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## **THE DIFFERENTIATION OF TYPES OF SOCIAL CAPITAL IN LODZ – SPATIAL CONTEXT**

**Abstract:** The functions of social capital affect many aspects of social life. The benefits of its presence are visible both in the case of individuals and wider communities. Therefore, an analysis of the discussed phenomenon seems important and necessary, as its proper use may constitute a remedy for the socio-economic problems of local communities. This article attempts to fulfil this need. It presents the results of representative research diagnosing the social capital resources of a metropolitan community.

The research performed not only expands the knowledge of social capital but also may be a valuable insight into Lodz's problems, especially because the aim of the exploration is also to present the examined phenomenon from a spatial perspective.

**Key words:** Lodz, metropolitan population, social capital, spatial analysis.

### **Introduction**

According to the principles of classical economics, there exist three basic factors of production which influence economic development: land, labour, and financial capital. The 1960s saw an increasing focus on physical capital, and a decade later, human capital was added to the list. The next step in acknowledging the role of non-economic determinants of development was the inclusion of social capital into the factors of production, as an inspiration to explain social differentiation.

The discovery of social capital and its role as a development stimulant led to the term appearing in various contexts..

The wide interest in social capital is mainly a result of its usefulness. This is why the research on social capital focuses increasingly on initiatives aimed at its expansion, seeing this resource as an opportunity to improve people's living conditions, permanent well-being and general progress. "Its career seems to originate from the common belief that just as financial capital (what one possesses) in the Pre-Modern Era, and human capital (what one knows and is able to do) in the Modern Era, social capital (whom one

knows and is connected to) determines nowadays (in the Post-Modern Era) the success of both individuals and wider social groups” [Rymsza 2007, p. 23].

The increase in the popularity of social capital compared to other types of capital should be connected to the emergence of a “new” market oriented at quality and flexibility. This model requires from individuals (actors) resourcefulness, innovation, co-operation, *i.e.* behaviours whose effectiveness grows as their transaction costs decrease. These costs are low in areas with a high level of social capital [Kazmierczak 2007]. Therefore, social capital is nowadays viewed as a factor of production. It complements human capital – “the latest equipment and most innovative ideas in the hands or mind of the brightest, fittest person, however, will amount to little unless that person also has access to others (...)” – with human capital displayed in individuals and social capital in relationships. [Woolcock 2001]. The presence of co-operation skills, models, norms, and trust in a given environment may lead to a modification of both the impact of macrostructural factors and the individual predispositions of particular actors.

Social capital has therefore two aspects, the individual and the collective one. There is individual social capital, stemming from the social or ethnic background, or capital accumulated as a network of relationships. The structural take on social capital, which is essential regarding the topic of this study, involves social structure seen as a value which gives its holders the upper hand in the field of social competition [Bartkowski 2007]. “Thus the resources of social capital as understood in this way become one of the determinants differentiating life opportunities of certain groups (strata), and their replication within society (succession) may lead to an increase in social differentiation, as evidenced in the differentiation of space, including urban space” [Szafranska 2008, p. 68]. Social capital is therefore one of many factors determining the development of cities as well as the intensity and pace of the changes they undergo.

Knowledge of social capital resources may form a vital insight into urban problems and their solutions. Social capital significantly affects social disparities and is viewed as an effective ally in the struggle with dysfunctions [Barczykowska 2011, p. 249].

Nevertheless, it should be noted that social capital does not emerge on its own. It is developed in several areas, in the family and during interactions with one’s social environment. One must then hope that representatives of appropriate institutions will fulfil their role and contribute to the generation of social capital, the more so because “social capital offers the local actors an opportunity to increase their impact on the development of their region” [Kazmierczak 2007, p. 53], which is especially significant when it comes to Lodz. The city examined in this study struggles with socio-economic problems and faces the need to manage their consequences and implement preventive measures. In the context of these actions, social capital occupies an important place, since it is a significant stimulant of local and regional development. Inclusion of the researched phenomenon into the local policy will undoubtedly result in a greater efficiency of the initiatives discussed above. These actions should

be based on research diagnosing social capital resources. Apart from the diagnostic purposes, these studies have a practical aspect, as they may form an inspiration for local politicians and social activists. Therefore, the claim that diagnosing social capital resources is important and necessary seems justified.

