemporary Czech and Slovak history. First it is necessary to set the context.

Czechoslovakia has played a very important role in European and Global politics since its establishment in 1918. However, its sovereignty was violated on more than one occasion during the twentieth century. A defining moment was the Munich Agreement in 1938 when Britain and France acquiesced to German expansionary demands against Czechoslovakia. Later toward the end of the Second World War the Czechoslovak government in exile led by President Edvard Beneš sought a partnership with the Soviet Union.

Czechoslovakia's strategic position between East and West was well known to both American and Soviet strategic planners at the end of the World War II. Czechoslovakia was the only country, except for Nazi Austria and Germany, which was liberated by both American and Soviet troops. Unfortunately, Stalin's expansive foreign policy and American lack of interest in Central Europe gave free way to Czechoslovak membership in the Soviet bloc.

Bridge between East and West after WWII

At the end of the World War II, President Edvard Beneš and Minister of Foreign Affairs Jan Masaryk did not reckon on the possibility of a break-up among the WWII allies. There were obvious disagreements stemming from different political philosophies, but the extent of Stalin's expansionism remained hidden until 1945.

In December 1943, Beneš signed an agreement of friendship and alliance with the Soviet Union. One key reason for such an agreement on the Czechoslovak side was "the fact that Stalin supported Beneš in all aspects of his post-war idea of the restitution of the Czechoslovak Republic in the pre-Munich borders" and displacement of Sudeten Germans at the end of the war (Přenosil 2002: 188). However, neither this agreement nor the presence of large numbers of Soviet advisors excluded friendship with the Western powers. Beneš had a clear

plan: alliance with USSR and friendship with West where Czechoslovakia would act as a "bridge between East and West" (Faure 2005: 18; Kuklík 2002: 188).

Holes began to appear in this plan shortly after the euphoria of the war had evaporated. Beneš brought together the London and the Moscow Czechoslovak governments in exile to work together in a 'National Front' government of unity. However, the Moscow side soon gained the upper hand without incurring significant protests from President Beneš. At the same time, Stalin decided to reveal his plans for the post-war division of Europe. Czechoslovakia was one of the first countries to be influenced by the Soviet Union's decision to adopt a defensive policy toward the United States.

In summer of 1947, the Soviet delegation left the international discussions in Paris concerning the Marshall Plan. Under this plan America promised to help with the economic rebuilding of Europe. The Czechoslovak leadership was, however, forced by Stalin to reject American offers of economic aid. This represented the first big step by Czechoslovakia towards membership of the emerging Soviet bloc.

According to one historical account "Stalin's interest in Czechoslovakia had roots (notwithstanding the strategic position of the Czech lands) in the uranium mines within Czechoslovak territory, at that time these were the only known uranium mines in Europe" (Přenosil 2002: 192). The importance of the Jáchymov uranium mines was invaluable for Soviets in the race to acquire nuclear weapons. A Czechoslovak-Soviet agreement for monopoly use of this resource was signed in November 1945. Thereafter, the Czechoslovak uranium industry became a flag-ship of growing Soviet influence in Central Europe.

Meanwhile, between 1946 and 1948 the Czechoslovak Communist Party (KSC) worked assiduously to bring the country more firmly under communist, and hence, Soviet control. The details of how Czechoslovakia became a communist state are not directly relevant except to say that Soviet security fears were some of the main reasons behind the February coup, and the KSC was likely to lose support in the second democratic elections to be held in May 1948 (see, Duchacek 1950, 1951; Adamec and Viden 1947/8; Henn 1998: 231).

Czechoslovak Security Situation 1948-1968

The communist putsch of 1948 had a pervasive impact on post-war Czechoslovak society. All democratic structures were eliminated and effective communist control penetrated into all aspects of the political, economical and cultural life of the Czechoslovak society. As a key member of the Soviet bloc, Czechoslovakia was forced into mechanically copying the Soviet experience of building socialism under Stalin.

Soviet experiences were also implemented within the Czechoslovak Army. First, the general

staff was "cleaned up" where about half of the officer corps was forced to leave the military. This purge mainly affected members of the Czechoslovak wartime resistance. This led to the "building of a new Czechoslovak People's Army that was characterized by its change into a powerful armed tool of the totalitarian state of Stalinist type, and by strong Sovietisation of all areas of the recruitment, training and life of the troops" (Přenosil 2002: 197).

