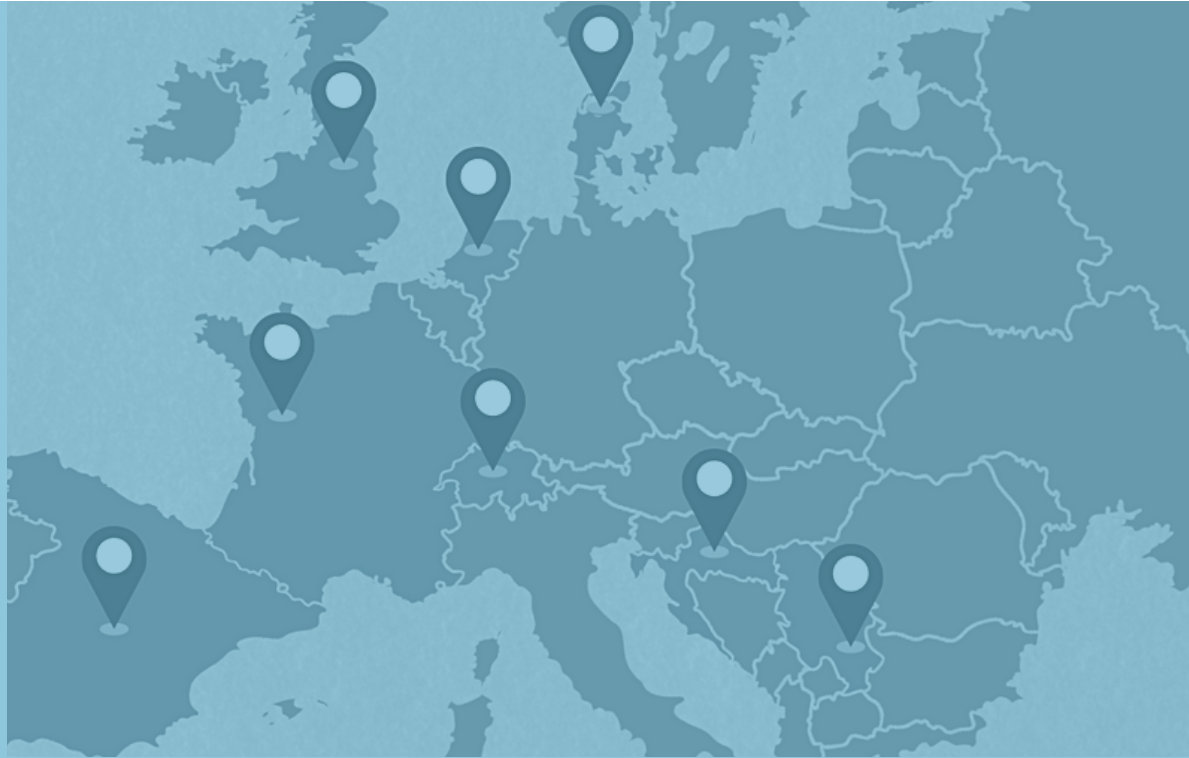


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EUROPEAN INVENTORY
OF CULTURAL VALUES



The influence of social inequalities on culture

INVENT REPORT D6.1

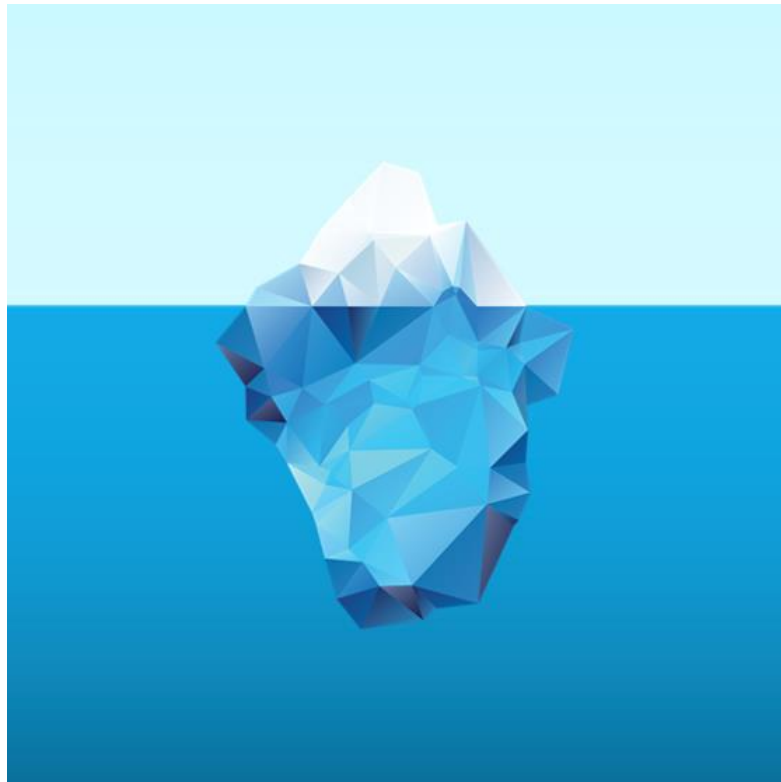
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EUROPEAN INVENTORY OF SOCIETAL VALUES OF CULTURE
AS A BASIS FOR INCLUSIVE CULTURAL POLICIES



Deliverable 6.1

A Report on the Influence of Social Inequalities on Culture

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The Influence of Social Inequalities on Culture

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Executive summary: Unequal cultural opportunities

This report, deliverable D6.1 of the H2020-funded INVENT project, provides an overview of the sources of unequal cultural opportunities faced by ordinary people in present-day Europe. It adopts a bottom-up perspective to unequal cultural opportunities, which means that instead of starting from some pre-defined concepts, it summarises the findings of several exploratory studies of the Influence of social inequalities on cultural participation among people across different European countries and social indicators. The report opens with a brief discussion on the societal values of culture, the sources of social inequalities in cultural participation, and how the various societal megatrends in Europe since the latter part of the 20th century have affected both the socioeconomic environment (the macro context in which we live) and the individual's position in the social space. We conclude that inequalities in cultural access negatively influence the societal values of culture.

Follows a synthesis of the main findings of several reports conducted within this work package (WP), unequal access to culture is organised according to the WP objectives: 1) perception of changes due to growing social inequalities, 2) sources of unequal access to culture within and between countries, 3) unequal lifestyles, and 4) the stratification of the social values of culture (the association between cultural participation and life satisfaction, social openness, and the social distribution of exclusive and inclusive views of culture).

Findings are based on wide-ranging and nationally representative survey datasets collected by INVENT in 2021 in its nine countries (Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK) and on Eurobarometer data. We have also collected data on social media and the stratification of the meanings of culture, and interviews have been conducted with a sample of migrants and local residents. In addition, the meanings of culture as expressed in social media have been analysed regarding the social inequalities in ascribed meanings. We end with a summary and implications for cultural policies.

Contents

CONTENTS	5
1. INTRODUCTION.....	7
1.1. Why study socioeconomic inequalities in cultural participation? Why now?	7
1.2. WP6 objectives and the aim of this report	8
1.3. The structure of the report	9
2. THE SOCIETAL VALUES OF CULTURE AND MEGATRENDS.....	10
2.1. The societal values of culture.....	10
2.2. Megatrends and cultural participation	13
3. METHODOLOGY.....	13
4. UNEQUAL ACCESS TO CULTURE	15
4.1. Perceptions of change.....	15
<i>Country comparisons.....</i>	<i>15</i>
<i>Social location.....</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>Sources of unequal cultural views</i>	<i>21</i>
<i>Within- and between-country sources of unequal access to culture</i>	<i>23</i>
4.2. Inequality in lifestyles.....	25
4.3. Social values of culture: sources of unequal influence of culture on life satisfaction, social openness, and inclusiveness	27
<i>Satisfaction with life and access to culture</i>	<i>27</i>
<i>Social openness and access to digital culture</i>	<i>28</i>
<i>Sources of inclusive and exclusive views of culture and social cohesion</i>	<i>30</i>
5. DISCUSSION.....	34
5.1. Brief summary	34
5.2. Policy implications.....	36
5.3. The road ahead.....	37
REFERENCES.....	37

List of Figures

Figure 1a: Country distribution of perceptions of change (I)	16
Figure 1b: Country distribution of perceptions of change (II).....	16
Figure 2a: Country and education distributions of perceptions of change (I).....	18
Figure 2b: Country and education distributions of perceptions of change (II)	18
Figure 3a: Country and age distributions of perceptions of change (I)	20
Figure 3b: Country and age distributions of perceptions of change (II).....	20
Figure 4: Word clouds of the Spanish and English views of culture	22
Figure 5: Lifestyles by country, education, and age.....	26
Figure 6: Associations between lifestyles by country, education, age, and life satisfaction...	28
Figure 7: Social distributions of digital cultural access indicators	29
Figure 8: Digital culture access and cultural and social openness.....	30
Figure 9: Country distributions of European attitudes	32
Figure 10: Country distributions of Europeans' aesthetic dispositions	33

1. Introduction

1.1. Why study socioeconomic inequalities in cultural participation? Why now?

Recent research shows that global economic change has accentuated inequalities since the early 2000s and posed profound challenges to social cohesion, solidarity, and wellbeing. The World Economic Forum has recently highlighted income disparity as one of the principal risks to economic and political security, and the OECD warns that, globally, the gap between the “haves” and the “have-nots” is now at the same level as in the 1820s, making it one of the most worrying developments of the past 200 years. In addition, Thomas Piketty’s “Capital in the 21st Century” (Piketty, 2003, 2014) has attracted interest worldwide, by demonstrating the trend towards increased wealth inequality in many nations, which is reverting to late 19th-century levels.

There has also been a simultaneous resurgence of interest in cultural aspects of stratification, for instance: the so-called “cultural class analyses” (Peterson, 2005); the role of cultural capital (Cveticanin et al., 2012; Katz-Gerro et al., 2007; Kraaykamp et al., 2008); the exploration of the shame and stigma experienced by people in lower social positions (Jun, 2019) compared to the pride and entitlement felt by people at the top (Atkinson, 2010; Skeggs, 2011); debates about cultural dynamics in the intersectionality of race, ethnicity, class, and gender (Crenshaw, 1991; Lamont, 2018); interest in the new elites (Froud et al., 2006; Khan, 2012); the literature on the relationship between age, generation, and inequality (Chauvel, 2008; Scherger & Savage, 2010); a new multidimensional model of social class (Savage, 2015; Savage et al., 2013); and the limits of social mobility (Friedman et al., 2015, 2016; Laurison & Friedman, 2016).

Two extensive UK studies have shown the significant influence of social inequality on the extent and type of cultural participation. Bennet and colleagues (2008) have shown that lifestyle in the UK is structured along four axes. The basic cultural division appears not to be between participation in elite and mass culture, as in Bourdieu (1984), but between active involvement in elite and popular cultural events, and non-participation (or limited participation) in cultural activities, except for watching television.

The projection of the sociodemographic variables onto lifestyles shows that this first axis, which has a decisive effect on the structure of the UK cultural map, is closely connected with the professional (socioeconomic) class of the respondents, their education level, and the class to which the parents belong. Chan and Goldthorpe have analysed cultural participation in music, film, theatre, performance, and the visual arts in the UK with slightly divergent results, indicating the existence of four audience groups (Chan, 2010; Chan & Goldthorpe, 2005, 2007). The first two groups, with a low level of cultural participation, comprise almost 60% of the sample. The fourth group (approximately 10% of the sample), with the highest level of cultural participation, included cultural omnivores in two or all three of the studied cultural domains. Further findings regarding the influence of socioeconomic variables on cultural participation confirmed the basic hypothesis that it is social status and not class that structures cultural participation (Chan, 2010; Chan & Goldthorpe, 2003a, 2003b).

A comparison of two Eurostat surveys (“European Cultural Values”, from 2007 and “Cultural Access and Participation”, from 2013) points to a general decline in participation in almost all cultural activities among European citizens. Across the EU-27, the index of cultural practices, which combines involvement in many cultural activities, illustrates a decline in participation in cultural activities between 2007 and 2013: “Very high” and “High” cultural engagement declined from 21% to 18%; medium engagement fell from 49% to 48%; and “Low” engagement increased from 30% to 34%. The respondents themselves indicated two main reasons for not participating or not participating more frequently in cultural activities as “lack of interest” (the first reason for five out of the nine activities tested) and “lack of time” (the first reason for the remaining four activities). However, cost, as measured by “too expensive” responses, proved to be an obstacle for many Europeans, particularly in eastern Europe (Romania, Bulgaria, and Hungary) and in countries worst affected by the economic crisis (Greece, Portugal, and Spain). However, growing social inequality does not only affect cultural participation in a narrow sense. It especially changes lifestyles and everyday practices: diet, clothing, socializing, travel, and free time activities. It is precisely those changes in everyday culture that is the focus of our research (Katz-Gerro, 2017).