This article is an answer to those needs. It presents the results of representative studies analysing social capital resources of a metropolitan community. Not only does the research expand the knowledge of social capital, it may also form an important insight into Lodz's problems, the more so because the aim of the exploration is also a spatial approach to the examined subject<sup>1</sup>.

## 1. Social capital – an empirical approach

An overview of the basic concepts of social capital shows that the components of the capital exist within three attributes of social life. Most authors cite contact networks, norms, and values, as well as various forms of trust, as the key elements of social capital [Starosta, Frykowski 2008]. According to Putnam [1995, p. 258], “social capital refers to features of social organization, such as networks, norms, and trust, that facilitate co-ordination and co-operation for mutual benefit”.

For many researchers, contact networks are the core of social capital, and some theories regard them even as a condition sufficient for its adequate description [Baker 2000; Burt 1992; Lin 2001]. Social trust is viewed similarly. In many situations and by numerous authors of the discussed concept, it is considered one of the key aspects of social capital [Coleman 1990; Fukuyama 1997; Sztompka 2007]. Nevertheless, social norms are also an essential attribute of social capital. They improve society's efficiency by facilitating co-ordination and enable initiatives whose aim is the common good combined with the willingness to give up immediate individual benefits.

According to the above, social capital is regarded as consisting of three components: trust, networks, and social norms.

The first component encompasses three dimensions of social trust, that is vertical trust, private trust, and the so-called generalised trust. The second one concerns social networks. Partial variables of this component concern the range of maintained social contacts, their frequency and duration. The third component is comprised of six variables providing information about the level of acceptance of social norms which support the development of social capital.

The partial variables of the network component concern the social structure. The other two components, *i.e.* the trust component and the normative component, are not

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<sup>1</sup> The determinant of the ecological variable used in the study were districts divided into housing estate units [see Frykowski 2007]. Although in this specific case there is no representativeness in the statistical sense, a spatial analysis of the examined phenomena shows some regularities and may be a starting point for subsequent research.

structural in their nature but apply to attitudes and values [Starosta, Frykowski 2008]. In Scott's [1991] terminology, the former variables are called relational variables and regard behaviours, the latter are "consciousness" variables and concern beliefs.

Since the indicators of the analysed components of social capital comprise various numbers of elements, the social capital scale was constructed transforming all the partial variables included in the components discussed above into variables with discrete values from the  $-1$  to  $+1^2$  range. Such method ensured a full comparability of the distinguished sub-scales. The theoretical range of the scales is respectively, for trust:  $-3$  to  $+3$ , for social norms:  $-6$  to  $+6$ , and for social networks:  $-7$  to  $+7$ . The empirical ranges of the scales are discussed below.

The result of the analyses was information on the structure of the community according to the specific components of social capital. The analyses indicated that the levels of individual components are low compared to the potential range of the variables. This is corroborated by the low values of the analysed indicators. The average level of the social trust variable is 0.39, with the variable being able to take values from the  $-3$  to  $+3$  range. The average level of social norms acceptance is 2.88 compared to the potential variable range of  $-6$  to  $+6$ . In the case of the third component the situation is similar, with the indicator capable to take values from  $-7$  to  $+7$ , and the average level of the network component being 2.9<sup>3</sup>.

## 2. Types of social capital

"The complexity of a specific reality is overcome through classification [...] of phenomena into several types or classes, which enhances its important features" [Bertrand, Wierzbicki 1970, p. 152]. „The term signifying a given type is nothing more than a term signifying a certain phenomenon, property or configuration of phenomena or properties of the debated objects, events or processes [...]. A type is a special value of a variable or a configuration of a determined values of a set of variables included in the classification template, considered more important than the others" [Nowak 1980]. A distinction is made between two basic kinds of types: the ideal ones and the empirical ones. The former, "being extreme or absolute constructs, do not have designata (with null ranges)" [Bertrand, Wierzbicki 1970, p. 154]. The ideal type is created when individual phenomena present in the empirical reality are combined to form one entity. This type is a certain „kind of a thought construction which enhances and exaggerates some specific elements of reality; it contains essen-

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<sup>2</sup> The procedure of summing individual items was conducted using the SPSS program after determining the level of the reliability of the scale.