Initially, the Czechoslovak army within the Eastern bloc focussed on ensuring the "defence of Czechoslovak territory" (Mastný, Luňák and Odom 2000: 9). In addition, members of the military participated in the revitalization of the national economy.

The first hints of change in this defensive policy arose during the Korean War (1950-53), when Stalin feared an escalation of hostilities into another global conflict. Because of this fear the Czechoslovak army doubled in size to three hundred thousand troops between 1950 and 1953. Within a short time in May 1955 the Warsaw Treaty Organization was established to counter the alleged threat from the NATO alliance. The Warsaw Treaty Alliance also became a framework for common foreign policy coordination, and was closely connected with the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA or Comecon) which facilitated a common approach to the economies underpinning the whole Soviet defence bloc.

It is important to note that the "position of Czechoslovakia within the Warsaw Pact was very specific because it was the only country of the Warsaw Pact with no Soviet forces on its territory" (Sieber and Mastný 2005: 10). At the same time the Czechoslovak Army formed the first strategic echelon within the integrated battle planning of the Warsaw Pact. Czechoslovakia's special position in Warsaw Pact affairs was costly because Czechoslovakia had to pay for the absence of Soviet forces through higher commitments to the unified command. In practice, this meant that the Czechoslovak Army was in peace time terms enormous in size: the non-mobilized peacetime strength was set at 150,000 soldiers. To give some idea of this scale of operations - this number is about twice the number of US soldiers currently serving in Iraq. In wartime, the Soviets required an army consisting of ten per cent of the total population, which would have meant a military with one and a half million personnel.

At the end of 1950s, the use of nuclear and chemical weapons became one of the main training areas of the Czechoslovak Army, as it prepared itself for offensive operations. The military thinking of the time held that a counter-offensive strategy was the best form of defence from the West. Significantly, Czechoslovak military staff had no access to nuclear weapons, and moreover no Soviet nuclear weapons were placed on Czechoslovak territory at that time.

One of the main lessons of the 'Berlin Airlift' crisis (1948-49) was the necessity of military institutionalization and the delegation of

responsibilities to battle groups for specific individual fronts. Within this new framework, the Czechoslovak Army was responsible for one entire front – the Czechoslovak front. It had its own command and tasks were set forth by the Soviets.

In 1964, the top secret 'Plan of Action for the Czechoslovak People's Army during War' was finalized. This plan was based on the assumption that Warsaw Pact forces would be quickly able to repulse a pre-emptive NATO strike, and this would be followed by a decisive Soviet-led counter-offensive into the heart of Western Europe. More specifically, "the orders for the Czechoslovak front stated that the valleys in the Vosges mountains close to the French city of Lyon were to be reached within nine days" (Mastný, Luňák and Odom 2000: 13). Undoubtedly, this was meant to prepare the way for troops of the second wave, made up mainly of Soviet forces. In retrospect, the most striking and chilling aspect of this war plan was its assumption that both sides would routinely use nuclear weapons.

To support the ambitions of the 1964 plan, Moscow attempted to impose the stationing of a number of Soviet divisions on Czechoslovak territory. Furthermore, in December 1965, the Soviets forced the Czechoslovak government to sign an agreement on the storage of nuclear warheads on Czech soil. In reality, both of these measures only became feasible after the Soviet led invasion of 1968.

Prague Spring and Invasion

During the first eight months of 1968, Czechoslovakia underwent wide ranging political and social reforms, and marked a unique episode in the history of the international communist movement. The democratization process, which had its origins in the democratic tradition of the First Czechoslovak Republic (1918-1938), came primarily from reforming tendencies within the Czechoslovak Communist Party who had come to fore in a leadership struggle in late 1967 (Skilling 1976).

A central theme and slogan during the so-called Prague Spring era was the notion of "socialism with a human face." This idea was first presented in the Action Program of April 1968 by the new communist leadership under Alexander Dubček. It is important to keep in mind that although the Action Plan advocated for the democratization of domestic policies "in the foreign policy Dubček spoke of retaining a close relationship with the USSR and the Warsaw Pact" (Valenta 1991: 18)

However, the leaders of the USSR (Leonid Brezhnev) Poland (Władysław Gomułka) and East Germany (Walter Ulbricht) feared the potential of spillover of revolutionary ideas from Czechoslovakia to neighbouring communist countries. Consequently, they supported Warsaw Pact intervention into Czechoslovakia in order to stop the reform process. The decision for intervention was eased also by the placating

position adopted by the Western powers towards the Eastern bloc. The American and West German governments made it clear that they would not interfere in the unfolding events in Czechoslovakia (McGinn 1999: 112).