Finally, a question of its own is related to an understanding of culture that no longer necessarily holds in present-day societies: the classical distinction between culture in the narrow (“culture as the arts”) and broad (“culture as the way of life”) senses. This question is addressed in-depth in a separate INVENT report (Purhonen et al, 2022).

1.2. WP6 objectives and the aim of this report

The aims of INVENT’s WP6: Unequal Cultural Opportunities are identification and description of social differences in access to and enjoyment of cultural practices, and comparison of social differences within and between countries over a long-term perspective. Culture among Europeans is understood in a broad sense, including the way of life, cultural participation, and consumption styles. Finally, we will explore the social implications of unequal opportunities to enjoy cultural life for social inclusion, tolerance, and cohesion.

Work on WP6 started at the beginning of INVENT (February 2020) and continues for the whole duration of the project (after the extension due to COVID-19 in July 2023). WP6 is led by UAB, but all INVENT partners contribute to achieving its goals. The objectives of WP6 are as follows:

- 1) Identification of how European citizens from various social groups perceive and understand changes in everyday culture influenced by growing social inequalities.
- 2) Identification of changes and perceived changes (production and reception) in the cultural participation of European citizens and examination of the degree to which these are connected to rising social inequality in European societies.
- 3) Identification of transformations in lifestyle patterns – especially consumption patterns (food, clothing, socialising, travel, leisure activities) and examination of the degree to which these are connected to re-stratification processes in European societies.
- 4) Analysis of the influence of growing social inequalities on inclusiveness, tolerance, and social cohesion in relation to cultural practices.

This report addresses those four objectives. The first objective, perception of changes influenced by growing social inequalities, is analysed with the survey's questions on perceptions of change and how they are unequally distributed among countries and social positions. The second objective, unequal cultural participation, is analysed with data from the open survey question regarding cultural views of residents in the Eurobarometer surveys of 2007 and 2013, i.e., before and after the debt crisis. The analysis of cultural views focuses on the complexity of national system of cultural views, social fragmentation, and stratification. The data from the two Eurobarometer surveys will help prove that growing social inequalities (after the debt crisis) have increased the cultural participation gap. Here we analyse how patterns of cultural participation changed after the crisis, how these changes varied according to individual social positions and country. These findings provide evidence for a pan-European cultural policy based on socioeconomic mechanisms that stabilise family incomes during an economic crisis, particularly in countries with a weaker welfare state. The third objective, identification of transformations in lifestyles patterns, is analysed by looking at the interdependence between a broad set of lifestyle indicators and how lifestyles patterns are unequally distributed, within countries (education and age, as the two main axes of social differentiation) and between countries. Unequal access to culture is also manifested in lifestyles. Finally, the fourth objective is addressed by analysing the association between cultural participation and a set of cultural values. The findings provide strong evidence that 1) life satisfaction is correlated with cultural participation, 2) exposure to digital culture influences openness to other cultures, but not necessarily openness to interaction with other people, and 3) attitudes toward European and other cultures as well as the aesthetic dispositions of Europeans are correlated to form a stratified scale of inclusive and exclusive cultural views.

1.3. The structure of the report

This report, representing the deliverable D6.1 of the H2020 funded INVENT project, provides an overview on sources of unequal cultural opportunities of ordinary people in present-day Europe. It adopts a bottom-up perspective to unequal cultural opportunities, which means that instead of starting from some pre-defined concepts, an exploratory study is conducted into the influence of social inequalities on cultural participation for different social indicators and across different European countries.

The report continues in the following section with a brief discussion on the societal values of culture and why it is important to study how the meanings of culture, cultural participation, lifestyles, and the influence of digital culture on social and cultural openness foster societal values of culture, most especially in our current socioeconomic context of increased economic, social, and cultural inequalities.

Follows a synthesis of the main findings of this WP, with unequal access to culture organised according to the four objectives: 1) perceptions of social change due to the growing social inequalities, 2) changes in cultural participation due to growing social inequalities (organised as within- and between-country sources of unequal access to culture), 3) stratification of lifestyles, and 4) societal values of culture (life satisfaction, social openness, and inclusive and exclusive cultural views). Findings are based on wide-ranging and nationally representative survey

datasets collected by INVENT in 2021 for nine countries (Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK) and on Eurobarometer data. Data has also been collected on social media regarding the meanings of culture and interviews have been conducted with a sample of migrants and residents. The meanings of culture as expressed in social media have been analysed regarding social inequalities in the ascribed meanings.

2. The societal values of culture and megatrends

2.1. The societal values of culture

The transformation of the EU into a multicultural society due to current megatrends and growing social inequalities brings to the light the importance of culture as a source of wellbeing, life satisfactions, social cohesion, social openness, and cultural openness, among other societal values. However, access to culture is not equally distributed among social groups in the ordinary life of multicultural societies. While cultural *assimilation* focuses on migrants adopting the mainstream culture of the host society, *multiculturalism* emphasises the rights of migrants to be recognised as a social group with their own particularities and identity in a multicultural society (Faist, 2010). That is, if cultural differences are recognised, they can be transformed into cultural capital (López Sintas et al., 2014).

Economic and cultural inequality are interrelated in the lives of people. Research on the social foundation of happiness have found that national variations in life satisfaction come half from economic drivers and half from social drivers of happiness (Helliwell et al., 2017). More importantly, analysis of the evolution in average life satisfaction for the period 1973-2004 shows that even though GDP per capita constantly increased, life satisfaction did not (Clark et al., 2008). It seems that after individuals reach a certain level of income, the main source of increased life satisfaction is social and cultural drivers. In consequence, privileged individuals (with a higher level of wealth) will experience a higher level of satisfaction with life. However, at some point, wealth is unable to increase satisfaction with life. From that point on, only social and cultural sources will increase happiness (Clark et al., 2008; Helliwell et al., 2017; Rojas, 2007). This means that life satisfaction can be increased with different combinations of wealth and social drivers. It also means that the non-wealthy may increase their satisfaction with life through better social drivers that compensate for lower levels of wealth.

Cultural researchers have also studied: 1) the stratification of cultural practices, i.e., inequalities in the social distribution of cultural practices, and 2) the relationship between cultural practices and wellbeing or perceptions of health, i.e., how cultural practices are related to subjective satisfaction with life. According to findings, subjective wellbeing is related to cultural practices, and the latter are linked to privileged individuals in society (Bygren et al., 2009; Grossi et al., 2012; Grossi & Compare, 2014; Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). If cultural practices are unequally distributed among social groups, then the social distribution of subjective life satisfaction will also be unequally distributed. And in measuring individuals' wellbeing, if inequality in happiness/satisfaction with life is more important than inequality in

income, then we should focus on studying the social and cultural sources of wellbeing. Unequal access to culture, for instance, may influence health and social and cultural openness, among other social drivers.

According to research into the social foundations of happiness, if income level and health expectancy remain constant, an increase in social drivers (social support, trust, etc.) could bring about major wellbeing improvements among individuals with low levels of social drivers (Helliwell et al., 2017). But for cultural policies to have an impact on social drivers, we need to know how the latter are related to cultural practices in multicultural communities in a context of migration, globalisation, and digitalisation of cultural practices. We need to 1) find out how multicultural experiences are related to the social values of culture so that we can find ways to influence and modify this association through cultural policies, and 2) uncover the social mechanisms by which arts, culture, and leisure participation in mixed, global, and digital societies are linked to social and cultural openness, given that the latter are related to subjective wellbeing and happiness, and 3) uncover the values of culture (different combinations of lifestyles that produce similar levels of wellbeing) associated with wellbeing and social inequality (Rojas, 2007).

The relationship between individual's lifestyles (arts, culture, and leisure) and happiness/life satisfaction/wellbeing has been reported for several countries (Bygren et al., 1996, 2009; Grossi et al., 2012, 2012; Grossi & Compare, 2014; Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). In the UK, engagement in arts, culture, and sports seems to be related to subjective wellbeing (life satisfaction and happiness), although in a distinctive way. Only regular participation in arts activities and sport generates positive effects, while the effect of participation in arts events (fairs, museums/historical sites) are positive, irrespective of frequency (Wheatley & Bickerton, 2017). Other research (in Italy) has regressed the Psychological General Well Being Index (PGWBI) on a set of cultural participation indicators jointly with a set of social indicators, finding that cultural practices appear to be the second most important determinant of PGWBI, after the absence of disease (Grossi et al., 2011, 2012).

The societal value of culture refers to the way that different patterns of culture (beliefs and behaviours) may have a positive effect on the individuals that experience it. Understood in this way, we should talk about cultural values in plural. Despite different views of meanings, the societal values of culture are fundamentally grounded in the capacity of culture (different ways of living) to 'effect change' on the social groups that experience it and on society (Crossick & Kaszynska, 2014; O'Brien & Oakley, 2015). This understanding of the social value of culture is an active process of effecting change that requires a social act of valuing culture. It attributes societal values of culture with an essential relationship with inequality and wellbeing. This proposition is grounded in the idea that culture can lessen the effects of social exclusion and can positively affect subjective life satisfaction for all or most indicators of social structure. The societal values of culture can be understood as an umbrella term for the intersection between culture and wellbeing in different social groups.

The social values of culture can be understood as a relationship between culture and inequality, suggesting that this relationship can be a hierarchical (class divisions) or a horizontal (symbolic divisions) social process. In relation to hierarchy, culture is connected to social hierarchies of what is, and what is not, of value or worth, and benefits only some social

groups, while some cultural forms may be perceived as having more value than others in society. As for horizontal production of differences, social values are connected to ethnicity, age, race, and gender. Both kinds of relationships interact with each other to produce different lifestyle patterns but also have similar effects on wellbeing. According to Bennett et al. (2009), interactions occur between class-based aspects of cultural values and aspects associated with gender, ethnicity, and age divisions.

The relationship between culture as lifestyle and wellbeing can be understood as a sequential causality chain between cultural beliefs and practices and wellbeing. However, the relationship may be mediated by individuals' social openness and cultural openness. For instance, multicultural practices may expose nationals to the cultures of other Europeans or of migrants from other cultures. These cultural practices may increase social and cultural openness to people from different cultures, increase tolerance of other cultural practices, and even increase social cohesion. Knowledge of this relationship is of particular importance to understanding the social mechanisms by which culture is related to wellbeing in multicultural societies like the EU. It then becomes possible to think about cultural policies that may change the exposure of nationals to other cultures, but also for exposure of members of other cultures to the local culture.

Researchers have endeavoured to explain the relationship between cultural diversity and tolerance, social differences, economic performance, human development, social cohesion, and generalised trust. Cultural diversity is often measured as: 1) the fraction of the population characterised by something different: ethnicity, language, race, etc., and 2) exposure to a diversity of manifestations of diverse cultures (eating, watching films, etc). No negative relation has been found in Europe and other long-established democracies, i.e., countries with good governance and high institutional performance (Hlepas, 2005). In this research, instead of studying cultural diversity at the ecological level (i.e., how communities are mixed), we study cultural diversity at an individual level for individuals living in multicultural communities, i.e., beyond acculturation and integration.

In Europe and long-established democracies researchers have found a positive relationship between cultural diversity and social tolerance (Hlepas, 2005). However, the effect of cultural diversity on wellbeing seems not to be universal. The majority of fractions of cultures living together in the same space seem to have lower levels of life satisfaction than the same fractions living in an area with low diversity (Longhi, 2014). However, no relationship has been found for the minority fractions living in an area of high cultural diversity.

Social interaction through leisure practices builds the social networks needed to access social support (Shinn et al., 1984). Whether a person asks a friend for assistance depends on a mutual understanding of the proper way of seeking such support (H. S. Kim et al., 2008). Social support is understood as people's specific recruitment and use of their social networks in response to specific stressful events, and involves the elicitation of advice, instrumental aid, or emotional comfort.

How do digital lifestyles contribute to society? Leung & Lee (2005) have found that internet activities, new media use, and leisure activities influence social support and affect the quality of life, as measured using the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS) developed by Diener et al. (1985). The SWLS is narrowly focused on assessing global life satisfaction and does not tap

into related constructs, such as positive affect or loneliness. As discussed by several researchers (Dobbernack & Modood, 2011; Lee, 2009), leisure, cultural diversity, and tolerance are correlated with trust (Matarasso, 1997), social cohesion (Sacco et al., 2018), and social support (Matarasso & Landry, 1999). We should expect that a higher level of leisure practices combined with a better perception of cultural diversity will produce a higher level of social tolerance.

2.2. Megatrends and cultural participation

As indicated in previous sections, inequality in cultural participation is influenced by megatrends as studied in INVENT, i.e., diverse notions of culture, globalisation, and social inequalities. As shown by the report on WP3 (D3.1), digitalisation has been seen to influence the very notion of culture, not only by affording new types of (digital) cultural products and practices and facilitating cultural abundance in contemporary societies, but also by evening out cultural hierarchies and reconfiguring cultural gatekeepers and intermediaries.

