

Social classes and values in Europe

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Abstract

Exploiting the analytical potential of the European Social Survey data, this text presents a set of theoretical assumptions and empirical findings concerning class structures, patterns of values and attitudes and the relationship between them. In the first section, a model of analysis is outlined, which relates social dimensions (in this case, classes) with cultural dimensions (in this case, values), both at the individual level and structural level. The second section compares the class composition of the various participating countries and pinpoints common trends and regional specificities. In the third and largest section, several indicators of ideological and political attitudes and electoral practices, as well as Shalom Schwartz's scale of human values, are analyzed in their relationship with the class position of the interviewees.

Keywords

social classes
values

Introduction

In the sociological analysis of the values and attitude patterns of various populations, it is essential to consider the structural context in which these preferences and orientations are shaped and interiorized by individuals (as dispositions of a generally enduring, though not unchangeable, nature) in the course of their experience of life in society. These dispositions are, in turn, called into being and action by the social actors in the production of symbolic representations and social practices in successive episodes in life and different situations of interaction. With all their variability and fortuity, the latter are, for this reason, also included in the structural context and suffer their corresponding constraints.¹

It is known, of course, that other parameters besides structural ones are highly important in the shaping of these values and attitudes patterns, e.g., generation, gender, religious or national identity, personal trajectories and the relational frameworks. But this does not invalidate the relevance of investigating the cultural effects of the social structure. The importance of such an analysis is directly proportional to how far it allows values and attitude patterns to be related with processes of societal change, as these are revealed in particular in the socio-occupational and socio-educational re-composition of populations, or, in broader conceptual terms, in the re-composition of social class structures.

1 The authors gratefully acknowledge the cooperation of Rui Brites and Tiago Lapa da Silva in the preparation of the empirical material presented in this text.

Amid the present context of globalization of social relationships and, in particular, growing international integration at a European level, social class structures no longer tend to be built solely within the framework of national societies. It is certain that these societies still present lasting specificities from a socio-economic and socio-cultural standpoint. It is also true that, with their institutional arrangements and public policies, national states influence class relations and social re-compositions in different ways. However, at present, these class structures tend to assume some relevant transnational dimensions.

Exploiting the potential of the ESS (European Social Survey), this text not only compares the class composition of the various participating countries but also seeks to go further. It endeavours to illustrate how class structures significantly mark the value patterns found in the populations analyzed.

The results presented here suggest that the systematic and continuous development of this type of analysis – of the relationship between class structures and value patterns at the national and transnational level – may be cognitively promising, if both concepts are well developed from the theoretical and operational point of view. The results are integrated into a wider research programme involving the sociological analysis of classes and values by the authors (in particular in Almeida 1986, 1995; Almeida, Costa and Machado 1988, 1994; Costa 1999; Machado and Costa 1998; Machado 2002; Machado et al. 2003), which is now decidedly positioned in a transnational perspective (Costa et al. 2000; Mauritti, Martins and Costa 2004).

Theoretically speaking, this research programme is organized around an analysis model that relates social dimensions (in this case, classes) with cultural dimensions (in this case, values). Furthermore, it conceptualizes these dimensions at two fundamental levels – those of individuals and structures. It does not reduce one to the other, i.e., it endorses neither individualistic nor holistic reductionism. On the contrary, it seeks to ascertain the relationship between them, which obviously demands that neither of them is subsumed either from the theoretical and conceptual or empirical and analytical standpoint.

Very succinctly, this implies considering social classes both as individual social attributes (a set of social properties of individuals, in particular those relating to socio-economic and socio-educational resources) and social contexts (a set of social properties of the structures in which individuals and groups are located, which are nowadays also related specially to the unequal distribution of economic and educational resources and the asymmetrical relationships that are established between the locations that are thus defined in the social structure). It also implies considering values in the same way, i.e., both as individual cultural attributes (in this case, the values held by each individual) and cultural patterns of a societal scope (which, to this effect, may be called cultural contexts).

Though probably unnecessary, it is nevertheless worth reaffirming that individuals and societal contexts have numerous other properties, which

are sometimes as noteworthy or more noteworthy, in explaining certain social phenomena. But those considered here cannot be ignored – such is the importance that they have repeatedly displayed for the comprehension of social processes and cultural configurations, an importance that the present analysis corroborates from a transnational (European) perspective. However, instead of providing confirmation of a general theoretical hypothesis, it is more important here to recount the actual contributions that are thus achieved for the comprehension and explanation of present-day European value patterns.

In schematic terms, from an operational standpoint, Figure 1 represents the main relationships to be analyzed in a research programme such as this. The direct data of the international survey are situated at the individual level, i.e., it is data on the class locations and value orientations of the respondents. The actual relationships between classes and values, which are examined in the final part of this text, are from the outset, operationally, relationships of individual causality between the individual's class attributes and values (IC-IV), though they are dealt with together statistically in an endeavour to draw some analytical inferences on the relationship between class structures and values patterns (CS-VP).

Though supported statistically, this type of inference may run the risk of the 'atomistic fallacy' whenever decisive properties that are indeed structural or institutional are left out of the analysis. One way of reducing this risk is to accompany the IC-IV analyses with CS-VP structural causality analyses.