The Czechoslovak government, military and public had suspicions of a planned invasion when the Soviets insisted on holding large scale Warsaw Pact military exercises within Czechoslovakia between June and August 1968. Attempts to forestall such military manoeuvres were unsuccessful. Moreover, there was confusion over the extent of divided loyalties within the Czechoslovak Army concerning the Prague Spring reform process.

In any event, the Soviet leadership made a final decision to occupy Czechoslovakia on August 19 1968. Then without warning on the night of August 20-21, five Warsaw Pact Armies invaded Czechoslovakia. On this occasion the soldiers were not on exercises, but involved in a real military operation. The exact size of the invading armies from the Soviet Union, Poland, East Germany, Hungary and Bulgaria is unknown. Czechoslovak estimates suggest as many as 650,000. In contrast, Western military experts at the time thought 230,000 front line troops and an unknown number of airborne forces to be a more reasonable figure (Skilling 1976: 713-4).

Some accounts recount the enormity of the invasion in terms of the arrival of twenty-nine divisions, seven and a half thousand tanks, and more than one thousand aircraft (McGinn 1999: 134-136; Retegan 2002: 148). Regardless of the exactness of these figures, the sheer scope, scale, and suddenness of the invasion were utterly surprising. Few had thought the Soviets would undertake and lead such an operation. Where was the Czechoslovak Army on the night of the invasion? As no defence plans had ever been made for a Warsaw Pact invasion they were dutifully stationed in their barracks. In any event the Czechoslovak government instructed its soldiers at 1 am on August 21 to remain in their quarters. There was to be no armed resistance.

For ordinary Czech and Slovak citizens this was the third time in three decades their country had been overrun by foreign troops. Once again Czechoslovakia's security policy was it tatters as its potential allies (in either the East, or ironically the West) refused to act for their strategic reasons. Unsurprisingly, given the dire military and political situation within "thirty-six hours all of Czechoslovak territory was under the full control of the Warsaw Treaty armies" (Valenta 1991: 126).

With previous security failures, invasions and takeovers in 1938 and 1948 there is little systematic information on how ordinary citizens perceived these events. Fortunately, during 1968 about thirty political opinion surveys were undertaken. Equally surprising is the fact that the summary results of more than half of these surveys have survived. Such evidence provides social science with a unique portrait of how

citizens view military invasions of their homeland.

Public opinion toward the invasion of 1968

While the actual Warsaw Pact invasion itself of August 20-21 1968 was a surprise, the potential threat of foreign intervention was not. Reforming socialism within Czechoslovakia was widely seen by both elites and the public to be most vulnerable to foreign pressure. A series of survey questions asked during July and August 1968 to citizens mainly in what is today the Czech Republic, and to members of all the political parties, i.e. the Communists (KSČ), the Socialists (ČSS) and the mainly Christian Democratic People's Party (ČSL) demonstrate this fact (Piekalkiewicz 1972: 54).

Within weeks of the publication of the Action Program the Czechoslovak government faced an international crisis. During June and July armies from the Warsaw Pact (Soviet, Hungarian and East German) took part in military training exercises within Czechoslovakia. The key question was if these armies would leave following manoeuvres. More than nine-in-ten of those interviewed across Czechoslovakia in mid July 1968 felt they should leave immediately.²

Table 1. Czech Fears of Invasion, August 13-14 1968

Greatest danger facing Czechoslovakia today	Choice (per cent)			
	1	2	3	None
Interference of foreign countries in the internal affairs of the CSSR	49	16	9	26
Inability to solve economic difficulties	11	19	16	54
Conflict between Czechs and Slovaks	4	17	20	59
Opposition of the conservative political forces	10	23	15	52
Excessive impatience of progressive political forces	3	8	11	78
Activity of anti-socialist forces	7	8	14	71

Question: "In which of the following possibilities do you see the greatest dangers to the positive development of Czechoslovakia? Choose three in order of importance." Data derived from a quota sample of the Czech lands using a postal questionnaire (N=2,947). Note that rows sum to one hundred per cent.