Relatedly, globalisation scholars have attributed great importance to media and communication technologies in globalisation processes. Media and especially the internet are important infrastructures that have reconfigured flows of communication and cultural exchanges. While some have celebrated this, others have been more critical, emphasizing the homogenizing cultural effects (Douglas & Pierce, 2008) (see also D4.1). Finally, as shown by the literature on digital divides, digitalisation of culture (as well as cultural globalisation and changing notions of culture) intertwine with questions related to social inequality as shown in this report (D6.1). Digital media not only make possible access to culture and engagement with culture, but may also potentially amplify the social stratification of, and inequalities in, cultural participation (see D5.1).

Social inequality has many dimensions. One of them is the evolution of income distribution, measure by the Gini Index. As pointed out in report D3.1, income inequality has increased in many Western countries in the last decades of the 20th century. However, no research has been conducted into how an economic crisis influences social and cultural inequalities. In this report we focus on the impact of growing social inequalities on cultural participation, perceptions of changes in cultural participation, and the social values of cultural participation.

3. Methodology

Survey data for this study were collected in the spring-early summer of 2021 within the framework of INVENT Culture. The survey was simultaneously fielded in nine countries: Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom. Data collection, coordinated by a national survey agency in each country, aimed at collecting responses from a representative sample of the adult population (aged 18 years and older). A minimum of 1,200 respondents per country completed the questionnaire. The survey included questions related to, e.g., respondents' attitudes towards and participation in culture and cultural activities, media use, life satisfaction, opinions on Europe and cosmopolitanism, and their sociodemographic background (further information is available in D2.2).

Project survey technical sheet	
Participants	Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the UK
Fieldwork	15 April 2021 – 4 July 2021
IRB approval	Approved by the Ethical Review Board of the coordinating institution (Erasmus University Rotterdam) before the start of data collection
Agency	Each country reflected in the project contracted a national agency to conduct the survey
Target population	Country population
Inclusion/exclusion criteria	Population aged 18-80 years living in Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, the Netherlands, Serbia, Spain, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom
Target sample	1,200 completed surveys per country (10,800 in total)
Sampling	Multi-stage sampling for pre-stratified conglomerates
Sample type	Random sample
Interview type	The information was collected through four complementary methodologies: CAPI (personal), CATI (telephone) and CAWI (electronic-spontaneous or assisted) and Face-to-Face . The principal method was CAWI (80% of the sample). Other methods were employed to get specific typologies of respondents (e.g., minorities). Exceptions were the United Kingdom, Serbia and Croatia where for technical reason the survey was completely online (United Kingdom) and completely face-to-face (Serbia and Croatia). A pilot test was performed on 20 people by each country of the project.
Sample procedure	In most countries, the survey was administered via computer-assisted web interviews or through the agencies' online panels. In some cases, the use of an online questionnaire was further supplemented or replaced by telephone, face-to-face, and/or paper-and-pencil interviews, depending on the availability of the method.
Final sample	Croatia (1,225), Denmark (1,666), Finland (1,247), France (2,259), the Netherlands (1,596), Serbia (1,236), Spain (1,398), Switzerland (1,370), and the United Kingdom (2,411). Total: 14,384
Response rate	The response rate varies considerably between countries due to different data collection methods: Croatia (53.98%), Denmark (19%), Finland (19,2%), France (unavailable), the Netherlands (17.5%), Serbia (24.9%), Spain (14.2%), Switzerland (23.3%), and the UK (not available).
Survey measurement block	The survey included a variety of questions related to, e.g., respondents' attitudes towards and participation in culture and cultural activities, media use, life satisfaction, opinions on Europe and cosmopolitanism, and their sociodemographic background.

4. Unequal access to culture

4.1. Perceptions of change

In the INVENT survey, perceptions of change were measured with eight indicators:

- Q23_1 The gap between the poor and rich has grown
- Q23_2 The presence of different cultures has enriched life
- Q23_3 The use of internet has created more problems
- Q23_4 Access to higher education is better now
- Q23_5 The European Union is a threat for national and local cultures
- Q23_6 Daily life is difficult without the internet
- Q23_7 The European Union has brought opportunities for resident peoples
- Q23_8 Competition from multinational companies is a threat for national and local firms

Country comparisons

The perception of social change is not uniformly distributed across countries. In Figure 1a below we can see that the perception that the *gap between the poor and the rich has grown* is higher among Europeans living in Spain (SP), Serbia (RS), and Croatia (HR), followed at a distance by the United Kingdom (UK) and the Netherlands (NL). As we will see in the next section, Spain, Serbia, and Croatia are the countries that have been most affected by the 2008 debt crisis, in comparison to European countries with a stronger welfare state. So, it is no surprise to see that those residents have a higher perception that the gap has grown between rich and poor. Regarding the perception that the *presence of different cultures has enriched life*, this is greater in the United Kingdom (UK), Switzerland (CH), Spain (SP), and Croatia (HR), but differences are not strong. The perception that the *use of internet has created more problems* is greater in Serbia (RS) and Croatia (HR), but most people do not see any problems in this respect. The perception that *access to higher education is better now* greater in Switzerland (CH), Finland (FI), Denmark (DK), Croatia (HR), and Spain (SP).

The perception that the *EU is a threat for national and local cultures* is greater in the United Kingdom (UK), Serbia (RS), Finland (FI), and the Netherlands (NL), but not in Spain (SP). The perception that it *is difficult to live without the internet* is very much greater in the United Kingdom (UK), Switzerland (CH), Finland (FI), and Denmark (DK), the countries with the highest rate of internet penetration. France (FR), Serbia (RS), and Croatia (HR), in contrast, have unexpectedly low perceptions. The perception that the *EU brings opportunities to residents* is greater in Spain (SP), Finland (FI), and Croatia (HR), but lower in Switzerland (CH), the United Kingdom (UK), and France (FR). The perception that *multinational firms are a threat to national and local firms* is lower in Denmark (DK) and France (FR), but in almost all countries is higher than 50% of residents.

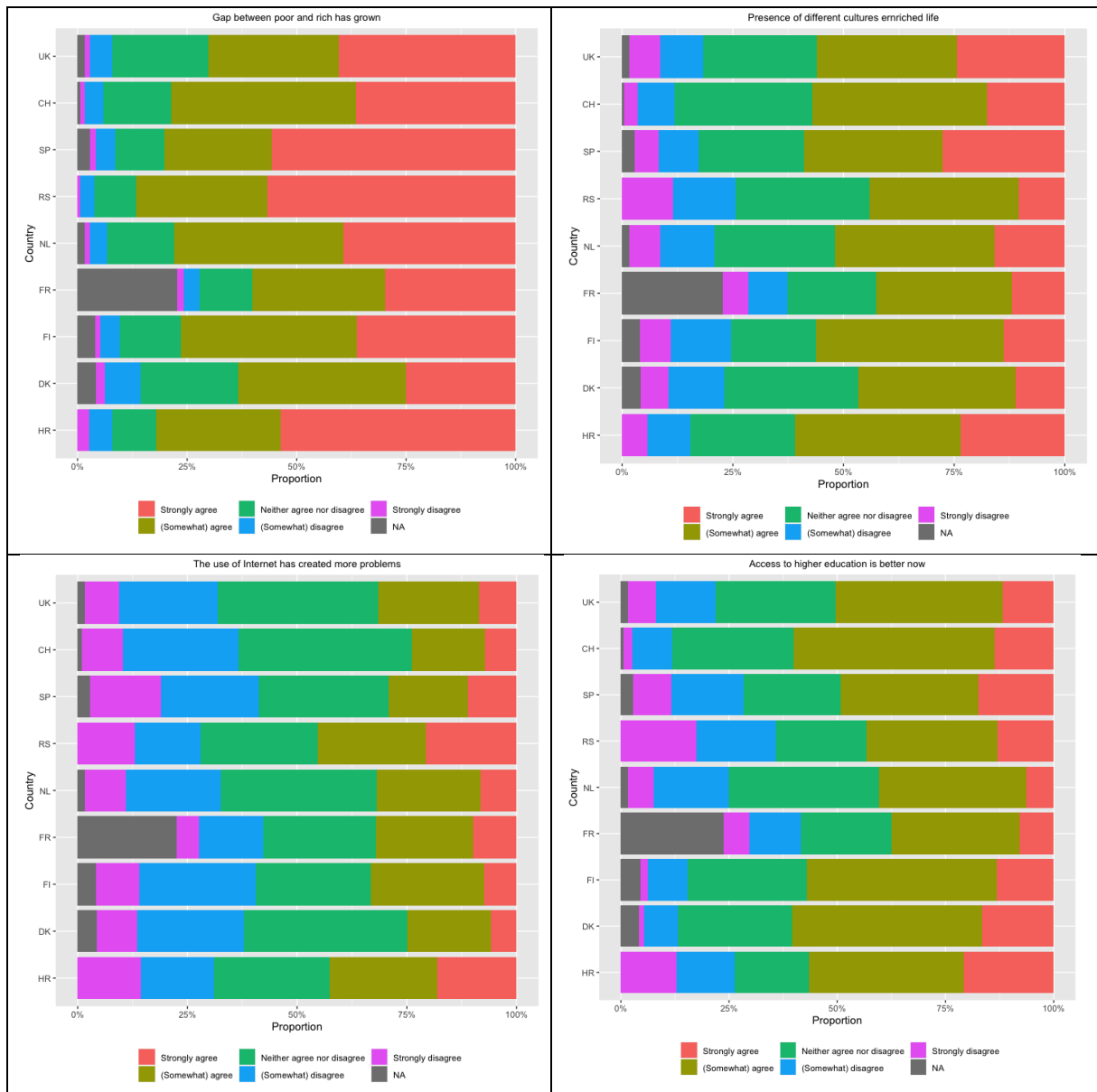


Figure 1a: Country distribution of perceptions of change (I)

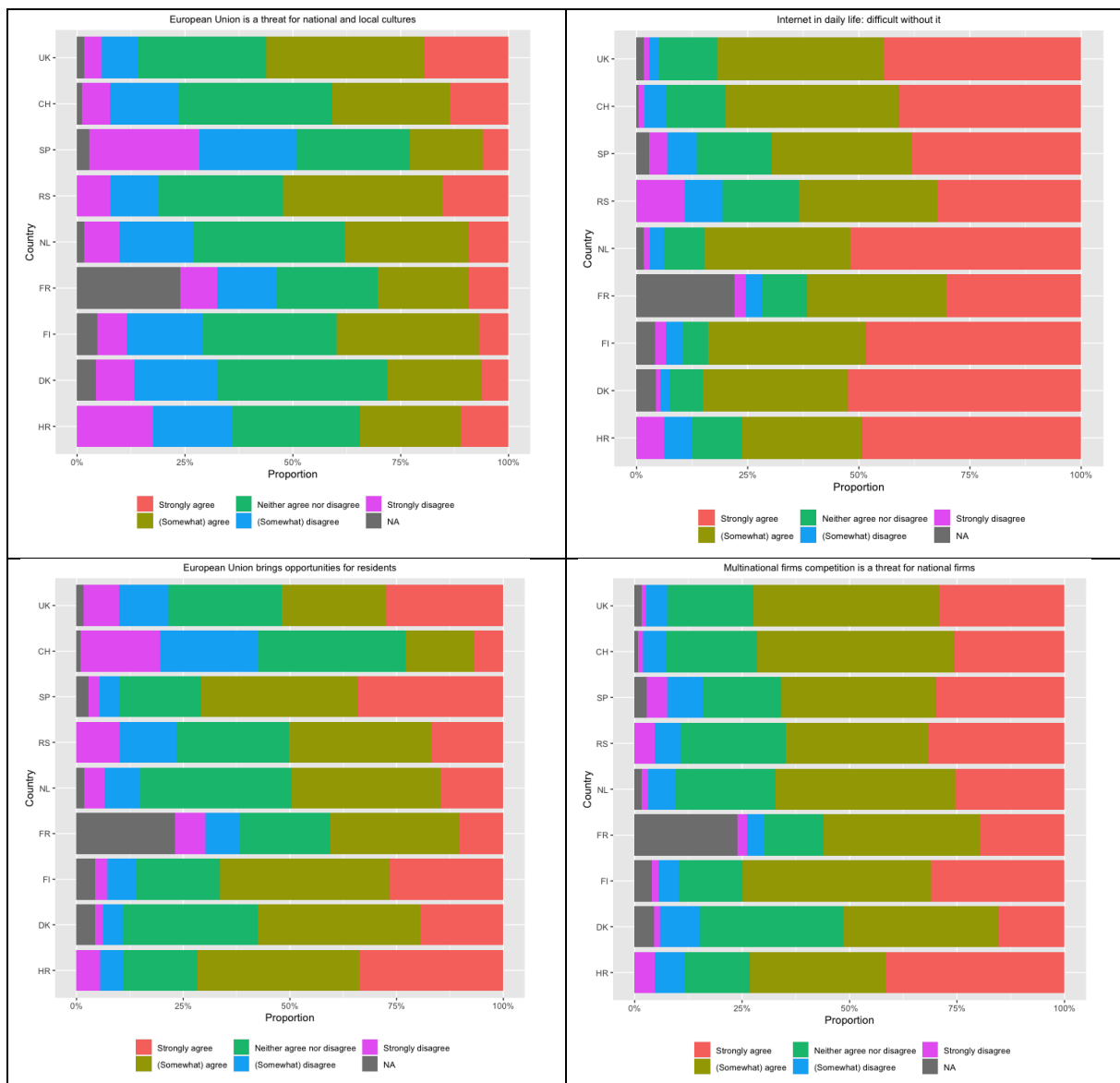


Figure 1b: Country distribution of perceptions of change (II)

Social location

Social position

The main social differentiation axes are education (class divisions) and age (symbolic divisions), for which present the distribution of perceptions of change by education and age but conditioned to the countries. The perception that *the gap between rich and poor has grown* is greater among the lower educated, particularly in Croatia (HR), Spain (SP), and Finland (FI), but not in Denmark (DK), France (FR), Serbia (RS), or the United Kingdom (UK). In this last set of countries, it seems that the better educated have a greater perception that the gap has increased.

