

Diversity and Postmaterialism as Rival Perspectives in Accounting for Social Solidarity: Evidence from International Surveys

Abstract

This paper explores the empirical support for the two rival perspectives of diversity and postmaterialism, each of which predicts different patterns and trends of social solidarity in the western world. The diversity perspective holds that ethnocultural heterogeneity undermines social solidarity, and consequently expects social solidarity to be weaker in more heterogeneous societies. In the diversity logic, social solidarity should have declined in western societies as these societies have become more diverse due to continuous immigration. Postmaterialism theory, by contrast, posits a positive link between postmaterialism and social solidarity, and would expect social solidarity to have increased because of rising levels of postmaterialism across the western world. This paper found no relation between diversity and social solidarity at either the individual or the national level in cross-sectional analyses of WVS and EVS survey data. Neither was the diversity argument supported by trend data on opinions about the poor. The positive relations between postmaterialism and social solidarity on the other hand did confirm the postmaterialism perspective. Still, as postmaterialism contributed little to explaining the variance in social solidarity at the individual level and as there was no connection between postmaterialism and social solidarity at the macro-level, it can be questioned whether the solidaristic sentiments expressed by postmaterialists are sufficiently deep and lasting to underpin robust welfare policies.

Key words: postmaterialism, ethnic diversity, trust, solidarity, welfare state.

Introduction

Many policy makers and academics are currently concerned about declining levels of social solidarity in modern Western societies. People are less willing than before to contribute to welfare policies that benefit the poor and needy, it is believed. Diversity is seen by many as the root cause of this alleged process. Diversity within a society, so the argument goes, makes it difficult for citizens to see fellow citizens of a different ethnic, cultural or racial background as part of 'us'. This in turn is said to affect the willingness of these citizens to pay for welfare arrangements benefiting these culturally different co-citizens (e.g. Goodhart 2004). As western societies are becoming increasingly diverse due to immigration and low birth rates of the native majority, public support for social welfare is inevitably diminishing, it is claimed.

The literature on the link between diversity and social solidarity has expanded rapidly in recent years. Proponents of the view that the former has a negative impact on the latter often base their claims on race relations research in America and argue that European countries will adopt a more American-style welfare regime as their societies evolve towards American levels of cultural/racial diversity (e.g. Alesina and Glaeser 2004). Others, by contrast, have argued that enduring political and institutional differences between Europe and America will prevent European societies from going the American way (e.g. Taylor-Gooby 2005). Again others claim that multicultural policies respecting difference and endorsing minority cultures are not necessarily undermining social solidarity as long as they also promote overarching loyalties based on common liberal values (e.g. Banting et al 2006).

Although all these studies make claims about the impact of cultural diversity on the beliefs and attitudes of people regarding social security and redistribution, only a few actually examine these beliefs. Instead, most of them focus on the *provision* of public welfare. But the level of welfare spending is not just a reflection of public opinion as expressed through the ballot box. It also depends on economic performance and on the ability of the state to find resources to finance welfare policies with. In other words, people may desire generous welfare arrangements, but the state may not be able to afford them (any longer). This argument is in fact often made by globalization theorists: contrary to public preferences, states are forced to cut back on welfare programs to reduce costs and keep their economies competitive in an increasingly global market of goods, services, capital and people (Cox 1993; Ohmae 1990). Low spending on welfare therefore need not always indicate low levels of social solidarity. In this sense, the study of beliefs and attitudes offers a more direct and less biased way of measuring social solidarity than an analysis of welfare spending.

Another omission in the diversity literature concerns the negligence of theories predicting quite different patterns and trajectories of social solidarity. Thus we cannot know from this literature whether the diversity theory outperforms other rival theories in accounting for these patterns and trajectories. In this paper we will focus on one of these rival theories: the culture shift argument advanced by Ronald Inglehart. In brief, this theory asserts that modernization and in particular the shift from industrial to post-industrial modes of production has led to an intergenerational process of cultural change away from materialist to postmaterialist values in advanced western societies. Social solidarity is seen by Inglehart as a component of this postmaterialism. It is interesting to contrast postmaterialism with the diversity argument as the two predict

diverging trajectories: while diversity theory expects social solidarity to diminish because of growing cultural, ethnic and racial heterogeneity in western populations, postmaterialism theory would expect it to increase as part of the ongoing shift towards postmaterialist values.

The objective of this paper is twofold. It first aims at providing a critical discussion of the diversity perspective highlighting several issues that the advocates of this perspective have overlooked, particularly in relation to social solidarity. Second, it seeks to assess the empirical claims of the two perspectives regarding social solidarity by analysing public opinion data on welfare, poverty and redistribution. We will argue that these data mostly support the postmaterialism perspective and refute the diversity argument. However, we also question whether the altruism expressed by postmaterialists is sufficiently deep and enduring to sustain solidarity levels. The next section outlines the diversity argument in further detail and presents the research evidence its advocates have brought forward. It then proceeds with a critique of the diversity argument. Subsequently, the paper discusses the postmaterialist perspective and its relation to social solidarity. This is followed by a subsection discussing the definition of the dependent variable - social solidarity and presenting three research questions aimed at exploring the relations between the two rival perspectives and social solidarity. The third section reviews the indicators and data sources used to measure the main concepts. Subsequently the research questions are explored in analyses of trends and cross-sectional analyses at the micro and macro-levels. The concluding section summarizes the main findings and highlights several limitations of the postmaterialist argument in relation to social solidarity.

Diversity, postmaterialism and social solidarity

Diversity

The diversity argument comes in various guises. Central in one version is the notion of trust. Citizens, it is argued, will only be prepared to pay for redistributive policies if they are confident that the recipients of welfare provisions will one day return the favour when they are in need. Thus, a community paying for and enjoying generous welfare services is a community of trust, reciprocity and mutual obligation (Miller 1995; 2004). Cultural diversity within a political community undermines trust because people will not feel the same level of commitment to the cultural other as to people of their own stock. This lack of commitment across cultural borders fuels suspicion that people of a different culture will show free-rider behaviour or will exploit the welfare system to the benefit of their own cultural group. Another version of the diversity argument approaches the issue from an evolutionary perspective and shifts the focus to ethnic groups. It argues that altruism is primarily directed at one's co-ethnics and rarely extends to ethnic others. That altruism has taken this form is because clans and tribes with internal mutual support schemes have outperformed groups lacking these support systems in the struggle for survival. The consequence of this natural selection process is that human beings today have a genetic propensity to favour their ethnic kin (Salter 2004). In this perspective, multiethnic societies will continue to be troubled by faulty welfare systems, ethnic nepotism and ethnic conflict.

