The Impact of
Trust, Democracy and Inequality on (Late Life) Volunteering in Europe

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Literature review on 'volunteering'

Two main questions:

- Why do people volunteer?　　=> Motivations for volunteering

Functional approach (7 types of motivations)

Focus on "benefits"

(i.e., achieving goals)

- Who volunteers?　　=> Determinants of volunteering

- Socio-demographic background characteristics

- Personality / psychophysiology

- Attitudes / values / preferences (i.e. 'motivations')

- 'Situational' (social network; being asked)

Focus on "costs"

(i.e., what helps/prohibits one to volunteer?)

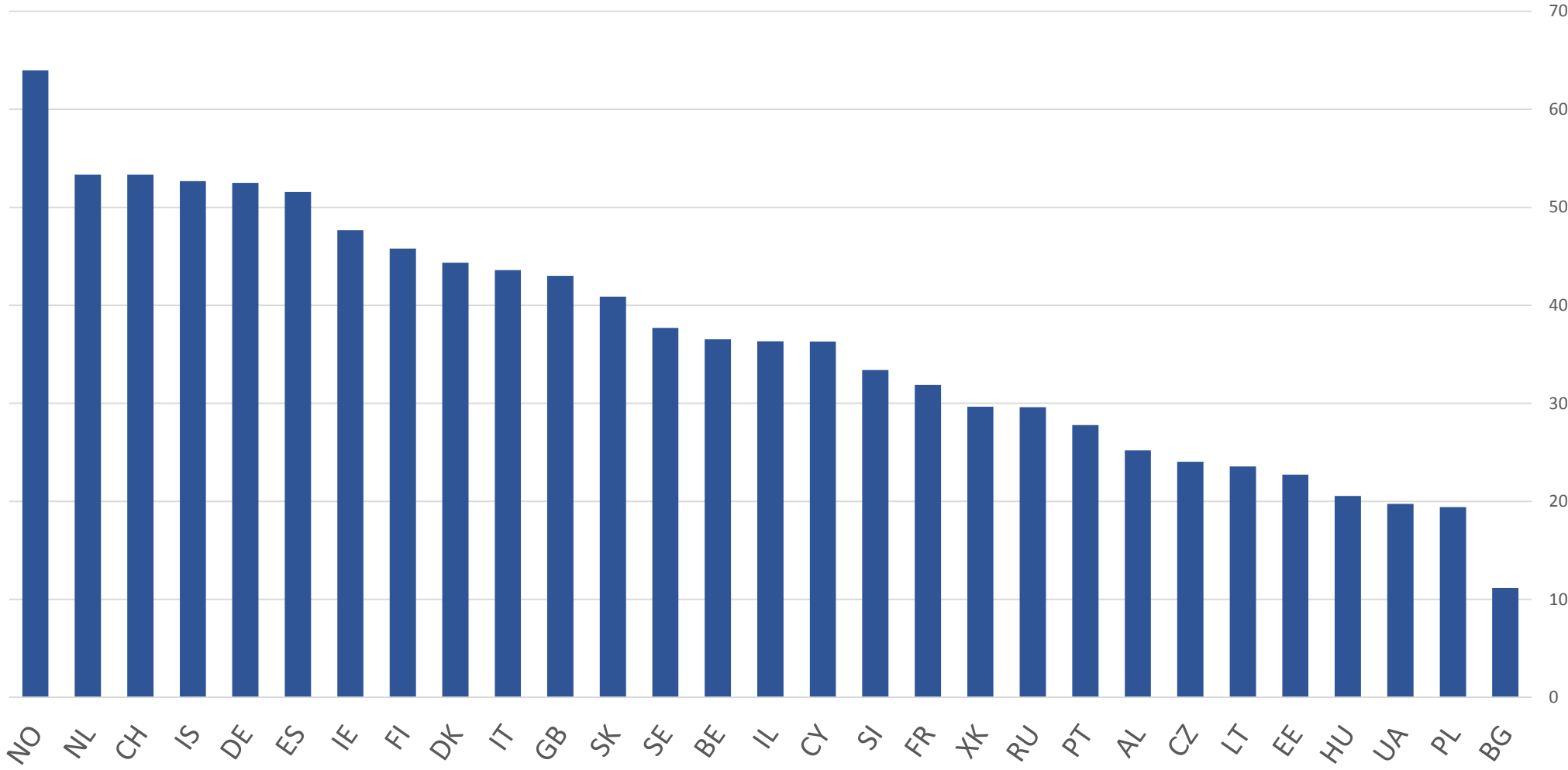Latter question, theoretical framework often lacking.

