

Lab 5: Social Capital

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Introduction

In this lab, we're going to follow-up and examine some of the trends in social capital. Of all the forms of participation, this is by far the hardest to measure. So we need remember that our findings are limited.

Section 1: How social are we?

We're going to start by looking at the variable "social". This is a question asking how frequently people met with their friends.

Let's look at how this varies.

Table 1: Socialise with Friends in European Democracies

Socialise	N	%
never/rare	742	6.0
1-2 per month	1035	8.3
1 per week	5089	40.8
more than once per week	5598	44.9

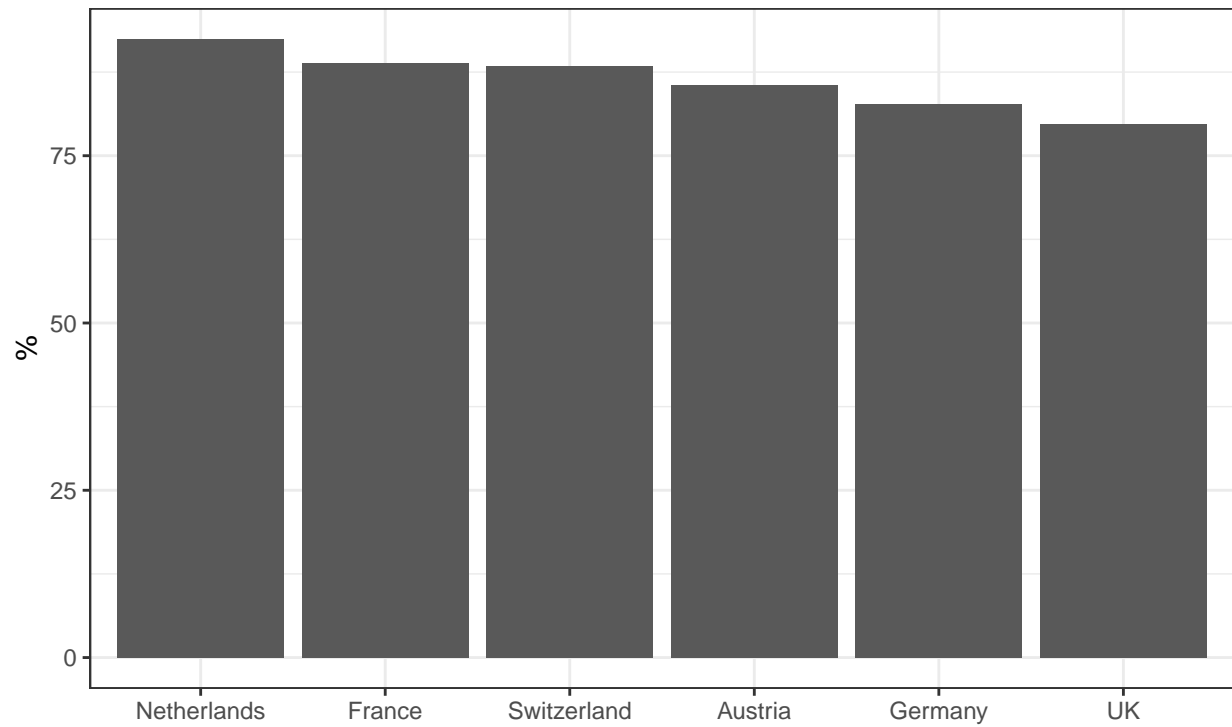
Looking at the data, few people socialise less than once a week. So let's find out how numerous the more socially active people are in our countries. To do this I've created a new variable "socialise", which combines never/rare and 1-2 per month into one category and 1 per week and more than once per week into one category.

Table 2: Socialise with Friends in European Democracies

Country	Socialise	N	%
Austria	rare	259	14.4
Austria	often	1535	85.6
Switzerland	rare	178	11.6
Switzerland	often	1353	88.4
Germany	rare	525	17.3
Germany	often	2516	82.7
France	rare	213	11.1
France	often	1703	88.9
UK	rare	457	20.2
UK	often	1806	79.8
Netherlands	rare	145	7.6
Netherlands	often	1774	92.4

We can graph this to make it clear:

