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**Subjective social distances to professions:
Subjective class boundaries
in the Czech Republic.**

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Social distance concept

- **Social Distance** are „the grades and degrees of understanding and intimacy which characterize personal and social relations generally“ (Park 1924).
- Subjective feeling of individuals of a special proximity to another individual. The feeling of common group affiliation and common identity indicates low, a distinct aloofness connected with diffuse fear high Social Distance.
- These feelings are not focused on particular individuals, but **on categories** (in terms of religiosity, class consciousness or ethnicity) (Steinbach 2004).

Social distance: **interactional approach to social stratification**

Interactional/ relational approach

(vs. conventional structural (substantialist): first main dimensions of stratification defined)

- a key aspect of a stratification system is the degree to which **intimate social relationships are confined to persons of “equal status“ or “equal class.“**
- study of *status groups* (Weber) rather than economic class groupings, (Marxian social classes)

Social distance: interactional approach to social stratification

Objective and Subjective social distances

among different status positions in the social stratification system

- *Subjective Social Distance* is an “attitude of ego toward a person (alter) with a particular status attribute (such as occupation) that broadly defined the character of the interaction that ego would be willing to undertake with the attitude object”.
- *Objective Social Distance* is “actually observed differential association of persons of different status attributes in various social relationships”.

[Laumann 1966]

Social distance survey - E. O. Laumann

- USA, Cambridge and Belmont, Massachusetts 1963
(422 white male residents)
- Focus on egocentric social networks
(occupation of 3 friends, 2 neighbors, father-in-law, father)
- Relative intimacy of access to a person - occupational stimuli (Bogardus, Westie)
- West Germany, Altneustadt 1971

Data: Social Distance 2007 survey

- Random sample of adult population, N=1197

Subjective social distance – Bogardus scale [Laumann 1966]

*I will now read you out the names of different professions.
Please tell me for each of them, if you would like him or
her as ...”*

- (1) Husband or wife,
- (2) Daughter-in-law or son-in-law,
- (3) Close friend,
- (4) Somebody who visits you often,
- (5) Member in your sports club or interest group,
- (6) Neighbour,
- (7) I do not want to have anything to do with him or her.

A list of 22 target professions followed ...