Essentially, these analyses may take two forms (not mutually exclusive but, rather, combinable among themselves, with a cognitive advantage). They may be based on wide-ranging qualitative information about historical processes, institutional systems, cultural configurations, collective action, etc. (analyses that are generally accompanied by VP-CS cultural causality considerations, which have also been widely developed by the social sciences). They may also be based on quantitative information, in

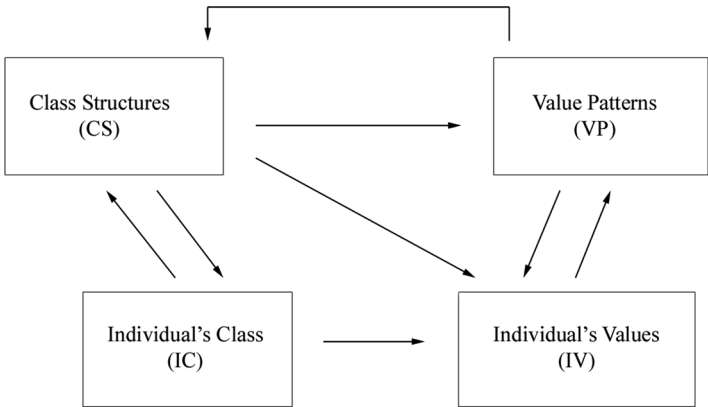


Figure 1: Analysis model of the relationship between values and social classes.

particular from the same extensive questionnaire surveys used in the IC-IV base analyses, though the surveys are processed to produce structural characterizations of the social and cultural contexts (in operational terms, relevant indicators of attributes characterizing societal clusters).

Moreover, taking classes into account in the sociological analysis as structural contexts also means considering the structural determination relationship (inter-level), CS-IC and CS-IV. Hence we proceed below to a brief characterization and comparative analysis of these structural contexts of class. This provides a reference base for the following point, which, as a concrete illustration, analyzes the relationship between classes and values. What remains implicit, and will not to be developed here, are the IC-CS and IV-VP composition effects relating to the way that individuals and multiple inter-individual relationships generate effects that emerge together at supra-individual levels of the formation of social relationships.

The opposite risk of the 'atomistic fallacy' is that of 'the ecological fallacy', when properties belonging to the level of structures and configurations are erroneously attributed to individuals. But the 'ecological fallacy' is avoided if care is taken, as here, to distinguish levels of analysis and types of relationship. Furthermore, it is essential analytically not to neglect the effects of context, in particular structural and cultural context, in the various circumstances in which there are good theoretical reasons to acknowledge that context is relevant and can be ascertained empirically.

To this effect, the IC-IV analyses carried out on the basis of the statistical processing of the extensive questionnaire survey data, as collected by the ESS, can achieve greater consistency if complemented with analytical considerations of the types CS-IV, VP-IV and CS-VP. This is what we seek to do below, even if in the very brief fashion that the available space imposes.

Social classes in a European context

In the accelerated globalization processes taking place in contemporary societies, which for Portugal are in first instance processes of Europeanization, one of the particular instruments that sociology can use to make these processes intelligible is class analysis, *albeit* with a change of the more usual scale. Better expressed, it should no longer only analyze class on a national scale, which does not mean dispensing with it, but should combine this with international analyses, which compare countries multilaterally, and especially with transnational analyses, which identify structural characteristics of class composition and re-composition in very wide social spaces that correspond to large groups of countries, such as the European Union.

The first ESS collected the data necessary to operationalize the class concept for all 22 participating countries (Table 1). It included the socio-occupational and socio-educational indicators normally used for this purpose, i.e., occupation, employment status and educational level. It was thus possible to apply the ACM class typology (Almeida, Costa and Machado 1988; Costa 1999) to the European data, along the lines of

