

# Seminář SOU AV ČR, v.v.i.



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## **Sociální distance**

**interakční přístup ke studiu stratifikace**  
(ochota ke sdružování, homogenita a zdroje v sociální síti)

**Social distance: interactional approach to study of social distance**  
(willingnes to associate, homogeneity and resources in social network)

**30. října 2008**

**Sociologický ústav, v.v.i.**

# Content

- Social Distance: interactional approach to social stratification, Objective and Subjective
- Social Distance 2007 survey
- I. Subjective Social Distances
  - Subjective Class Boundaries
  - Like-me effect and Prestige principle
- II. Objective Social Distances and Proximity principle
  - Friendship patterns in Ego network – strong ties educational, occupational, class homogeneity (3 best friends in Name generator)
  - Network composition / social resources – weak ties (Position generator of 18 professions)

# Stratification system of society

- **Classic approach:** a system of differentiated access to rare and socially valued resources in the form of status symbols (education, prestige, various economic characteristics e.g. income, property)
- **Relational /social-distance-interactional approach:** system of social distance norms which determine equal-status contacts and those, in turn, define and reproduce inequalities in a society
  - hierarchies and inequalities are routinely reproduced within social interactions
  - patterns of association (friendship homogeneity/ spouse heterogamy)

# Social Distance – General Concept

- Sociální distance: „míra pochopení a intimacy, která obecně charakterizuje osobní a sociální vztahy“ (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)
- relational perspective on inequalities  
*symbolic placement* (Warner)

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 the “actually observed differential association of persons of different status attributes in various social relationships”. (Laumann 1966) <sub>6</sub>

# Social distance surveys: E. O. Laumann

- 1. USA, Cambridge and Belmont, Massachusetts 1963 (422 white male residents)
- 2. USA, Detroit 1966 (1013 white male residents)
- 3. West Germany, Altneustadt 1971 (820 men and women)
- Egocentric social networks (occupation of 3 friends, 2 neighbors, father-in-law, father)
- Social distance scale: relative intimacy of access to a person -occupational stimuli (Bogardus, Westie)

# **I. Subjective Social Distances**

willingness to association

# Data: Social Distance 2007 survey

- Random sample of adult Czech 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 ...*

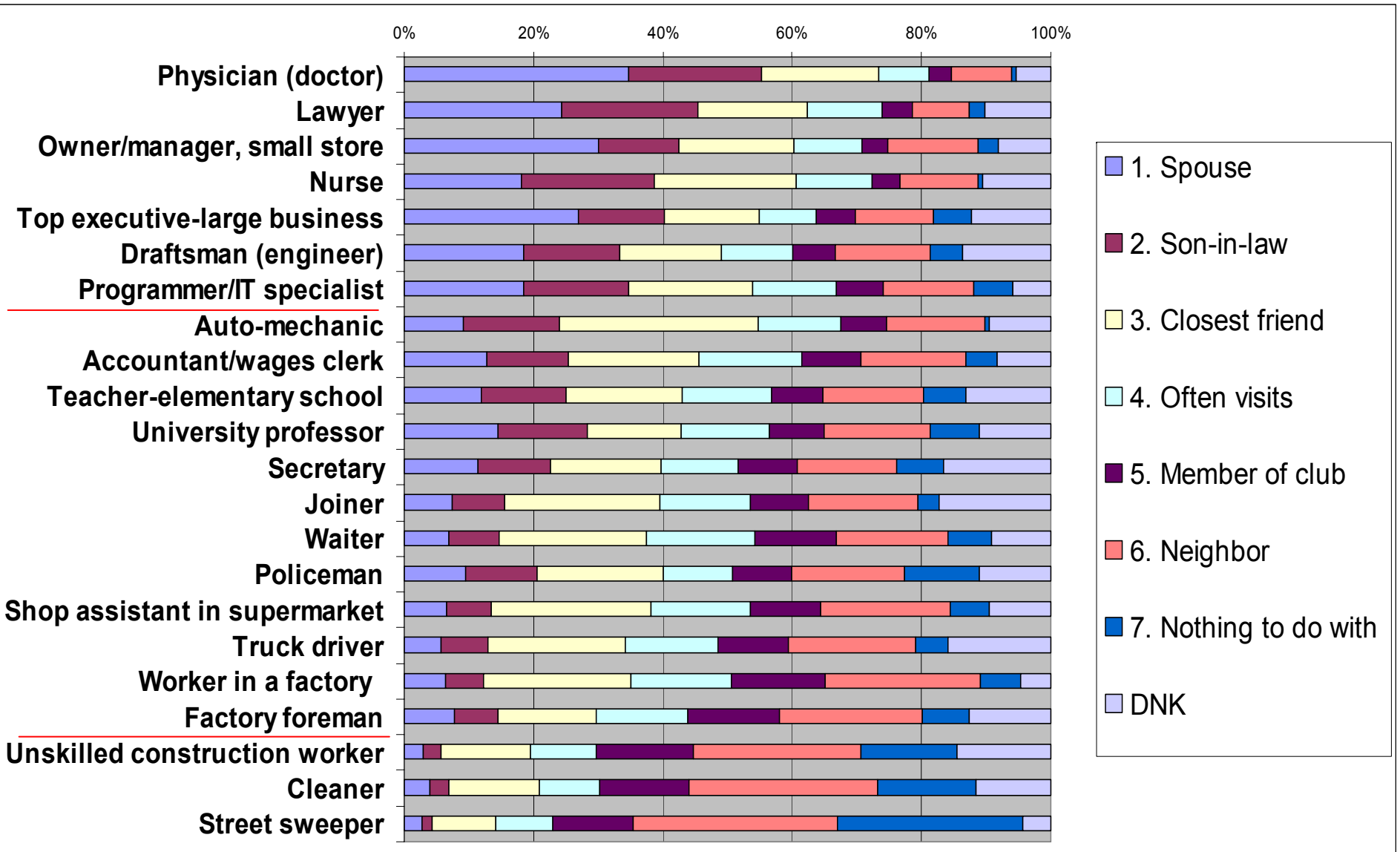
- (1) Husband or wife,
- (2) Daughter-in-law or son-in-law,
- (3) Close friend,
- (4) Somebody who visits you often,
- (5) Member in your sports club or interest group,
- (6) Neighbour,
- (7) I do not want to have anything to do with him or her.

„Budu Vám postupně číst různá povolání. U každého z nich mi prosím řekněte, zda byste je měl/a rád/a za ....“.

manžel/ka, zeť/snacha, nejbližší kamarád, častá návštěva, člen sportovního klubu/zájmového sdružení, soused/ka, nechci mít nic společného.

A list of 22 target professions followed ...

# Social Distance to 22 occupational stimuli



## Social status:

# Social distance vs. Usefulness (prestige)

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

General coincident prestige continuum but some differences:

- **Social distance**

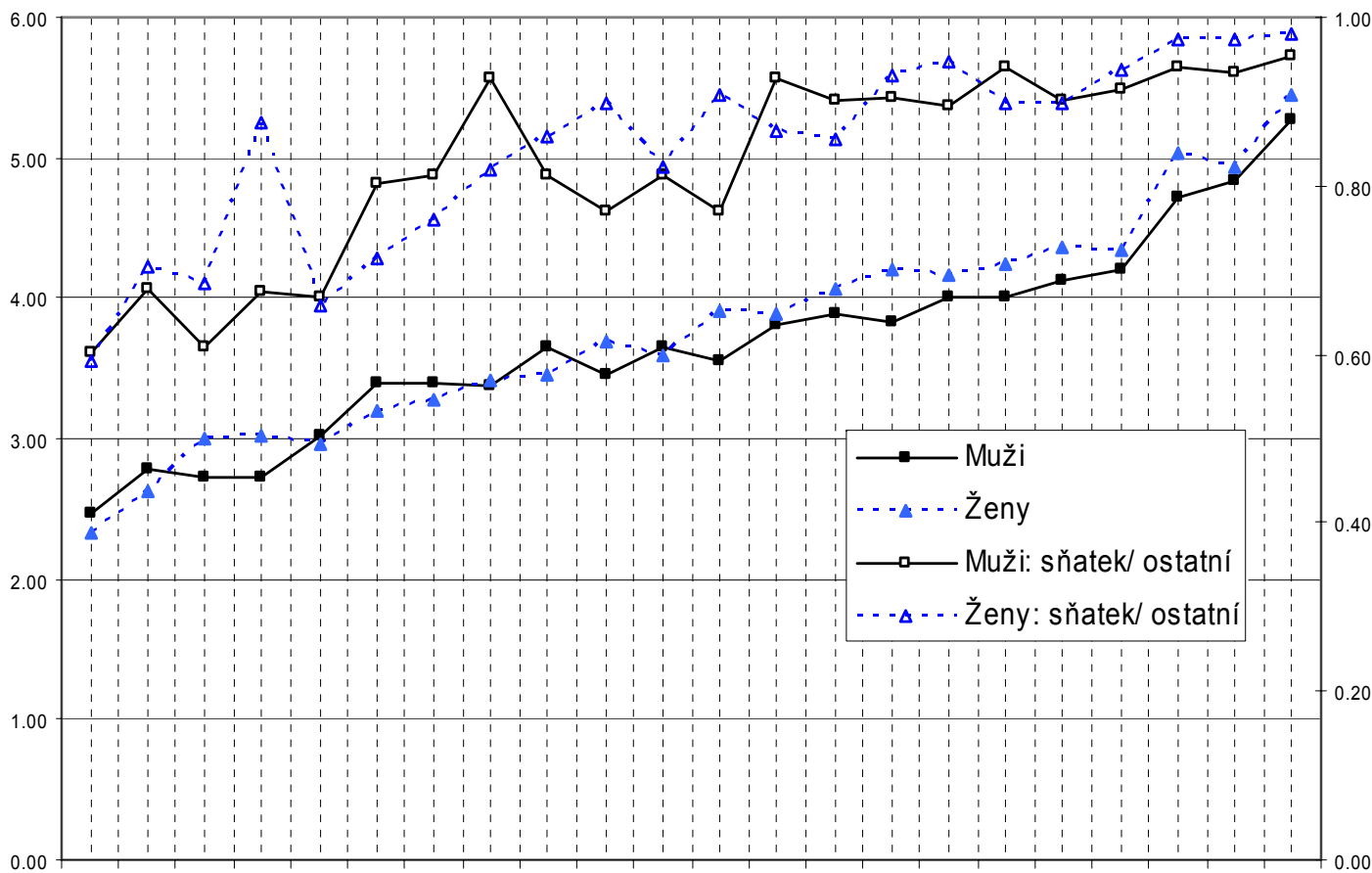
*Female professional occupations:* nurse, accountant, secretary