However the diversity argument is elaborated theoretically, its advocates have marshalled an impressive amount of research evidence in support of their claims. Most of this research relates to the United States, where a series of studies have found

a negative relation between ethnic or racial heterogeneity and (support for) welfare expenditures at the city or state level (e.g. Alesina, Baqir and Easterly 1997; Hero and Tolbert 1996; Luttmer 2001). The work of Gilens (1999) and Luttmer (2001) is particularly interesting for this study as these authors focused exclusively on public opinion. Gilens (1999) found that negative opinions about blacks coincide with anti-welfare attitudes. Combining tract level data from the census and public opinion data from the General Social Survey, Luttmer, moreover, discovered that white support for welfare spending diminishes as the proportion of black recipients of welfare in the tract population increases. This result indicates that racial heterogeneity seems to be particularly harmful for social solidarity if racial cleavages coincide with social inequalities. Focusing on Canada, Soroka, Johnston and Banting (2004) established that interpersonal trust diminishes as the proportion of visible minorities in census tracts increases, and that trust in turn is positively linked to support for social programmes. Yet, they also found the direct relation between the proportion of visible minorities and support for welfare arrangements to be weak. Trust was thus the crucial intermediate factor linking the two ultimate variables in their analysis. The link between diversity and (support for) welfare arrangements has also been explored cross-nationally. For Africa, Easterly and Levine (1997) have found a strong negative correlation between a country's ethnic heterogeneity and public investment in schooling and infrastructure. Using a sample of 47 countries across all continents, Sanderson (2004) discovered that ethnic diversity was still negatively correlated to welfare expenditures after having controlled for GNP per capita, level of democracy, labour organization and party fractionalization.

Finally, an important contribution to the cross-national work on diversity and welfare policies has been Alesina and Glaeser's (2004) recent book *Fighting Poverty*

in the US and Europe: A World of Difference. Comparing the very different welfare regimes in the US and Europe, Alesina and Glaeser argue that redistributive policies are mainly a function of political institutions, ideology, geography, and ethnic and racial heterogeneity. However, they only consider the latter two to be the true first causes. In their view, America's geographic isolation, low population density, vast size and ethnic diversity have severely handicapped the development of a powerful unified workers movement there. This in turn meant that organized labour could not challenge existing political institutions benefiting the well-off and enforce social welfare policies. Moreover, the coincidence of racial cleavages with social inequalities (black=poor; white=affluent) fuelled a racist anti-welfare ideology which blames the poor themselves for being poor. In this way geography and diversity combined to prevent the establishment of generous welfare schemes. In densely populated Europe, by contrast, the strong ethnically homogenous labour movements seized the moment in the chaotic aftermath of World War I to force through welfare arrangements and proportional representation in a good number of countries. To support their argument, Alesina and Glaeser present a regression analysis showing that racial heterogeneity is negatively linked to social welfare expenditures with GDP per capita held constant. As European societies move to American levels of racial inequalities, they ominously warn, so a combined anti-welfare / anti-immigrant ideology will gain in strength in many European countries, and consequently support for the welfare state will erode.

Notwithstanding all this evidence, the diversity argument and its link to social solidarity can be criticised on a number of grounds, which highlights the need to consider an alternative perspective. The first criticism relates to the durability of cultural, ethnic and racial cleavages. The advocates of the diversity argument

implicitly assume these cleavages to be lasting realities of social life. However, from the literature on nationalism and ethnic group mobilization we know that there is nothing natural and fixed about ethnic boundaries (McKay 1981). Culture, ethnicity and race are as much a social construction as the other institutions of society, and as such they are closely interlinked with socio-economic processes and interest constellations. Many scholars have pointed to the strategic use of ethnic symbols by politicians and common people alike in their efforts to gain access to political and economic resources (e.g. Glazer and Moynihan 1975; van den Berghe 1976). As interest configurations change along with the socio-economic restructuring of society, so cultural and ethnic boundaries are likely to follow. Indeed, a brief review of cultural developments in post-war Western Europe reveals that the ethnic cleavage (native majority versus immigrant minorities) has replaced the religious divide (Protestants, Catholics and seculars) as the most salient fissure in a number of societies. In recent years, the religious divide seems to once again come to the foreground given the centrality of Islam and liberal democratic values in the public debate. In the United States, too, cultural cleavages that once divided the worker movement have rapidly dissolved after World War II. Each change in salience of ethno-cultural markers involves the creation of new in- and out-groups and makes society appear more homogenous or heterogeneous. Thus, the fissures the diversity perspective holds to be so permanent can be highly dynamic and contingent on other circumstances. The theory therefore runs the risk of focusing on symptoms rather than underlying causes.

Secondly, and related to the first criticism, some supporters of the diversity thesis have argued that heterogeneity mainly links negatively with social solidarity when ethno-cultural boundaries concur with socio-economic cleavages (e.g. Alesina

and Glaeser 2004; Luttmer 2001). Alesina and Glaeser for instance note that the relative economic equality of Catholics and Protestants in Germany has made it difficult for political entrepreneurs to exploit religious or regional divisions. The invocation of social fractures, however, dilutes the diversity argument. Apparently, ethno-cultural diversity need not produce declining support for the welfare state by itself. Indeed, a closer look at the analysis done by Luttmer (2001) (see above) supports this conjecture: while white support for welfare was negatively linked with the percentage of black *recipients of welfare*, it was positively correlated with the percentage of blacks *as a whole* in the census tract population (see the results of the regression analysis on page 507 of his article). For some reason, Luttmer chose not to highlight the last-named correlation in his interpretations of the analysis. The finding however is of crucial importance. It means that diversity – also of a racial kind – and social solidarity are not necessarily at odds with one another under conditions of socio-economic equality.

While the first two criticisms concern the independent variable (diversity), the third reservation pertains to the dependent variable (social solidarity) in the diversity argument. The advocates of the diversity school often fail to distinguish between *support for the welfare state* and *social solidarity*, treating these concepts as synonyms. Welfare state support, however, need not only be an expression of social solidarity. It may equally well be motivated by rational self-interest. This is the perspective that Pierson (2001) for instance adopts in his analysis of the restructuring welfare state. In his view, demographic changes in post-industrial societies have generated new pressures on the welfare state. One of these new pressures is the steadily aging population, which has generated powerful interest groups fighting for the retention of costly pensions and health care systems. Similarly, the expanding

inclusion of women in the workforce has led to growing demands for state-financed parental leave and childcare arrangements. Contrary to the diversity argument, which predicts declining support for welfare arrangements, Pierson's theory assumes that the social security system faces new demands and that these demands are on the rise.

The insight that support for the welfare state may well be driven by rational self-interest casts doubt on the claim of some observers that the expansion of the welfare state in the 1950s and 60s was conditioned on the national homogeneity of society and the feelings of ethnic solidarity this generated (e.g. Wolfe and Klausen 2000). Far from presenting society as a harmonious whole of like-minded individuals with strong national loyalties, this insight draws attention to competing groups within society struggling with one another in the pursuit of their interests. Indeed, the idea that the post-war welfare state is the product of combat rather than peaceful ethnic solidarity dominates the welfare literature. Many scholars, for instance, have documented the struggle of organized labour to wrest concessions from the ruling classes and establish redistribution and welfare schemes (e.g. Esping Anderson 1985; Flora and Heidenheimer 1981; Korpi 1989). Stephens (2001) notes that the more often socialist parties were part of the government, the more generous the welfare state has become. Even in countries where the initiative to adopt welfare policies has not come from organized labour (e.g. in Bismarck Germany), it is doubtful whether the rulers responsible for their introduction were motivated first of all by ethnic solidarity. They may have done so to pre-empt social unrest, stop the growth of the socialist movement and keep the working classes in check. Scholars of neo-Marxist persuasion, for instance, have argued that state welfare policies were predominantly an instrument of control for the ruling classes (e.g. Ginsburg 1979; Poulantzas 1978). Others have argued that it was 'enlightened' self-interest that prompted the well-off to

establish the first welfare arrangements in the nineteenth century (e.g. De Swaan 1988). Thus, it is doubtful whether groups being net contributors to the welfare state have ever supported redistribution wholeheartedly, even if they shared ethnicity with the recipients of welfare. In homogenous societies feelings of solidarity with fellow citizens of different socio-economic status may therefore be as weak as in heterogeneous societies, which is not what the diversity argument would expect. The possibility that public welfare levels could well reflect the strength of organised interest groups moreover casts further doubt on the suitability of using of social spending as a proxy of social solidarity, which, as we pointed out above, is what most of the diversity literature does.