| | Entrepreneurs and Executives | | | Professionals and Managers | | | Self-employed | | | Routine Employees | | | Industrial Workers | | |
|----------------|------------------------------|------|-----|----------------------------|------|------|---------------|------|------|-------------------|------|------|--------------------|------|------|
| | MW | M | W | MW | M | W | MW | M | W | MW | M | W | MW | M | W |
| Austria | 14.8 | 8.9 | 5.9 | 27.7 | 13.2 | 14.6 | 3.4 | 1.5 | 1.9 | 38.2 | 13.1 | 25.1 | 15.9 | 11.8 | 4.1 |
| Belgium | 13.4 | 8.8 | 4.6 | 29.1 | 15.4 | 13.7 | 4.8 | 2.8 | 2.1 | 28.1 | 10.1 | 17.8 | 24.6 | 18.3 | 6.4 |
| Denmark | 13.9 | 10.1 | 3.9 | 30.2 | 12.9 | 17.3 | 1.7 | 1.1 | 0.6 | 29.6 | 7.2 | 22.3 | 24.6 | 20.0 | 4.6 |
| France | 10.0 | 7.5 | 2.6 | 30.3 | 15.1 | 15.3 | 4.1 | 2.2 | 1.9 | 34.8 | 8.7 | 26.1 | 20.8 | 15.1 | 5.7 |
| Finland | 12.5 | 8.4 | 4.1 | 26.3 | 11.2 | 15.1 | 7.4 | 3.9 | 3.6 | 27.7 | 5.1 | 22.6 | 26.1 | 19.9 | 6.1 |
| Gemany | 12.8 | 8.5 | 4.3 | 29.0 | 11.9 | 17.1 | 3.0 | 1.3 | 1.7 | 30.7 | 7.7 | 22.9 | 24.6 | 19.2 | 5.5 |
| Greece | 18.8 | 13.4 | 5.4 | 11.1 | 5.5 | 5.6 | 23.5 | 12.1 | 11.4 | 24.0 | 8.4 | 15.5 | 22.7 | 13.5 | 9.2 |
| Ireland | 16.9 | 10.9 | 5.9 | 7.3 | 7.5 | 9.8 | 8.4 | 7.0 | 1.5 | 36.8 | 8.1 | 28.6 | 20.7 | 14.3 | 6.4 |
| Italy | 20.6 | 13.9 | 6.7 | 18.3 | 8.4 | 9.9 | 8.8 | 4.5 | 4.4 | 28.6 | 9.8 | 18.9 | 23.6 | 15.3 | 8.3 |
| Luxembourg | 14.3 | 9.1 | 5.1 | 28.3 | 12.5 | 15.7 | 1.6 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 35.8 | 10.1 | 25.7 | 20.0 | 17.6 | 2.4 |
| Netherlands | 16.3 | 11.6 | 4.7 | 38.3 | 14.8 | 23.5 | 0.5 | 0.1 | 0.4 | 29.7 | 8.1 | 21.6 | 15.2 | 12.4 | 2.8 |
| Portugal | 14.1 | 9.9 | 4.2 | 13.2 | 5.5 | 7.6 | 8.5 | 3.5 | 5.1 | 30.5 | 8.1 | 22.4 | 33.7 | 20.8 | 12.9 |
| Spain | 9.4 | 6.2 | 3.2 | 18.3 | 9.9 | 8.4 | 9.5 | 5.4 | 4.1 | 27.2 | 7.2 | 20.0 | 35.5 | 25.8 | 9.7 |
| Sweden | 11.0 | 8.0 | 3.0 | 31.5 | 15.1 | 16.4 | 3.6 | 2.5 | 1.1 | 34.3 | 8.6 | 25.6 | 19.6 | 16.6 | 3.0 |
| United Kingdom | 16.9 | 12.4 | 4.6 | 20.8 | 9.2 | 11.6 | 4.2 | 3.3 | 0.9 | 37.7 | 9.9 | 27.8 | 20.4 | 14.3 | 6.1 |
| EU15 | 14.4 | 9.8 | 4.5 | 24.6 | 11.2 | 13.4 | 6.2 | 3.4 | 2.8 | 31.6 | 8.7 | 22.9 | 23.2 | 17.0 | 6.2 |
| Czech Republic | 10.9 | 7.3 | 3.6 | 23.6 | 9.5 | 14.1 | 3.1 | 2.7 | 0.4 | 23.1 | 6.8 | 16.4 | 39.3 | 24.3 | 14.9 |
| Hungary | 13.9 | 8.2 | 5.7 | 16.5 | 5.8 | 10.7 | 5.0 | 3.3 | 1.7 | 23.4 | 5.1 | 18.3 | 41.2 | 26.5 | 14.7 |
| Israel | 17.4 | 12.5 | 4.8 | 37.6 | 13.4 | 24.2 | 2.3 | 1.5 | 0.8 | 29.5 | 9.4 | 20.1 | 13.3 | 10.7 | 2.6 |
| Norway | 9.9 | 7.1 | 2.8 | 31.2 | 15.2 | 16.1 | | | | 35.0 | 9.6 | 25.4 | 23.9 | 21.3 | 2.5 |
| Poland | 14.5 | 9.2 | 5.3 | 17.0 | 5.1 | 11.8 | 14.5 | 7.2 | 7.3 | 20.8 | 5.3 | 15.5 | 33.2 | 23.5 | 9.7 |
| Slovenia | 9.6 | 6.1 | 3.5 | 26.3 | 10.9 | 15.4 | 2.7 | 1.9 | 0.8 | 26.8 | 8.8 | 17.9 | 34.5 | 21.5 | 13.0 |
| Switzerland | 17.1 | 11.0 | 6.1 | 31.9 | 15.8 | 16.1 | 5.8 | 3.2 | 2.6 | 28.9 | 7.3 | 21.6 | 16.3 | 12.7 | 3.7 |
| ESS Total | 14.2 | 9.7 | 4.4 | 24.3 | 10.7 | 13.6 | 6.0 | 3.3 | 2.7 | 30.5 | 8.3 | 22.3 | 25.0 | 17.9 | 7.0 |

Table 1: Class structures in ESS countries.

earlier work based on *Eurostat* statistical information (Costa et al. 2000; Mauritti, Martins and Costa 2004).

The typology used here, which takes the individual as the unit of analysis, is reduced to five categories: entrepreneurs and executives, professionals and managers, self-employed, routine employees and industrial workers.² This compact version of the ACM typology not only allows a more direct reading of the greater contours of class structures, which is especially important on a transnational scale, but also provides a clearer understanding of the correlations between values and class locations, the topic of the third part of this text.

The first aspect to note in Table 1 is the relative importance of the category of professionals and managers (PM). In present-day societies, this is a leading category on account of its scientific, technical and cultural resources, which give it a privileged position in the processes of increased incorporation of information, knowledge and technical expertise in the different fields of contemporary economic and social life.

The PM represented the second largest category in the group of fifteen countries belonging to the European Union in the survey year (24.6 per cent), only being surpassed by routine employees (RE), to whom we shall refer later. But in many countries, already in that year, they were clearly in the majority. In Germany, Belgium, Denmark, France, Holland and

2 For a detailed discussion of the specificities of the ACM typology in relation to others commonly used in the analysis of classes, see Costa et al. (2000) and Machado et al. (2003).