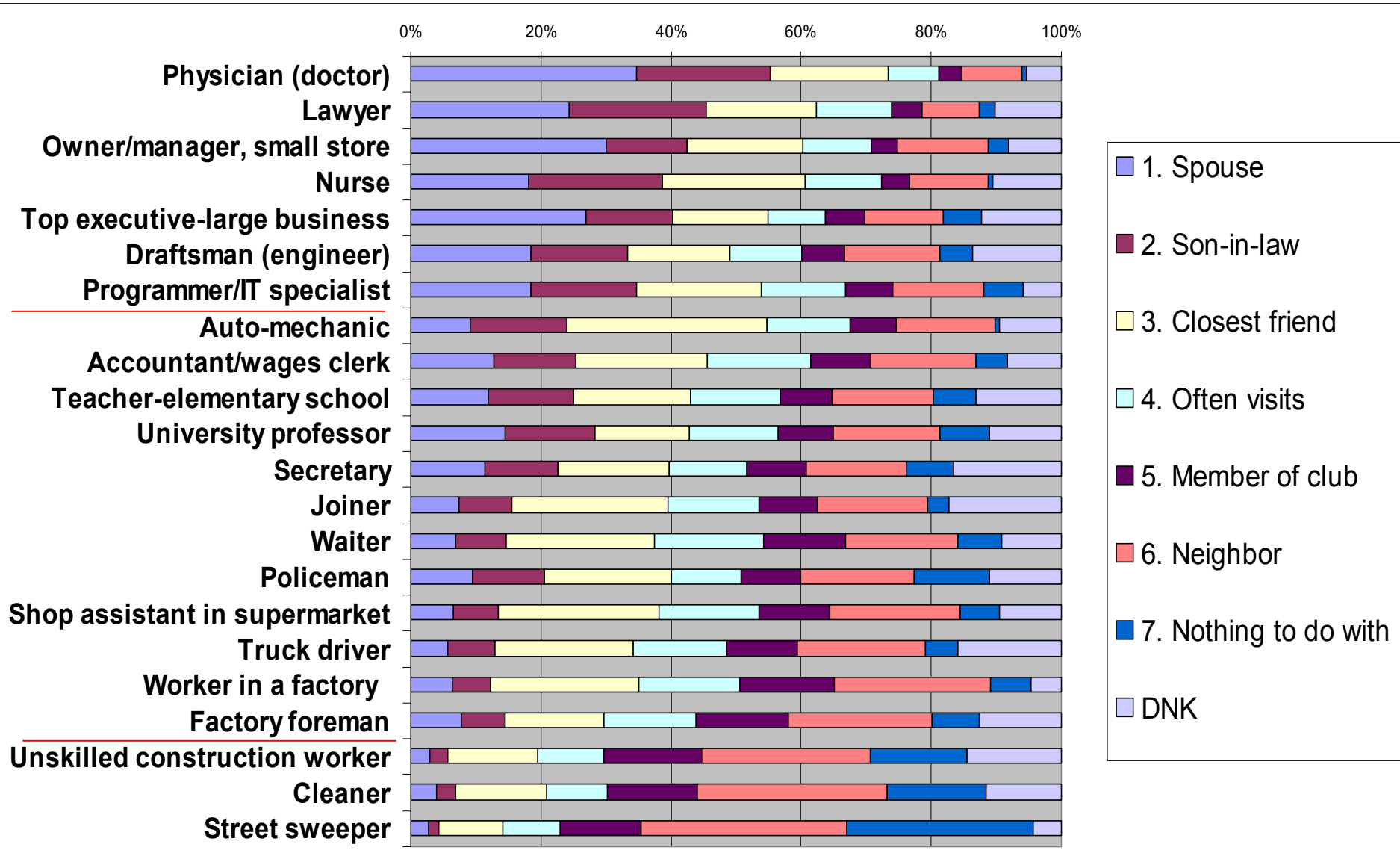
Hypotheses

RQ: Are there groupings of occupations that have roughly similar distance reactions among themselves but differ significantly from other groupings?

Two hypotheses:

- **“subjectively experienced class structure”**
→ groupings of occupations on the basis of highly similar aggregate social-distance reactions
- **“status-continuum”**