<sup>3</sup> A detailed analysis of the individual components of social capital was presented in: [Mularska-Kucharek 2012].

tial elements present in all the empirical phenomena of a given series; it is of utopian character” [*ibidem*, p. 156].

The empirical type, on the other hand, “is a peculiar construction, selected purposefully and in an abstract way, which combines and enhances a set of features which have empirical equivalents” [*ibidem*, p. 159]. Contrary to the ideal type, the empirical type has respective empirical designata. Therefore this construction involves events occurring in reality and forming measurable criteria. According to Nowak [1980], when performing research, one should take into account quantitative reasons to determine which types to include and which ones to omit. Only features which have many designata may be termed types. For researchers, creating a typology facilitates the presentation and comprehension of a complex reality.

Apart from all of the above, a typology orders information about the world, yielding an image of a regularised, transparent reality. Furthermore, the development of types allows for comprehension of objective truth, which is impossible to achieve through pure empirical observation. This is because observation largely depends on conceptualisation, which by forming certain leading ideas, concepts or frameworks enhances some features. This in turn allows the researcher to determine which facts to gather and examine.

Adopting the typological point of view in a research study enables the correlation of certain personality traits and characteristic attitudes with the beliefs presented on the topic in question [Pawłowski 1967].

Bearing in mind the advantages of a typology, three types of social capital were distinguished. Technically, constructing this typology was possible through cluster analysis commonly employed to such types of actions; empirically, it was possible due to the prevalent sort of the analysed components of social capital (networks, norms, and trust).

Table 1 contains the values of accumulated variables in the individual types of Lodz residents’ social capital. Based on statistical analysis, three types of clusters with different structure and combined value of the three-value indicators were specified. The combined value of the three-value indicator was an equivalent of a total social capital indicator including norms, trust and social networks. The cluster analysis showed that none of the categories distinguished exhibited the maximal degree of all the elements discussed previously. Therefore, it may be concluded that the ideal type of social capital is non-existent in the examined community. However, the second type is the only one to have positive values of the three analysed variables and as such largely approximates the ideal capital, which is characterised by the co-occurrence of all three components (see Table 1).

It should be noted that the prevalent category in the examined community is the first one, which includes a strongly developed *trust* component which adopts a positive value and the two other components, *i.e.* networks and social norms, with low, negative values. The least common is the third category, whose characteristic trait is a relatively high level of the normative component. This result confirms the claim that

Table 1

Types of social capital components (N = 452)

Name and value range of the component	Types		
	1	2	3
Trust (-1 do +1)	0.55	0.35	-0.74
Networks(-1 do +1)	-0.33	0.74	-0.56
Social norms (-1 do +1)	-0.25	0.58	0.55
Percentage	46.2	36.5	17.3

Source: Own work (Tables 1, 2).

social trust is omnipresent in individual lives, as well as the assumption that relativism and moral permissivism are becoming increasingly more popular.

Based on the social capital component prevalent in a given type, individual types were given adequate names. The first type was termed an inconsistent trust capital, the second one a consistent network-normative capital, the third one an inconsistent normative capital.

The first of the discussed types features a positive value of trust and negative values of the other two components, *i.e.* networks and social norms. It is therefore an inconsistent capital. It should be noted that this type has the lowest total value of the social capital indicator. It shows a relatively low level of acceptance of social norms, which form the basis of social capital, and a small size of social network. Although the representatives of this type of capital present a relatively high level of social trust, they do not respect prosocial norms and do not maintain a large network of social contacts. Hence it can be assumed that their trust is directed at a narrow circle of people, including family members, relatives and neighbours. This type of trust, called private trust, focuses mainly on close and intense relationships with people one already knows. Nevertheless, it is not sufficient to build social capital, since it limits co-operation with other people as well as the need to develop a social network.

In conclusion, when compared to the other types, the inconsistent trust capital has the weakest structure and therefore the lowest coincidence of its components. As a result, it may be assumed that this type of capital will bring the least effect and its functionality will be limited to selected aspects of social life.