Sweden they registered figures that were very close to or above 30 per cent. In the particular case of Holland, they reached an exceptionally high figure of 38.3 per cent.

On the other hand, there are marked contrasts in class composition in the EU area. In countries like Italy, Ireland, Portugal and Greece, the relative weight of the PM is less than 20 per cent or even just above 10 per cent, as happens in the case of Portugal and Greece. As far as the other countries participating in the ESS are concerned, there are three distinct situations: Switzerland, Norway and Israel record PM percentages also above 30 per cent, Hungary and Poland present values below 20 per cent and the Czech Republic and Slovenia are in between.

In the light of these figures, it can be said that the PM percentage – and this is a perfect demonstration of the analytical relevance of this class category – is a distinctive indicator of economic modernization and social development. In essence, the distribution of the its relative weights at a European level reflect the different countries' differing degrees of progress in what is regularly called the information and knowledge society. It is certain that in all of them the PM category has been increasing very fast (Costa et al. 2000; Mauritti, Martins and Costa 2004).

Another category that reflects positions of relative favour in the class structure is that of entrepreneurs and executives (EE). Besides the 'qualitative' importance that arises from the economic, institutional and professional power that characterizes it, it is also an important category in quantitative terms. In none of the countries is the EE percentage below 9 per cent and, in various cases, it is close to or even above 20 per cent.

These quantitative levels show that, besides the large global economic corporations, the European area has many small and medium-sized business units, whose number has been increasing in the last two decades (Costa et al. 2000; Mauritti, Martins and Costa 2004). They also suggest that the senior executives in the private and public sector, grouped together in this category, will also be contributing to this growth, though only a disaggregated analysis, not possible here, would allow us to know the exact quantitative development of the two segments making up this class category.

Another characteristic of the class structures in the European countries surveyed and the transnational space that they form is the fact that most of their population is distributed between two subordinate categories, the routine employees (RE) and industrial workers (IW). In contrast to authors such as Wright (1997), who recommends merging the two into a whole that would correspond to the proletariat of advanced capitalist societies, this paper endorses the total relevance of the analytical separation between them, in line with our earlier work.

If it is truth that the two categories are close to each other, in that both aggregate socio-occupational positions of subordination, implementation and routine, there is much more that sets them apart. There are differences in the specific content of the tasks performed, the relational contexts that surround them and the class identities of their members.

Furthermore, the quantitative development of the two class categories has been emitting opposite signals until very recently. The continued decline in IW numbers was accompanied by a regular increase in RE figures, which themselves only began to fall, in relative terms, a few years ago (Costa et al. 2000; Mauritti, Martins and Costa 2004). The final significant difference between the IW and RE categories relates to their gender composition, which is mainly masculine in the first and feminine in the second.

As stated above, the RE class category represents the most numerous of the five, both in the group of fifteen countries that made up the EU at the time of the first ESS (31.6 per cent) and in the total of 22 countries, in which the survey was applied (30.5 per cent). There are wide variations around these average values. In the case of the EU, they range from 24 per cent of the total in Greece and 27.2 per cent in Spain to 37.7 per cent in the United Kingdom and 38.2 per cent in Austria, with Portugal occupying an intermediate position. In the other countries, the most extreme values are the 20.8 per cent for Poland and 35 per cent for Norway.

Industrial workers, in their turn, present average values of 23.2 per cent in the area of the European Union and 25 per cent in the 22 countries as a whole, also with large deviations from the average distributions. For the EU15, the greatest contrast is between Holland (15.2 per cent) and Spain (35.0 per cent), with Portugal appearing very close to Spain. In the 22 countries as a whole the interval of variation is even greater, ranging from 13.3 per cent in Israel to 41.2 per cent in Hungary.

If the numerical decline of industrial workers is an undeniable fact in all countries, in southern and Eastern Europe there are still countries whose class structures reflect traces of past industrial models. In these countries – Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovenia, Poland, Spain and Portugal – there are still more, or even far more, industrial workers than RE. They contrast with the countries with earlier tertiarization, in particular Austria, the United Kingdom, France and Norway, in which there are clearly more RE. Here, they are close to double the IW in number, if not more than double.

Furthermore, if we count the RE and IW personnel together, we obtain values that, at one extreme, are little more than 40 per cent and at the other greatly exceed 60 per cent. As a general rule, it can be said that the sum of the two categories is lower in economically and socially more advanced countries and higher in those that are less so. Lower RE and IW percentages almost always mean higher percentages in the PM category, a class category whose relative weight, we have already stated, is a good indicator of the economic and social development of each country in particular and the European area as a whole.

In a search for the cases in which this sum is highest, we find Portugal, Spain, Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovenia. The lowest values are to be found in Holland, Switzerland, Israel and a result a little above 50 per cent in Belgium, Finland and Sweden. The exceptions to this correlation

between development levels and the sum of RE and IW percentages are, above all, Greece and Poland and, partly, Italy. These three countries would be expected to present considerably higher numbers, close to or above 60 per cent, as in the group that includes Portugal. But they register values in the 40–50 per cent range, or a little above. Simultaneously, they have low or very low PM percentages.

The reason for this exception is that in all three, though more clearly in Greece and Poland, there are substantial sectors of the self-employed (SE), the fifth and last category of the structural social-class map is adopted here.