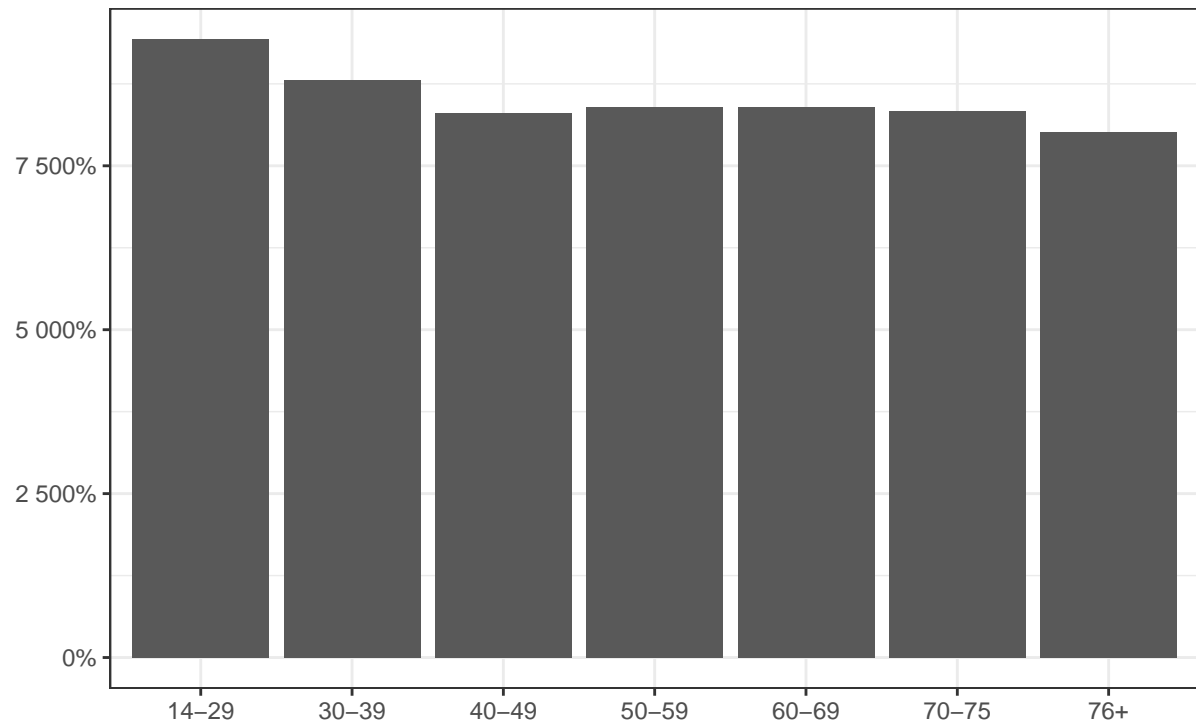
Figure 1: Socialising by Country



ESS 2016

Do the figures differ by age category?