- **Usefulness for society (prestige)**

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

# Gender differences

Průměr sociální distance



Lékař/ka  
 Právník/právníčka, advokát/ka  
 Majitel/ka / vedoucí obchodu  
 Zdravotní sestra  
 Ředitel/ka podniku  
 Projektant/konstruktor/ka (ing)  
 Programátor/ka / IT  
 Automechanik/čka  
 Učitel/ka ZDŠ  
 Nižší / mzdový/á účetní  
 Univerzitní profesor/ka  
 Sekretář/ka / asistent  
 Truhlář/ka  
 Policista / ka  
 Číšník / servírka  
 Prodavač/ka v hypermarketu  
 Řidič/ka nákladního auta  
 Mistr / ova v továrně  
 Dělník/ce v továrně  
 Nekvalifik. stavební dělník/ce  
 Uklízeč/ka  
 Metař / metařka

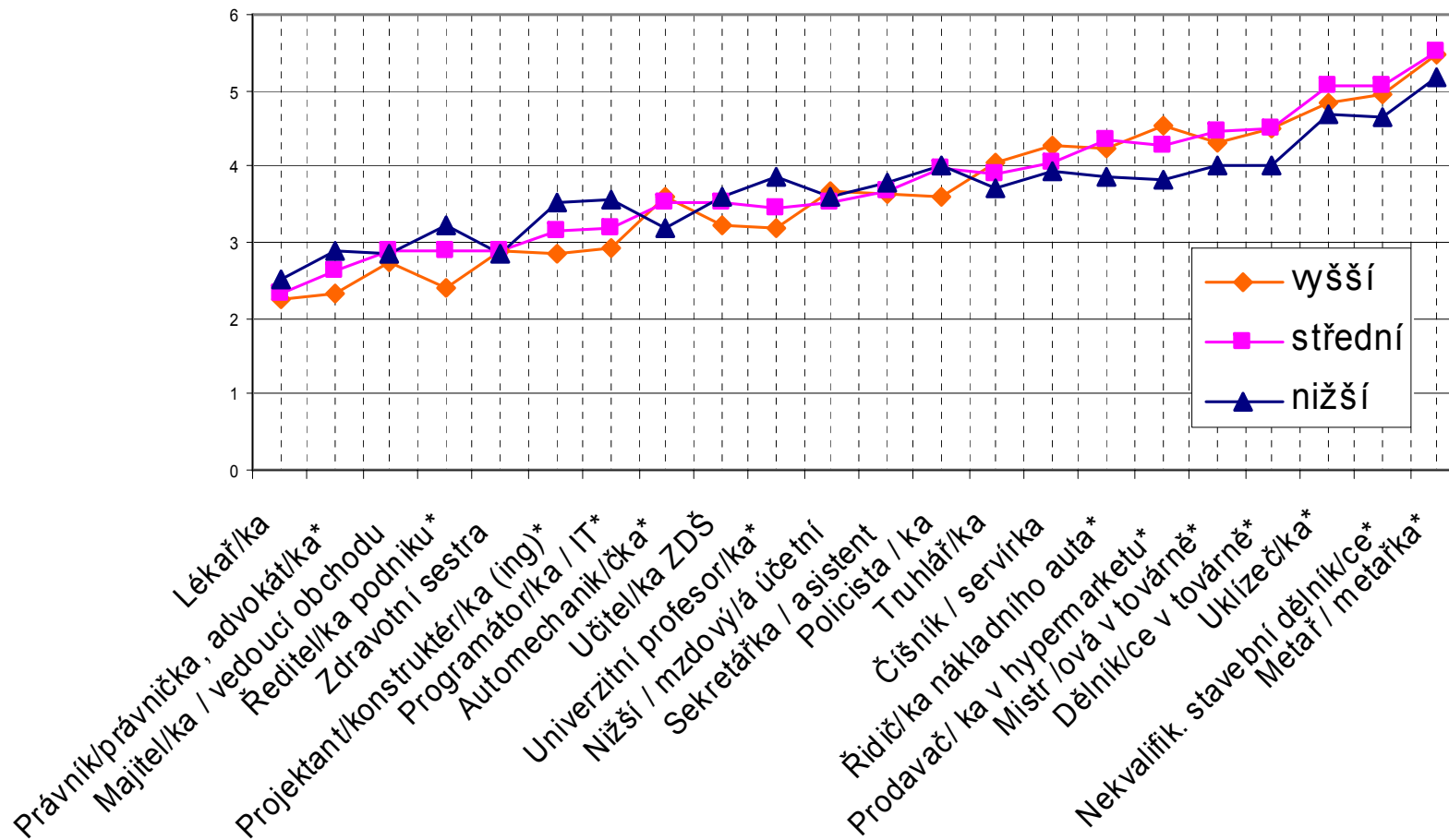
# Subjective Class Boundaries

# Hypotheses I. Subjective distances: groupings of occupations?

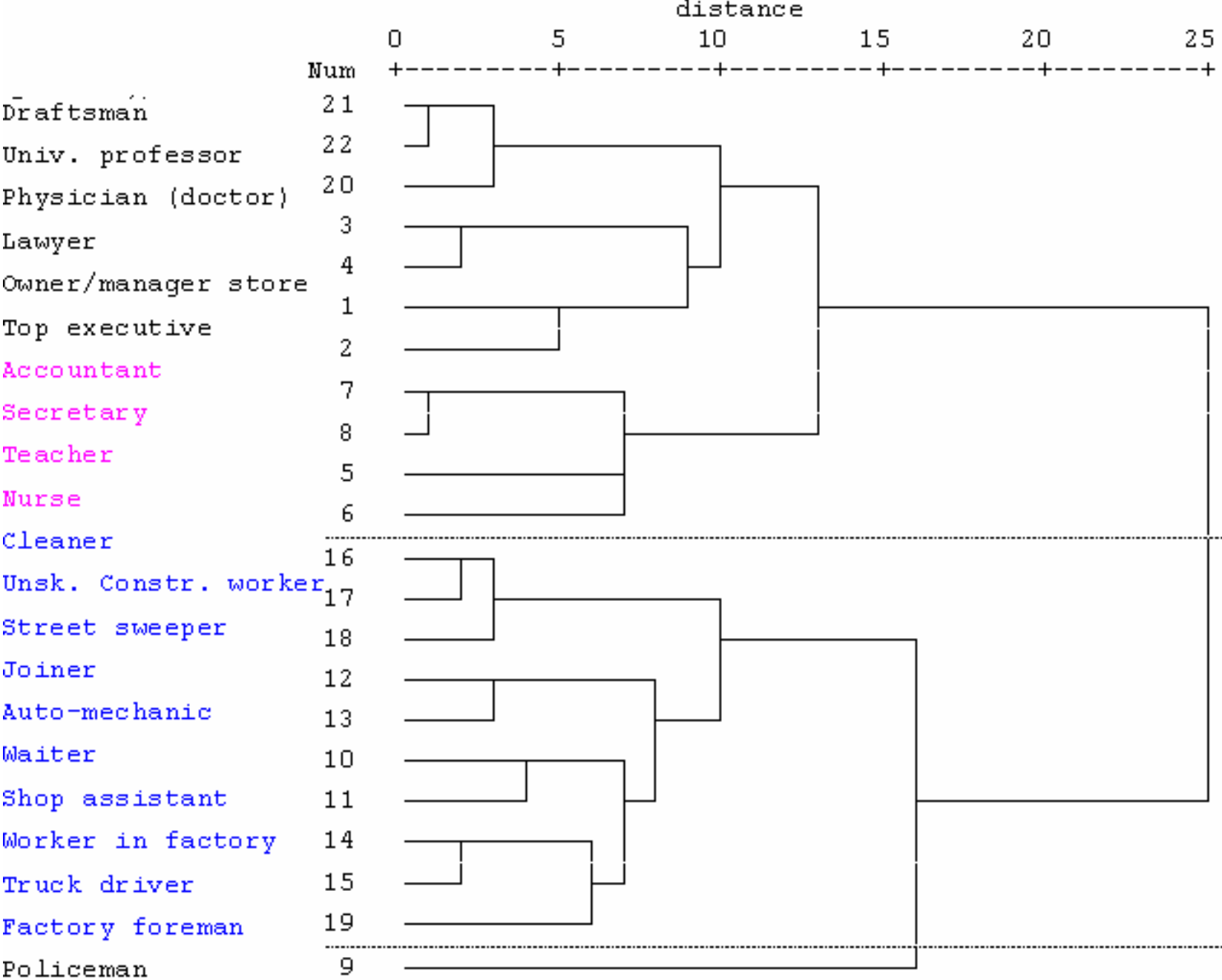
**RQ:** Are there groupings of occupations that have roughly similar distance reactions among themselves but differ significantly from other groupings? → Two hypotheses:

- **“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 the 22 occupations from each other along a finely graded prestige or status continuum)

# Subjective social classes differences



# Profession groupings images - HIC



vzdálenost spojení

0 5 10 15 20 25

Num

Programátor 21

Projektant 22

VŠ profesor 20

Lékař 3

Právník 4

Majitel obchodu 1

Ředitel podniku 2

Účetní 7

Sekretářka 8

Učitel 5

Zdrav. sestra 6

Uklízečka 16

Staveb. dělník 17

Metař 18

Truhlář 12

Automechanik 13

Číšník/servírka 10

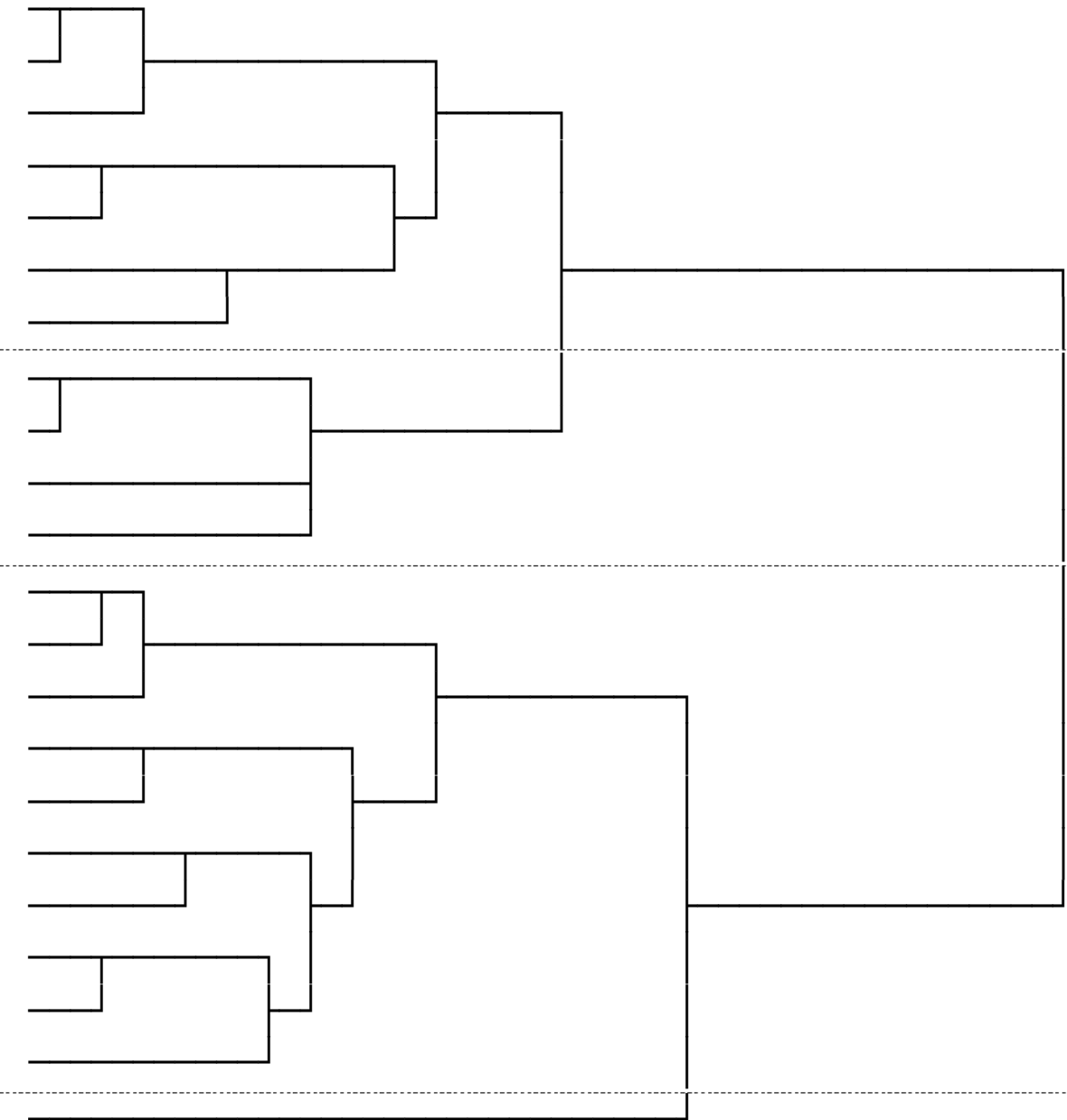
Prodavač 11

Dělník 14

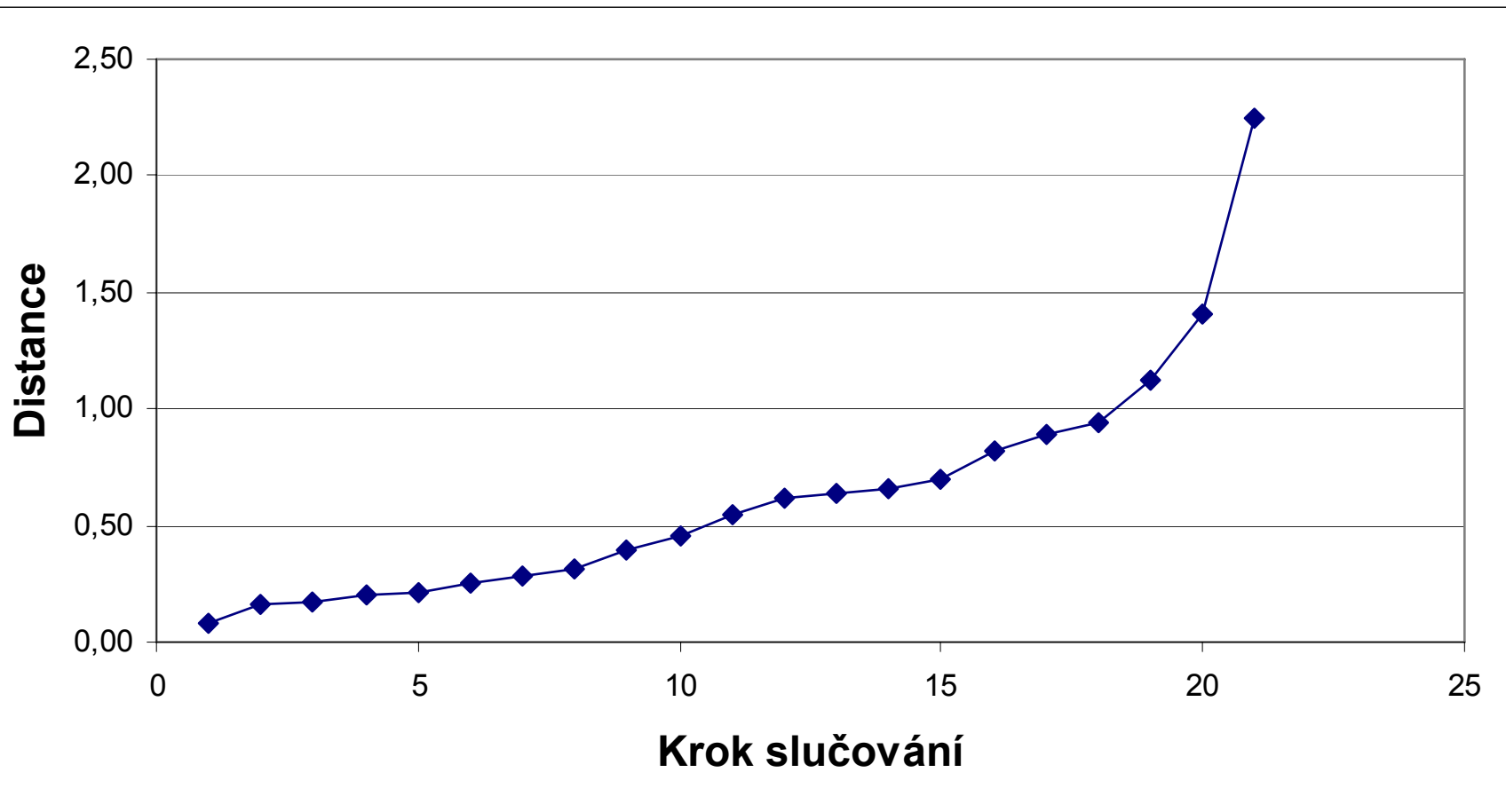
Řidič 15

Mistr 19

Policista 9



# Profession groupings – HIC: optimal number of clusters



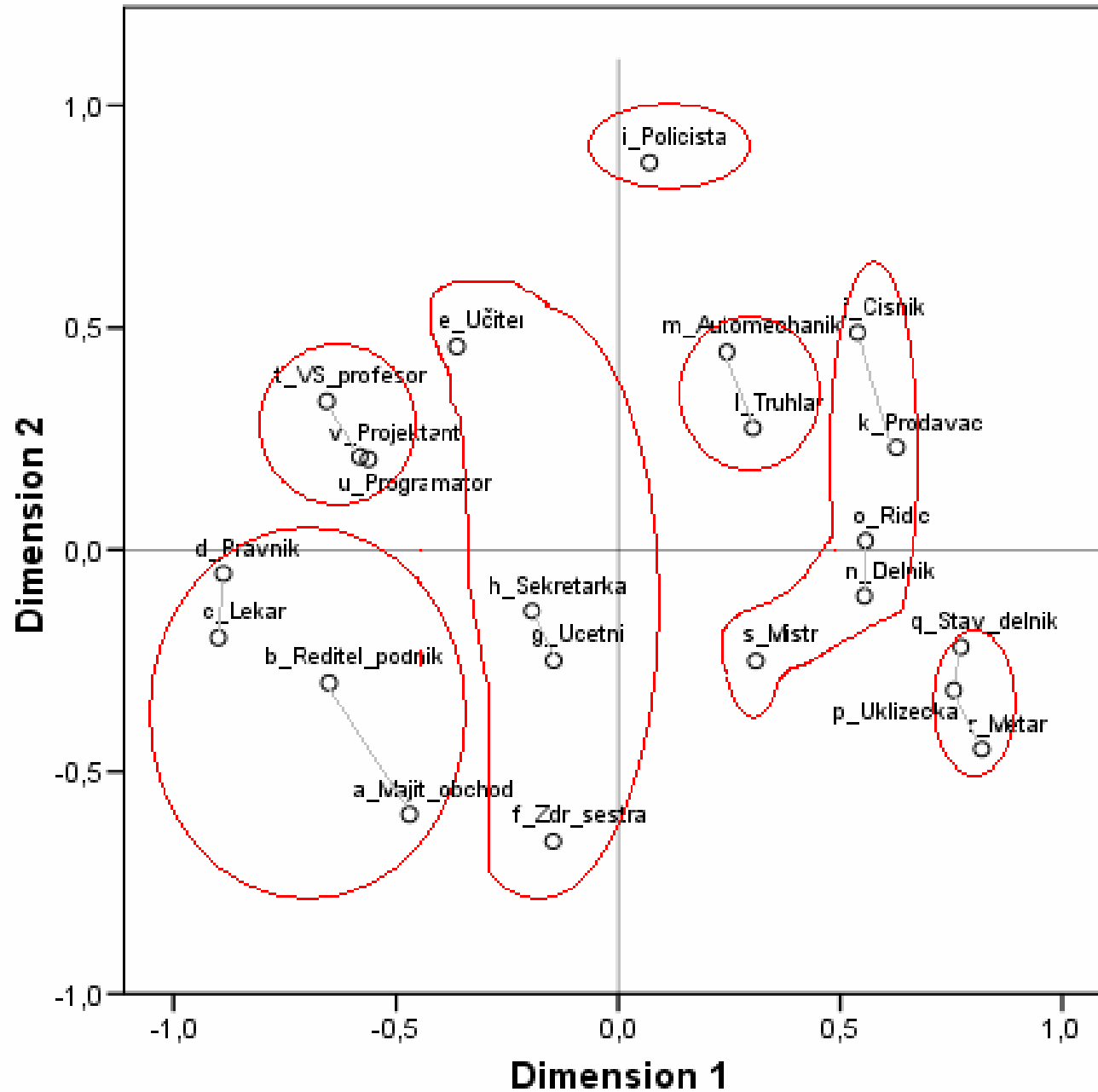
# 7 status groupings

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	<b>Soc. distance</b>	<b>ISEI</b>	<b>SIOPS</b>