On average, the SE are also the last in numerical terms. They represent 6.2 per cent in the EU15 nations as a whole and 6.0 per cent in all 22 countries participating in the study. The lowest figures, which are almost insignificant, are for Denmark, Holland and Luxembourg, and also Norway, where the SE did not even figure in the sample surveyed. In contrast, in Greece and Poland, and also in Italy, Spain, Ireland and Portugal, the SE percentage is above average. Moreover, quantitatively speaking, it is only in Greece and, to a lesser degree, Spain that this category is not the last of the five.

In short, the Europe of social classes is made up of different Europes, with basic integrating convergences, e.g., the growing PM protagonism, but also important divergences such as the very unequal weight of the IW or SE, reflecting different national histories from an economic and social viewpoint.

It is also worth noting that the continuities and contrasts of class composition are, to a fair extent, territorial continuities and contrasts. In the same way that certain class affinities correspond to territorial contiguities that are easy to see, there are differences in national class structures that are associated with territorial discontinuities. The similarities of class composition among southern EU countries, which separate them as a whole from those in the north and centre, obviously do not go undetected. And neither do the similarities among the countries belonging to the group of ten states that, since 2004, have pushed the European Union eastwards – similarities that distinguish them from those that until that date made up the EU.

The final comments about Table 1 concern the class gender profiles revealed by the ESS. These profiles vary greatly from one class to another and this is a clearly transnational structural characteristic. In other words, at a European level, continuities can be seen in the gender composition of social classes. The same classes, in different countries, have the same type of gender composition with few variations in the percentages and almost no exceptions.

The IW and RE categories, the two with the fewest resources, present opposite gender profiles. Without exception, the IW group includes a large majority of men, and the RE group has a large majority of women, often with a ratio of three or more to one. But it is certainly worth noting that the male predominance among industrial workers is less in some eastern countries (the Czech Republic, Hungary and Slovenia) and southern countries (Portugal and Greece), where the percentages of female industrial workers are above or very close to 10 per cent.

| | 10 October 1999 | 17 March 2002 | Party voted for in last elections (17 March 2002) ESS responses |
|---------|-----------------|---------------|--|
| PS | 44.06 | 37.79 | 39.4 |
| PPD/PSD | 32.32 | 40.21 | 40.4 |
| PCP/PEV | 8.99 | 6.94 | 6.8 |
| CDS/PP | 8.34 | 8.72 | 6.5 |
| BE | 2.44 | 2.74 | 3.7 |

Source: CNE (<http://eleicoes.cne.pt/cne2005/index.html>) and ESS.

Table 2: General election results in Portugal, 1999 and 2002 and the ESS responses (%).

In contrast, in all countries except Belgium and Spain, the PM category consists, for the most part, of women. In the cases of Poland, Israel, Hungary, Holland and Germany, the female majority is especially pronounced. The other category at the top of the class structure, the EE, has the opposite gender composition to that above. In all countries, there are always more men, if not far more. This imbalance is particularly marked in France, the United Kingdom, Sweden, Denmark, Norway and Israel, with male representation being over 2.5 times higher than that of females. Finally, it should be said that, except in occasional cases, men are also in the majority among the self-employed.

Values and social classes

The results of the first ESS, with its methodological rigour and substantial volume of samples, allow us once more, following in a very long tradition, to appreciate the explanatory capacity of class analysis.

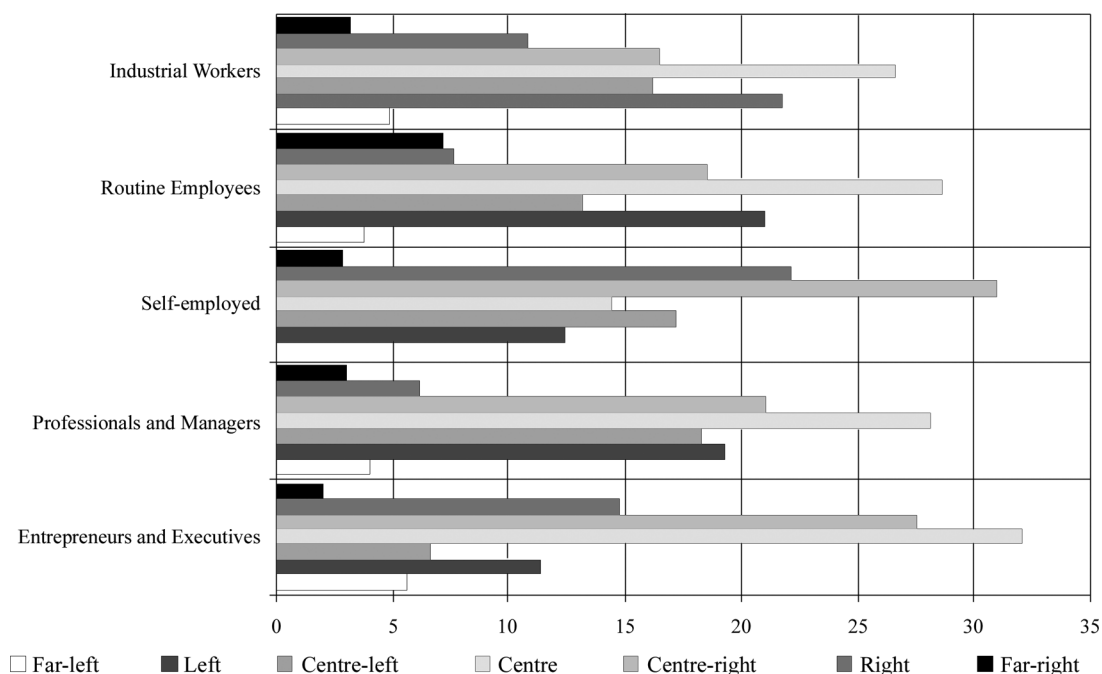
We also use the simplified five-class version here, crossing occupation and employment status to illustrate this analytically fertile ground on the basis of data usually dealt with under political sociology.