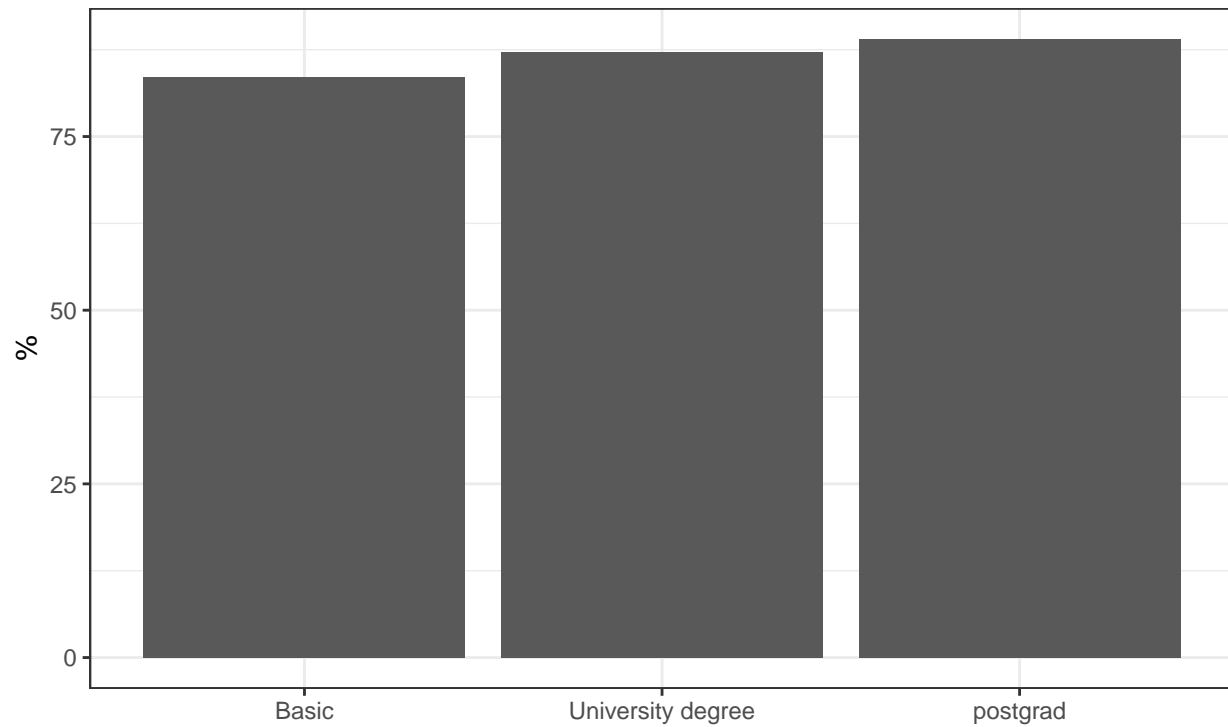
Figure 2: Socialising by Age Category



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Do the figures differ by Education

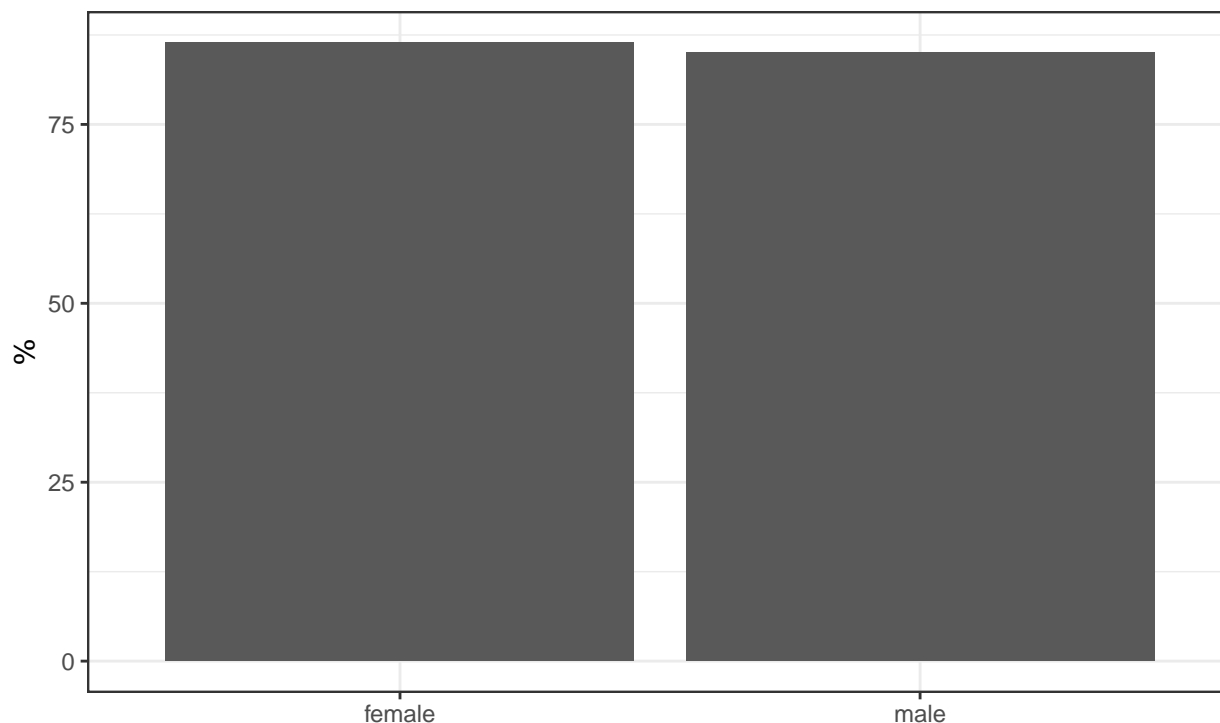
Figure 3: Socialising and Education



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And Gender

Figure 4: Socialising and Gender



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Section 2: Does this influence participation?

Although we have established the people are relatively social, one might ask: does it matter? Does the propensity to be socially active spur participation? And does it vary across countries?