Interestingly, even if the diversity argument were correct and support for and the provision of welfare arrangements would indeed be an expression of social solidarity, the theory could still be criticised for understanding social solidarity in a very restricted sense. People, it is claimed, are only prepared to contribute to welfare schemes if they are confident that one day they will be able to benefit from these schemes themselves. In other words, it is the expectation of reciprocity rather than disinterested altruism that underpins pro-welfare attitudes. If people no longer trust their fellow citizens to reciprocate, their willingness to pay for welfare arrangements will disappear, it is believed. Scholars, however, have noted that people often help others without expecting anything in return (De Beer 2005a, Koopmans 2006). Donations to charities, volunteers, missionaries and human aid workers are all manifestations of this kind of *unilateral* solidarity. If support for the welfare state is motivated more by unilateral than by reciprocal solidarity, the process of a steady declining willingness to contribute to welfare policies, as predicted by cultural diversity theory, is unlikely to happen.

Postmaterialism

In view of these theoretical criticisms it is illuminating to present an alternative perspective which predicts entirely different trends in social solidarity. As noted in the introduction, this is the postmaterialist value change theory elaborated by Inglehart (1990, 1997) and Inglehart and Welzel (2005). Inspired by Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs idea, this theory holds that the post-war socio-economic development in the western world has generated a process of value change through the mechanism of generation replacement. At its heart, the theory postulates that the circumstances in which people grow up have a decisive impact on their beliefs and attitudes. People who had to endure poverty and deprivation in their formative years are likely to develop values stressing physical and economic security (so-called materialist or survival values). By contrast, people who spent their childhood years in affluence are more prone to internalize values emphasizing autonomy, emancipation, equality and personal development (so-called post-materialist or self-expression values). Whereas the former tend to view cultural difference, gender equality and alternative lifestyles as threatening, the latter value diversity positively, seeing it as a source of learning and personal enrichment. As the younger generations have grown up in ever better conditions after World War II, so we should see a steady move towards postmaterialism across all advanced post-industrial societies, with older, more materialist cohorts being replaced by younger, more post-materialist generations (Inglehart 1997, p. 140; Inglehart and Welzel 2005, p. 132). In a graph showing inter-

cohort differences over time, Inglehart (1990, p. 85) provides evidence for this process of value change.

Inglehart is only brief about the consequences of value change for social solidarity. This is surprising as one could very well imagine the two to be related. Postmaterialists, it may be argued, have a wider horizon than materialists. Much more than materialists are they concerned about issues that transcend the narrow interests of family, friends, ethnic group or class. From this perspective, postmaterialists are more likely than materialists to be genuinely concerned about the well-being of fellow citizens or mankind as a whole and express feelings of solidarity and commitment towards them. If this is true, postmaterialism is likely to have important consequences for the motivations underpinning pro-welfare attitudes. Postmaterialists may well be more inspired by social solidarity (quite possibly of a unilateral kind!) than naked self-interest in endorsing welfare arrangements. Inglehart indeed proposes that the rise of post-materialist values has diminished the salience of economic self-interest vis-a-vis social solidarity as motivations buttressing pro-welfare attitudes (1990, pp. 252, 253), but he has not explored this interesting conjecture empirically. The proposition is interesting as it runs precisely counter to the prediction of the diversity argument: instead of social solidarity being steadily undermined by increasing cultural diversity, it is actually becoming stronger because of rising postmaterialism. Social solidarity may moreover have changed in nature – from a self-interested reciprocal to a disinterested unilateral kind.

Postmaterialism theory (PM theory) clashes with the diversity argument in another important respect. While the latter holds that diversity affects social cohesion negatively because trust does not transcend ethnic boundaries, PM theory would not see increasing diversity as problematic since postmaterialism entails a positive

disposition towards ethno-cultural difference. If PM theory is correct and postmaterialists would indeed have positive opinions on immigrants and other distinct cultural groups the basic mechanism postulated by the diversity argument no longer applies for a growing number of people. In other words, postmaterialism could overcome the diversity/solidarity trade-off by combining an appreciation of cultural diversity with a sense of solidarity towards more encompassing communities (the nation, Europeans, mankind as a whole).

Interestingly, conceived in this way postmaterialism could also shed light on the contradictory findings of some recent studies. Recall that Alesina and Glaeser (2004) found a negative relation between racial heterogeneity and social spending based on an analysis of 54 countries worldwide. By contrast, Taylor-Gooby found no significant relation between social spending and racial diversity using a sample of 21 *European* states. Similarly, while Delhey and Newton (2005) discovered a negative link between heterogeneity and social trust in an analysis of 57 states across the globe, Hooghe et al (2006) found no meaningful links between 28 (!) indicators of diversity and social trust in their study of 20 *OECD countries*. In short, while in an extended sample of 50 or more states worldwide the presumed negative effect of diversity can indeed be seen, it fails to occur in a sample of western countries. As it is precisely in the latter that levels of postmaterialism are relatively high, postmaterialism may have prevented the diversity effect from occurring there. Conversely, the relatively strong materialist orientations in non-western states may have fuelled the diversity effect. In short, there could be an interaction effect between postmaterialism and diversity: in contexts with high levels of postmaterialism the diversity effect is neutralised while in contexts with weak supplies of postmaterialism diversity shows its negative impact.

Several critical observations can nonetheless be added to the presumed positive relation between postmaterialism and social solidarity. First of all, the assumption that postmaterialists have the ability to express feelings of solidarity towards people of different ethnic stock says nothing about the depth of these feelings. Postmaterialists could well not feel the same level of commitment to these people as materialists feel to ethnic kin or members of the same religious group. In this sense the feelings of connectedness of postmaterialists could well reflect the ‘thin’ type of bonds characteristic of modern cosmopolitan society while the feelings of solidarity of materialists are reminiscent of the durable and thick forms of loyalty found in communal society. Thus, there could be tension between the scope and the depth of solidarity. Postmaterialism, moreover, has also been associated with individualism, a belief in personal autonomy and a dislike of traditional and hierarchical institutions (family, church, union, state). Neither of these phenomena is seen as conducive to social solidarity. Individualism is often said to be harmful for solidarity because it leads to the prioritization of personal interests over those of the community (de Beer 2005b). Similarly, the belief in personal autonomy could well negatively affect social solidarity if it is closely linked to a conviction of individual efficacy and responsibility - i.e. individuals not only have the *ability* to take matters into their own hands, they also have an *obligation* to do so. In this line of thought, one need not feel morally obliged to help less fortunate individuals because these individuals owe their misfortune entirely to themselves. Lastly, the dislike of authority and traditional forms of association is likely to make postmaterialists ill-disposed to collective welfare arrangements provided by the state or by the unions. Kitschelt (1994) for instance has argued that social democratic parties need to downplay their traditional materialist agenda of redistribution and social security and

incorporate libertarian orientations in order to appeal to the growing number of postmaterialists from the middle classes. In the final section we will examine to what extent these reservations are supported empirically.