The survey evidence presented in Table 1 demonstrates that on the eve of the invasion almost half of those interviewed saw foreign interference as presenting the greatest danger, with a quarter expressing no worries in this respect. Overall, fears of external influence strongly out-weighted domestic concerns.

Within a few weeks of the invasion, a survey undertaken across all of Czechoslovakia in mid-September 1968 showed that almost three-in-

four (73 per cent) citizens saw the "departure of foreign troops" as the most important condition for the return to a "normal situation." When asked how likely they thought such a military departure was in reality only a minority felt that all of the Warsaw Pact troops would leave.

Table 2. Will the invaders stay or leave?

Response	Czecho-slovakia	Czech lands	Slovakia
Leave	27	28	25
Partially leave	45	46	43
Stay forever	14	14	15
Another answer	9	7	13
Don't know	5	5	4
N	1,871	1,316	555

Question: "Do you think the armies of the Warsaw Pact will leave in agreement with the demands of our country, only leave partially, or will remain forever?" This survey was undertaken on September 14-16 1968 using face-to-face interviewing. Columns sum to one hundred per cent.

The evidence presented in Table 2 shows that despite fears of foreign intervention and the immediate shock of invasion, a majority of Czechs (74 per cent) and Slovaks (68 per cent) in mid-September 1968 believed that the invading troops would either leave totally or at the very least partially.

Table 3. New Year Wishes in Czechoslovakia, 1969

Greatest wish for 1969	Czecho-slovakia	Czech lands	Slovakia
Sovereign freedom	24	26	17
Realisation of the January [1968] policies	21	21	21
The exit of Soviet troops	19	21	16
Peace	18	16	22
Solution of economic problems	7	7	8
A higher standard of living	3	3	5
Other wishes	8	6	11
N	1,350	976	374

Question: "Regarding our Republic, what is your greatest wish for the New Year [1969]? Please choose one answer only." These polling results come from a quota sample undertaken during January 1-15 1969 using face-to-face interviewing. Columns sum to one hundred per cent.

The plurality view among all Czechoslovaks (45 per cent) that a partial withdrawal of Warsaw Pact troops was the most likely outcome turns out in retrospect to be closest to the truth. In fact, by mid-September 1968 this "partial withdrawal" deal had already been struck. In

one part of the "Normalization Agreement" which the Czechoslovak representatives were forced to sign in Moscow on 27 August 1968, it was agreed that seventy thousand Soviet soldiers would remain permanently on Czechoslovak territory. This had in fact been a goal which the Soviet high command had wanted to accomplish for some time.

Active cooperation on the part of anti-reformist elements within the Czechoslovak army's officer corps with the occupational forces, however, had a very negative impact on public opinion toward the Army and national defence more generally for the next two decades. The extent of popular resentment toward having Soviet troops on Czechoslovak territory and the associated loss of sovereignty were strongly evident in one of the last political surveys undertaken before such social science research work was banned by the new hard-line communist Czechoslovak government led by Gustav Husák.

The survey results from early 1969 presented in Table 3 reveal that preferences relating to the invasion constituted 61 per cent of the wishes of all Czechoslovak citizens. There were few differences of opinion between Czechs and Slovaks regarding the invasion. Concerns about political reforms (21 per cent) and economic worries (10 per cent) appear to have been much less salient given the trauma of invasion.

Czechoslovakia during the "Normalization" Era of 1970s and the 1980s

As we now know popular wishes for an end to the invasion and foreign interference in early 1969 went unfilled for two decades. In the beginning of the 1970s, the Czechoslovak Army like many other institutions in society suffered under the rigors of a process rather ironically called "normalization." This process started with the establishment of a much more authoritarian communist regime under Gustáv Husák with the departure of Dubček and the reformers from the political scene.

The period of 1980s was influenced by the growing tensions between the Soviet Union and the United States, or more specifically between the Warsaw Treaty and NATO. New technologies and front line units were implemented. And as well new Soviet front line units, nuclear missile launchers, were placed on Czechoslovak territory. However, the growing costs of nuclear armaments forced the USSR into negotiations with the USA. This led to the signing of an Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987. Thereafter in the second half of 1980s, the Warsaw Treaty Organisation's strategic planning changed. The 1964 concept of waging a war with nuclear weapons was withdrawn, and the Czechoslovak security position turned toward away from an offensive position toward a defensive one centred along protecting its borders.