The perception that the *presence of different cultures has enriched life* is, in general, greater among residents with tertiary education (particularly in the UK), but differences among educational levels are low, particularly in Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), Serbia (RS), and the

Netherlands (NL). The perception that *the use of internet has created more problems* is greater among the less educated, and greater in Croatia (HR), Serbia (RS), Spain (SP) and the United Kingdom (UK). The perception that *access to higher education is better now* greater in Croatia (HR), Spain (SP), and Denmark (DK), but differences are not strong.

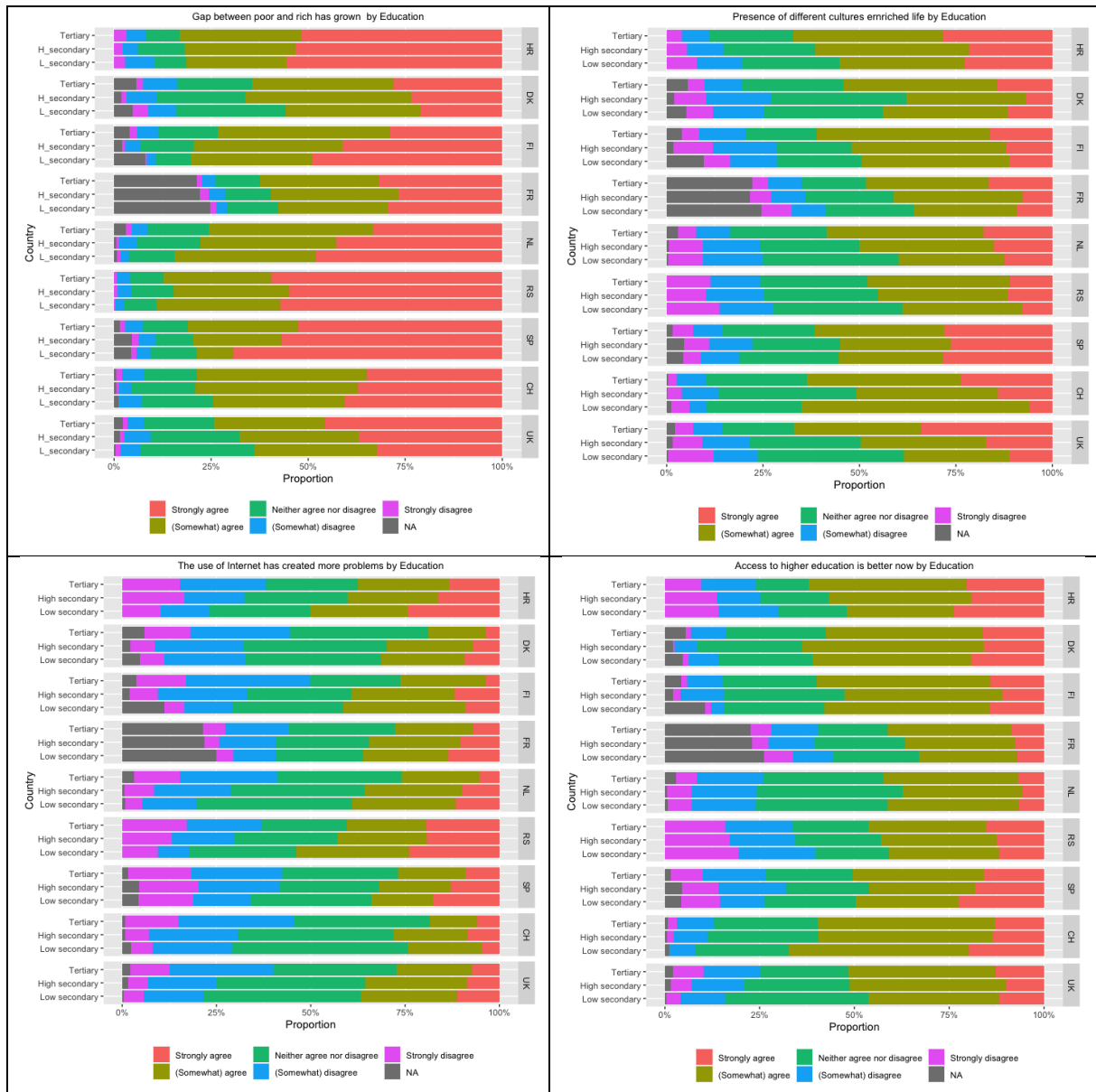


Figure 2a: Country and education distributions of perceptions of change (I)

The perception that the *EU is a threat for national and local cultures* is stronger in the United Kingdom (UK), Serbia (RS), Finland (FI), and Switzerland (CH), but only in the United Kingdom (UK) is the level higher than 50% of residents. The perception *it would be difficult to live without the internet* is strong among the higher educated, except in the Netherlands (NL) and Spain (SP), where there are no differences between educational levels. The perception that the *European Union brings opportunities to residents* is greater among the higher educated, particularly in the United Kingdom (UK), Finland (FI), Denmark (DK), and the

Netherlands (NL). The perception that *multinational firms are a threat to national and local firms* is stronger among the less educated in Croatia (HR), Spain (SP) and Finland (FI), and is lower in Denmark (DK) and France (FR).



Figure 2b: Country and education distributions of perceptions of change (II)

Generational differences

The perception that *the gap between poor and rich has grown* is very strong among the older people, particularly in Croatia (HR), Denmark (DK), Spain (SP), Serbia (RS), and Switzerland (HR), with a proportion higher than 50% of residents. The perception that *the presence of different cultures has enriched life* is greater among younger people in the United Kingdom (UK), the Netherlands (NL), and Denmark (DK), but not in the other countries. Almost 50% of residents have a positive perception. The perception that *the use of internet has created more problems* is higher among older people in Serbia (RS) and Croatia (HR). It was a surprise to find that younger people in Spain (SP) show a higher perception of internet

problems. The perception that *access to higher education is better now* higher among younger people in Croatia (HR), Serbia (RS), and Spain (SP), but in Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), and Switzerland (CH), older people think that access to higher education is not better now.

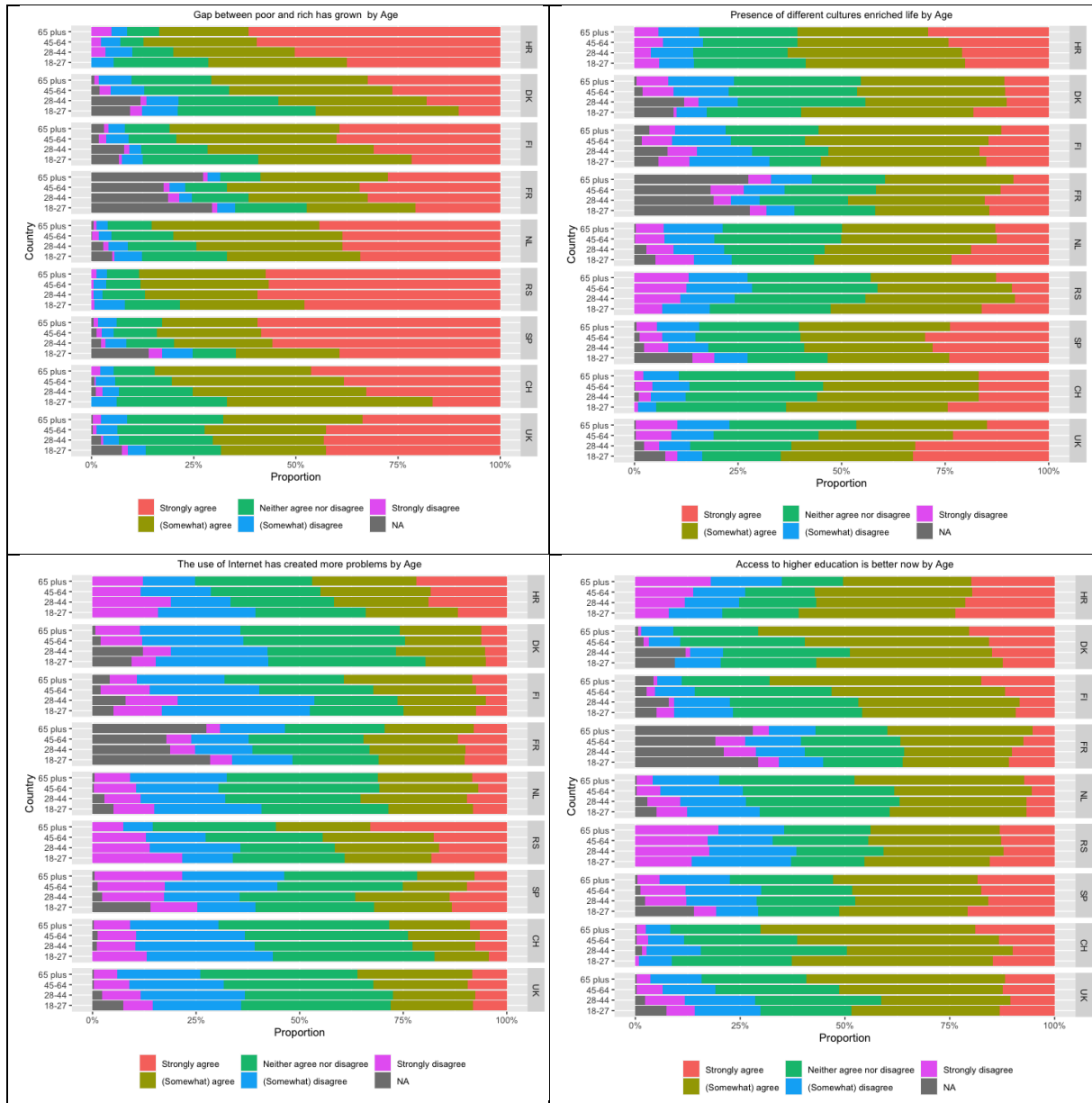


Figure 3a: Country and age distributions of perceptions of change (I)

The perception that the *EU is a threat for national and local cultures* is homogenous among generations but is greater in the United Kingdom (UK), Serbia (RS), Finland (FI), and Switzerland (CH), but is low in Spain (SP). The perception that *life is difficult without the internet* is higher among the younger generation in Croatia (HR), Denmark (DK), the Netherlands (NL), Finland (FI), and the United Kingdom (UK). The perception that the *EU brings opportunities for residents* is higher among older people in Croatia (HR) and Spain (SP), but among the younger generation in Serbia (RS). Finally, the perception that *multinational firms are a threat for national and local firms* is stronger among older people, particularly in Croatia

(HR), Serbia (RS), Spain (SP), and Finland (FI).