The second type of social capital is characterised by a positive value of all its components, that is trust, networks, and social norms. Therefore it is a consistent capital. Since the prevalent components are in this case networks and norms, this type is called “consistent network-normative capital”. Its representatives display a high level of social networks and norms, as well as considerable social trust. This type of capital seems to be the best, as it includes all of its elements: norms, networks, and trust. It can be therefore considered a “full social capital”. It seems justified to assume that this type of social capital is the most valuable and will yield the best effects.

The third one of the types of social capital presented displays only one component with a positive value, *i.e.* social norms. The other two components, networks and trust, reached relatively low values. However, compared to the first type of capital, these values stand a little higher. Undoubtedly, social norms, a constitutive element of social capital, doubtlessly form the foundation of this type. This acceptance of social norms forms favourable circumstances for the creation of a moral bond contributing to the development of the elements of social capital. The presence of social norms heightens the effectiveness of social groups, facilitating co-ordination and co-operation. In conclusion, it may be claimed that the discussed type of social capital will prove useful, although its effectiveness will be much lower than that of the near-ideal type.

### 3. Social capital: a spatial approach

Knowledge of the resources of social capital in the researched community is essential. However, from the point of view of the local policy, the key information is the spatial aspect of the examined phenomenon. In this case, the subject of the analysis is the total population of a given area. The average value of a given variable in the community in question is an element of social capital. The social capital indicator is the sum total of the average values of constitutive variables in individual housing estates.

The identification of the areas with different levels of social capital may form a significant source of information for initiatives aiming at improving the residents' quality of life. Taking into account the significance of social capital for the development of the city and the pace of the changes it undergoes, as well as the significance for the standard and quality of human life, these results take on a special meaning, the more so because the correlation between social capital and its components and the ecological variable is statistically significant [see Mularska-Kucharek 2012]. These correlations involve both the level and the type of social capital.

A spatial analysis of the identified types will be prefaced by an in-depth description of the level of social capital. The correlations in question are illustrated on the following maps (see Figs. 1 and 2).

Figure 1 shows the spatial differentiation of the social capital level in five major administrative districts, which include Widzew, Polesie, Górna, Bałuty, and Śródmieście. Due to large differences in socio-demographic features in these districts, the results obtained may serve only as illustrative material. Although in this case generalisation of the obtained data is not possible, it should be noted that this spatial analysis shows some regularities. The most visible one is the low level of social capital prevalent in Lodz. In every district, a low level of the examined phenomenon occurs much more frequently than the other two, *i.e.* the medium and high level. Therefore, the structure of social capital in the individual districts reflects the

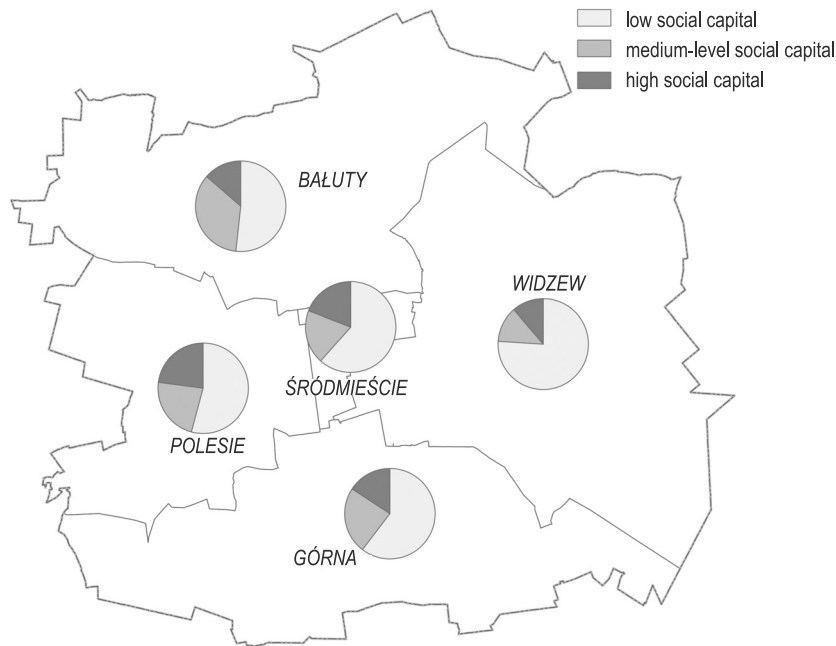


Figure 1. Level of social capital in Lodz's administrative districts

Source: Own work (Figs. 1-3).

structure of the researched phenomenon in the entire city. On the other hand, the data presented here show a high level of social capital in Śródmieście. Since this is the smallest of the examined districts, it exhibits the least differentiation, which in turn limits data dispersion.