Conceptualize volunteer work as a productive activity that 'requires' capital (Wilson & Musick, 1997; Freeman, 1997)

-Three forms of capital (individual level):
- Human capital (education, income, health)
- Social capital (information, resources, trust [and obligations!] through social ties/networks)
- Cultural capital ([socialization in] moral values [e.g., religion])

Demographical (gender, age, ethnic) differences due to differences in capital

Percentage of respondents who indicate to have volunteered in the 12 months prior to the survey (ESS round 6; 2012)

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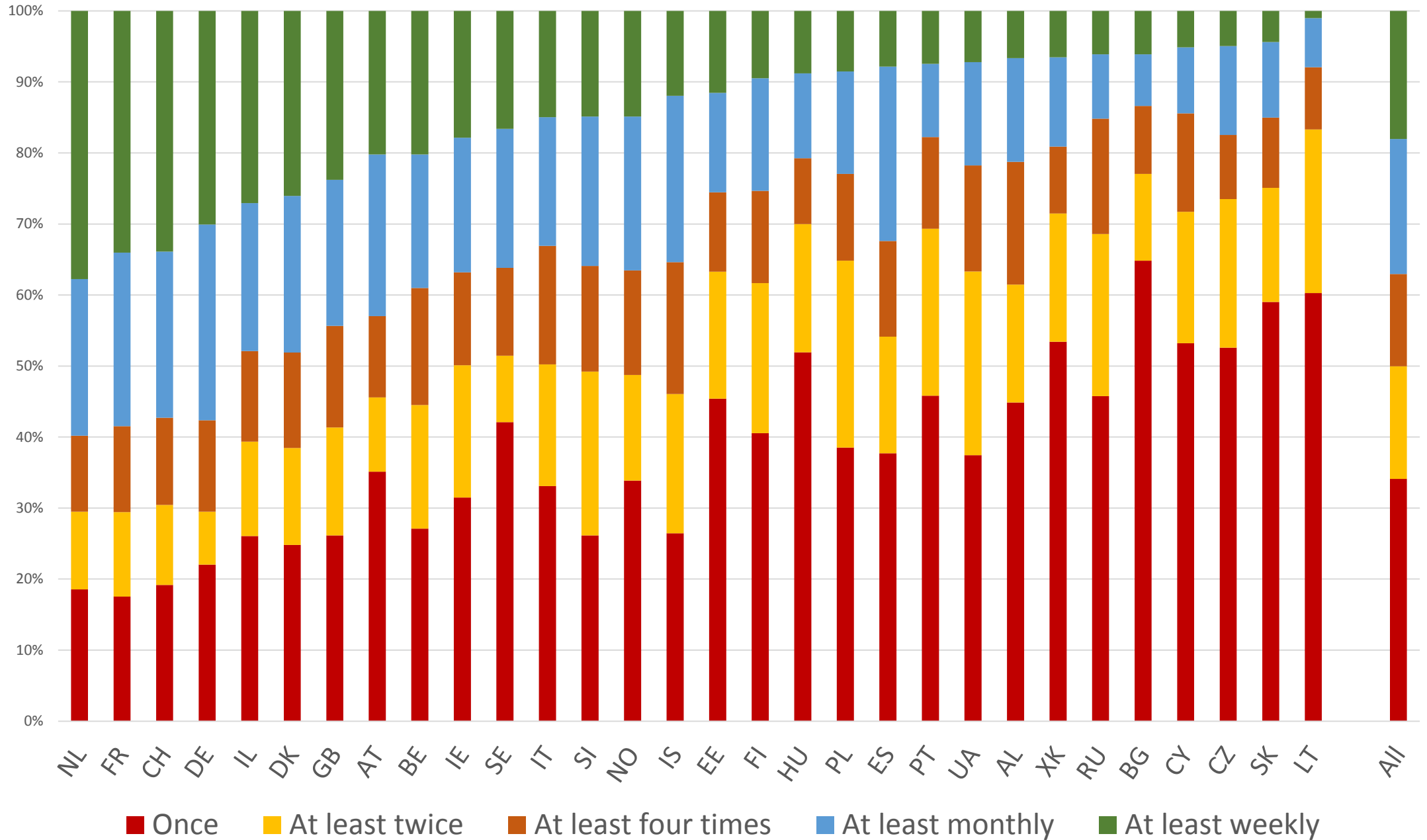
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Our contribution: - contextual factors
- cross-level interactions
- **more 'refined' measure of volunteering**

Frequency of volunteering by country

■ Once ■ At least twice ■ At least four times ■ At least monthly ■ At least weekly

Previous cross-national comparison studies

- Curtis (1971)
- Curtis (1992)
- Anheier & Salamon (1999)
- Salamon & Sokolowski (2001)
- Curtis, Baer, & Grabb (2001)
- Smith & Chen (2002)
- Parboteeah, Cullen, & Lim (2004)