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

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# Symbolic space of professions



# Conclusion:

## Subjectively experienced class structure

- 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 (with some minor differences as we shall see further)

however

- Mental categorization patterns of professional groupings draw an intense **social class boundary between white and blue collar professions.**

# Conclusion:

## Subjectively experienced class structure

- 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'.

# Like-me Effect and Prestige Principle

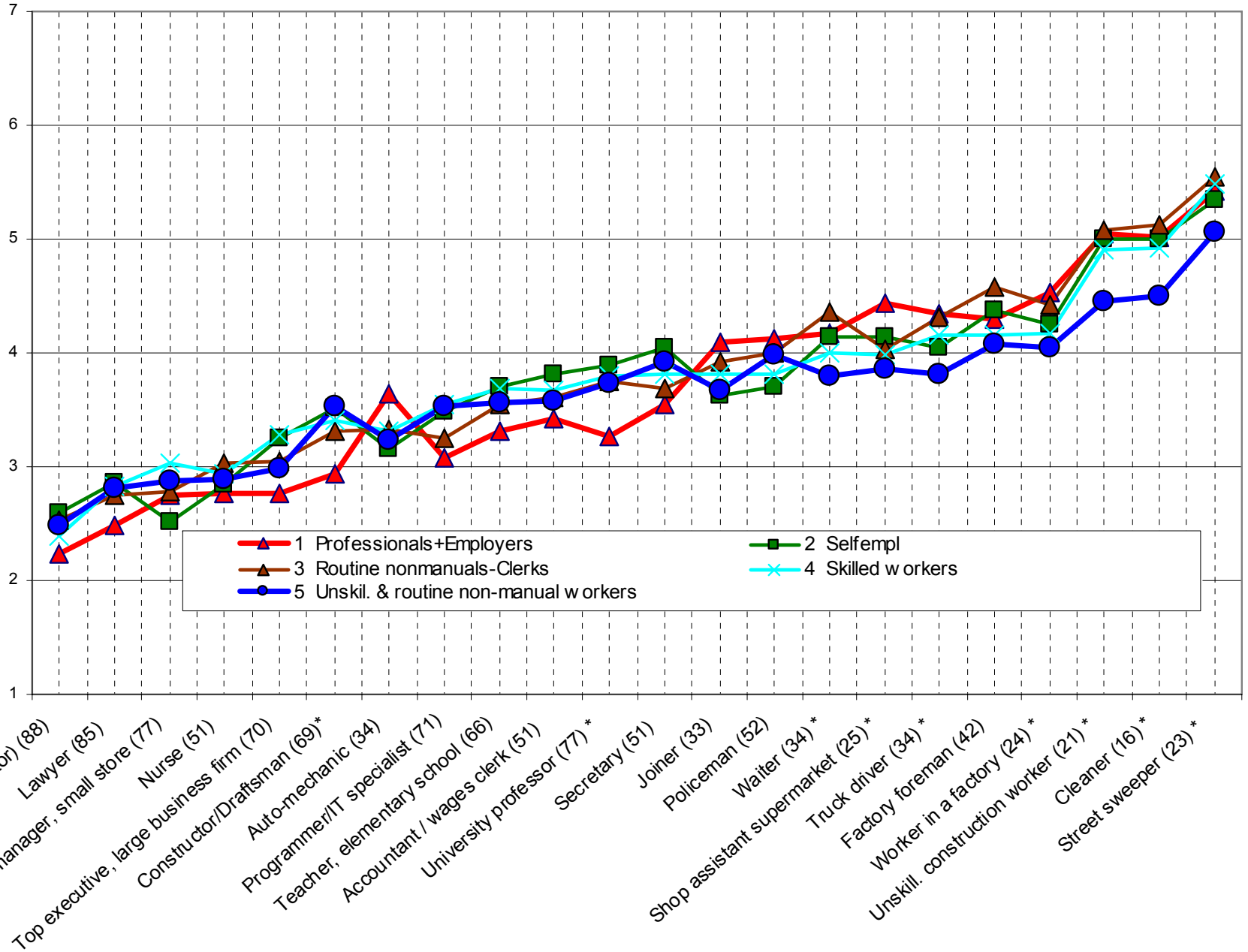
# Hypothesis II. Subjective distances: Proximity principle?

RQ: Is subjective social distance of Czechs influenced by the social status of occupations?

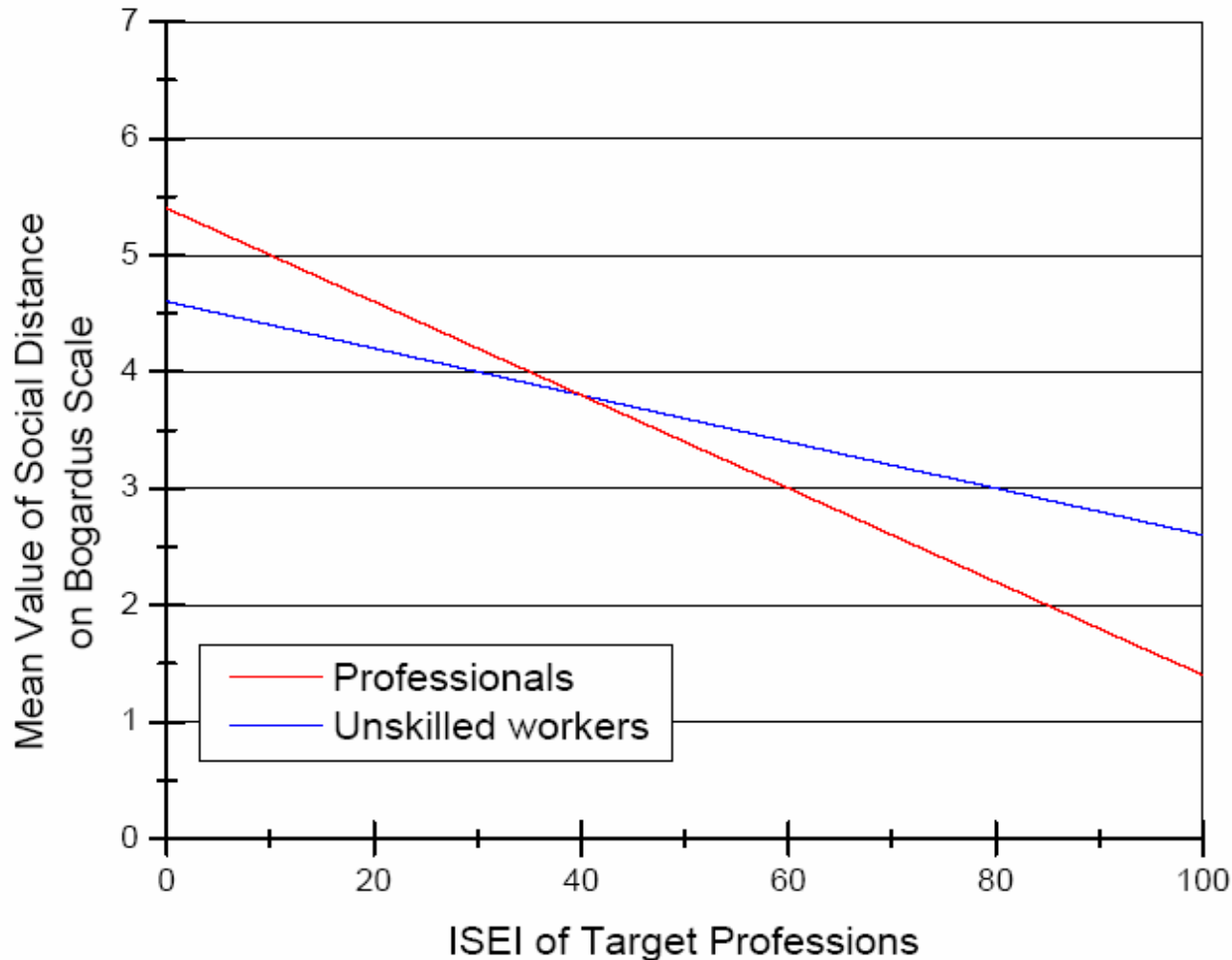
→ Two Hypotheses:

- *Like-me principle*: people prefer to establish intimate contacts with persons of equal status
- *Prestige effect*: a higher status of an imaginary profession leads to a smaller distance of a person regardless of his/her status

# Social classes EGP differences



# OLS Regression – predicting power of ISEI of the target profession on the social Distance towards it



Professionals:  
 $y = 5,4 - 0,036x$   
Self-employed:  
 $y = 4,9 - 0,024x$   
Routine-clerk:  
 $y = 5,2 - 0,030x$   
Skilled workers:  
 $y = 5,0 - 0,025x$   
Unskilled workers  
 $y = 4,6 - 0,020x$

# Result

- negative regression coefficients (standardized and unstandardized) indicate → **Prestige effect**
- negative impact of ISEI on the social distance decreases from the upper class of professionals to the lower unskilled worker class → **Like-me hypothesis partly validated**

# Is the like-me effect significantly working?

Differing of slopes analyzed using the method General Linear Model - analysis of covariances (ANCOVA) using Typ III sum of squares

Result: slopes differ significantly only among class of professionals and unskilled worker class ( $p=0.017$ ).

Only in comparison of these two we can speak of a Like-me effect.

# How much stronger is the prestige effect?

- multiple variable called Distance: social distances to 22 target professions restructured into groups of related cases
- 26334 of cases (1197 x 22 entries)
- regression with effect of *prestige* and *like-me*
- Distance =  $-0,349 * \text{Target profession ISEI} + 0,130 * |\text{ISEI respondent} - \text{ISEI target occupation}|$
- the effect of prestige is 2,7 times stronger than like me.
- in each social class separately the prestige-effect decreases in the lower classes

# What effect prevails towards the target occupations?

Stratification specific social distance (SSSD)

$SSSD = \text{abs. value (ISEI target profession} - \text{ISEI respondent)}$

# Correlation SSSD and social distance to each of 22 occupations

	Pearson corr.	sign.	ISEI
Physician (doctor)	<b>0,077</b>	0,041	88
Lawyer	<b>0,090</b>	0,016	85
University professor	<b>0,078</b>	0,036	77
Programmer/IT specialist	<b>0,103</b>	0,006	71
<hr/>			
Top executive, large business firm	0,066	0,078	70
Constructor/Draftsman	<b>0,106</b>	0,004	69
Teacher, elementary school	0,055	0,138	66
Accountant / wages clerk	0,021	0,572	51
Secretary	0,017	0,646	51
Nurse	-0,001	0,981	51
Policeman	0,006	0,872	50
Owner/manager, small store	-0,023	0,540	49
Factory foreman	-0,010	0,792	42
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Waiter	<b>0,108</b>	0,004	34
Truck driver	<b>0,105</b>	0,005	34
Auto-mechanic	<b>0,097</b>	0,009	34
Joiner	<b>0,098</b>	0,009	33
Shop assistant supermarket	<b>0,154</b>	0,000	25
Worker in a factory	<b>0,139</b>	0,000	24
Street sweeper	<b>0,129</b>	0,001	23
Unskill. construction worker	<b>0,174</b>	0,000	21
Cleaner	<b>0,151</b>	0,000	16

→ Correlation SSSD and Social Distance:

for high and low prestigious professions the  
like-me principle is working

social distance to gendered professions  
(teacher, accountant, secretary and nurse)  
is assigned regardless of own social  
standing

BUT: just weak correlations

# Conclusion: Prestige vs. Like-me

In Subjective distances Prestige effect prevails over Like-me principle.

We find a general order of social distance to occupations that can be regarded as prestige or socioeconomic status → people are conscious of their class and order people mentally relative to themselves (in a specific distance to themselves)

BUT also the like-me principle is partly working:

→ in comparison of the professional and unskilled worker class

→ in the estimation of social distance to high and low prestigious professions

## **II. Objective Social Distances**

observed differential association

**Friendship patterns**

**Vzorce přátelství**

Proximity principle

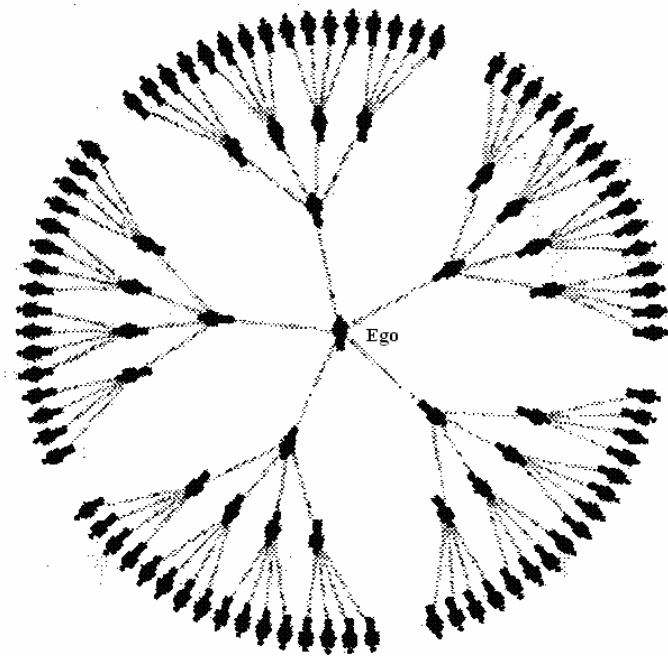
aneb

uzavřená nebo otevřená  
společnost?

# Egocentric network

The idea

Egonetwork in Name generator – Strong ties

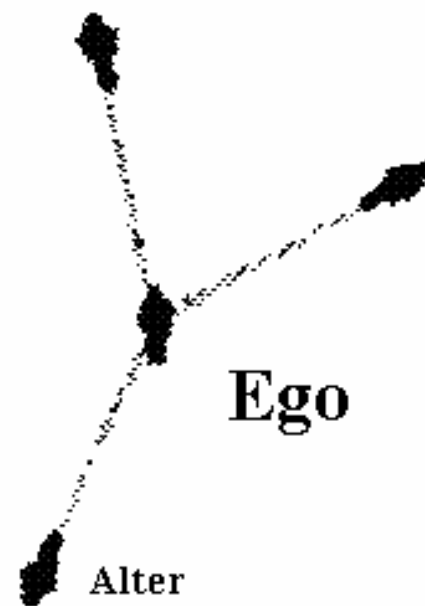


Alter

**Friend 1:**  
Education  
Occupation  
Gender  
Wherefrom

Alter

**Friend 2:**  
Education  
Occupation  
Gender  
Wherefrom



Alter

**Friend 3:**  
Education  
Occupation  
Gender  
Wherefrom

# Wherefrom are our friends?

Wherefrom:	All friends	Friend 1	Friend 2	Friend 3
<b>Otherwise</b>	20,4	18,1	17,9	25,2
<b>Neighbourhood</b>	17,4	14,0	18,8	19,5
<b>Former job</b>	15,5	17,5	16,5	12,4
<b>Elementary school</b>	12,2	<b>18,2</b>	9,3	9,0
<b>Other school</b>	10,5	11,0	11,9	8,6
<b>Current job</b>	9,3	8,0	9,9	9,9
<b>Leisure</b>	9,3	6,5	10,5	10,8
<b>Sport</b>	5,5	6,7	5,2	4,7
	100	100	100	100