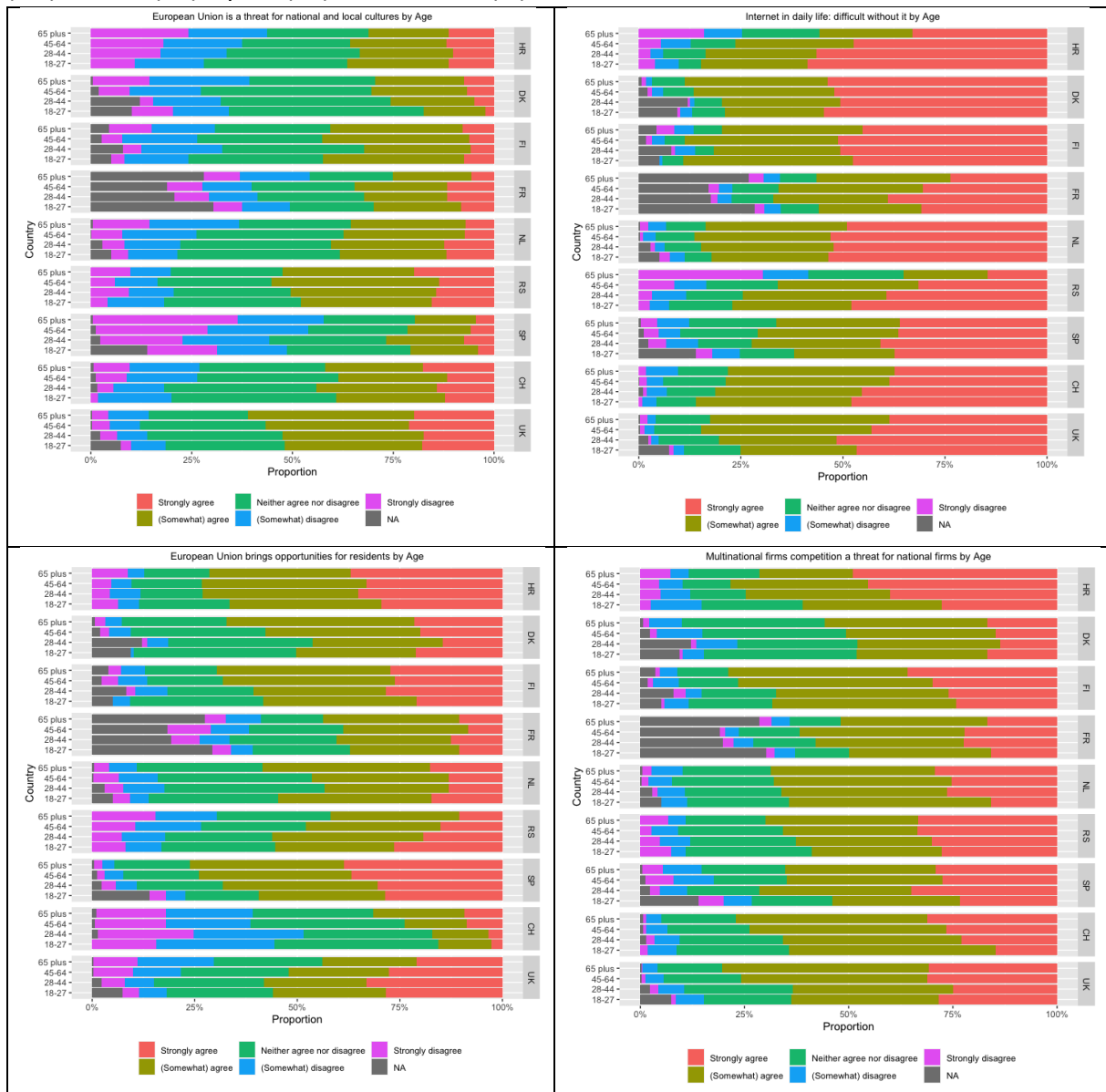


Figure 3b: Country and age distributions of perceptions of change (II)

Sources of unequal cultural views

As a way to describe to what extent culture is unequally lived in Europe, we conducted research into the structure of the system of cultural views of the residents of two countries, the UK and Spain (Jinju et al., 2022). We found that the cultural systems of both countries were different and unequally distributed inside both countries. We were interested in how particular social groups within each country select different components of their cultural system, resulting in a stratified view of social and cultural reality. Social groups access different individual and social resources, and maintain different positions in the social system, and consequently they are exposed to different ways of living and manifestations of culture (Bourdieu, 1984). We expected that differences in social location within and between countries would expose residents to different experiences and hence to cultural views. For

this reason, cultural narratives were condensed into a few topics for people to talk about culture. We thus reduced systematic heterogeneity in the national discourse to uncover a few clusters of individuals with similar cultural views. After uncovering the heterogeneity in the national meanings of culture we used semantic network analysis (Drieger, 2013) to describe the structure of the national cultural narrative regarding their cultural system and the relations among the cultural components of their particular cultural system (Manning & Schutze, 1999).

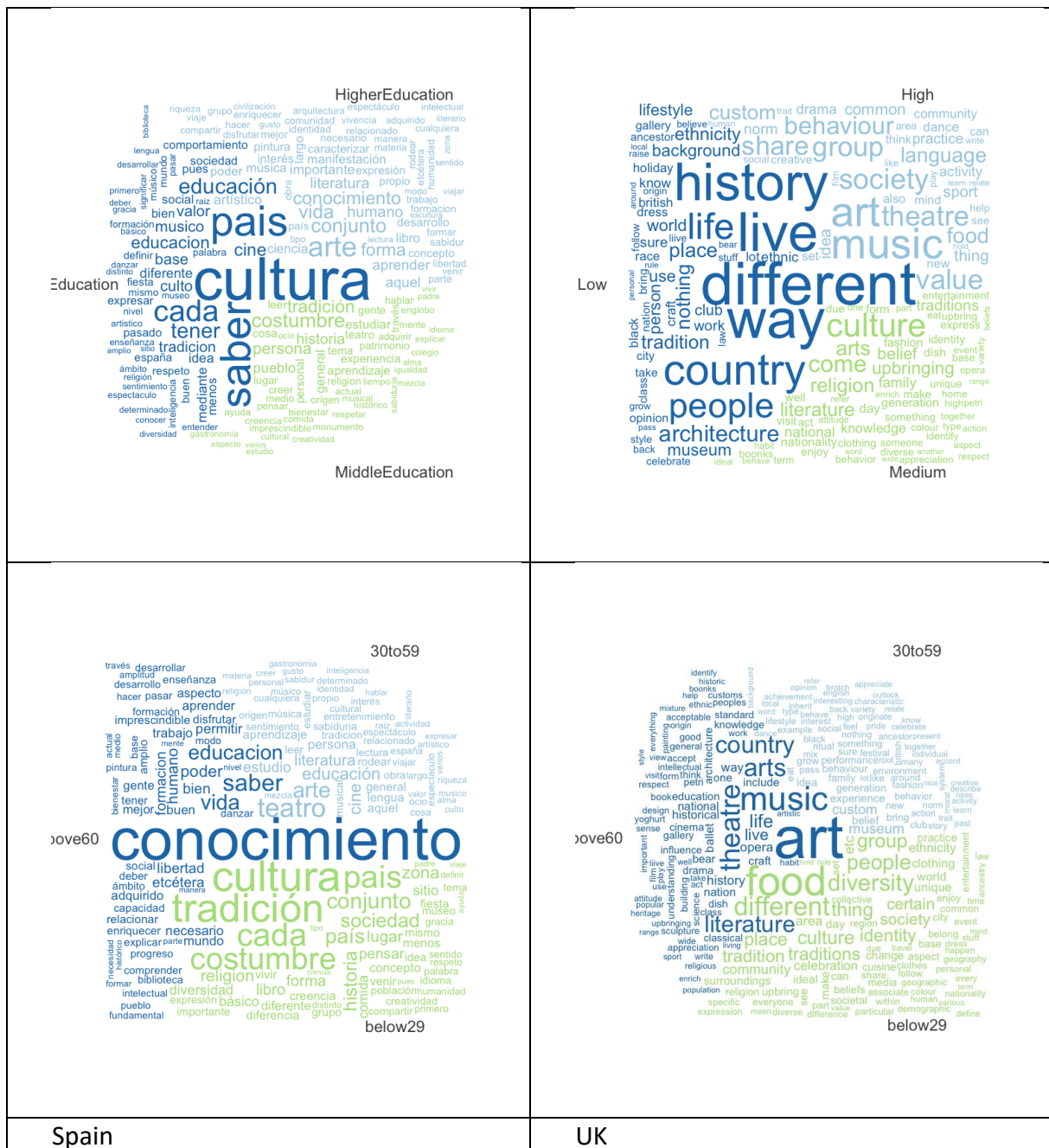


Figure 4: Word clouds of the Spanish and English views of culture

The descriptive picture shown in Figure 4 suggests that the meanings and cultural views are different in both countries. Spaniards seem to associate culture with knowledge and the arts,

while UK residents seem to associate it with people and cultural expressions of what people do: people are located at the centre of culture, surrounded by the arts, music, traditions, history, theatre, food, beliefs, etc.

The system of cultural views in the UK is related to the identity of particular social groups, while in Spain it is related to the hierarchical values of culture. Even though we needed fewer cultural topics to model the UK's cultural system, it was more fragmented than the Spanish system. Individuals classified into different clusters of cultural views were described according to their residence, including those living in large cities and rural areas along with migrants from the former British Empire. The sample of residents in Spain included recent migrants from Morocco and Romania. Both groups of migrants have settled in different areas, according to their skills: Romanians in large cities and Moroccans in rural areas. Therefore, we expected and found that the UK and Spanish cultural systems reflected the complexity of their social systems, due to migration, decolonisation processes and other social facts.

In the UK we found five social groups with distinct cultural views (the arts, customs, traditional food, culture, and a way of life) holding similar cultural views inside the groups but different between them. In Spain we found four (the arts, general knowledge, cultural knowledge, and customs). In both cases, the cultural views of social life were stratified. If the systems of cultural views reflect a particular view of social reality of the people who hold them, then we should expect that the more complex the national cultural system, the more fragmented the cultural views of social reality. This is precisely what we reported, a fragmented and stratified cultural view of social reality. The social groups associated with the cultural segments are from unequal social positions and social categories. Note that the identified cultural differences of social realities are associated with people's residence in urban or rural areas. Privileged individuals living in cities see culture as the highest expression of a society and associate it with social and cultural openness. Residents living in rural areas see culture as a traditional way of life. Culture as an expression of identity, based on the religion, food, and traditions of the country where parents and grandparents were born, is prevalent in the UK, but not in Spain. These contrasting views of culture between urban and rural peoples may also mirror the political views of social groups. Future studies should investigate this issue further.

Within- and between-country sources of unequal access to culture

Bourdieu theorised that individuals with privileged social positions (better material conditions of living) distinguish themselves through legitimate highbrow cultural participation and lifestyles. By social position, Bourdieu referred to the temporary social location of a person in a social space, grounded in their economic, cultural, and social capitals (Bourdieu, 1984). The association between the social and cultural spaces that distinguish individuals is based on people's habits and is called Bourdieu's homology thesis (van Rees et al., 1999). The homology thesis is a sociological explanation of an alternative thesis of no social relationship between social groups' position in the social space and their lifestyles (Becker, 1998).

Even though the homology thesis was initially proposed in a national context (France) in a specific temporal moment (late 70s), it can be extended to the comparison of cultural participation and lifestyles of social groups living in different countries and even in different

temporal periods. Bourdieu's homology thesis is based on an unequal distribution of resources in which people's material conditions of living are grounded. Social inequality and cultural inequality are interdependent according to the homology thesis. Unequal social distribution of economic, cultural, and social capitals among individuals produces differential social constraints and opportunities, resulting in differential habitus and behavioural patterns (Bourdieu, 1984; DiMaggio & Mukhtar, 2004).

According to research we have conducted (López Sintas & Lamberti, 2022), the homology thesis can be extended to the comparison between countries and temporal moments. This work proposed that, at the supranational level, a country's resources and their distribution among residents may operate as a supranational stratification mechanism. A country's position in the cross-country social arena, grounded in the level and composition of its resources, forms the basis for between-country differences in material conditions of living and in cultural participation. We call this the double homology thesis (López and Lamberti, 2022). This means that, at a cross-country level, individuals' material conditions of living not only depend on their capital but also on their country's level and distribution of resources. What we refer to as the *double structuration process* reflects how variations within countries and between countries' material conditions of living are transformed into variations in cultural participation at both levels, within country (the homology thesis) and between country (the double homology thesis). The double homology thesis is the alternative explanation to no social relationship at both levels (Becker, 1998).

Furthermore, as well as the level of a country's resources, we consider the unequal social distribution of resources, that is, the welfare that countries offer their residents. Families and the welfare state play greater or lesser roles in providing cultural, social, and economic resources (Abio et al., 2021). When an economic shock hits, access to financial resources can cushion any temporal reduction in household income and, by extension, in cultural participation. However, we suggest that from where those resources are sourced – from individuals, families, or the welfare state – may influence the relationship between social inequality, unequal cultural participation, cultural class divisions and symbolic divisions. We call this the *welfare state thesis*, which explains differences in the social mechanisms that translate an economic shock to cultural participation.

Data from Eurobarometer surveys for 2007 and 2013 were used to explore the influence of an economic shock – the debt crisis of 2008 – within and between countries in terms of evidence for the double homology thesis and the welfare thesis. The aim was to answer four research questions: (1) to what extent do EU citizens systematically differ in their cultural participation? (2) to what extent did the EU debt crisis differ in its impact on cultural participation in EU countries? (3) to what extent has the double structuration process produced an unequal impact on cultural participation in EU countries after the EU debt crisis? (4) to what extent is there evidence for the welfare state thesis in the EU country framework?