Social solidarity

Finally, we have to clarify what we mean by *social solidarity* as the dependent variable of this study. In our use of the term it exclusively refers to feelings of sympathy for and commitment to *fellow citizens*. We consciously ignore manifestations of solidarity targeting subnational groups (family, ethnic group, class) or supranational groups (Europeans, mankind as a whole). We only focus on solidarity towards fellow citizens because welfare policies are still primarily organized at the national level in the vast majority of western states and because the claims of the cultural diversity theorists usually relate to the nation as the unit of analysis. In view of the critical points noted above we will not measure social solidarity by examining attitudes on specific welfare policies since these attitudes may reflect self-interest. Rather we will seek to tap social solidarity by assessing support for a number of general principles, such as equality and the fulfilment of basic needs, by examining opinions on the less fortunate in society (the poor; the unemployed) and by exploring the degree of stated engagement with fellow citizens.

Until now we have only paid attention to diversity and postmaterialism as factors which may influence social solidarity. It goes without saying that solidarity is also shaped by many other conditions and processes operating at both the individual and collective level. Similar to postmaterialism, a person's education level may, for

instance, be positively related to the scope of solidarity as the better educated usually have more knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. Income level might well show a negative relationship with solidarity because the fear of redistributive policies could well prevent the rich from expressing sympathy with the poor. At the collective level, economic prosperity (as measured by GNP per capita) might well be inversely related to social solidarity, for instance because the population in affluent societies believes that issues like poverty, social exclusion and lack of opportunity no longer have the urgency they once had. In the multilevel analyses of the final section we will control for these and other factors, allowing us to assess the relative explanatory power of the diversity and postmaterialism perspectives.

The theoretical conjectures outlined above have led us to formulate the following research questions:

1. Does postmaterialism indeed have the potential to carry trust and feelings of affinity across ethnic borders?
2. Can aggregate trends in social solidarity be discerned and if so, which perspective do these trends support?
3. Which perspective has the upper hand in explaining the variation in social solidarity at the individual and aggregate levels, taking other relevant factors into account?

Before scrutinizing these questions in our analyses below we first present the data and the sources they were obtained from.

Data sources

We drew on data from various sources to explore the three research questions cross-nationally and across time. Data of the 1999 wave of the European Values Study (EVS) was used to arrive at measurements of postmaterialism, ethnic tolerance, social trust and social solidarity at the *individual* level. The 1999 wave covered 29 European countries using nationally representative samples of 1000-2000 respondents in each country and providing data suitable for cross-national comparative research (Inglehart et al. 2004). Our analyses in the following section are thus based on data from these 29 countries. To measure postmaterialism we relied on the ready-made four-item index developed by Inglehart (1990) on the basis of factor analysis. This index, with values 1 – materialist, 2 – mixed and 3 – postmaterialist, is composed of the following items:

- Maintain order in the nation
- Fight rising prices
- Give people more say in the decisions of the government
- Protect freedom of speech

The first two items reflect materialist inclinations, the last two reflect postmaterialist attitudes. The postmaterialist index has been criticised for the weak factor loadings of the items on which it is based (Davis 1996). In response to this criticism, Abrahamson and Inglehart (1996), however, have pointed out that the low factor loadings are the by-product of the specific ranking approach they used. A different way of connecting the items in the questionnaire (for instance, a rating approach) would have produced higher loadings. Moreover, Inglehart (1990: 139) shows that the four items cluster in

the same way across many different countries, making the postmaterialist index a robust measure in terms of cross-national validity. We tapped trust with the well-known item “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?” [1 – you can’t be too careful; 2 – most people can be trustedⁱ]. We further developed a measure of ethnic tolerance by constructing a scale out of the following four itemsⁱⁱ:

- Immigrants and foreign workers mentioned/not-mentioned as unwanted neighbours
- Government should prohibit/allow people from less developed countries to come here to work
- Feeling concerned about the living conditions of immigrants in one’s country
- Being prepared to actually do something to improve the living conditions of immigrants in one’s country

The scale has a minimum of -3.6, denoting intolerance, and a maximum of 4.0, denoting tolerance.

We finally selected five items from the EVS to represent social solidarity, the dependent variable of this paper. Two of these items are taken from a question asking what a society should provide in order to be considered just: (1) “Eliminating big income differences between citizens”, (2) “Guaranteeing that basic needs are met for all, in terms of food, housing, cloths, education, health” (answers: 1 - not at all important --- 5 - very important). Another taps engagement with fellow citizens: “To what extent do you feel concerned about the living conditions of your fellow countrymen?” (answers: 1 - not at all --- 5 - very much). The fourth indicator measures attitudes on the unemployed: “How would you place your views on this scale? 1 - People who are unemployed should have to take any job available or lose

their unemployment benefits --- 10 – People who are unemployed should have the right to refuse a job they do not want”. We consider responses approaching the latter end of the scale to be indicative of social solidarity. The last item gauges opinions on the poor: “Why are there people in this country who live in need? 1 - because of laziness of lack of willpower; 2 - because they are unlucky, because of injustice in our society or because it’s an inevitable part of modern progress”ⁱⁱⁱ. Following Alesina and Glaeser (2004) we interpreted the first response on this item as a negative indicator of social solidarity. The response scales of all five items are thus in an ascending order, i.e. higher values denote more solidarity.

Although correlations between the five items are all positive and significant, they are not of a magnitude that would justify the claim that the items tap into a coherent syndrome that could be called social solidarity. Indeed, a principle component analysis (Varimax rotation) on the pooled data produces a two factor solution with the first three items loading on one dimension (factor loadings of .74, .72 and .42, respectively) and the last two items loading on a second dimension (factor loadings of .72 and .78). In view of the semantic content of the items, we labelled the first dimension ‘support for general solidarity principles’ and the second dimension ‘compassion for the unfortunate’. These two dimensions will constitute the dependent variables in subsequent multilevel analyses (see results section). This does not mean, however, that we are claiming social solidarity to be a bi-dimensional phenomenon. We only make use of these dimensions to reduce data complexity. Social solidarity, in our opinion, should be understood as a fairly loose concept embracing a variety of meanings.

Specifically to assess trends in social solidarity (i.e. the second research question) we compiled data from four editions of the Eurobarometer series (editions

5, 31A, 40 and 56.1) using the item “Why in your opinion are there people who live in need”. This item has the same response categories as the item in the EVS on poverty. Similar to the EVS, the Eurobarometer relies on nationally representative samples of 1000-2000 respondents. As the Eurobarometer is restricted to EU member states, our analysis of trends only include the original EU six plus United Kingdom, Ireland and Denmark

Diversity, the other explanatory variable of interest, was gauged with three indicators - ethnic heterogeneity, the percentage of immigrants in the population in 2000, and the *change* in the percentage of immigrants from 1990 to 2000 – all three of which relate to the national level. We borrowed data on ethnic heterogeneity from Alesina et al (2003), using their *Ethnic Fractionalization* construct. This construct takes both the number of ethnic groups and the size of each group into account and reflects the chance that two randomly chosen individuals from a national population belong to different groups.^{iv} The values of this measure range from 0 (maximum homogeneity) to 1 (maximum heterogeneity). Specific about Alesina’s conception of ethnic fractionalization is that it incorporates both linguistic and racial distinctions to account for situations in which different ethnic groups speak the same language (as in many Latin American countries). The data for the second and third indicator were derived from UN statistics on people of migrant stock (see <http://esa.un.org/migration/>). These statistics represent the percentage of the population born abroad and thus have the drawback of only capturing the first generation of migrants. They do ensure good cross-national comparability, however. We added the third indicator to explore whether increases in diversity have a greater impact on solidarity attitudes than diversity levels. It is after all conceivable that people are much more alarmed by changes in their surroundings than by stable

features of their environment with which they have learnt to cope (Hooghe et al. 2006). To our knowledge no other indices of diversity are available that cover all European countries. It needs to be emphasized that the three measures of diversity need not run parallel to one another. For instance, ethnic heterogeneity is high and immigrant numbers are low in multi-ethnic states with emigration surpluses (e.g. Romania, Ukraine, Russia). Similarly, countries with relatively small immigrant communities may have recently become immigration societies experiencing substantial inflows of migrants (Spain and Greece are good examples). Lastly, we relied on GDP per capita (1995) as a measure of economic prosperity.