# Educational heterogeneity/homogeneity

2007

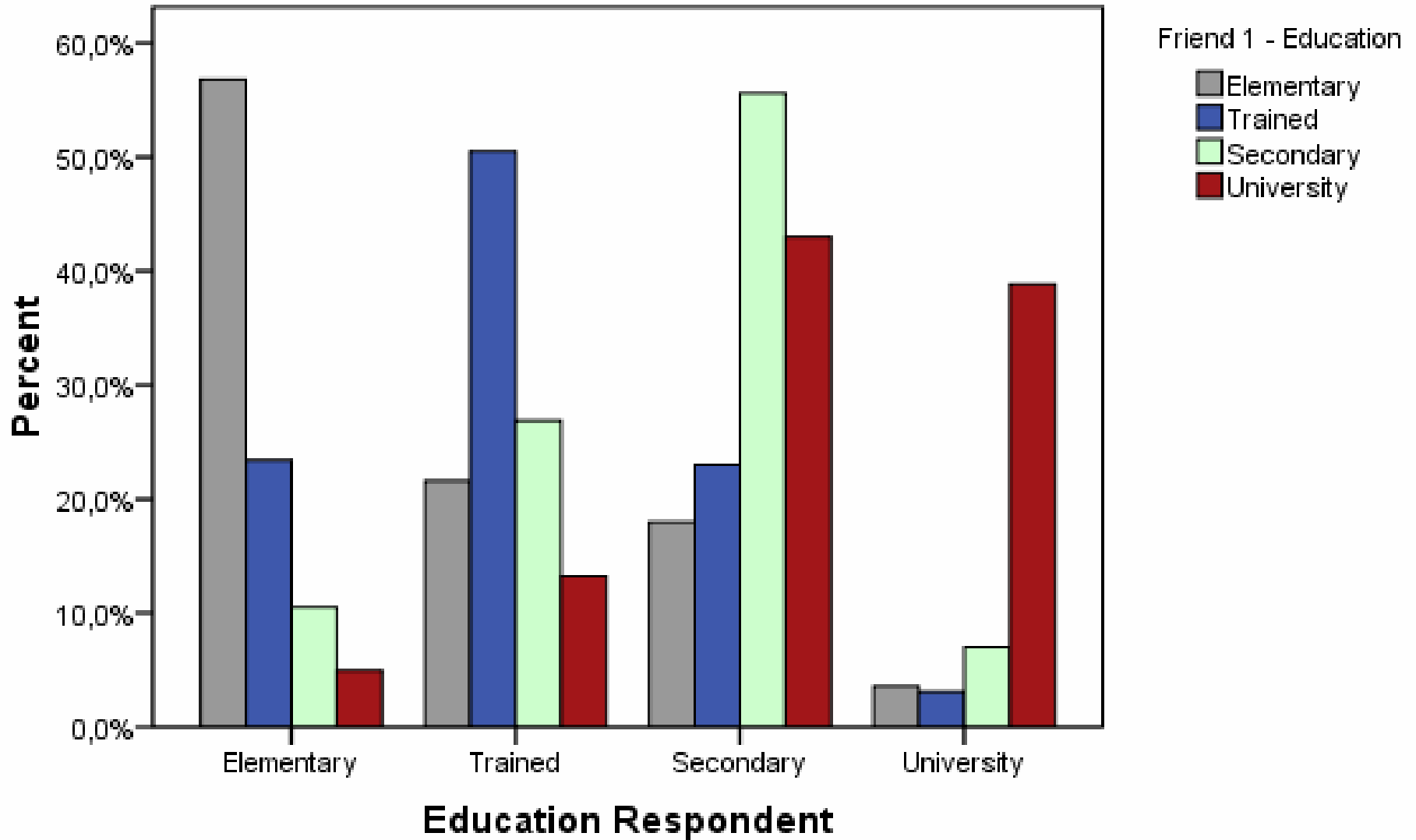
	1. friend	2. friend	3. friend	Network 3	Network 4
Homogeneity	51,9	48,7	48,6	31,6	23,1
Heterogeneity	48,1	51,3	51,4	68,4	76,9
within that:					
Friend with Higher educ.	29,6	33,8	34,8		
Friend with Lower educ.	18,5	17,5	16,7		

	1. friend		2. friend		3. friend	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Homogeneity	49,6	54,3	45,3	52,2	45,8	51,5
Heterogeneity	50,4	45,1	54,7	47,8	54,2	48,5

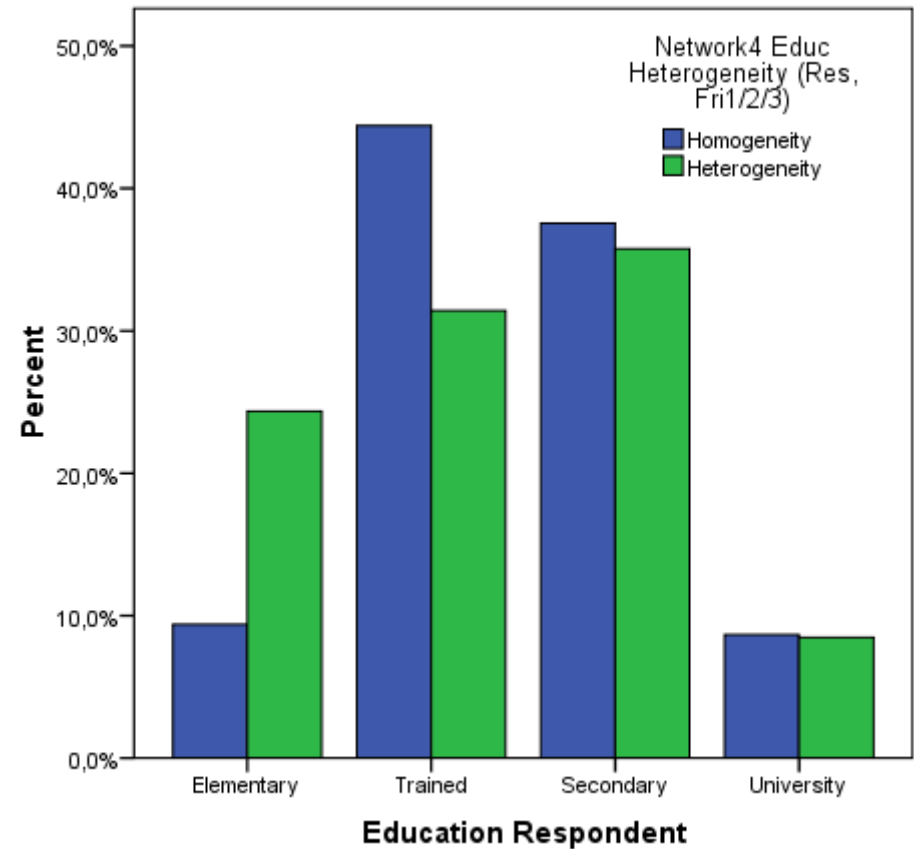
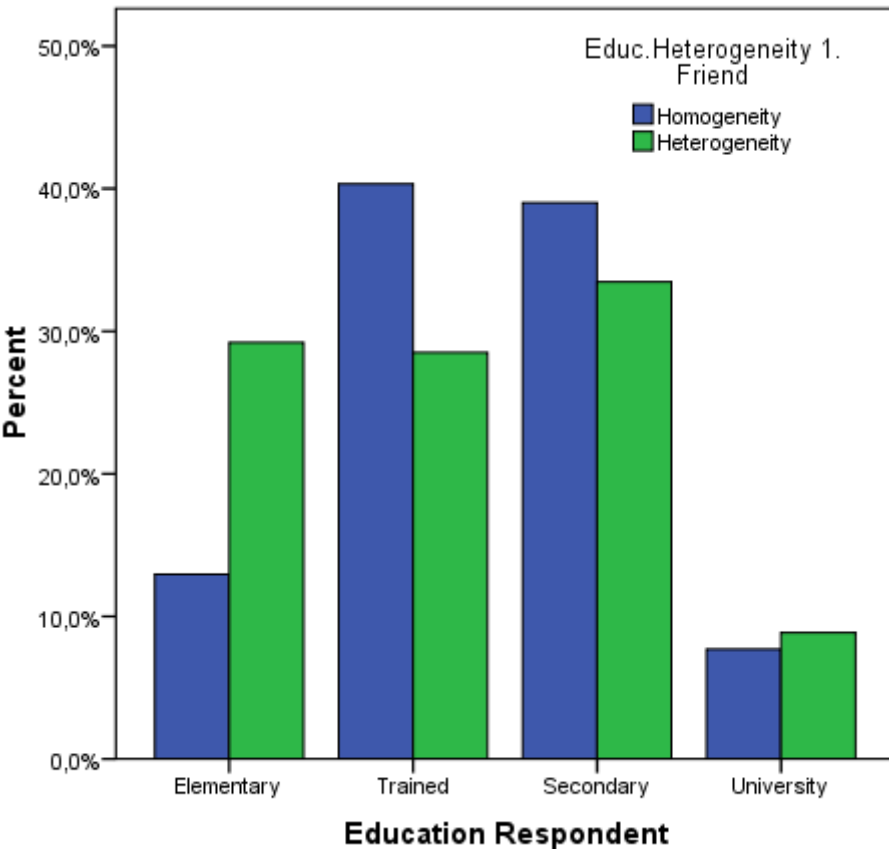
	1993*	1967**	2007 (men only)		
	1. friend	1. friend	2. friend	1. friend	2. friend
Homogeneity	52,4	44,0	38,2	49,6	45,3
Heterogeneity	47,6	64,0	61,8	50,4	54,7
within that:					
Friend with Higher education	32,6				
Friend with Lower education	15				

\* [Vlachová 1996] \*\* [Petrušek 1969], in 1993 age 20-69; in 1967 men only

# Education: Respondent & 1. Friend (%)



# Educational Homogeneity by Respondent Education (%)



# Education Homogeneity (odds ratio):

Respondent & 1. Friend

Respondent & 3 Friends (Network 4)

	<b><u>1. Friend</u></b>	<b><u>Network 4</u></b>
Trained	1,53	0,43
Secondary	1,26	0,32
University	*0,94	0,31

Elementary as reference category Exp(B)