Voting

##

##

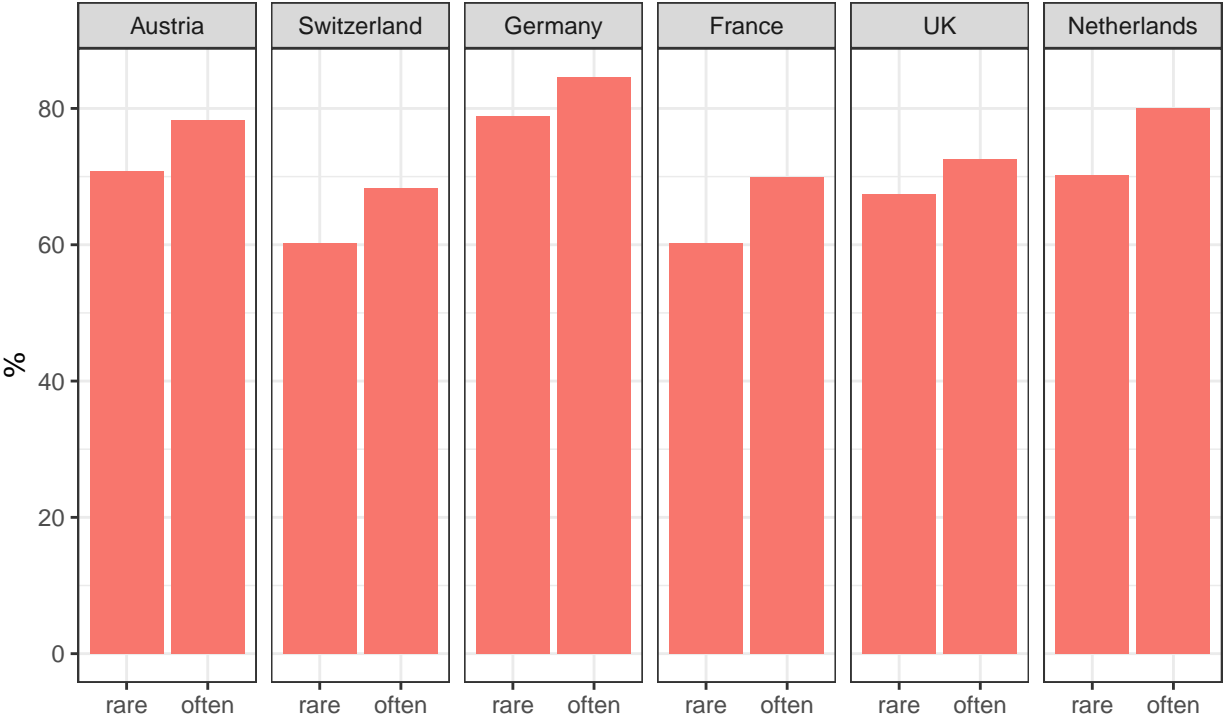
Table: Socialising and Voting

##

Socialising	Voting	N	Percentage
rare	voted	1153	70.30
often	voted	7353	76.74

What about the relationship across countries?

Figure 5: Voting by Socialising and Country



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Contacting

```
##
##
## Table: Socialising and Contacting Politicians
##
## Socialising    Contacting    N    Percentage
## -----
## rare          contacted    222    12.50
## often         contacted    1970    18.45
```

Contacting across countries

Figure 6: Contacting by Socialising and Country



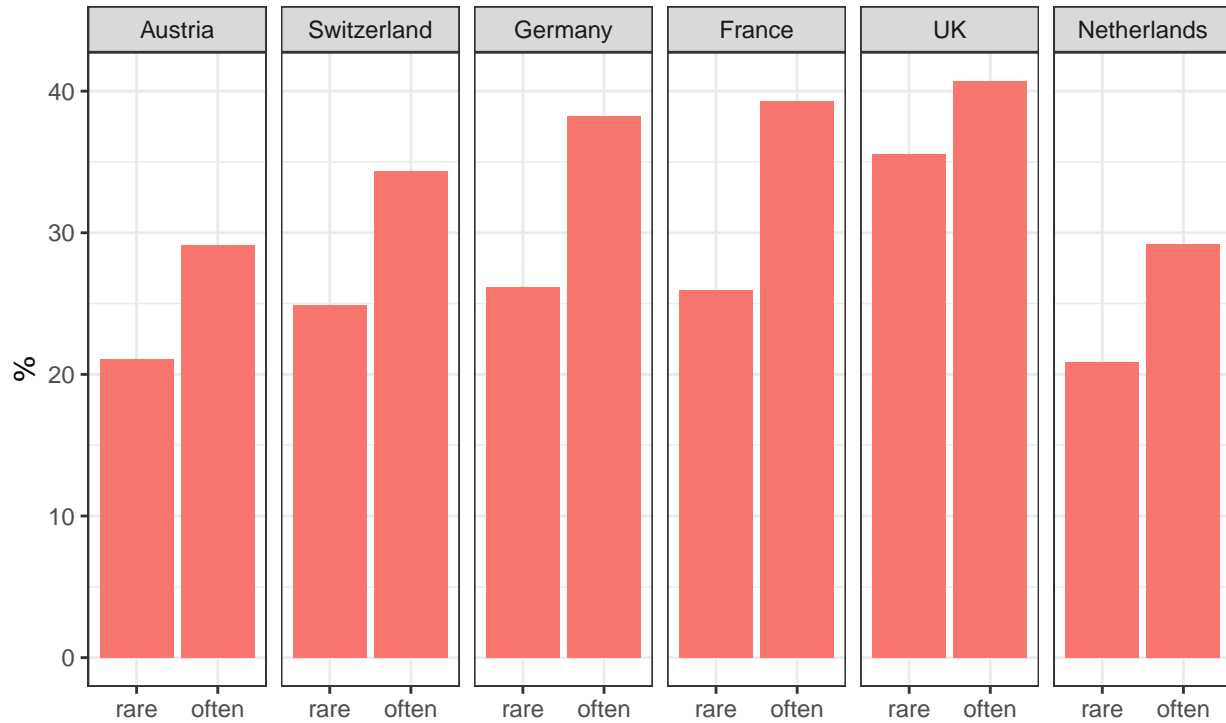
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Petition

```
##
##
## Table: Socialising and Petition
##
## Socialising      Petition      N      Percentage
## -----
## rare            signed petition  482      27.26
## often           signed petition  3785     35.52
```