The evidence supporting the *double homology thesis* (López and Lamberti, 2022) indicates a structural equivalence between individuals and countries. Both levels of analysis – within and between countries – point to an association between Europeans' resources and greater cultural participation. Within countries, individuals' patterns of cultural participation are related to individuals' social locations (cultural and economic capitals and social categories).

Broadly speaking, the more privileged the individual, the greater their cultural participation, in particular, in legitimate cultural expressions (Bourdieu, 1984; Coulangeon, 2005; Falk & Katz-Gerro, 2016; García-Álvarez, Katz-Gerro, & Lopez-Sintas, 2007; Katz-Gerro & Sullivan, 2010; Peterson, 2005; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Peterson & Simkus, 1992), and the younger the individual, the greater their cultural participation in contemporary cultural expressions (Eijck and Knulst, 2005; Holbrook, 1993; Holbrook and Schindler, 1994; Schindler and Holbrook, 2003; Tampubolon, 2008a,b).

However, the association between patterns of cultural participation and the social location of individuals changes in three differentiated clusters of countries, defined according to the strength of the welfare state. *Cultural class divisions* were stronger in countries with weaker welfare states, whereas *symbolic cultural divisions* were stronger in countries with stronger welfare states. The double homology thesis provided an explanation for empirical evidence reported by several researchers (Falk & Katz-Gerro, 2016; Virtanen, 2005b, 2005a), while analysis of the welfare state thesis suggested two theoretical patterns. First, Europeans living in socially democratic countries not only enjoy a higher level of cultural participation but also are cushioned against the impact of economic shocks on their social and cultural life. Second, social variation in cultural participation is reduced during economic shocks but increased during periods of economic growth, as already reported elsewhere (García-Álvarez, Katz-Gerro, & López-Sintas, 2007).

4.2. Inequality in lifestyles

To describe the lifestyles of residents in the nine countries we used questions regarding watching TV, cultural participation, and frequency of cultural participation. Watching TV series was measured with question Q14 – *how often you watch the following TV series or films (either on TV, DVD online, or in movie theatres)* – measured on a scale from almost daily (5) to almost never (1). We were interested in the language of films: local language, English, other European language, and other non-European language.

Cultural participation was measured with question Q15a, *how often do you typically do the following activities? [Please answer for a situation in which there are no restrictions because of COVID-19]*, measured on a scale from almost daily (5) to almost never (1). The activities selected were the following: dining out in restaurants; going to a café; pub, or bar; do-it-yourself work; visiting recreational areas; visiting markets or fairs; doing sports or physical exercise; making music or playing an instrument; doing other art; doing handicrafts (e.g., knitting, quilting, pottery- or jewellery-making); doing volunteer work (e.g., related to culture, religion, sports, or social work); and reading books.

The frequency of cultural participation was measured with question Q15b, *How often do you typically go to the following events or places? [Please answer for a situation in which there are no restrictions because of COVID-19]*, measured on a scale from almost daily (5) to almost never (1). The activities selected were the following: classical music concerts, opera, ballet, or theatre in a concert hall or theatre; popular music concerts or popular music festivals; local fairs with food and music; and museums, monuments, or historical sites.

To make it easier to interpret the findings, instead of describing frequencies we transformed the measurement scale into a numeric variable, produced summaries of the

mean values across countries for education (class divisions) and age (symbolic divisions), i.e., the two main axes of social differentiation.

Figure 5 below shows that residents in Serbia (RS), the United Kingdom (UK), and France (FR) watch films in local languages more than the average. Residents in Spain (SP), Croatia (HR), the Netherlands (NL), and Finland (FI) watch films in other languages in a higher proportion than the mean. Residents in Switzerland (CH) generally reflect the mean but watch films from other European countries a little more than the other countries. The average age pattern goes along the first axis: from left, older people watching local language films, to right, younger people watching films spoken in languages different from the local language. The education pattern also goes along the first axis: from left to right, the most educated show a higher pattern of watching films in other languages.

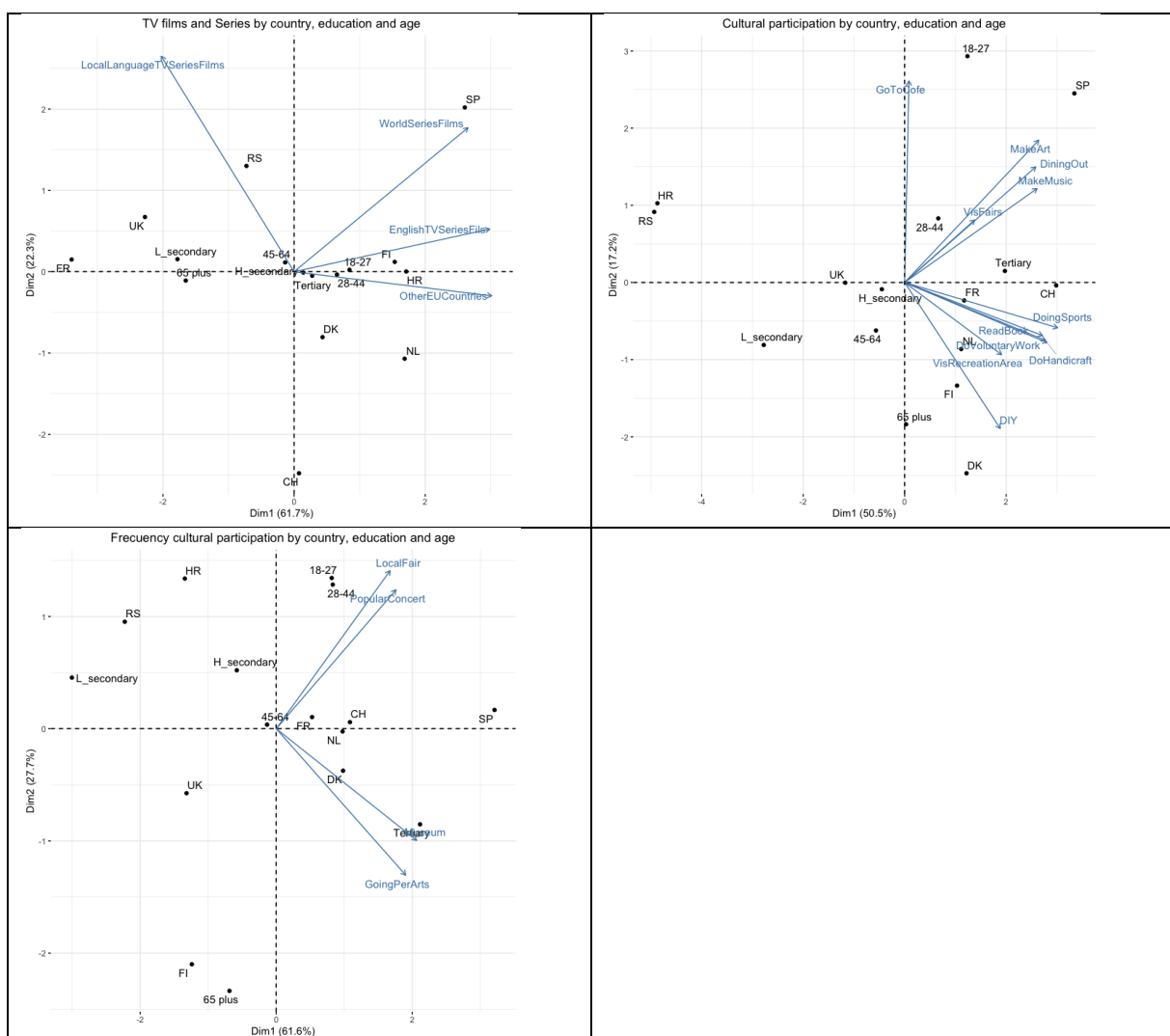


Figure 5: Lifestyles by country, education, and age

Cultural participation shows an unequal pattern. Countries with poorer material conditions, Croatia (HR) and Serbia (RS), are located to the left, with a pattern below the mean, while the other countries are located to the right. The second dimension, however, splits countries according to the pattern of cultural participation. Above we have countries with

better weather (Spain (SP), Croatia (HR), and Serbia (RS)) where residents do more *outdoor social activities*: going to a cafe, dining out, visiting fairs. Below are the countries with colder weather and better material conditions (Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), the Netherlands (NL), France (FR), and Switzerland (CH)), participating in more *indoor activities*: Do-it-yourself, visiting recreational areas, doing voluntary work, reading books, doing sports. Regarding the *generational* differences see that age goes from above to below, suggesting that younger people do more *outdoor social activities* than older adults, who conduct more *indoor activities*. Education, instead, goes along the first axis, suggesting that less educated residents participate in culture less than better educated people. Since education is a proxy of social position, according to cultural research, this means that cultural participation is a sign of social class divisions.

The frequency of cultural participation tells a similar story. According to the data, residents in Croatia (HR), Serbia (RS), the United Kingdom (UK) and Finland (FI) show a lower pattern of going to local fairs, popular concerts, museums, or the performing arts. However, the countries show different patterns, as residents in Finland (FI), the United Kingdom (UK), and Denmark (DK) show a pattern higher than the mean for going to museums and performing arts, but lower than the mean for going to local fairs or popular concerts. The other countries, instead, show a higher pattern for going to local fairs and popular concepts, but France (FR), The Netherlands (NL), Switzerland (CH), and Spain (SP) show a higher pattern of cultural activities. Generational differences are clear again, younger people more frequently participate in *outdoor cultural activities* (local fairs and popular concerts) than older adults, who prefer *indoor activities* (museums and the performing arts). Regarding education, again this goes along the first axis: the less educated participate less in cultural activities than the more educated.

4.3. Social values of culture: sources of unequal influence of culture on life satisfaction, social openness, and inclusiveness

Satisfaction with life and access to culture

Research has reported that satisfaction with life is correlated with cultural participation. Here we describe correlation of life satisfaction with cultural participation before and after COVID-19, controlling for country, age, and education. The top and bottom graphs of Figure 6 show the association between life satisfaction and cultural participation, and the frequency of cultural participation, respectively. Life satisfaction is labelled from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 7 (very satisfied).

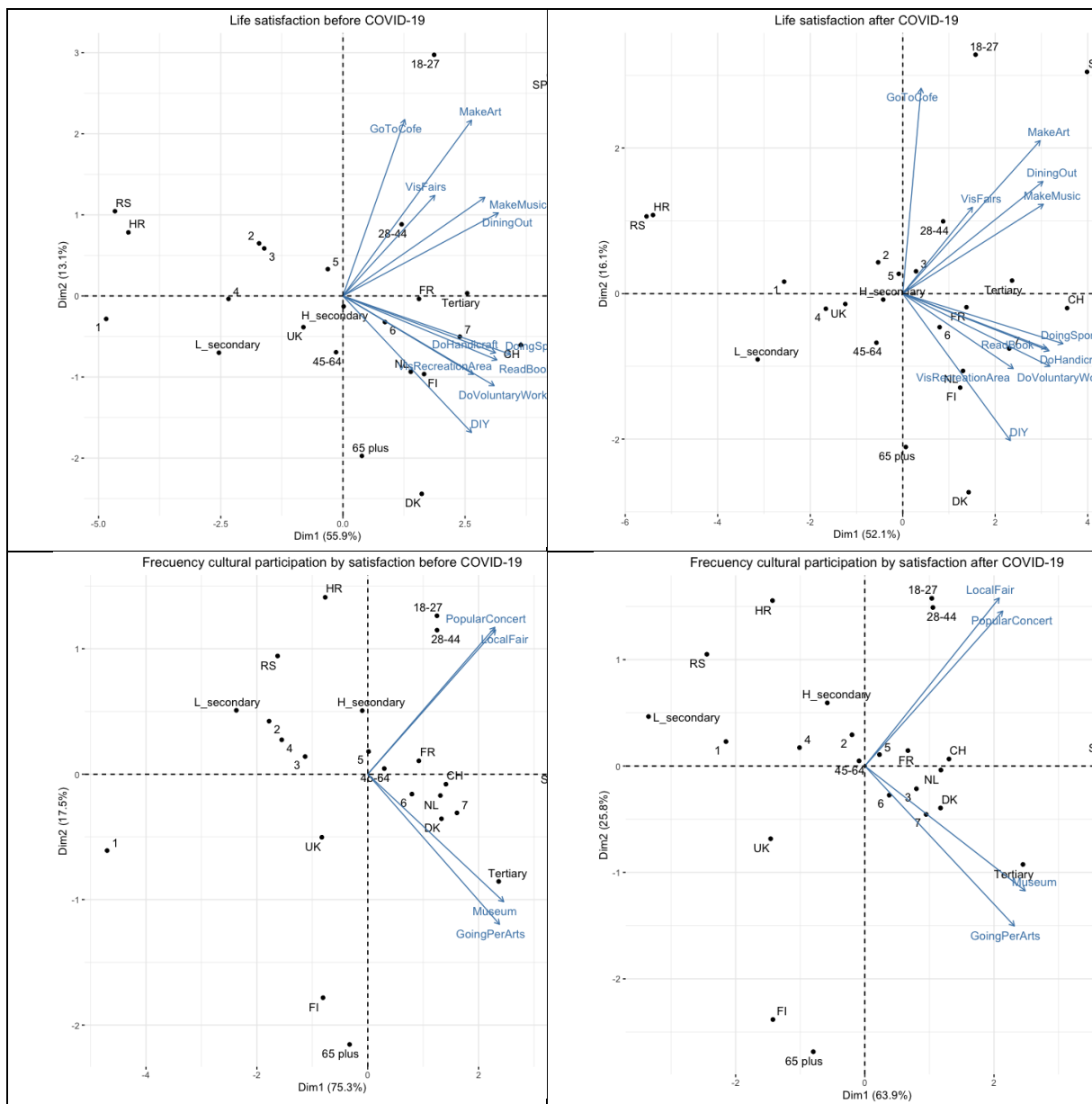


Figure 6: Associations between lifestyles by country, education, age, and life satisfaction

The association of life satisfaction with cultural participation, before and after COVID-19, goes along the first axis, i.e., the axis of class divisions. Life satisfaction seems to be higher among the more educated and younger people living in Switzerland (CH), Spain (SP), France (FR), Finland (FI), the Netherlands (NL), and Denmark (DK).