→ absence of any such groupings (respondents were able to differentiate each of 22 occupations from each other along a finely graded prestige or status continuum)

Social Distance to 22 occupational stimuli



Status: social distance / prestige / usefulness - differences

Correlation SD: ISEI 0,79 SIOPS 0,82 Usefulness 0,79

General prestige continuum but:

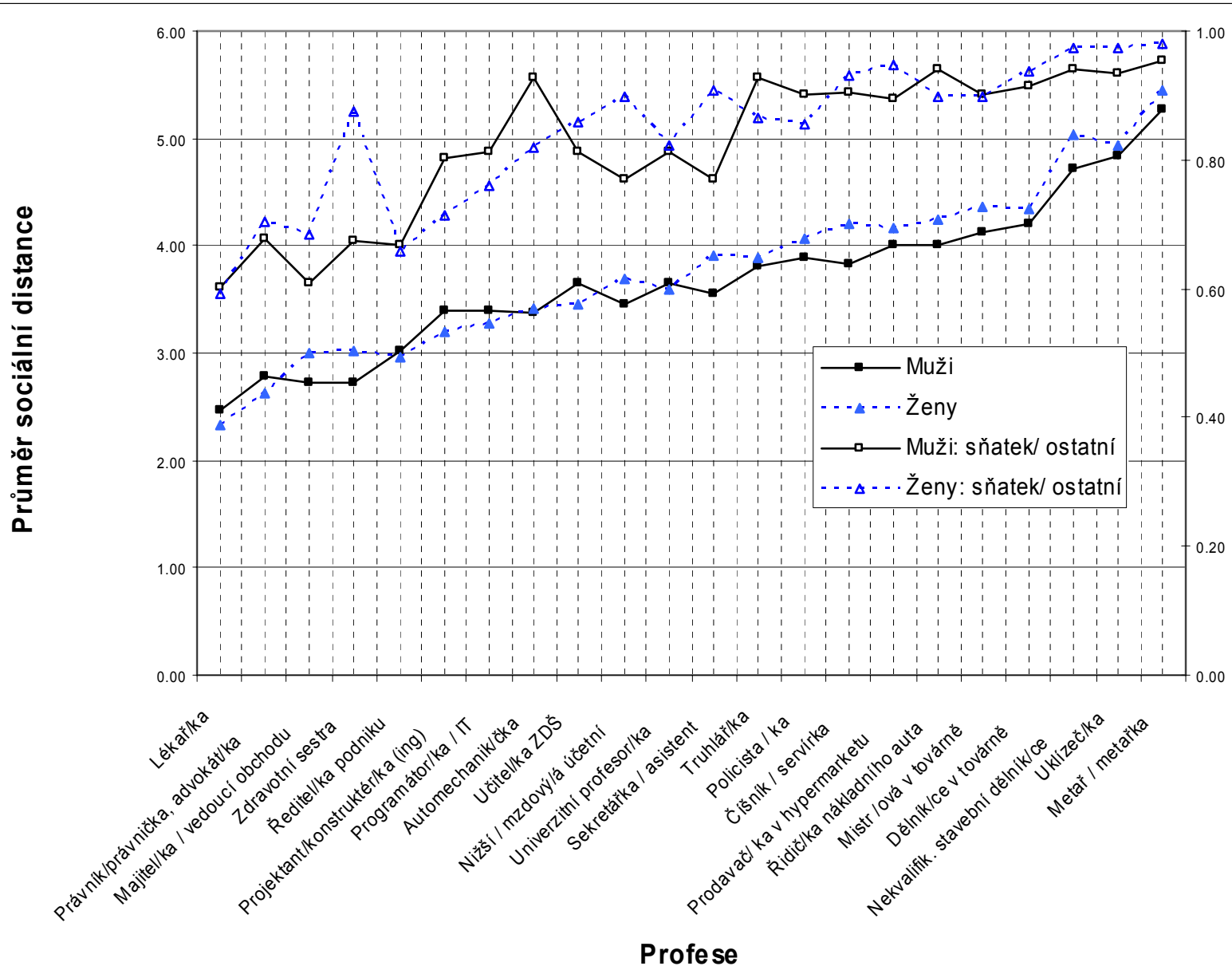
- Social distance:

female professional professions: nurse, accountant, secretary

- Usefulness for society:

„services dealing with peoples esp. in life threaten situations“: doctor, nurse, teacher, policeman

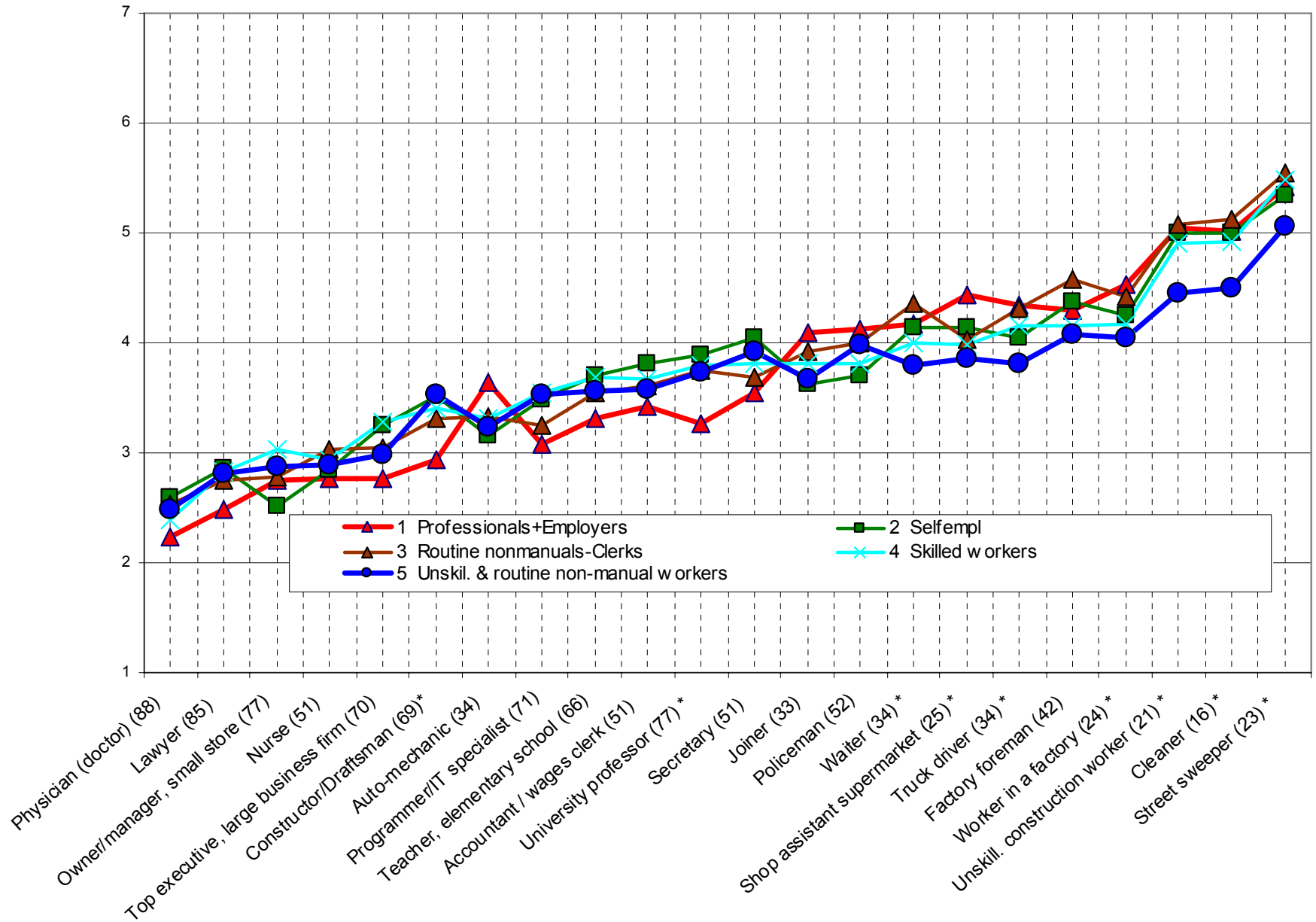
Gender differences



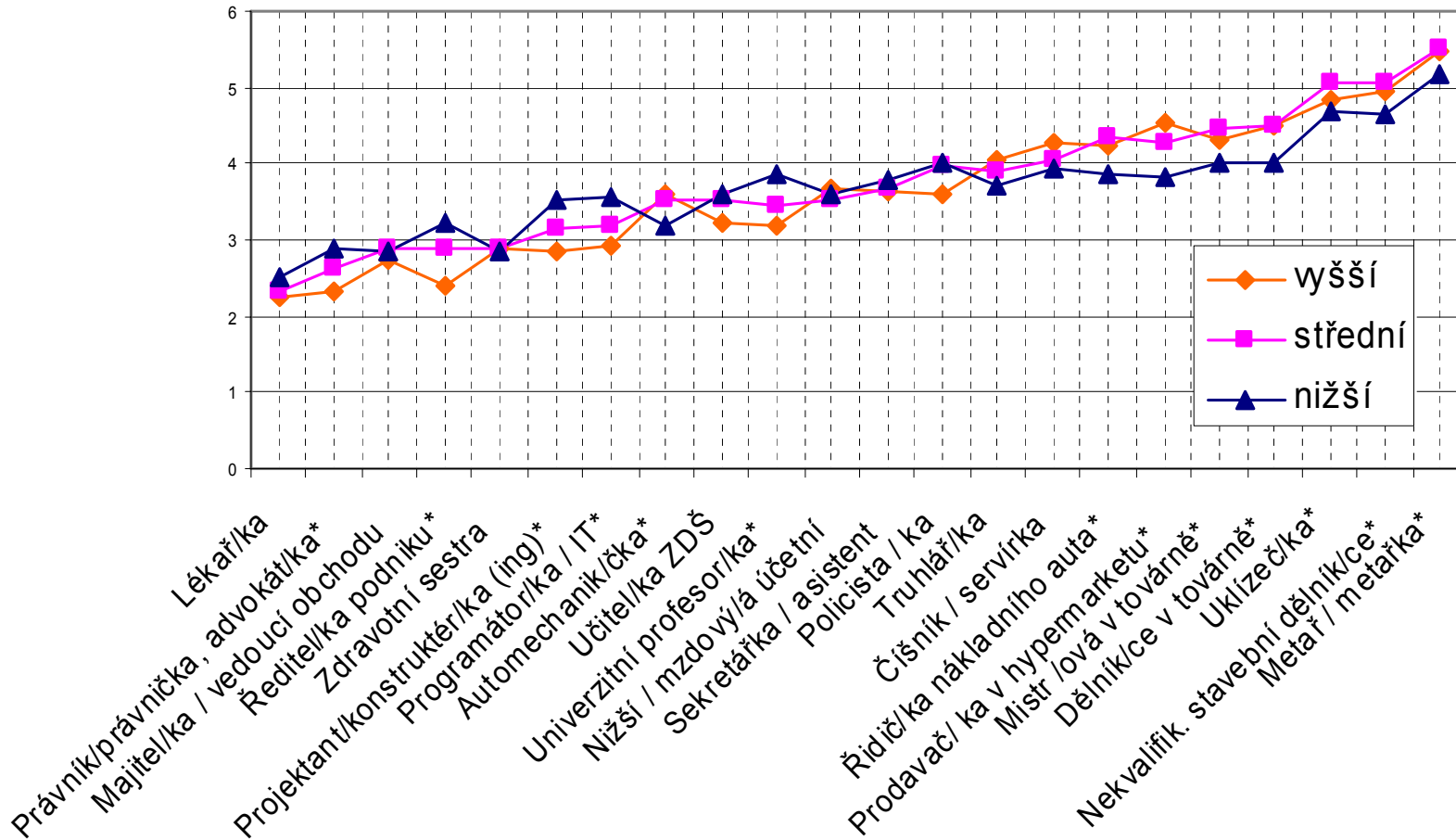
Methods of analysis

- Nonparametric Partial correlations
- Multidimensional scaling (Proxcal)
- Hierarchical cluster analysis
- Paired T-tests (dependent sample)

Social classes EGP differences



Subjective social classes differences



Means of SD: Paired T-Test

(among respondents from different subjective social classes)

- No significant differences among upper and middle class (except for owner of a small shop)
- Significant differences among middle and lower class
- Significant differences among upper and middle class

Means of SD: Paired T-Test Differences of professions

- All subjective classes assess the same social distance to:
 - Owner of a shop - Nurse
 - Shop assistant - Truck driver
 - Worker in factory - Factory foreman,
 - Truck driver - Factory foreman,
 - Cleaner - Nonqualified worker
 - Programmer - Draftsman