Table 1 shows the country aggregate scores on all measures. The data on postmaterialism and on the two solidarity outcomes represent national means. It can be seen that there are substantial differences between countries on almost all measures across Europe. There are also noticeable cross-regional differences. On average Eastern countries are significantly more ethnically diverse than Western countries. Western states by contrast have higher proportions of immigrants, though the difference with Eastern states is not significant. The former have also experienced a net influx of migrants whereas the latter have become more homogenous in terms of the percentage of people born abroad. Unsurprisingly, the West also has significantly higher levels of postmaterialism and economic prosperity than the East. On the social solidarity indicators the cross-national variation seems to be more important than the cross-regional one as there are no significant differences between East and West.

Table 1 about here

Analyses and results

Postmaterialism and the scope of solidarity

To assess the first research question optimally we would need survey items asking respondents whether they trust (or identify with) compatriots of a different ethnic background as much as they do (with) co-ethnics. To our knowledge, however, no such questions have ever been asked in the major surveys. Instead we relied on items tapping ethnic tolerance and social trust as a means to explore whether postmaterialism transcends ethnic boundaries. Our measurements of postmaterialism, ethnic tolerance and social trust have been discussed in the previous section.

We postulate that if postmaterialism carries trust and solidarity across ethnic borders it should at least be positively related to both ethnic tolerance and social trust. We explored this hypothesis with linear and logistic regression analyses of the pooled EVS data using ethnic tolerance and trust as the dependent variables and postmaterialism, education, income, gender and age as the independent variables. The results show that postmaterialism is indeed positively related to both ethnic tolerance and trust controlling for the other explanatory variables (see Table 2). Judging from the t statistics of the linear regression analysis and the B coefficients in combination with the standard errors of the logistic regression analysis, the effect of postmaterialism moreover is quite strong in comparison to the effects of the control variables. What is more, these effects have cross-regional validity as they can be observed in both Western and Eastern Europe.^v In short, although existing survey data do not allow us to unambiguously prove that postmaterialists are blind to racial and

ethnic divisions, the strong positive links between postmaterialism and ethnic tolerance and trust do offer us important clues in that direction.

Table 2 about here

Trends in social solidarity

Our assessment of the second research question is also handicapped. Ideally, we would need longitudinal data spanning a considerable period with sufficient points of measurement in time and including a wide range of countries. The Eurobarometer has repeatedly included the item on the reasons for poverty (see previous section), and it is, to our knowledge, the only survey with an item on social solidarity stretching as far back as 1976. But its drawback is that it includes only the nine countries mentioned before.

Nonetheless, the Eurobarometer trend data on the reasons of poverty do allow us to draw provisional conclusions as to the explanatory power of the diversity and postmaterialism perspectives. If diversity negatively affects social solidarity, we would expect to see declining sympathy for the poor since the societies of the nine countries included in the Eurobarometer have all become more ethnically diverse over the last 30 years (see for instance Figure 1 in Putnam (2006, p. 139) displaying rising immigrant numbers in selected OECD countries). By contrast, if the postmaterialism perspective is correct, we should see a more forgiving attitude towards the poor over time since postmaterialism levels have steadily risen from the 1960s as Inglehart has amply demonstrated in his books (see, e.g. Inglehart and Welzel 2005; 132). As

Figure 1 shows, trends in opinions about the poor clearly support the postmaterialism perspective. Almost everywhere people have become *less* judgmental of the poor over time, rather than *more* as the diversity theory would predict. Only Denmark shows a small increase in the percentage of people thinking that the poor owe it to themselves that they are poor. Nonetheless, despite the overall trend towards greater sympathy for the poor over a period stretching from 1976 to 2001, negative opinions on the poor are on the rise again in six countries since 1993. We would need more data on social solidarity to state with any measure of certainty whether 1993 constitutes a watershed year marking the beginning of a reverse trend or whether 2001 is simply an upward fluctuation in a continuing downward trend. In any case, while acknowledging that social solidarity is shaped by many more factors than postmaterialism and diversity alone, the trend data of Figure 1 clearly lend more support for the former than for the latter. If the negative impact of diversity had been as strong as its advocates claim it is, we should have seen declining instead of rising levels of sympathy for the poor.

Figure 1 about here

We can also explore the relationship between the two rival theories and solidarity by analysing cross-sectionally at the national level whether *changes* in diversity and/or postmaterialism are linked to *changes* in social solidarity. Obviously, if the diversity argument holds, one would expect countries showing drastic increases in diversity to also show dramatic declines in social solidarity. We used the aforementioned UN data on migrant stock 1990-2000 as a measure of diversity change. We turned again to the EVS to find measures of changes in postmaterialism and in social solidarity. Although

the EVS does not cover as large a time span as the Eurobarometer, it does have data on two solidarity items (reasons for poverty and opinions on unemployed) and on the four-item postmaterialism index for the 1990 and 1999 waves for as many as 26 countries. We could thus construct three measures of change covering a nine-year period: (1) a measure reflecting the change in the percentage of people not mentioning laziness as a reason for poverty; (2) a measure indicating the change in country means in opinions on the unemployed (with positive values indicating that people have become more sympathetic towards the unemployed); (3) a measure indicating the change in country means of postmaterialism. Lastly, we collected data representing the annual economic growth rate over the 1990-2000 period for 18 countries.

Simple bivariate correlations at the country level show that increases in diversity are not linked to decreases in social solidarity (see Table 3). To the contrary, changes in diversity are actually positively related to the dynamics in opinions on the unemployed as one of the solidarity measures. That is, people in countries with increasing immigrant numbers have adopted more lenient attitudes towards the unemployed over time, not less. Also in these analyses therefore, we could not find any support for the diversity perspective. Intriguingly, Banting et al (2006) *did* find a negative correlation between growth in the percentage of immigrants and changes in social solidarity. Their indicator of social solidarity however was the percentage of GDP spent on social welfare. As we noted before, this may not be an appropriate indicator as the degree of social spending may well reflect the power of interest groups, or perhaps the strength of the economy, rather than the bonds between citizens. In the case of Banting's findings it is, for instance, conceivable that economic growth was the key factor driving both the rise in immigrant numbers (by attracting foreigners in search of jobs) and the decline in social spending (by creating

more employment and thus reducing the appeals on social benefits). The discrepancy between our findings and those of Banting et al thus nicely illustrates our point that solidarity attitudes and social spending levels should not be treated as synonyms.

The absence of a link between the dynamics of diversity and solidarity does not mean, however, that postmaterialism or other perspectives perform any better in accounting for changes in solidarity attitudes. To the contrary, the correlations of Table 3 do not show any meaningful relationship between changes in solidarity attitudes and changes in postmaterialism and economic growth either. Thus, the dynamics of social solidarity attitudes, at least for the 1990-2000 period, seem to defy any plausible explanation.

