

A3.7 Ethnic Networks and Educational Achievement over the Life Course



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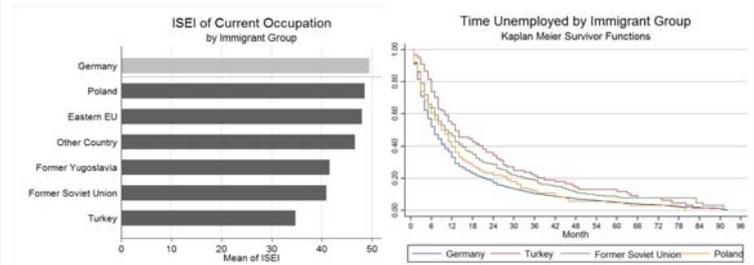
Social Embedding and Integration: In Search of a Comprehensive Model

Background and Motivation

The social embedding is of crucial importance for various aspects of the integration of immigrants into the host country society. In particular, sticking to ethnic networks and communities can foster or hinder educational achievement and labour market integration. Empirical evidence, however, is inconclusive:

- Impact depends on societal context and immigrant group characteristics,
- Few studies examine the case of Germany,
- Large-scale data with appropriate social capital measures are scarce.

→ Specify mechanisms more precisely & test them more directly.



Data: NEPS SC6, SUF 1-0-0, N = 4,833, Time at risk = 8,947 months, own calculations.

How does the social embedding influence labour market integration?

The Role of Social Embedding for Structural Integration

For the labour market integration of immigrants, information and support are crucial social capital resources. Especially contacts to higher socio-structural positions may be beneficial.

Integration research is discussing controversially whether ethnic ties strengthen or constrain the structural integration of immigrants:

Ethnic networks may be helpful because they...

- can give access to group-specific resources, esp. social capital
- can establish protection against "downward assimilation"
- can provide support in hostile environments
- Can transmit high aspirations if ethnic group highly values education

Ethnic networks may constrain structural integration because...

- they provide only *bonding* social capital. Because immigrants are often in lower socioeconomic positions, ethnic ties provide fewer resources.
- strong ethnic ties impede building more helpful *bridging* ties to the host society that could give access to more helpful resources.

→ Drawing upon social capital theory we seek to specify the underlying mechanisms more precisely (see figure 1).

Comprehensive SC Measures to Test Competing SC Mechanisms

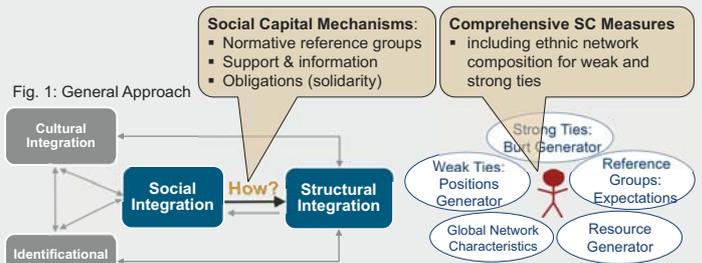


Fig. 1: General Approach

Fig. 2: NEPS SC Measures

	FSU	POL	TUR
Positioning of weak ties (ISEI Sum)	310.68	370.25	337.23
Share of Co-ethnics (weak ties)	0.46	0.26	0.58
Strong ties: At least one outside family	0.68	0.66	0.64
Share of Co-ethnics (Strong ties)	0.54	0.32	0.79

Summary and Conclusion

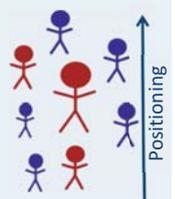
Results from Regression Analyses of NEPS SC6

	OLS ISEI Current Job			PH Cox Time Unemployed		
	FSU	POL	EEU	FSU	POL	TUK
Positioning (ISEI)	0.13 (0.16)	0.31 (0.11)	0.53 (0.16)	1.10 (0.06)	1.09+ (0.06)	1.22 (0.08)
Share of Co-Ethnics	-0.34 (0.51)	0.22 (0.92)	-0.90 (1.22)	0.89 (0.19)	0.52+ (0.21)	0.90 (0.22)
ISEI X Share of Co-ethnics	-0.02+ (0.01)	-0.03 (0.03)	0.00 (0.04)	---	---	---
Strong Ties (BG)	1.16 (2.31)	3.31 (1.46)	0.53 (2.15)	1.17 (0.19)	0.98 (0.18)	1.19 (0.39)
Co-Ethnic Ratio	-4.34 (3.06)	0.77 (3.13)	-1.26 (3.55)	1.14 (0.24)	1.14 (0.33)	0.50 (0.18)
Adj. R ² / LR Chi ²	0.44	0.30	0.27	41.67	23.87	35.05

All models control for education, age, gender, and immigrant generation; OLS models on ISEI of current job: German-language skills added; PH models: occupation of previous job, job period, and number of previous spells added. Time at risk (month): FSU = 6,012 (N=279), PL = 3,735 (N=178), TUR = 3,452 (N=127). Bold coefficients $p < .05$, $+ p < .10$.

Results for Labour Market Integration

- Weak ties turn out to be the most relevant channels.
- Networks with higher positioning are associated positively with labour market integration.
- High shares of co-ethnics tend to hinder labour market integration. Yet, to rely on co-ethnics is not a hindrance per se. It is rather a question of network positioning. Co-ethnics often provide less social capital (interaction effect).
- Ethnic networks do not offer the information and support necessary to find a job more quickly or to get a better one.



Next Steps

Take advantage of another strength of the NEPS social capital measurements: Use prospective and retrospective measurements (Wave 2) for more severe testing.

Extend analyses to other NEPS cohorts to test which social capital mechanisms are relevant at particular stages in the educational career.