Social openness and access to digital culture

There is no consensus among social scientists about the influence of the digitalisation of culture on the social values of culture, like cultural and social openness, and on its social stratification. The digitalisation of culture has increased opportunities to access cultural expressions from practically any country. By cultural expressions we mean music, films, and TV series. In particular TV series with its multiple sessions and episodes play a crucial role in providing insights to other cultures (J. Kim & López Sintas, 2021; J. Kim & Sintas, 2020) and in

building a national film industry (López-Sintas, 2011), but also to the ordinary way of living in other social contexts.

As another way of showing the social values of culture, we measured the relationship between digital cultural participation and cultural and social participation (Lamberti et al., 2022). We focused on a selected number of variables relevant for the assessment of digital cultural access as described in the following figure. The social distribution of digital cultural access (DCA) indicators is not equal. Listening to music and watching online cultural material are the two indicators that are most unequally distributed, followed by sharing cultural expressions, while searching for cultural information seems to be equally distributed.

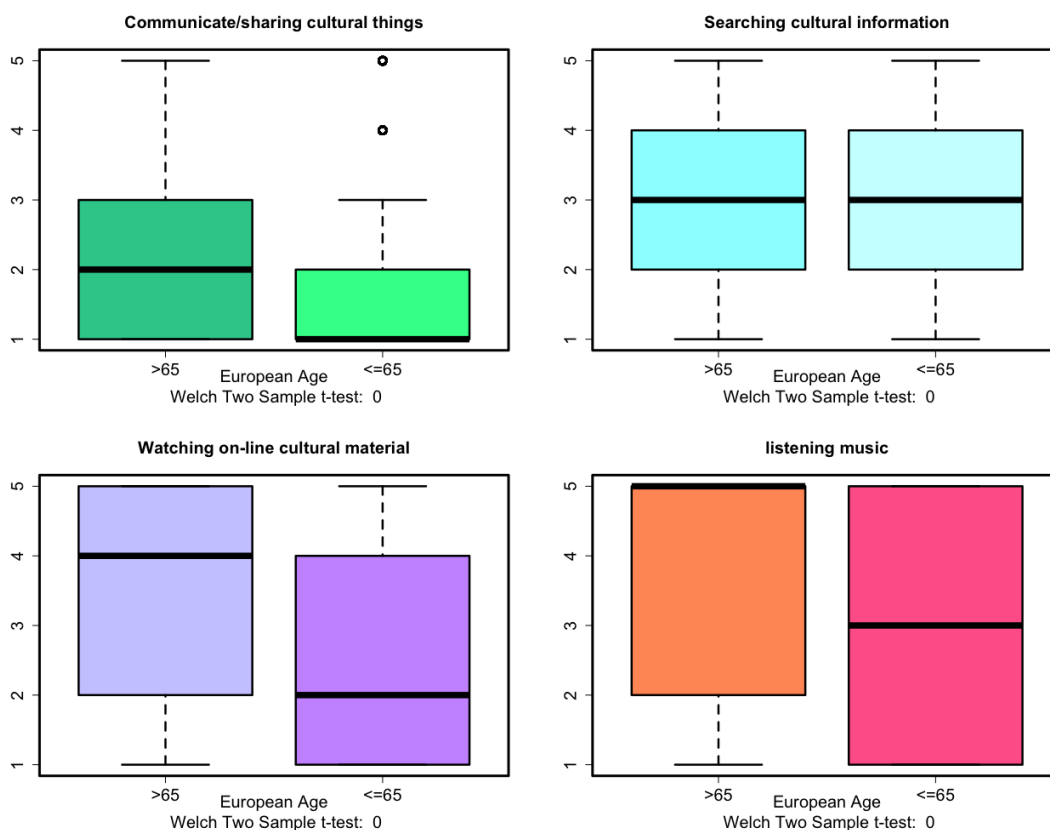


Figure 7: Social distributions of digital cultural access indicators

To estimate the causal relationship among DCA, cultural openness (CO), and social openness (SO), we used partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)(Hair et al., 2017). The findings suggest that accessing digital cultural expressions and information from all over the world influences CO and SO, and that CO influences SO, as shown in the figure below. The evidence suggests that the more an individual is exposed to other cultures, the more open they are to others. However, the indirect influence of DCA on SO mediated by CO is higher than its direct effect. Both the indirect and direct effect of DCA is 1/3 of the direct effect of CO on SO.

The influence of digital culture on social openness

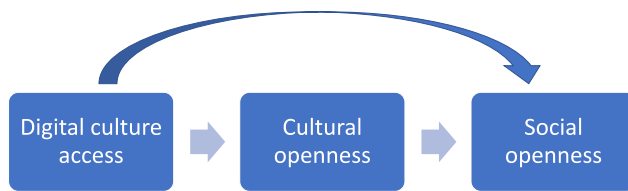


Figure 8: Digital culture access and cultural and social openness

However, the effects are stratified. There seems to be several social mechanisms that transform digital culture into cultural and social openness. First, the *double homology and welfare theses* seem to operate here as well: the social mechanism is stratified both within countries and between countries. On the one hand, the effect of digital culture on cultural openness is higher for Europeans living in Finland (FI) and the Netherlands (NL). It is no coincidence that Netflix first entered the European market through the Nordic countries. On the other hand, within countries, younger (to 28 years) and more educated (secondary and tertiary) Europeans show greater influence of digital culture access on their social openness. Consequently, we should find that younger educated Europeans will have a more inclusive view of other cultures. In summary, social inequality is manifested within and between European countries. This means that enjoyment of the social values of cultures is also stratified.

Sources of inclusive and exclusive views of culture and social cohesion

The European Union has experienced a long process of economic and social integration but is today experiencing an increase in migration, social inequalities, globalisation, and digitalisation that introduces more heterogeneity in the social composition of member states. This heterogeneity transforms the aesthetic disposition of residents, whether born in the country, with or without migrant ancestry, but also may be a threat to social cohesion, European cultures, and European identities. The acculturation of newcomers and the hybridisation of cultural habits may result in processes and conditions within the different European countries under which a multicultural Europe might be possible (Gobel et al., 2018).

Even though much research has been conducted on lifestyles and the link to individual's social positions, less research has focused on the aesthetic disposition on which that relationship is based. Research has found that an aesthetic disposition is the result of three effects: distinction, effacement, and omnivorousness (Holbrook et al., 2002; López-Sintas & García-Álvarez, 2005). These three effects are manifested in the structure of the aesthetic disposition of Europeans and their views regarding European cultural openness, social openness, and social cohesion. Distinction is based on the dominant aesthetics and rejects popular aesthetics (it is less socially open). The boundary effacement effect tends to reduce differences in aesthetic dispositions (more socially open). The omnivorousness effect can be

interpreted as a mixture of the distinction and boundary effects: more inclusive in views of European cultures, and less distinctive in aesthetic dispositions (Peterson, 2005; Peterson & Kern, 1996; Peterson & Simkus, 1992). Interdependence and exchanges among European countries may have brought about a better knowledge of other Europeans. This means an increase in the homogeneity of perceptions regarding European cultures and aesthetic dispositions. However, there are differences in language, ethnicity, religion, and other social dimensions that may account for the remaining differences in the distribution of European cultural perceptions and aesthetic dispositions. So, social cohesion may be based on low latent social conflict (based on the distribution of wealth, ethnicity, language, race, gender, religion, for instance) and on the presence of strong social bonds (feeling European, for instance).

Here we are interested in a selected number of variables relevant for the assessment of the cognitive dimensions of cultural practices and their social stratification, and the link to inclusive and exclusive cultural views (López Sintas et al., 2022). Figure 9 below describes the country distribution of Europeans' attitudes towards culture measured with four indicators: 1) *I take pride in artistic heritage from other European countries.* 2) *Europe's cultural heritage should be taught at schools, as it tells us about our history and culture,* 3) *European culture is better than other cultures,* and 4) *there is no common European culture, because European countries are too different from one another.*

All indicators were measured on a Likert scale: totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5). Figure 9 shows that agreement is not equally distributed among countries.

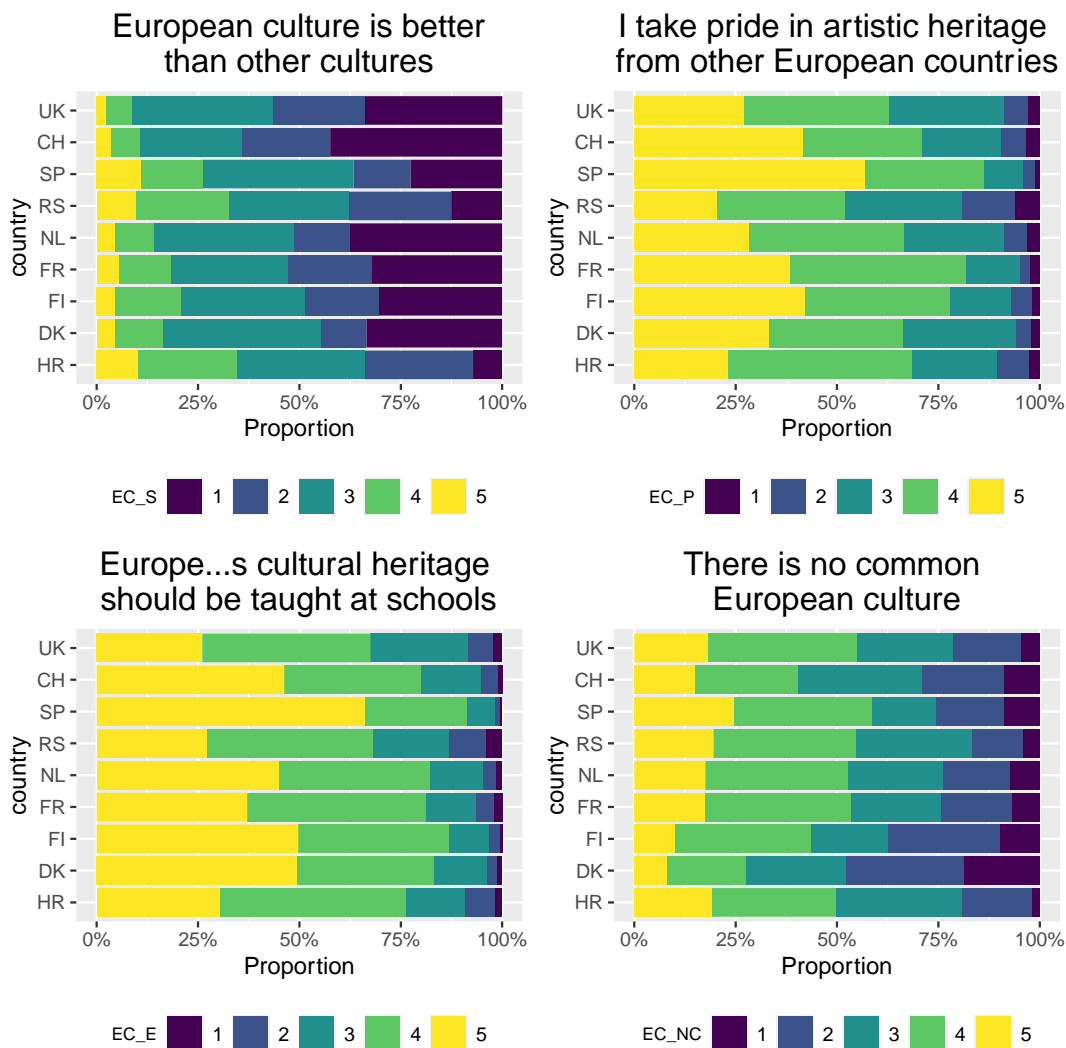


Figure 9: Country distributions of European attitudes

Figure 10 below describes aesthetic dispositions measured with four indicators: 1) *High artistic quality can be found in popular or in folk culture just as much as in high art*, 2) *Even if tastes differ, one can make a distinction between more and less valuable culture*, 3) *One needs to know more about art and classical music than I do to enjoy them fully*, and 4) *Sometimes I feel that other people are not as refined in their cultural tastes as me*.