Petitioning across countries by socialising

Figure 7: Petitioning by Socialising and Country



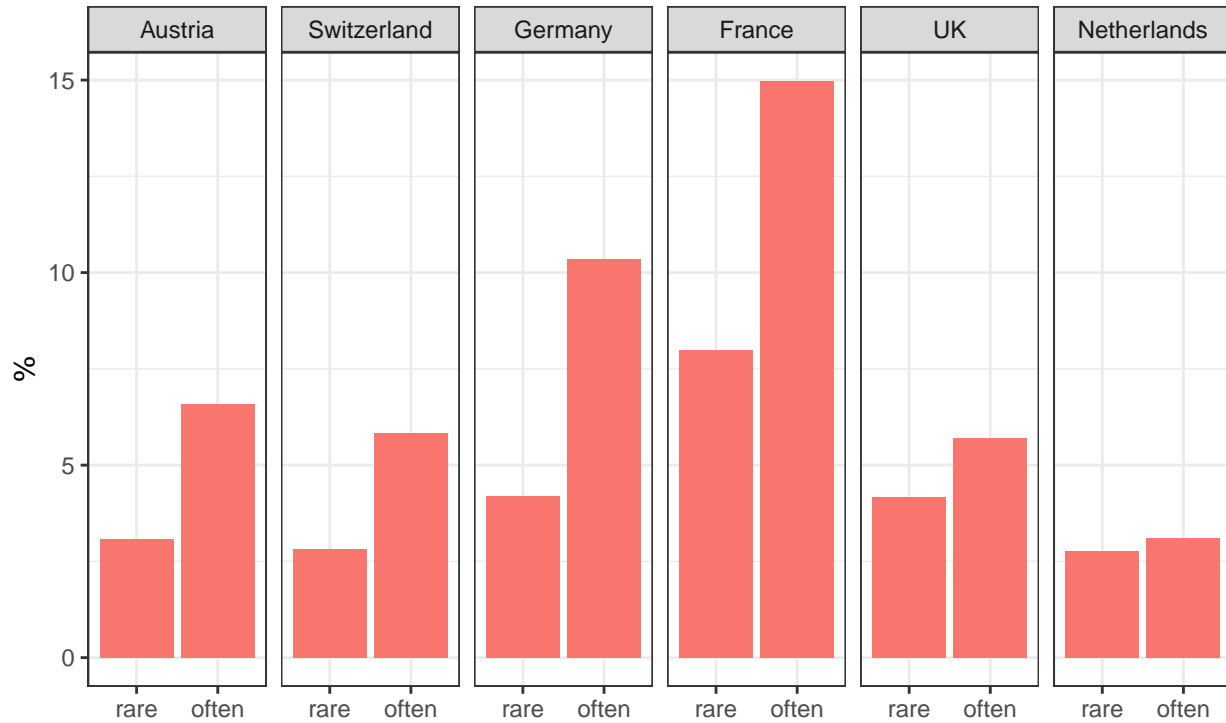
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Demonstrating

```
##
##
## Table: Socialising and Demonstrating
##
## Socialising      Demonstrating      N      Percentage
## -----
## rare             have demonstrated    75      4.22
## often            have demonstrated   853     7.99
```


Demonstrating Across Countries

Figure 3: Demonstrating by Socialising and Country



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Conclusion So, time to draw some conclusions. Does social capital matter? The answer *might* be a little and depending on the measure and depending on the country.