Cross-sectional analyses of social solidarity

Since the dependent variables are measured at the individual level and the explanatory variables of interest are pitched at both the individual level (postmaterialism) and national level (diversity), the appropriate method to explore the co-variables of social solidarity is a multi-level analysis. Faced with explanatory variables at different levels, some research has simply attributed the values of some higher level variables to all lower level units in order to conduct an ordinary multiple regression analysis (e.g. Berry et al. 2006). This, however, leads to an overestimation of the effect of higher level variables. Moreover, a multiple regression model requires that observations are independent of one another, and it is precisely this requirement that the data of international surveys violate (Hooghe et al, 2006). After all, these data are based on *national* samples, and citizens of one country usually have more in common with fellow citizens than with citizens of another state. International surveys thus have a two-tier nested structure with country as the first order unit by which respondents

were selected in a non-random fashion. Multilevel analysis takes this nested structure into account. Using Mlwin software we will build a random intercept model, which means that we allow the intercepts of the regression coefficients of the individual level variables to vary between countries.

We entered postmaterialism, education level, income level, age and gender as the individual-level explanatory variables in the model. GDP per capita and the three diversity indicators were introduced as country-level variables. We regressed the two social solidarity dimensions on this collection of explanatory variables, running a separate model for each diversity indicator. Table 4 presents the results of these analyses. It was ensured that none of the explanatory variables exceeded collinearity thresholds. We further note that postmaterialism and social solidarity in our understanding are notions with a considerable conceptual overlap. Therefore, in our analyses below we do not aim to explore whether postmaterialism *causes* social solidarity (as if they were entirely distinct concepts) but whether social solidarity is *part of* the mindset of postmaterialists controlling for the other variables.

Critics might argue that there is an imbalance in our research design in that postmaterialism is entered as an individual variable while diversity is included as a series of contextual variables. As significant effects are much more likely to be found at the individual level, the design would give the postmaterialism perspective more chance of being supported. To create a level playing field one should, in this logic, enter a contextual measure for postmaterialism and an individual-level indicator for diversity. While acknowledging the asymmetry in our design, we would, however, maintain that a balanced design with indicators at both levels would not do justice to the theoretical substance of the two perspectives. Inglehart's theory of postmaterialist value change is essentially pitched at the individual level: it is because of increasing

prosperity that *individuals* develop postmaterialist values. Aggregate levels of postmaterialism are seen as a mere compositional condition (i.e. reflecting the sum of individual value preferences), not as a contextual condition exerting an independent effect on some social phenomenon on top of individual-level postmaterialism. By contrast, ethnic diversity is only conceptualised as a contextual effect in the diversity literature, i.e. as a group-level effect that cannot be reduced to the properties of the group's members. It would thus make little sense to explore it as an individual-level variable. This being said, we will compare the two perspectives at the same level of analysis in Table 5 using aggregate measures of postmaterialism and solidarity. If postmaterialism is a very important driver of solidarity at the individual level, the same link should be visible at the aggregate level. In this way, the two perspectives can be tested under equal conditions.

Table 3 about here

Let us now turn to the results of the multilevel analyses (Table 4). It appears that none of the three diversity measures is related with either of the two solidarity outcomes controlling for GDP per capita and the five individual level conditions. One of these measures, ethnic fractionalization, is even close to showing a significant positive link with compassion for the unfortunate, which is a finding that runs completely counter to the diversity hypothesis. Admittedly, the number of countries on which these relations are based is not large (27), making it difficult for context variables such as the diversity measures to achieve statistical significance. Yet this number is

apparently not too small for GDP per capita, the other context variable, to show a significant negative link with support for general solidarity principles. In other words, while diversity levels and changes in diversity do not seem to matter, economic prosperity does have an impact in a sense richer countries display lower solidarity levels. This supports our earlier supposition that people in affluent countries may simply not find issues of social solidarity as important and urgent as people in poorer societies do.

Compared to the macro-level variables the individual level variables appear to be more closely related to the solidarity indicators. In general women and the well-educated report higher levels of altruism than men and the poorly educated. Higher incomes, by contrast, express lower levels of solidarity than low incomes. These relationships are by and large in line with the expectations discussed above. Age does not show a consistent link with the two solidarity outcomes. Older people are more supportive of general solidarity principles but show less sympathy for the socially marginalised. Yet, the more interesting finding for this study is that, postmaterialism, does not show a regular pattern of relationships either. Although postmaterialists express significantly more compassion for the unfortunate than materialists do, they are not significantly more supportive of general solidarity principles.

Why is there no consistent link between postmaterialism and the two social solidarity outcomes? This undoubtedly partly has to do with the variety of meanings that the outcome measures tap, as we explained above. However, the lack of consistency may also be related to the different historical experiences of the countries that participated in the EVS. Diverging historical backgrounds may have led respondents in Eastern and Western Europe, for instance, to interpret the principles of basic needs provision and the containment of large socio-economic inequalities

(which are both components of the general principles outcome measure) in different ways. While these principles are likely to have become tainted in post-communist countries in a sense that are associated with the rhetoric of the former authoritarian regime, they may carry positive connotations for West-Europeans, who could well interpret them as part of the social justice agenda of mainstream socio-democratic parties. If this conjecture is true, postmaterialism could well be related completely differently to both principles across the two regions. To test whether this is the case we performed the same multilevel analyses for both regions separately (see bottom half of Table 4). We indeed see that postmaterialism has a strong negative effect on support for general solidarity principles in Eastern Europe while it is positively linked to this outcome in Western Europe. The relation with compassion for the unfortunate, the other outcome, does not vary by region (i.e. all positive). Postmaterialism thus shows a consistent positive link with solidarity in Western Europe, but not in Eastern Europe.

Intriguingly, the regional split up also sheds light, albeit a confusing one, on the interaction effect between postmaterialism and diversity. As we conjectured above, the diversity effect could well be neutralised in environments with high stocks of postmaterialism given the propensity of postmaterialists to look beyond ethnic boundaries. Consequently, the negative effect of diversity on solidarity should above all be visible in materialist surroundings. As it happens, Eastern and Western Europe differ substantially in levels of postmaterialism: materialism prevails in the former while more mixed value orientations predominate in the latter (see discussion of Table 1). We should thus expect to see a strong negative link between diversity and solidarity in Eastern Europe and a weak link or no link at all in Western Europe. Our analyses only confirm this hypothesis for the first outcome measure: indeed we see an (almost

significant) negative relation between ethnic heterogeneity and support for general solidary principles in Eastern Europe and a weak positive link in Western Europe. A completely different pattern emerges on compassion for the unfortunate, however. Contrary to our expectation, ethnic heterogeneity shows a significant positive (!) link with this outcome measure in Eastern Europe and a weak positive relation in Western Europe. Moreover, there is also a fairly strong positive connection between the proportion of immigrants and compassion for the unfortunate in Eastern Europe. We can only speculate on the reasons for the sharply diverging patterns between the two outcome measures. Possibly, respondents in Eastern Europe had members of their own ethnic group in mind rather than anonymous fellow citizens when they were asked to give their opinions on the poor and unemployed. Alternatively, the economic slump following the collapse of communism may have been so profound and encompassing that people had every reason to blame economic changes or ‘corrupt politicians’ for widespread poverty and (hidden) unemployment and not the people afflicted by these hardships themselves. Finally, the unexpected results could simply be a reflection of the small number of countries on which the regional analyses are based (east – 13 countries; west – 14 countries), with outliers determining the patterns.