In the period proposed for the analysis, Portugal had a stable system of political parties with representation in the national parliament. This removes the need for additional exercises to isolate relevant variables. Furthermore, the first ESS questionnaire was applied in September 2002, a short time after the Portuguese general election of mid-March.

This meant that we could indirectly test the overall reliability of the sample constructed and assess the validity of the responses to questions on political options. As is known, these are not among the most neutral in the overall scheme of the survey.

The result was entirely satisfactory, since the sum of the respondents' answers with regard to their vote in the elections was consistent with the results that had actually occurred in those elections (Table 2).

The task now in hand is to enhance the value of a substantive approach among class membership, ideological and political attitudes and



$\chi^2(24) = 72.08; p=0.000$

Chart 1: Self-assessed political position by social class: Portugal (%).

electoral practices. In other words, it is to illustrate a particular case of two or three large areas that fall within ESS objectives: values (articulated with individual and social behaviour) and social structures.

In this first application of the ESS, Shalom Schwartz's (1992) scale of human values showed its analytical and empirical productiveness once and for all, confirming various earlier uses and tests.

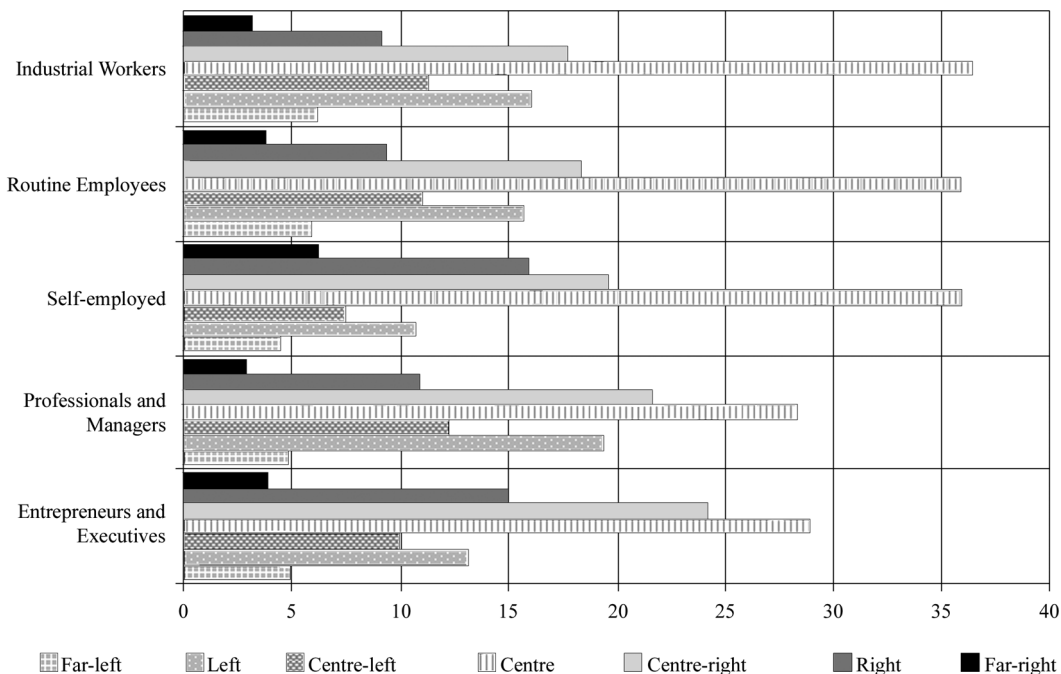
We consider, moreover, that we have never come so close to measuring another concept, advanced long ago by Pierre Bourdieu (1972) – that of 'habitus'. Though its theoretical roots are different, the concept of 'habitus', the system of dispositions, is also an intermediary between structures and practices.

The example presented below, however, does not directly use 'trans-situational' values but rather applied or situational values from the political sphere.

Let us begin, then, by taking a brief look at the political positions of the Portuguese on the basis of their class membership (Chart 1).

Unsurprisingly, the results show the preponderance of 'defensive' central positions, corresponding to 5 on a scale from 1 to 10, with the exception of the self-employed (SE).

The results for the 22 European countries (Chart 2) also show the overall preponderance of positions in the centre, though it will be noted that this is significantly less among the classes that, as a whole, have greater educational, cultural and economic resources: professionals and managers (PM) and entrepreneurs and executives (EE).