Bearing in mind that a district-level analysis probably averages the results, the spatial structure of social capital merits a more careful examination. Fig. 2 presents data on the level of social capital in housing estate units (25 identified within 5 administrative districts).

The map presented above illustrates the fact that the level of social capital is varied also when it comes to housing estate units, that is within the administrative districts. Only five estates displayed a high level of the researched phenomenon. The largest social capital resources were observed in the area of Śródmiejska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa, Zarzewie, the Akademicka housing estate as well as Nowe Miasto and Teofilowo (see Fig. 2). The first two units were described as having a high level of social capital in Frykowski's study [2006]. Similar results (despite having used other social capital indicators) were obtained in Szafrńska's research [2008]. It should be emphasized that as many as 15 housing estate units displayed a low level of social capital. When thinking of including social capital into the local policy, these results are of considerable importance, mainly by emphasising the extent of work that should be undertaken to increase social capital resources.





Figure 2. Social capital level in Lodz's housing estate units

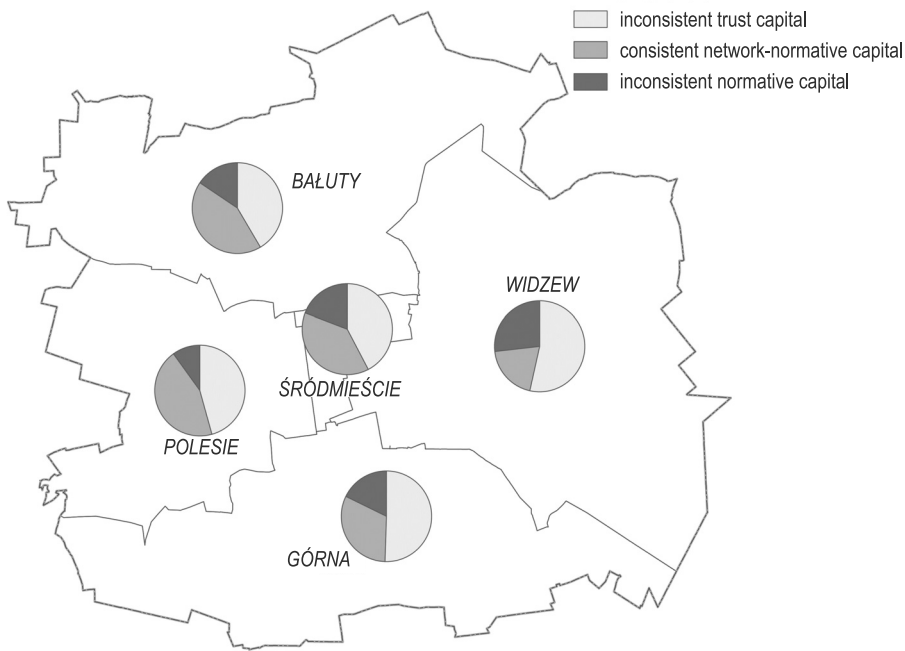


Figure 3. Types of social capital in the districts of Lodz

Moreover, the research indicates that social capital varies not only by level but also by type. Variation on the district level is shown on Fig. 3.

As the visual shows, the type of capital prevalent in all the districts is inconsistent trust capital, *i.e.* the type with the lowest coincidence of social capital components and therefore the least effective. Nevertheless, it should be stressed that in this case, as in the case discussed above, the analysis is only an estimate and the data should be interpreted accounting for the socio-demographic variation in individual districts. Table 2 presents detailed information in this respect.

The data depicted above confirm that the prevalent type of social capital in Lodz is the least effective one, that is inconsistent trust capital.