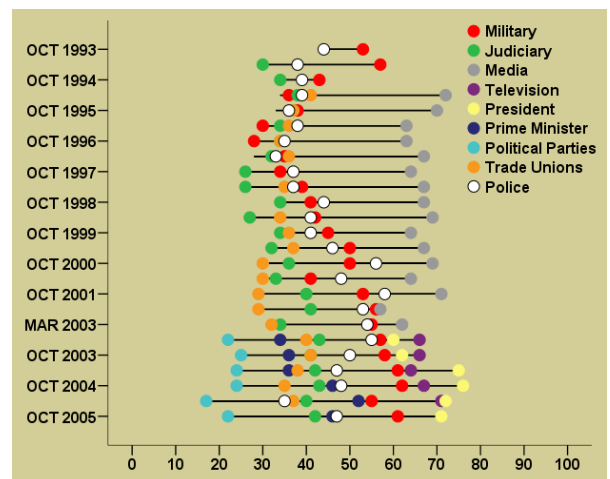
The political changes that came with the Velvet Revolution of November 17 1989 led to the end

of the communist power in Czechoslovakia. As was the case with the Soviet led invasion of 1968, the Czechoslovak Army did not actively try to prop up the incumbent communist regime. In fact it assisted in the democratic transition by its loyal approach to the new democratic evolution of the Czechoslovak society and this may be seen as part of its rehabilitation within Czechoslovak public opinion given its collaboration with Soviet troops over the previous two decades.

Trust and distrust since 1990

With the post-communist transition process everything changed with regard to security. The Czechoslovak state disappeared with hardly a whimper in early 1993, and later the daughter Czech and Slovak Republics both joined NATO in 1999 and 2004 respectively, and the EU in 2004. During the 1990s external threats to Czech security were primarily concentrated among non-state actors such as terrorist organisations and organised crime.

Figure 1. Who do you trust most within the state?



Source: CVVM monthly omnibus surveys 1993-2005. Question: "To what extent do you trust the following institutions to deal with your interests" (5 point scale, quite trustworthy to quite untrustworthy). These estimates refer to the 'quite trustworthy' and 'trustworthy' responses.

An examination of public trust in institutions whose role is to provide security such as the military shows a remarkable decline and resurgence. Figure 1 demonstrates that trust in the military declined quickly in the early nineties, but its level of public trust has grown steadily since 1996. In recent times it elicits more trust than the police, judiciary, churches or political parties. It would seem fear and loathing of public institutions in Czech society centers on politics rather than security as was the case in the past. Such evidence suggests that public faith in the Czech military has cast into history the army's failure to protect the Czechoslovak state in 1968, and its disreputable role in the normalisation process of the 1970s.

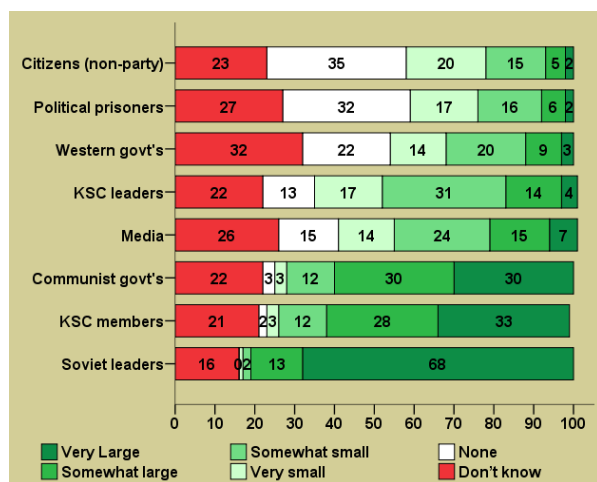
Looking back in anger?

When the Czech public was asked in a CVVM survey in early January 2008, whether they felt they understood about the Warsaw Pact invasion of August 1968 half felt 'informed' (17 per cent) or 'somewhat informed' (33 per cent). It seems that the military invasion of four decades ago is receding into the realms of facts contained in dusty old history books. This survey data reveals important differences on the basis of age and level of education where the older and better educated know most about this event.