$\chi^2(40) = 631.74; p=0.000$

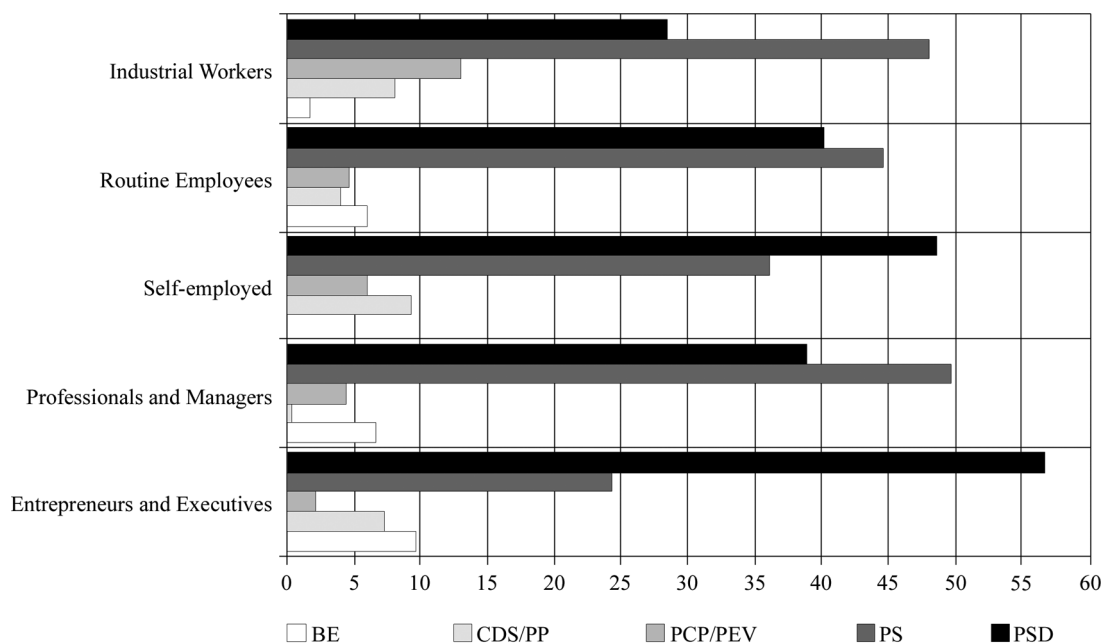
Chart 2: Self-assessed political position by social class: ESS countries (%).

With regard to Portugal, the last two categories contrast with each other in the left–right options. In effect, with the exception of certain far-left options by the EE, which are also the greatest for all classes, its other left-wing positions are considerably fewer than those of the PM and also fewer than any of the other sectors.

The class of industrial workers (IW) is the most left-wing and that of the SE the most right-wing. The average European positions are not too far from this configuration. They also show most right-wing positions among the EE and SE and most left-wing positions among routine employees (RE). The PM and IW positions, however, are more balanced than in Portugal, where, as has been seen, left-wing options clearly predominate.

It is now of interest to examine the degree of consistency that exists between these declared overall positions in Portugal and the respondents' party sympathies, in accordance with the same socio-occupational categories (Chart 3).

The parties represented in the national parliament in Portugal are distributed as follows: the Bloco de Esquerda (BE – Left Bloc), Partido Comunista Português/Partido Ecologista os Verdes (PCP/PEV – Portuguese Communist Party/Ecology Party-The Greens) and Partido Socialista (PS – Socialist Party) are positioned on the left, whereas the Partido Social Democrata (PSD – Social Democratic Party) and the Centro Democrático Social, Partido Popular (CDS/PP – Social Democratic Centre/People's Party)



$\chi^2(16) = 68.576; p=0.000$

Chart 3: Party sympathies by social class: Portugal (%).

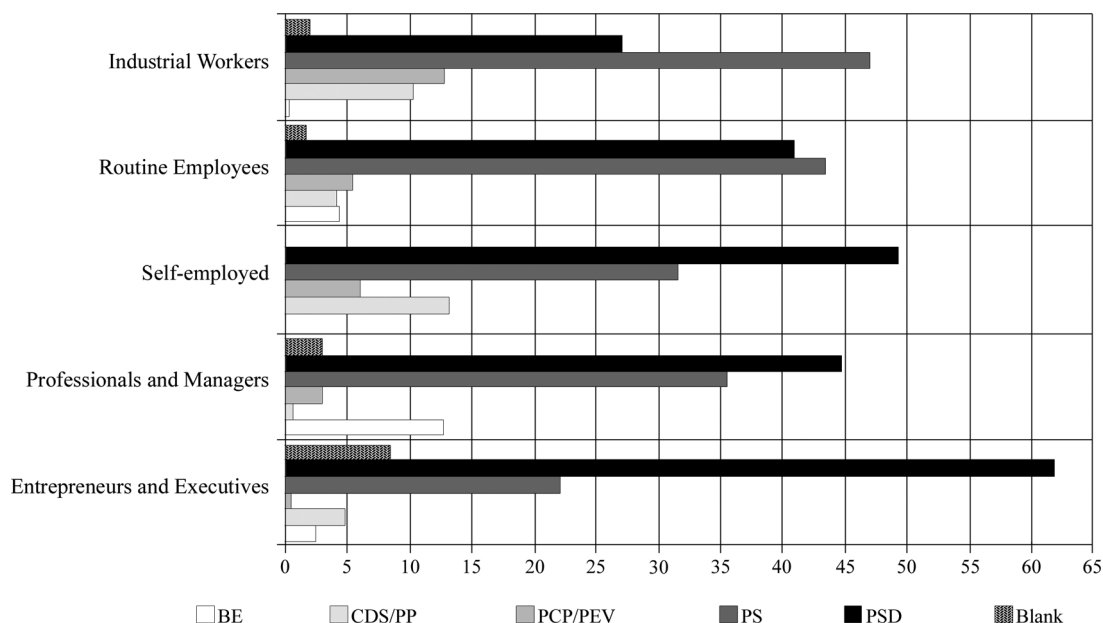
occupy the right wing of the parliamentary spectrum. With and without alliances, the two largest parties, the PS (centre-left) and the PSD (centre-right) have governed the Portuguese democracy for the last 30 years.