Table 2

The prevalent type of social capital in Lodz housing estate units

District	Housing estate unit	Prevalent type of social capital
Śródmieście	1. Nowe Miasto	Consistent network-normative capital
	2. Akademicka	Consistent network-normative capital
	3. Centrum	Inconsistent trust capital
	4. Śródmiejska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa	Consistent network-normative capital
Bałuty	5. Outskirts of Bałuty	Inconsistent trust capital
	6. Radogoszcz	Inconsistent trust capital
	7. Stare Miasto – Bałuty	Inconsistent trust capital
	8. Teofilów	Consistent network-normative capital
	9. Zubardz	Inconsistent trust capital
	10. Doly	Inconsistent trust capital
Górna	11. Nowe Rokicie	Inconsistent trust capital
	12. Górny Rynek	Inconsistent trust capital
	13. Dąbrowa	Inconsistent trust capital
	14. Outskirts of Górna	Inconsistent trust capital/Consistent network-normative capital
	15. Chojny Zatorze	Inconsistent trust capital
Polesie	16. Outskirts of Polesie	Inconsistent trust capital
	17. Koziny	Inconsistent trust capital
	18. Zielona	Consistent network-normative capital
	19. Retkinia	Consistent network-normative capital
Widzew	20. Outskirts of Widzew	Inconsistent trust capital
	21. Olechów	Inconsistent trust capital
	22. Widzew Wschód	Inconsistent trust capital
	23. Widzew Zachód	Inconsistent normative capital
	24. Zarzew	Consistent network-normative capital
	25. Fabryczna	Inconsistent trust capital

The type of social capital characterised by a high coincidence of its elements is present only in 7 housing estate units, including the Akademicka estate, Śródmiejska Dzielnica Mieszkaniowa, Retkinia. It should be noted that these data corroborate the analyses of social capital level in housing estates.

As a conclusion of the research results presented above, it is worth noting that the areas with the highest level of the examined phenomenon and the best type of social capital exhibit a larger than average percentage of people with university education, a low unemployment level and a low number of social security recipients, as well as good housing standards [Szafrńska 2008]. The residents of these areas also display a high quality of life [Mularska-Kucharek, Wiktorowicz 2012].

Therefore, having in mind the advantages of social capital, particular attention should be paid to those estates and areas where social capital and its components adopt extreme values. Communities residing in areas with high level of social capital resources have the biggest potential to develop. The situation in areas with low level of social capital is decidedly different. These units need external help in initiating basic actions aimed at strengthening social capital and in consequence improve the residents' living conditions.

### Summary

The research showed that resources of social capital are varied across the area of Lodz. The city comprises areas with high, medium and low level of the researched phenomenon. Furthermore, there are differences in the typology of social capital. In some regions, a near-ideal type is prevalent, whereas others are dominated by trust capital. Unfortunately, the latter type, that is the least effective one, prevails in the city area. Taking into account the advantages of social capital, this result is not always satisfying. A constitutive element of this type of capital is private trust, which focuses on relationships with the closes social environment. Unfortunately, strong family ties are often accompanied by caution in relations with other people. This obviously reflects on the construction of social networks and co-operation aimed at implementing common initiatives.

Differentiation in social capital resources is reflected in various aspects of social life, including the standard and quality of the lives of residents in the individual areas [Mularska-Kucharek 2012a]. Research indicated that representatives of the housing estate units with the highest level of social capital enjoy a better standard of life and are more satisfied with their lives than people from the areas with the lowest levels of social capital resources [Mularska-Kucharek, Wiktorowicz 2012].

Therefore, apart from acknowledgement and appreciation of the role of social capital, actions aimed at its development should be initiated. An important source of information about the ways to construct social capital is Social Capital Development Strategy, which presents a range of actions essential to creating this potential. These

actions may become an inspiration for local initiatives. Due to its function, social capital should become one of the major elements of municipal social policy.

The research on the social capital of Lodz residents presented in this article is of both diagnostic and practical nature. The knowledge of the usefulness of social capital may contribute to a widespread practical use of the new forms of capital, which may serve as an essential supplement to the overused human capital. Information on the spatial differentiation of the researched phenomenon allows for intensification of the actions aimed at building social capital in the areas with its lowest level. Due to the range of the analysed phenomena, the results are of significance both for the creators of social life and for individuals.

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