In sum, our findings are not consistent with the diversity perspective. They do offer considerable support for the postmaterialism perspective but this support is region-specific as it pertains to Western Europe (and possibly to other western states as well). We further note that the individual-level variables do not perform well in terms of accounting for the variance associated with that level (see the small percentages of explained variance in Table 4).^{vi} This indicates that any (positive) impact of postmaterialism on social solidarity may well be dwarfed by the (negative)

influence of other factors not included in the analyses. Our findings on postmaterialism, incidentally, are in line with those of a study focusing on the link between postmaterialism and support for public welfare policies. Drawing on a sample of party members and activists of the English Canadian Social Democrats, this study found postmaterialism to be positively correlated with support for social programs, fiscal progressivism, and decommodification (Erickson and Laycock 2002).

We have to end with another qualification of the postmaterialism perspective. So far we have examined the co-variates of social solidarity at the individual level but it is entirely feasible that different relationships obtain at the aggregate level. This is all the more likely if much of the variance in individual level analyses is left unaccounted for, as is the case in our multilevel analyses. We therefore examined whether the positive link between postmaterialism and social solidarity (and the non-relation between diversity and social solidarity) also obtains at the national level (see Table 5; the correlations are based on the aggregate data displayed in Table 1). Due to the small number of observations and collinearity problems we restricted ourselves to bivariate correlations. Postmaterialism turns out not to be positively correlated with either of the two solidarity outcomes (we even see negative correlations although these are not significant). In other words, societies with high levels of postmaterialism are not necessarily more altruistic. Evidently, there are forces at work that depress the solidarity levels of both materialists and postmaterialists in countries with comparatively high levels of postmaterialism. Economic prosperity could clearly be one of them judging from the negative correlations of GDP per capita with the two outcome measures, particularly with support for general solidarity principles. However, the absence of a positive relation between postmaterialism and solidarity at

the aggregate level could also be indicative of the shallowness of the feelings of solidarity of postmaterialists. As noted before, the attachments that postmaterialists feel towards fellow citizens (or towards people of even wider communities such as fellow Europeans or global citizens) are likely to be of a thinner, less committed kind than the bonds that unite people of the same family, ethnic group, religious group or class to one another. Seen in this light, it is likely that other processes have overruled the effect of postmaterialism on solidarity at the aggregate level. The table further shows that the three diversity indicators are not related to the two solidarity outcomes at the aggregate level either. Thus the diversity perspective is not supported by any of our analyses.

Table 4 about here

Conclusion

Many scholars have argued that people will only be prepared to help others if they feel they have something in common with these others. In other words, social solidarity is based on a sense of community. In this logic growing diversity will undermine social solidarity because it erodes interpersonal trust and communal cohesion. The current paper has not produced empirical evidence for this theory. First, it was not supported by time series data. The diversity argument would expect an anti-welfare ideology showing little mercy with the poor to have risen in societies that have become increasingly diverse due to ongoing immigration. Immigration societies, however, have become more sympathetic to the poor across the board from the mid

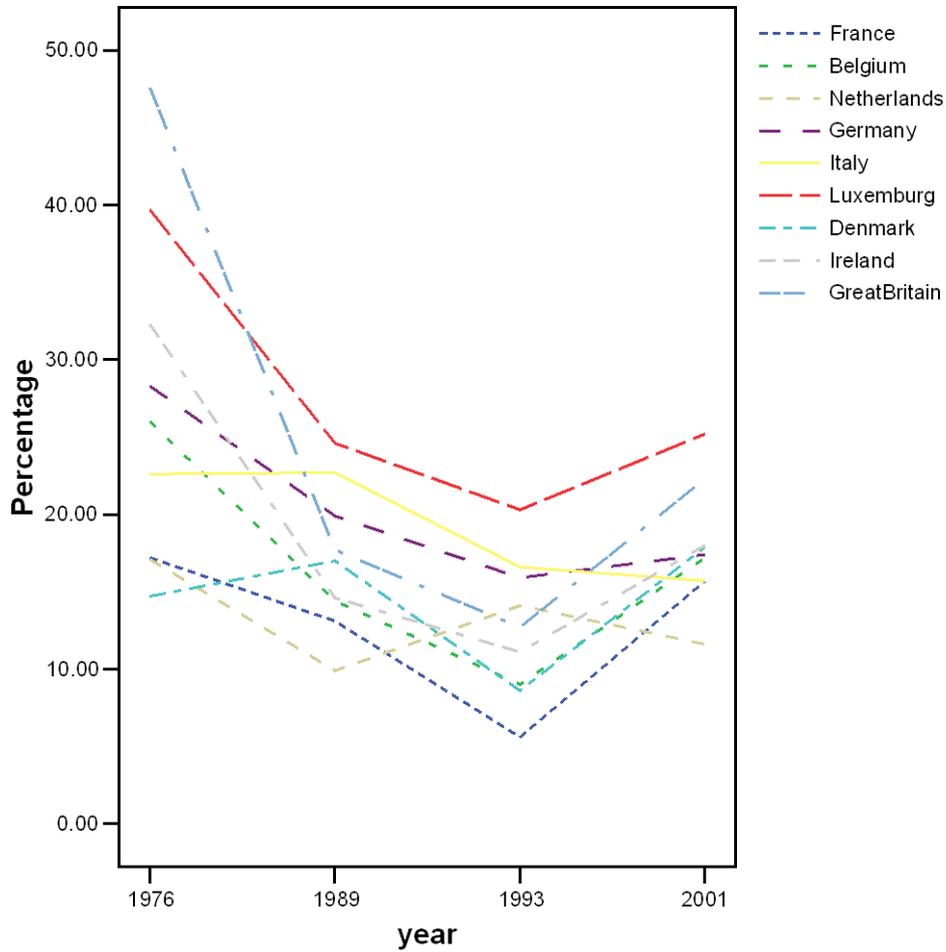
1970s onwards. Second, it found no confirmation in cross-sectional analyses of the dynamics of diversity and solidarity. Countries with increasing levels of diversity did not show corresponding declines in solidarity. Third, the diversity argument could not be substantiated at the individual level. In none of the six multilevel analyses covering 27 European countries could a relation be found between three indicators of diversity and two outcome measures of social solidarity controlling for other macro and micro-level variables. Finally, no link could be observed at the macro-level between diversity and aggregate measures of social solidarity.

This article proposed Inglehart's theory of postmaterialist value change as a promising alternative perspective on social solidarity. Theoretically the link between postmaterialism and social solidarity is explained by the tendency of postmaterialists to have wider horizons and feel committed to values such as freedom and a just and fair society for all. Moreover, the open and explorative posture of postmaterialists often translates into positive appraisals of cultural difference, enabling them to look beyond ethnic boundaries and extend feelings of attachment to broader communities. Postmaterialism theory thus offers a meaningful explanation of why people can retain a sense of solidarity towards fellow citizens under conditions of growing diversity. Our analyses showed that postmaterialism is positively linked to ethnic tolerance and interpersonal trust which confirmed our conjecture that postmaterialism helps to bridge ethnic divisions. Most importantly, postmaterialism showed a strong positive connection with compassion for the unfortunate at the individual level.