\* not significant

No effect of gender, size of community, age

# Social Class

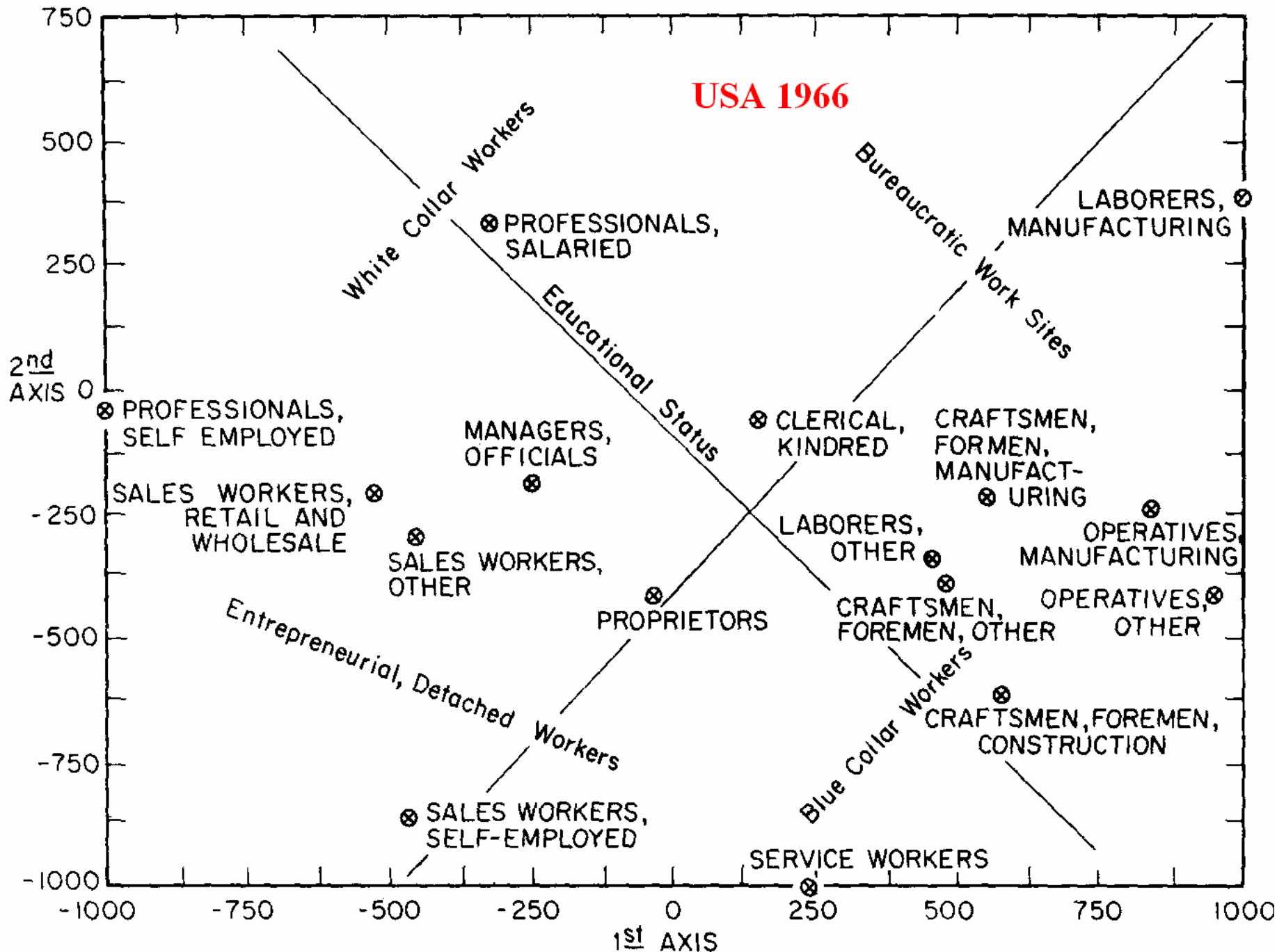
## heterogeneity/homogeneity

	<b>25 occupational groupings</b>			<b>EGP 11</b>
	1. friend	2. friend	3. friend	1. friend
Homogeneity	<b>21,0</b>	<b>16,8</b>	<b>15,2</b>	<b>33,7</b>
Heterogeneity	79	83,2	84,8	66,3
within that:				
Friend in Higher class				27,5
Friend in Lower class				38,8

### Class homogeneity and heterogeneity in best friendship EGP7 [CVVM 2007-04]

Homogeneity	48.1
Heterogeneity	51.9
within that:	
Higher class best friend	23.7
Lower class best friend	27.9

Structure of Occupations [Laumann 1973]

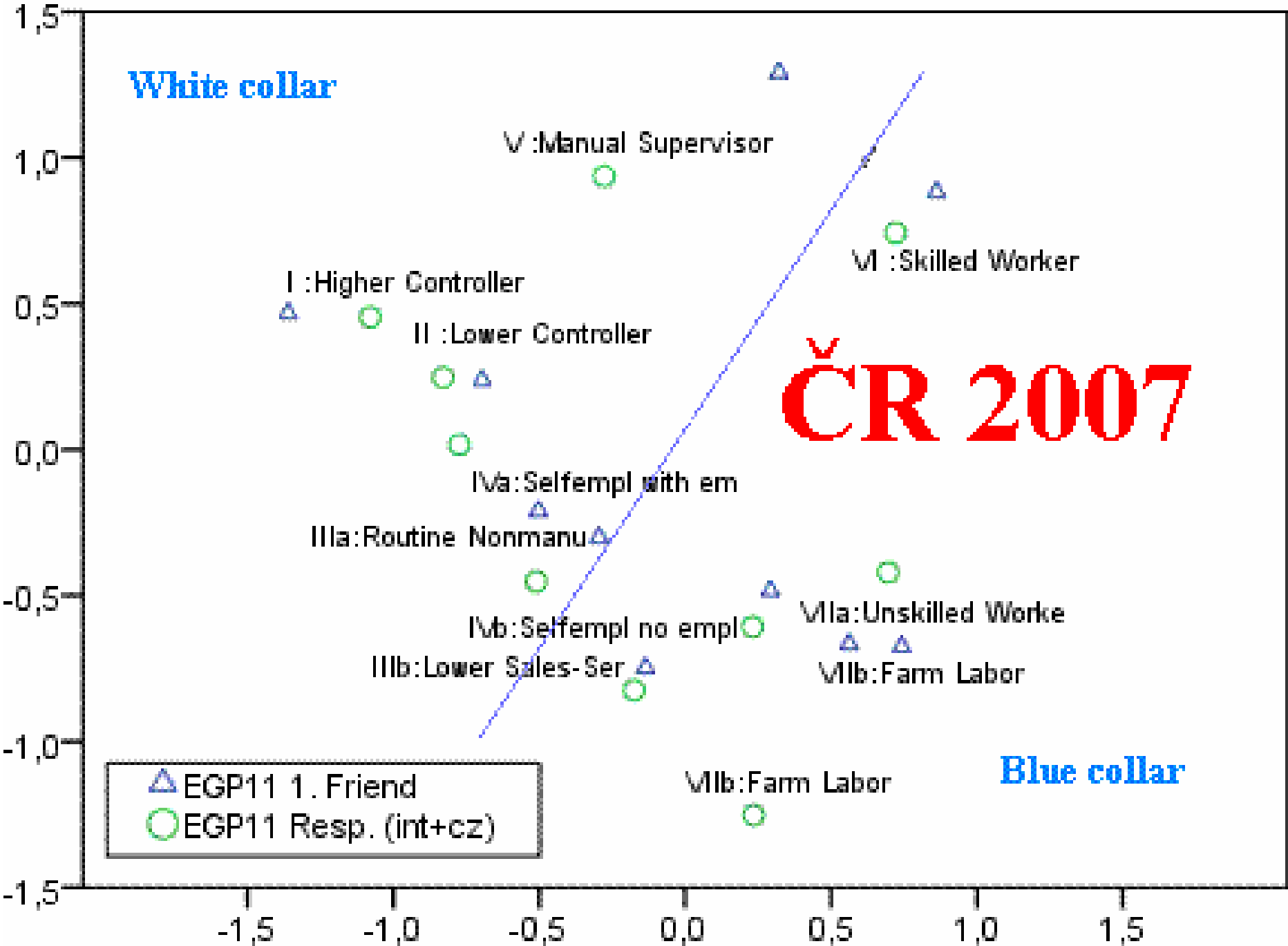




**White collar**

**ČR 2007**

**Blue collar**



- △ EGP11 1. Friend
- EGP11 Resp. (int+cz)

# Conclusion: Objective social distances

- Approximately half of friendship is homogeneous in terms of education, occupation/ social class
- Strong Like me effect (proximity principle) when actual association is considered.  
→ Similarity breeds connection.
- It seems steady in time: (1960's →) 1990's → 2000's
- Generalized cultural boundary between white/blue collar world (non-manual professional vs. manual & routine non-manual; originated already during different secondary education paths)
- Further analysis is needed: time comparison, specific groups social circles and weak ties closeness / openness