Means of SD: Paired T-Test

- But no general pattern visible where class boundaries

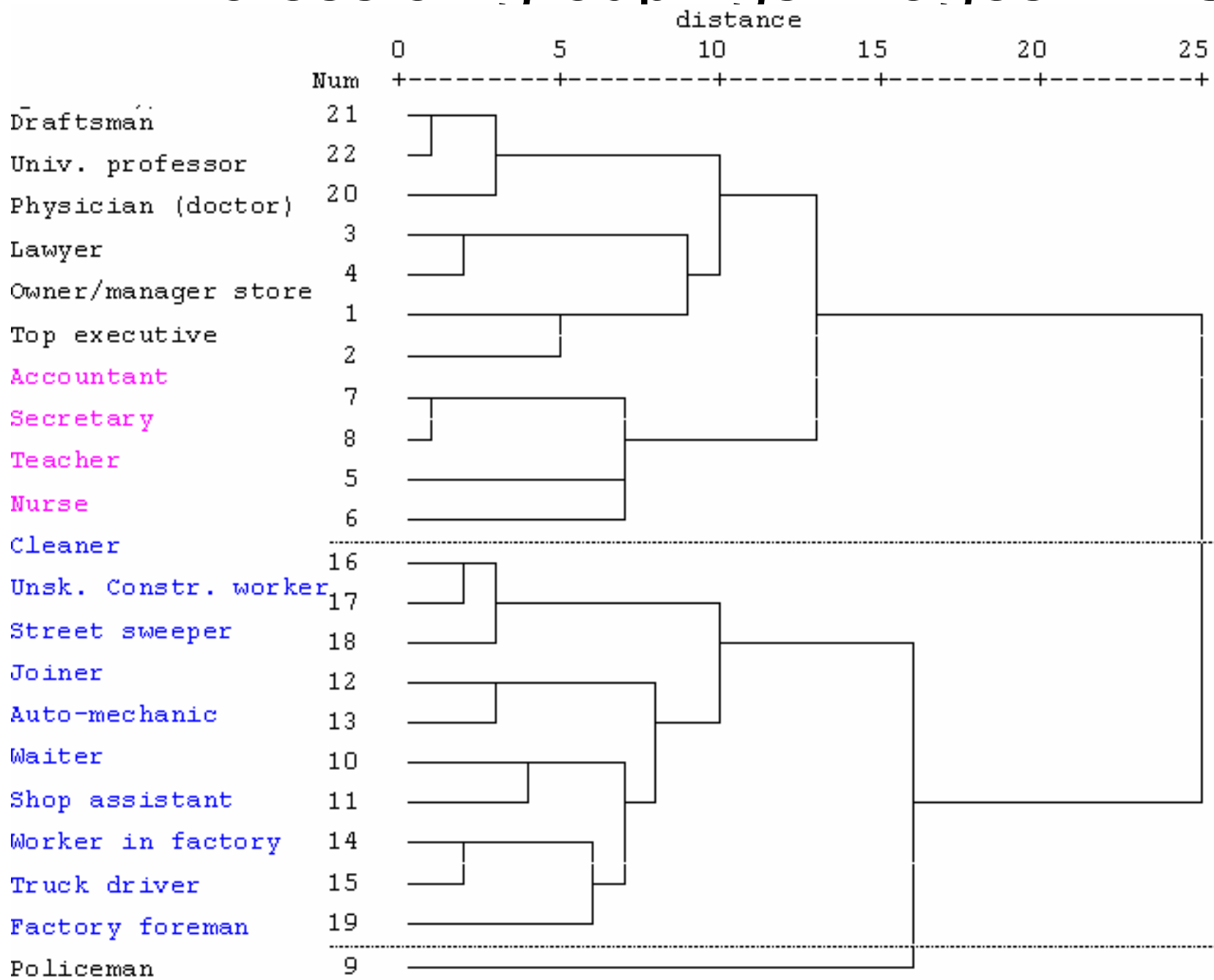
→ further analysis necessary

(distance among occupational stimuli based on correlation)