However, several reservations prevent us from seeing postmaterialism as the panacea for all societal ills. First, because we relied on analyses of cross-sectional data we, obviously, cannot make statements about the causal order. It is quite imaginable, for instance, that diversity not only shapes social solidarity but that social

solidarity in its turn positively contributes to diversity in a sense that immigrants prefer to settle in countries with relatively high stocks of social solidarity. Second, we found the link between postmaterialism and social solidarity to vary by region, with postmaterialism being negatively correlated to support for general solidarity principles in Eastern Europe. Postmaterialism may thus have different consequences in different contexts. This should caution those who understand postmaterialism as a welcome process of value change having the same positive effects everywhere. We postulated that the communist past has made issues of social solidarity more controversial in Eastern Europe leading postmaterialists there to sharply reject principles associated with or advocated by the former authoritarian regime. Third, if postmaterialism had the potential to dissolve ethnic divides, we would expect to see no relation between diversity and solidarity in environments with high levels of postmaterialism and a strong negative relation in contexts with high levels of materialism. However, a comparison of East- and West-European countries revealed that diversity is not more negatively linked to solidarity in materialist surroundings. Fourth, although postmaterialism is positively related to social solidarity (certainly in Western Europe), it contributes little to explaining the variance in social solidarity at the individual level. Moreover, at the aggregate level postmaterialism is not linked to social solidarity. All of this suggests that the feelings of solidarity of postmaterialists may well be too thin and too fleeting to sustain comprehensive national welfare regimes. We have to end with the unsatisfactory conclusion that other processes not considered in this study are likely to have a much greater impact on social solidarity than rising levels of postmaterialism.

Figure 1. Opinions about the causes of poverty
 (percentage saying “people are poor because of laziness or lack of willpower”)



Sources: Eurobarometers 5, 31A, 40 and 56.1. Question in surveys: “Why in your opinion are there people who live in need? Here are four opinions – which is the closest to yours?” 1- because they have been unlucky; 2 – because of laziness and lack of willpower; 3 – because there is too much injustice in our society; 4 – it’s an evitable part of modern progress; 5 – none of these

Table 1. Postmaterialism, diversity and social solidarity levels in European countries

Country	GNP per capita (1995)	Post-materialism	Diversity			Social solidarity	
			Ethnic fractionalization	% of pop of migrant stock 2000	Change in % of pop of migrant stock 1990-2000	Support for general solidarity principles	Compassion for the unfortunate
Au	26890,00	2.21	,11	15,10	5.30	6.80	6.60
Bel	24710,00	2.03	,56	6,90	-.50	7.00	7.10
Bul	1330,00	1.58	,40	1,30	.90	7.00	7.20
Bela	2070,00	1.57	,32	12,20	.40	7.10	7.20
Cro	3250,00	2.09	,37	14,50	3.20	7.20	7.20
Cze	3870,00	1.85	,32	4,40	.30	6.60	6.60
Den	29890,00	2.08	,08	7,20	1.40	5.90	7.10
Est	2860,00	1.62	,51	15,20	-5.80	6.80	7.50
Fin	20580,00	1.85	,13	3,00	1.40	6.90	7.10
Fra	24990,00	1.90	,10	10,70	.20	7.00	7.10
Ger	27510,00	1.84	,17	12,30	4.40	7.10	6.80
Gre	8210,00	1.98	,16	8,80	2.60	7.40	7.10
Hun	4120,00	1.53	,15	3,10	-.50	7.30	6.80
Ice	26215,00	1.89	,08	7,80	2.10	7.20	7.00
Ire	14710,00	1.93	,12	14,10	3.60	7.20	7.20
Ita	19020,00	2.14	,11	4,30	.40	7.00	6.70
Lv	2270,00	1.70	,59	19,50	-7.00	7.10	7.10
Lt	1900,00	1.80	,32	4,80	-3.30	7.20	7.30
Mal	9330,00	1.72	,04	2,70	.60	6.70	6.70
Neth	24000,00	2.11	,11	10,10	1.80	6.50	7.30
Pol	2790,00	1.68	,12	1,80	-.90	7.30	6.80
Por	9700,00	1.76	,05	7,30	1.80	.	.
Rom	1480,00	1.62	,31	,60	.00	7.20	6.90
Rus	2240,00	1.48	,25	8,40	.30	6.90	7.30
Sv	2950,00	1.58	,25	2,30	1.40	7.50	6.70
Slove	8200,00	1.99	,22	8,50	-.30	7.30	6.50
Sp	13580,00	1.97	,42	11,10	2.10	7.30	6.90
Swe	23750,00	2.16	,06	12,40	2.10	6.80	7.00
Ukr	1630,00	1.57	,47	14,70	.40	.	.
GB	18700,00		,12	9,10	1.50	.	.
East	2925	1.69	.33	7.95	-.78	7.12	7.01
West	21318	1.97	.17	10.61	1.93	6.91	6.98
Difference	-18392***	-.28***	.16**	-2.66	-2.70**	.21	.03

* p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001.

‘East’ includes Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Ukraine.

‘West’ includes Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Malta, Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Great Britain.

Table 2. Postmaterialism, ethnic tolerance and social trust

Co-variates	Ethnic tolerance (linear regression)		Social trust (logistic regression)	
	Beta-coefficient	t value	B coefficient	Standard Error
Postmaterialism	.132***	22.10	.416***	.021
Income level	.017**	2.65	.112***	.017
Education level	.137***	21.29	.117***	.006
Age	.013*	2.05	.007***	.001
Gender (0-man; 1-woman)	.054***	9.23	-.061*	.025
R ²	.044		.047 (Nagelkerke)	

Note: The effects of the co-variates did not exceed critical collinearity thresholds.

Table 3. The dynamics of diversity, postmaterialism and social solidarity (bivariate correlations at the national level)

	Social solidarity	
	Change in the percentage of people not mentioning laziness as reason why people are living in need 1990 - 1999	Change in country average of opinions on unemployed 1990-1999
Change in % of pop of migrant stock 1990-2000	-.08 (26)	.40* (26)
Change in mean levels of postmaterialism 1990-1999	-.09 (26)	.01 (26)
Average annual economic growth 1990-2000	-.24 (18)	.16 (18)

NB: The N is given in parentheses

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 5. Correlates of social solidarity at the national level

	Social solidarity	
	Support for general solidarity principles	Compassion for the unfortunate
Ethnic fractionalization	.21	.33
% pop of migrant stock	-.07	.32
Change 1990-2000	-.03	-.30
Postmaterialism	-.31	-.16
GDP per capita 1995	-.44*	-.09

NB: The N of all correlations is 27 countries

* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$.

End notes

ⁱ We reversed the scores in the original database to ensure that an ascending order of response categories represents growing trust.

ⁱⁱ Factor analysis showed that these items load on one dimension. Cronbach's Alphas for this scale ranged from .526 to .731 across the 27-European states that we selected for the analysis, indicating that the scale has good cross-national validity..

ⁱⁱⁱ We transformed the four response categories in the original database into two response categories to create an ascending order reflecting growing solidarity.

^{iv} See Alesina et al (2003) for the formula to compute this measure of diversity.

^v The results of the region-specific analyses can be obtained from the author.

^{vi} At first sight it would seem that the proportion of variance explained by the macro-level variables is much higher. This proportion however relates only to the macro-level (or between-country) variance, which is just a fraction of the within country (or individual-level) variance. This means that in terms of reducing the *total* variance, the macro-level variables do not perform as well as the individual-level ones.

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