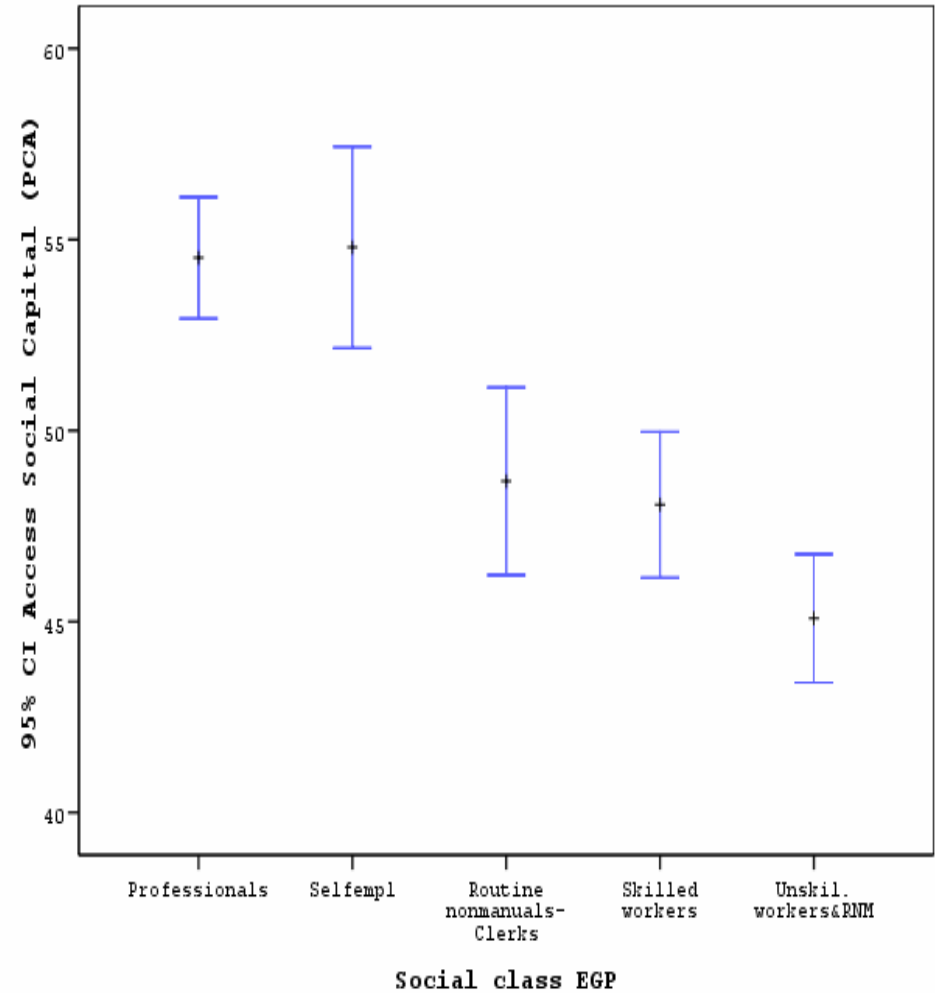
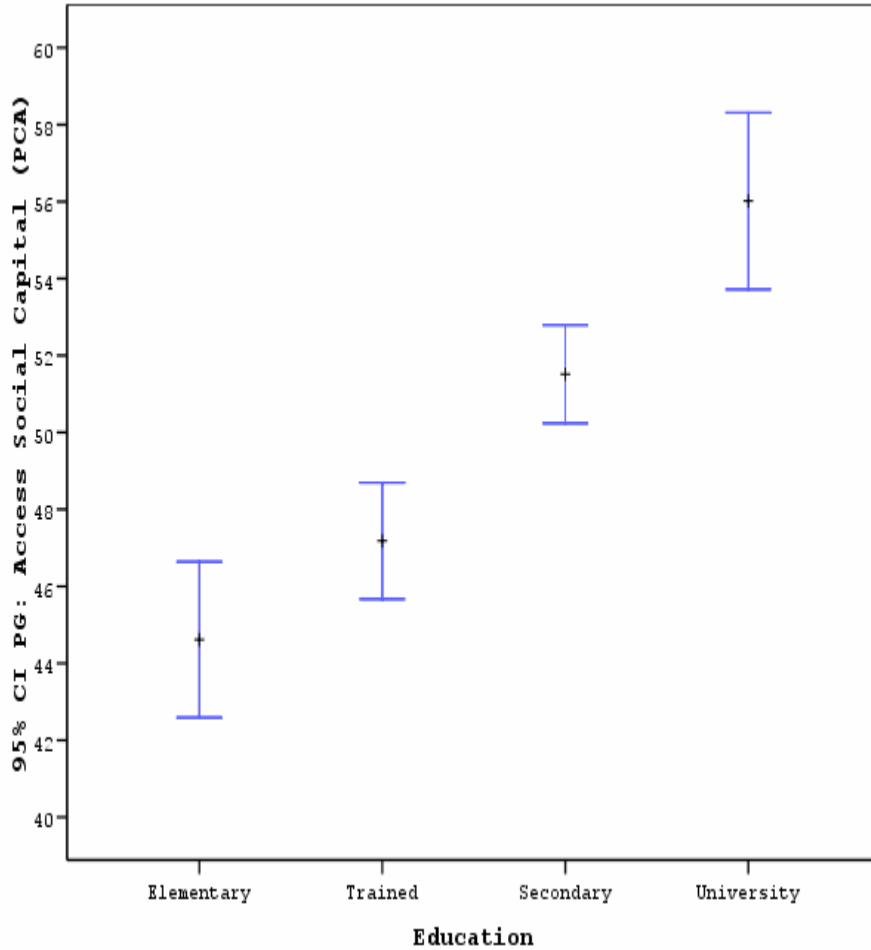
# Egocentric network – Weak ties

## Position generator: „Do you know...?“

Profession	ISEI Score	Yes (%)	Family (%)
<b>Worker in a factory</b>	24	<b>61</b>	<b>29</b>
<b>Nurse</b>	51	<b>60</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Shop assistant in a supermarket</b>	25	<b>57</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Auto-mechanic</b>	34	<b>56</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Waiter</b>	34	<b>55</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Truck driver</b>	34	<b>48</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Teacher at elementary school</b>	66	<b>45</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Accountant / wages clerk</b>	51	<b>44</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Physician (doctor)</b>	88	<b>41</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Owner / manager, small store</b>	49	<b>40</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Policeman</b>	50	<b>38</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	51	<b>38</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>Cleaner</b>	16	<b>37</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Joiner</b>	33	<b>37</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Unskilled construction worker</b>	21	<b>30</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Programmer / IT specialist</b>	71	<b>29</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Lawyer</b>	85	<b>24</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Top executive of a large business firm</b>	70	<b>18</b>	<b>21</b>

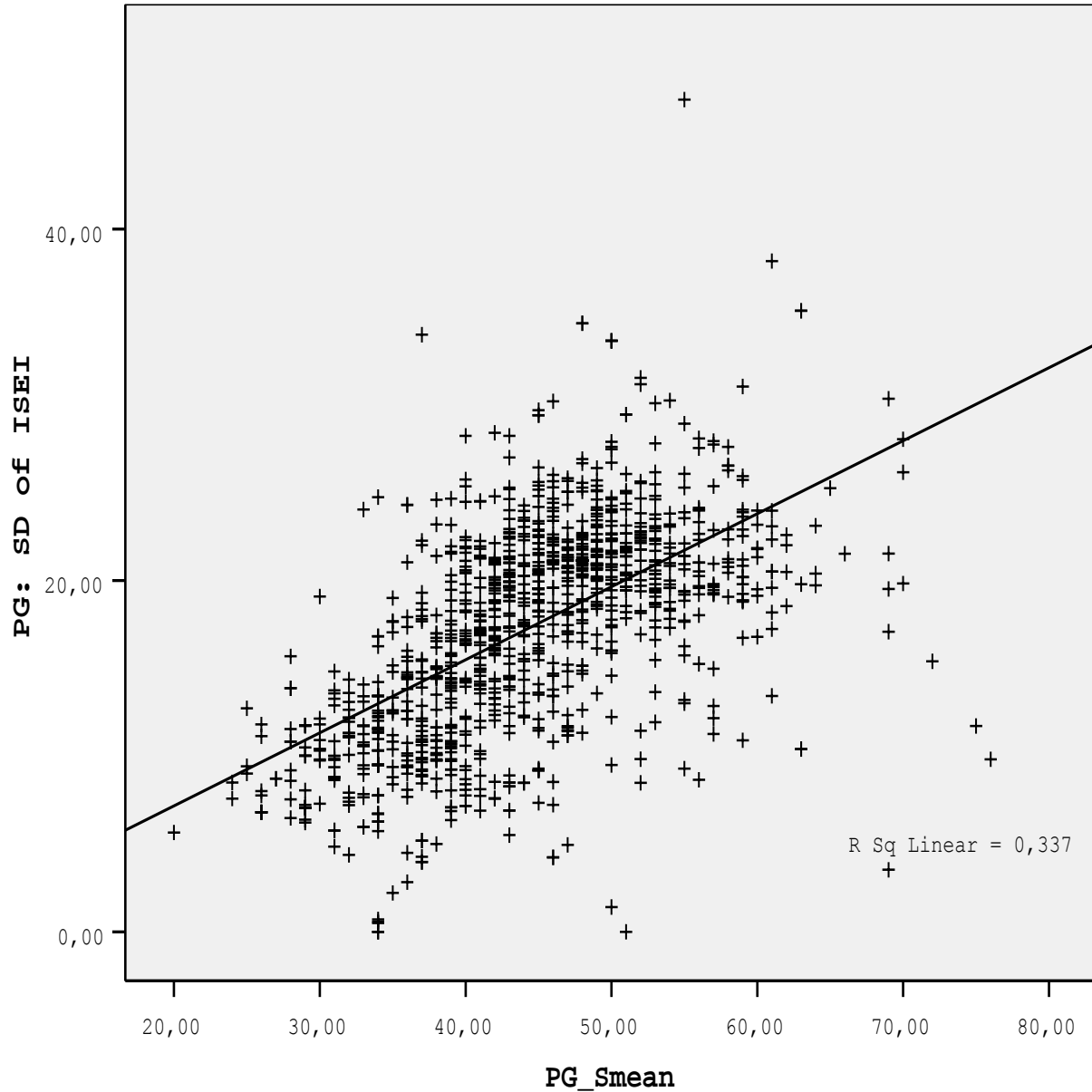
# Inequality in Social Capital

## Access Social Capital by Education and Social Class



However, no significant differences in access to prestigious occupations between men and women

# Mean of ISEI in Network & StDev





**Thank you for your attention!**

[www.socdistance.wz.cz](http://www.socdistance.wz.cz)