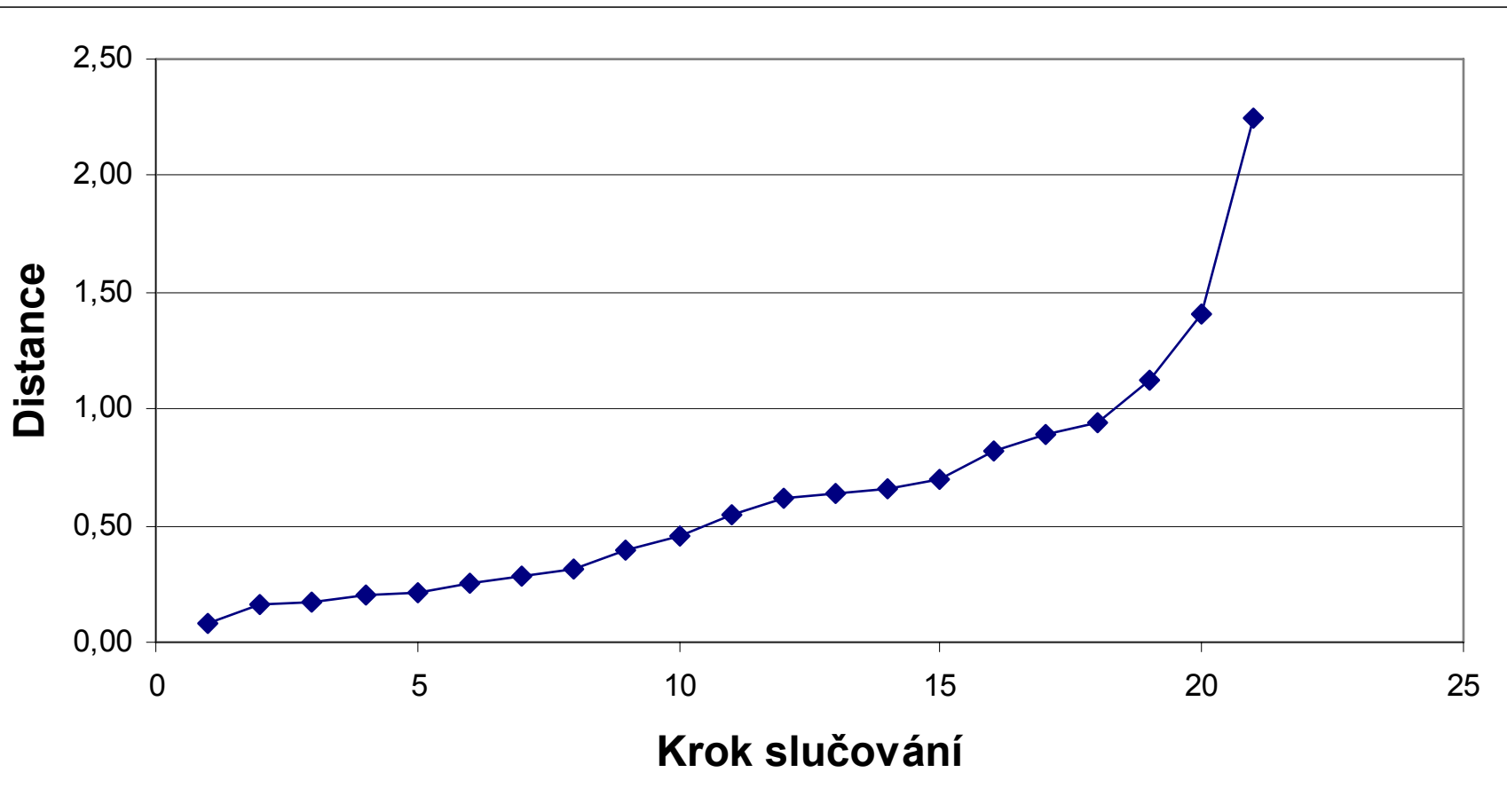
Occupational stimuli: mutual distances

	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j	k	l	m	n	o	p	q	r	s	t	u
Owner/manager store	1,00																				
Top executive	0,61	1,00																			
Physician (doctor)	0,38	0,53	1,00																		
Lawyer	0,38	0,55	0,70	1,00																	
Teacher	0,34	0,38	0,42	0,47	1,00																
Nurse	0,34	0,31	0,41	0,34	0,49	1,00															
Accountant	0,46	0,42	0,39	0,38	0,49	0,58	1,00														
Secretary	0,42	0,45	0,38	0,37	0,48	0,48	0,74	1,00													
Policeman	0,25	0,25	0,21	0,22	0,33	0,25	0,35	0,32	1,00												
Waiter	0,30	0,26	0,17	0,18	0,30	0,28	0,37	0,38	0,41	1,00											
Shop assistant	0,36	0,20	0,16	0,14	0,30	0,31	0,41	0,39	0,34	0,59	1,00										
Joiner	0,28	0,30	0,20	0,31	0,33	0,34	0,35	0,35	0,34	0,43	0,50	1,00									
Auto-mechanic	0,29	0,32	0,27	0,27	0,30	0,32	0,34	0,35	0,32	0,42	0,45	0,65	1,00								
Worker in factory	0,25	0,21	0,18	0,18	0,30	0,33	0,39	0,35	0,28	0,45	0,53	0,52	0,53	1,00							
Truck driver	0,27	0,24	0,15	0,18	0,30	0,30	0,41	0,37	0,32	0,44	0,52	0,51	0,51	0,68	1,00						
Cleaner	0,19	0,17	0,08	0,08	0,26	0,27	0,33	0,31	0,28	0,40	0,50	0,41	0,30	0,55	0,48	1,00					
Unsk. Constr. worker	0,19	0,18	0,07	0,09	0,23	0,25	0,34	0,32	0,26	0,46	0,52	0,45	0,38	0,58	0,53	0,72	1,00				
Street sweeper	0,12	0,14	0,05	0,04	0,22	0,16	0,29	0,29	0,26	0,39	0,43	0,37	0,28	0,48	0,44	0,62	0,67	1,00			
Factory foreman	0,34	0,30	0,22	0,24	0,33	0,33	0,46	0,43	0,30	0,46	0,53	0,50	0,44	0,56	0,52	0,49	0,56	0,50	1,00		
Univ. professor	0,37	0,49	0,45	0,47	0,48	0,32	0,38	0,42	0,29	0,24	0,21	0,29	0,27	0,22	0,24	0,23	0,19	0,18	0,37	1,00	
Programmer/IT	0,37	0,52	0,47	0,49	0,46	0,33	0,46	0,49	0,27	0,28	0,24	0,33	0,34	0,25	0,27	0,19	0,21	0,16	0,39	0,69	1,00
Draftsman	0,37	0,51	0,46	0,50	0,45	0,36	0,42	0,47	0,29	0,28	0,27	0,36	0,33	0,25	0,26	0,22	0,22	0,16	0,41	0,66	0,81