All indicators were measured on a Likert scale: totally disagree (1) to totally agree (5). The figure shows that agreement is not equally distributed among countries.

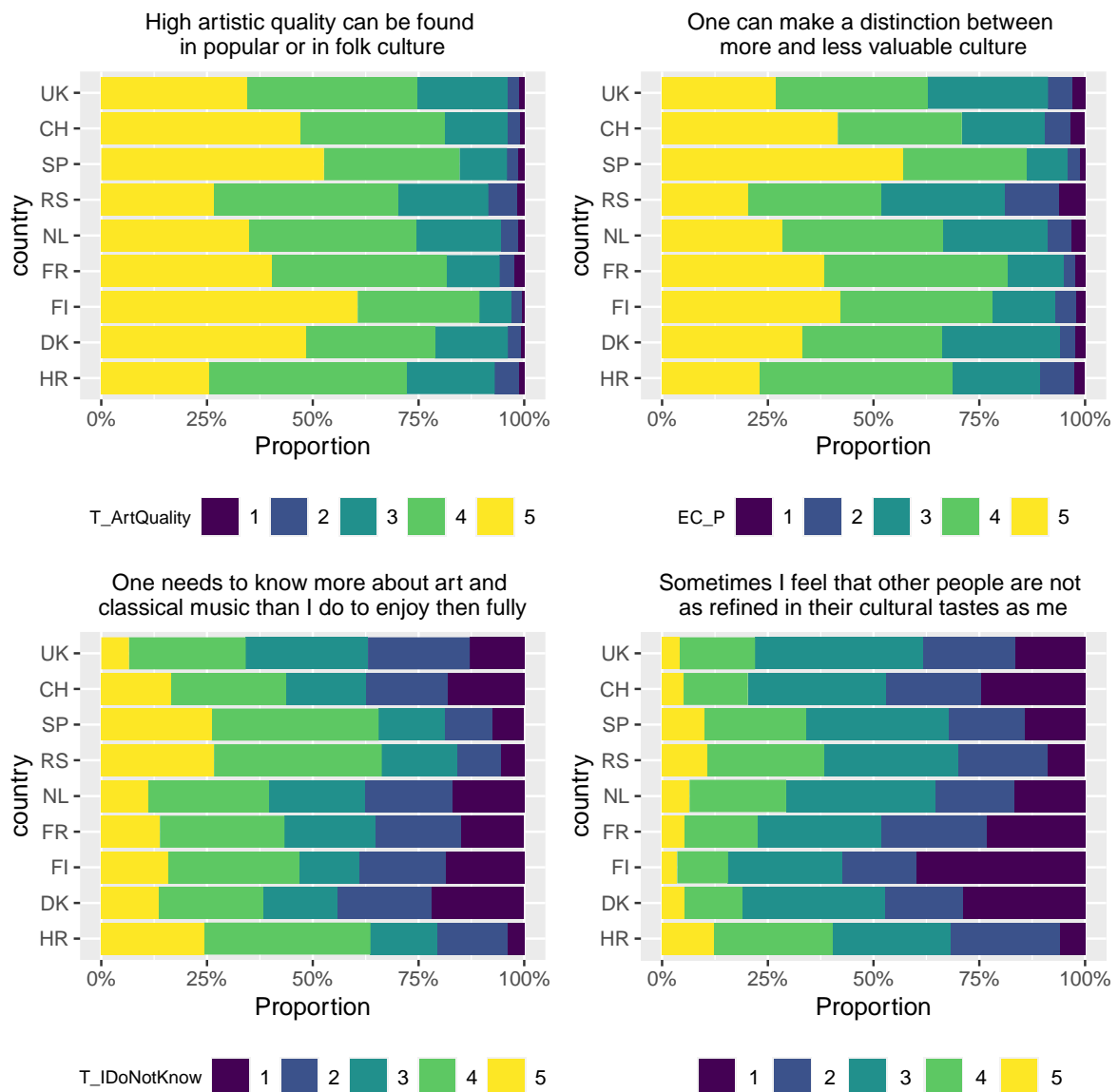


Figure 10: Country distributions of Europeans' aesthetic dispositions

The findings suggest that attitudes toward European cultures and other cultures form two independent dimensions of cultural attitudes. A positive dimension toward European cultures is correlated with *taking pride in artistic heritage from other European countries* and *Europe's cultural heritage should be taught at schools*. On the other hand, a negative dimension is correlated with the views that there is *no common European culture* and *European culture is better than other cultures*.

Regarding the aesthetic dispositions of the Europeans surveyed, the analysis shows two independent aesthetic dispositions. One is interpreted as the dominant aesthetic disposition, as it is correlated with *one needs to know more about art and classical music than I do to enjoy them fully, even if tastes differ, one can make a distinction between more and less valuable culture*, and *sometimes I feel that other people are not as refined in their cultural tastes as me*. The other independent dimension is interpreted as boundary effacement, as it is correlated

with the view that *high artistic quality can be found in popular or in folk culture just as much as in high art*.

When the researchers put the findings together, they found that inclusive and exclusive views of culture are two independent views. The *inclusive* view is correlated with a positive attitude towards European cultures and the boundary effacement aesthetic disposition, while the *exclusive* view is correlated with a negative attitude towards other cultures and the dominant aesthetic disposition.

Both dimensions of the cognitive space of culture are independent, meaning that their correlates may be different – that individuals in one country may score higher than the mean in both dimensions. The exclusionary view of culture was most often found in Croatia (HR), Serbia (RS), Spain (SP), the Netherlands (NL), Denmark (DK), Finland (FI), France (FR), and Switzerland (CH), unlike the UK. Education moderated the average country exclusionary view as well as the individual cultural view. Women are less exclusionary, and young people not holding any religious belief or not holding Catholic beliefs, while individuals not born in the country hold a more exclusionary view.

Regarding the inclusionary view of culture, data suggest that Finland (FI), Spain (SP), Denmark (DK), Switzerland (CH), France (FR), the Netherlands (NL), and Croatia (HR) show a more inclusionary view of culture, compared to the UK, while Serbia (RS) seems to hold a less inclusionary view. Even though education increased the inclusive view of residents, it did not moderate the country average. Women and individuals not born in the country again show a more inclusive view of culture, and inclusiveness increases with age. Residents with migrant backgrounds held a less inclusive view as well as people holding religious beliefs other than Catholic.

Again, the welfare state seems to play in favour of an inclusive view and against an exclusive view. All country indicators of a better welfare state correlate positively with the inclusive view, but negatively with the exclusive view of cultures. However, there are some sociological traits of countries that correlate positively with the inclusive view, e.g., language fractionalisation. In contrast, ethnic and religion fractionalisation correlate negatively with an inclusive view of culture.

5. Discussion

5.1. Brief summary

Perceptions of social change influenced by growing social inequalities depend on the social context and the starting point of the comparison. The social location has two levels: the country level and the within-country level. The country level is related to whether the welfare state provides social resources to residents. For instance, the perception that the gap between poor and rich has grown is higher among residents living in Spain, Serbia, and Croatia, countries with the weakest welfare states in comparison to the other countries studied. The perception that the presence of different cultures has enriched life is higher among residents located in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Spain, Serbia, and Croatia than in the other countries. The perception that access to higher education is better now stronger in Switzerland, Finland, Denmark, Croatia, and Spain. The perception that the use of internet has

created more problems is higher among residents in Serbia and Croatia, while the perception that it is difficult to live without the internet is higher in the United Kingdom, Switzerland, Finland, and Denmark. The perception that the EU is a threat for national and local cultures is higher in the United Kingdom, Serbia, Finland, and the Netherlands, while the perception that the EU brings opportunities to residents is higher in Spain, Finland, and Croatia, but lower in Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and France. Contrasting is the fact that almost all countries perceive that multinational firms are a threat for national and local firms.

When we look at the social position of residents in the countries, we can see that perceptions are associated with who benefits or suffers from the perceived change. For instance, the perception that the gap between poor and rich has grown is higher among less educated residents, except in Denmark, Serbia and the United Kingdom, where the better educated perceive that the gap has grown. Here it seems that social locations and the point of reference changes among countries. The same is true for the perception that use of internet brings more problems is higher among residents living in less developed countries, but the benefits are perceived by residents living in more developed countries. Symbolic differences (generational differences) have a similar pattern, but negative perceptions are reported by older people, and positive perceptions by younger people.

Unequal access to culture due to the growing inequalities has been addressed by the unequal meanings of culture and the influence of the debt crisis on unequal access to culture. In the first case, we have reported evidence that the repertoire of cultural meanings available to European residents depends on the country, i.e., more homogenous in countries with the longest democratic traditions. Within countries, perceptions are more fragmented.

The comparison between cultural participation before and after the 2008 debt crisis has shown that differences have increased between countries and within countries. Differences within countries have increased more among residents living in countries with a weaker welfare state. This evidence supports the *double homology* and *welfare theses*. The double homology thesis suggests that Bourdieu's proposition that there is an association between cultural participation and social locations is extended to countries, i.e., there is an association between cultural participation and the economic development of countries. The welfare thesis proposes that not only the economic development of countries matters, but also the extent to which governments take care of residents with lower resources. Europeans living in a country with a stronger welfare state will enjoy not only lower levels of social inequality but also higher levels of cultural participation. More egalitarian societies show fewer class divisions, but stronger symbolic divisions (more fragmentation), as the study on the system of cultural views has found. The welfare state plays a key role in preventing economic crises from increasing social and cultural inequalities.

Unequal lifestyles are related to the country of residence and social location inside the country. Countries with poorer material conditions, like Croatia and Serbia, show restricted lifestyles (a pattern below the mean) and a pattern of outdoor cultural activities. That pattern is also related to younger people and secondary education. The pattern of indoor cultural activities is associated with older people and better educated residents living in northern European countries.

The societal values of culture have been explored in three research studies: 1) the association between cultural participation and life satisfactions, 2) the association between digital culture and cultural and social openness, and 3) the inclusive and exclusive cultural views of Europeans and their social correlates. The evidence suggests that life satisfaction is associated with cultural participation: the stronger cultural participation, the greater life satisfaction. This association is unequally distributed, especially benefiting residents living in Spain, central, and northern Europe (and less so Serbia, Croatia, and the United Kingdom), older people and better educated Europeans. This association is strong both before and after COVID-19.

On the other hand, the association between digital culture and social openness is mediated by cultural openness. However, the social mechanism that links digital culture to social openness is not unique but is stratified across countries and within countries. Across countries, Finland and the Netherlands exhibit a stronger link between digital access and cultural openness. On the other hand, younger and more educated Europeans also exhibit a stronger link between access to digital culture and social openness. Younger and more educated Europeans are more socially oriented for different reasons: to be linked to their generation (younger people) and to build stronger social capital (more educated people).

Finally, inclusive and exclusive cultural views of Europeans seem to be independent views of culture. Inclusionary views seem to depend on certain country's cultural traits (language diversity) and material conditions of living, but the exclusionary views depend mainly on the material conditions of living. Within countries, women seem to be more inclusive and less exclusive in their cultural views, but older Europeans are both more inclusive and more exclusive in their views. Catholics seem to be more exclusionary but also more inclusionary, and language fractionalisation seem to be positively correlated with inclusive views of culture.

The next step in this WP will be an analysis of individual and group interviews, to triangulate interpretations and to propose cultural policies

5.2. Policy implications

We need a European cultural policy to strengthen cultural production and cultural access for Europeans living in countries with weaker welfare states. This is important to prevent economic crises from increasing unequal access to culture within countries and between countries. Class divisions will reduce within countries as socioeconomic differences are reduced, but symbolic divisions may increase (age, ethnicity, etc will increase the degree of fractionalisation of system of cultural views).

We need to foster access to European cultural expressions through digital streaming platforms, e.g., by erasing or reducing barriers to the diffusion of European digital expressions of culture. TV broadcasting and streaming video across European countries should be accessible and free (if possible) in all countries: 1) to raise awareness of the social and cultural differences (and commonalities) of Europeans living in other countries, and 2) to enhance understanding of the social and cultural differences (and commonalities) of nationals that speak another local language. TV series are a great way to foster cultural and social openness among Europeans. If we want to develop stronger social cohesion, we need to know each other better.

5.3. The road ahead

The steps ahead are related to an analysis of individual interviews and group interviews (focus groups) that will allow us a deeper understanding of unequal access to culture and social inequalities and will inform cultural policies.

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