- Ruiter & De Graaf (2006)
- Erlinghagen & Hank (2006)
- Hank & Stuck (2008)
- Kohli, Hank, & Künemund (2009)
- Hank & Erlinghagen (2010)
- Hank (2011)

- Majority only describing differences (possible causes discussed, not tested)
- If tested (5 out of 13 studies), explanations include:
    ➢ Economic development
    ➢ Level of religiosity / religious composition
    ➢ Educational attainment
    ➢ Degree / years of democracy
    ➢ Level of investments in social welfare
- But - tested only for the decision/likelihood to volunteer (yes/no)
        - no cross-level interactions (except Ruiter & De Graaf, 2006)

Current study

- Different data: European Social Survey
  - Starting in 2002, six waves of cross-sectional data (bi-annual), respondents in 36 countries
- Volunteering measured in:

    2002: Multiple items measuring volunteering in diverse range of organizations

    2008: Single item: "Volunteered last month, yes/no?"

    2006/2012:

"In the past 12 months, how often did you get involved in work for voluntary or charitable organisations?"

1) Never
2) Less often
3) At least once every six months

4) At least once every three months
5) At least once a month
6) At least once a week

Independent variables

Individual: [controls]   gender, age

                      [human capital]   education, income (poverty), health

                      [social capital]   partner, children, trust

                      [cultural capital] religiosity

Country: 1) Corruption Perceptions Index (TICPI)

                      2) Inequality (GINI index)

                      3) Democracy (Individual liberty index)

Cross-level interactions: - age   (current country characteristics more
                                    influential on younger generations)
                     - capital (country characteristics more
                                    influential on those who lack capital)

N = 52,426 in 29 countries (most recent wave [2012])

Dependent variable => ordered categories => ordered logistic regress. [Stata 14]

Results

Intercept-only model (variance component):

- 10.7% of the variance in volunteering is at country level

Adding individual level variables to the model reduces variance at the country-level by 19% => (country differences in volunteering due to composition of population/sample)

	Coeff	SE	P-value
Female	**-.046**	.019	.015
Age (centered)	**.010**	.001	.000
Age^2 (centered) * 100	**-.021**	.009	.021
Education (centered)	**.148**	.006	.000
Poverty (centered)	**-.138**	.012	.000
Married (ref.)			
Divorced	-.031	.036	.403
Widowed	**-.096**	.041	.019
Single	-.021	.035	.547
Unm. cohabiting	**-.165**	.039	.000
Marital status unknown	-.042	.062	.503
Parent	**.087**	.029	.003
Self-rated religiosity (centered)	**.091**	.003	.000
Self-rated health (centered)	**.113**	.012	.000
General trust (centered)	**.058**	.005	.000
/cut1	**.701**	.070	.000
/cut2	**1.37**	.071	.000
/cut3	**1.77**	.071	.000
/cut4	**2.18**	.071	.000
/cut5	**3.02**	.072	.000

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Adding country level variables to the model reduces (explains) variance at the country-level by another 44%

Results

Country level characteristics:

	Coeff	SE	P-value
Corruption Perceptions Index (TICPI)	**-.217**	.009	.000
Inequality (GINI index)	.050	.057	.123
Democracy (Individual liberty index)	.035	.026	.173

Cross-level interactions (w/ random slope for individ. level vars):

	Coeff	P-value
Corruption / Age / Corruption * Age	-.175 / .001 / **-.002**	.000 / .000 / .019
Corruption / Education / Corruption * Education	-.182 / .066 / .012	.000 / .000 / .053
Corruption / Poverty / Corruption * Poverty	-.173 / -.122 / **-.023**	.000 / .000 / .000
Corruption / Parent / Corruption * Parent	-.137 / .190 / **-.055**	.000 / .000 / .000
Corruption / Religiosity / Corruption * Religiosity	-.173 / .109 / **-.005**	.000 / .000 / .001
Corruption / Health / Corruption * Health	-.175 / .488 / .009	.000 / .001 / .490
Corruption / Trust / Corruption * Trust	-.174 / .053 / .001	.000 / .001 / .094

Conclusion / discussion

- Country differences exist in frequency of volunteering

- Current data provide evidence this is mainly due to difference in level of corruption between countries

- Unexpectedly, level of corruption has greater impact among elderly (but effect is small and marginally significant)

- However, cross-level interactions suggest that level of corruption has less impact on those with more economic, social, and cultural capital (as expected)

- Possible differentiation by type of volunteering (using Round 1 of ESS)

- Alternative country characteristics (religiosity, GDP, welfare state exp.)