What was the impact on Czechoslovak society of the Soviet led invasion of 1968? From a retrospective point of view, today's citizens in the Czech Republic think that this event was primarily an issue of importance for communist leaders in Moscow and in neighbouring communist country capitals. Figure 2 also reveals that the invasion had very little influence on ordinary citizens not involved in politics. This is a fascinating insight into the collective memory of a military invasion that initiated a repressive period of political conformity.

While the Czechoslovak government and army capitulated, the general population engaged in spontaneous popular resistance to the invasion. During the first weeks of the invasion there was a general strike and the mass media went underground setting up 'free' radio stations and newspapers. In essence, Czechoslovak citizens refused to recognise the occupation and engaged in an exemplary form of non-violent resistance.

Figure 2. Looking back: perceived impact of the 1968 invasion



Source: CVVM Survey, January 14-21 2008, (N=1,046). Question: "And was in your opinion the influence of the Warsaw Pact invasion the same for each group in society?"

When examined in this light the poll results presented in Figure 2 make sense. The Soviet leaders, neighbouring communist governments and communist party (KSČ) members in Czechoslovakia were most directly affected, because it changed the political order. For everyone else including western governments and Czechoslovak citizens' life simply went on after the initial period of mass resistance faded

away. Whether or not, Czechs and Slovaks look back in anger at this invasion by "fraternal" armies is difficult to say with this survey data.

Back to the future ...

Within the twentieth century the Czechs and Slovaks underwent a remarkable history of success in securing a state at the end of the First World War in 1918 and catastrophic failure in 1938, 1948 and 1968 with foreign invasions and interventions into national politics. Attempts to develop an effective security policy from such a history have been a daunting task.

Membership of NATO and the EU represent two key pillars in the Czech Republic's twenty first century security policy. Such initiatives have been popular with citizens. The debacle within the UN, NATO and the EU over how to deal with the US led military intervention in Iraq in 2003 demonstrated how weak security alliances can be during times of crisis (Lyons 2007).

For most post-communist states such as the Czech Republic memories of powerful neighbours with expansionist aims motivate them to seek powerful friends. In the twenty first century the international friend of choice is the United States. With a resurgent Russia under the control of Vladimir Putin since 2000, Central and Eastern European states see their security being threatened. The strong arm tactics threatened by Russia regarding the Czech-US Radar Treaty underscore the importance of remembering the past (note, Lauder 2008).

With the fortieth anniversary of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968, key events in Czech and Slovak history in 1918, 1938, 1948, 1968, and now 2008 demonstrate the central importance of security concerns. Just as the twentieth century was defined by rapid changes and uncertainty, the current century is likely to throw up equally important challenges.

One curious feature of the security failures in Czechoslovakia is the emergence among citizens of the strategy of non-violent resistance. Perhaps stemming from the experiences of 1938 and 1948; this feature was very evident in 1968 and 1989. In this crucial respect, a key lesson of security failures was instrumental in laying the foundations for the success of the Velvet Revolution. While one might debate whether avoidance of violence is evidence of 'Švejkism' or 'living in the truth' it is undeniably the case that security failures are not simply the concern of political elites (Ulč 1975; Havel 1992: 84-101; 237-248).

In this respect, arguments over holding a local referendum on the proposed Czech-US radar station in Brdy (close to Prague) over the last two years forms a fascinating back drop regarding how security policy should be formulated in the twenty first century. The Czech and Slovak cases clearly demonstrate that national security is a matter of concern to all,

and its implications for daily life are far from inconsequential.

Remembrance of the morning of Wednesday August 21 1968, when neighbour told neighbour "Wake up! Wake up! We have been invaded!" is a salutary warning of how quickly political and daily life can change.

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Notes:

1. The wording of this question "Recently on the territory of our Republic general staff exercises of the allied armies (CSSR, USSR, DPR, Hungary) were concluded. Do you consider it proper for all the members of the allied armies to leave the territory of our Republic immediately after the conclusion of exercises?" This item was asked to a quota sample of 1,772 respondents across all of Czechoslovakia using face-to-face interviewing undertaken between July 13 and 14 1968 (Piekalkiewicz 1972: 45, 345).

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