Profession groupings images - HIC



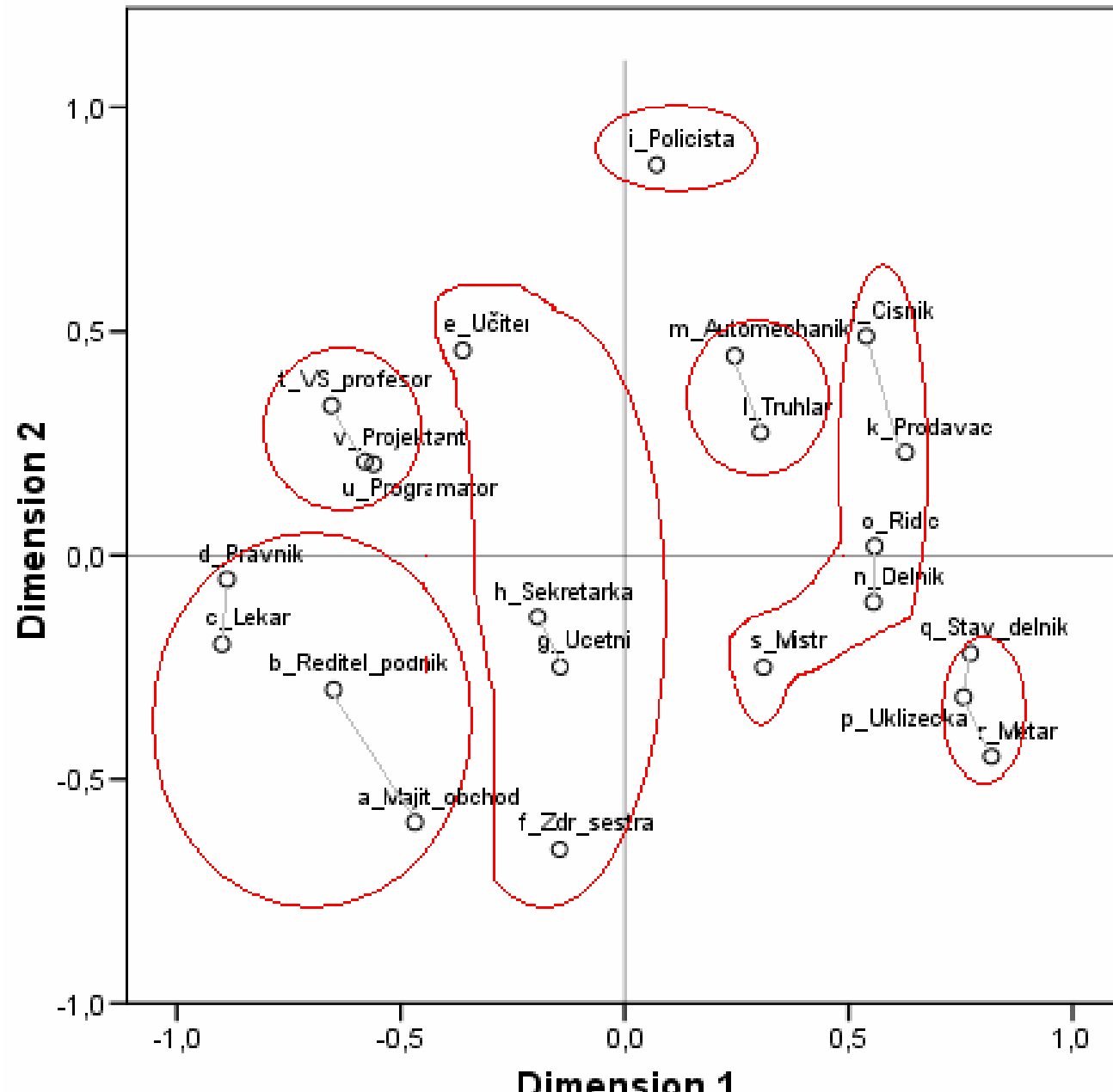
Profession groupings – HIC: optimal number of clusters



7 status groupings

	Soc. distance	ISEI	SIOPS
Higher professionals: others (doctor, manager, etc.)	2,9	72	61
Higher professionals: technical (draftsman etc.)	3,5	68	63
Female lower professionals (nurse etc.)	3,6	56	50
Qualified manual workers, crafts (joiner etc.)	3,7	32	40
Policeman	4,1	50	40
Semi-qualified manual and non-manual workers	4,2	35	31
Unqualified manual professions with low prestige	5,1	20	16

Symbolic space of professions



Conclusion: Subjective social distances

- Subjective social distance as hypothetical interaction proved to be alternative method of measurement of images of occupation.
- “**status-continuum**“ is present shared by all classes (wit some minor differences)

Conclusion:

Subjectively experienced class structure

- Mental categorization patterns of professional groupings draw an intense social class boundary between *white* and *blue collar* professions.
 - Moreover, four groupings regarded as „**subjective social classes**“ can be identified:
 - I. **higher professionals,**
 - II. female lower professionals,
 - III. qualified & semi-qualified manual/ non-manual workers
 - IV. unqualified manual professions with low prestige**
- Basic outline of subjectively experienced class structure in Czech society regardless of people's own social standing. It is shared by those 'at the top' and 'at the bottom'.

Thank you for your attention!

www.socdistance.wz.cz