It is clear to see that the PS is the favourite among the IW, RE and PM classes, whereas the PSD has the advantage among the EE and the SE. The PCP continues to win strong support, obviously among a minority, though it is reasonably divided among all classes except the PM, where it is insignificant. Finally, the BE has no support at all among the SE – which corresponds to the lack of far-left options in this sector – but, on the contrary, it has the greatest relative number of sympathizers among the EE. This corresponds to the far-left options already confirmed there, in contrast, anyway, to the overall right-wing positions of the great majority of them.

What results from all this data, therefore, is a clear convergence between abstract political positioning measured on a scale from 1 to 10 and the expression of the party preferences of the classes, as the party spectrum itself is presented in the Portuguese scene.

Moving one step further forward, let us now see what the respondents stated about the party that gained their vote in the March 2002 elections for the national parliament.

It has to be remembered that these elections were caused by the political crisis arising from the resignation of the then prime minister (who was also secretary-general of the Socialist Party), which led to the dissolution of the parliament. This relinquishment of power, and the way it happened,



$\chi^2(16) = 118.88; p=0.000$

Chart 4: Party voted for in the last national elections by social class (%).

contributed to a right-wing majority in the elections mentioned, with a victory for the PSD. A punitive transfer of votes, therefore, took place from the left to the right.

More precisely, the voting in the 1999 and 2002 elections gave the results presented in Table 2, which also registers the responses of the Portuguese questioned in the ESS on the party they had voted for in the last elections, in March 2002.

Let us now see what the respondents tell us about their vote in 2002, with a view to comparing this with the party preferences expressed, as shown in Chart 4.

A comparison immediately reveals a significant convergence between party preferences and votes. But a notable and interesting exception appears to be the PM. We saw before that their majority left-wing preference translated, in party terms, into an identical preference for the left and, in particular, the PS. It was essentially here, then, that the punitive transference of votes from left to right occurred, reversing the party power situation in 2002.

It can be seen, in fact, that a small increase in right-wing votes from other classes might have happened. But everything takes place as if, in all of them, party sympathy permanently coincided with voting practice, irrespective of the political conjuncture. Among the PM, in contrast, many of those who declare their sympathy for the left and the PS also declare that they voted PSD in the 2002 elections.

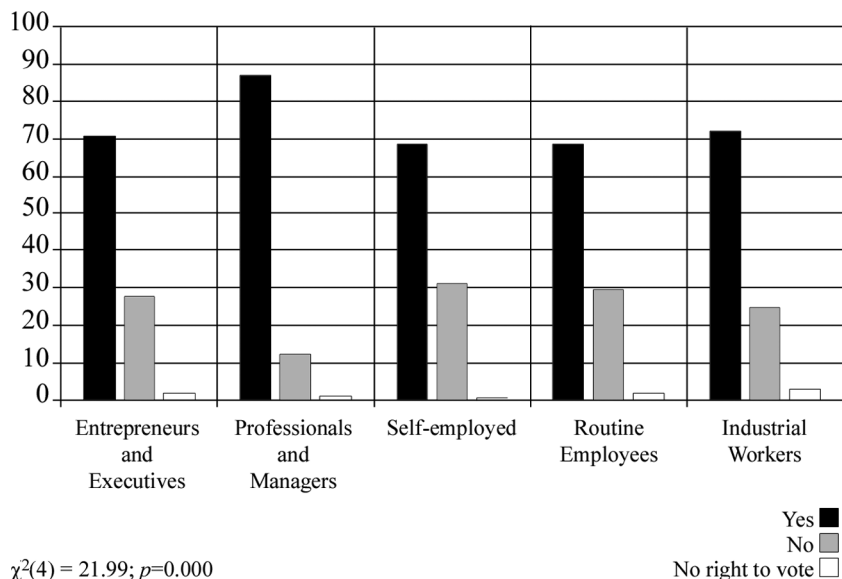


Chart 5: Participation in the last national elections by social class (%).

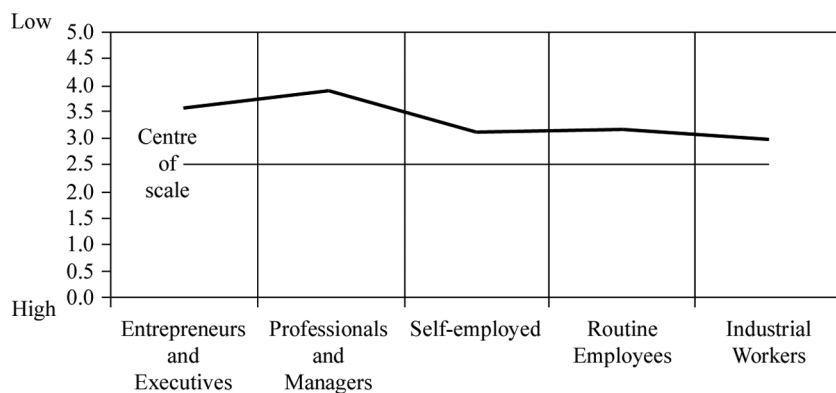
Several studies confirm that instability in political preferences is reflected in instability and volatility in voting. Alignment and re-alignment with the parties seems to be one of the consequences of modernization processes and the concomitant change in values (Chart 5).

On an individual level, the assessments leading to the inclination to vote for a party, or to abstain, are based on many issues: they are connected overall with the level of satisfaction with the government and the institutions, the assignment of blame and merit, perceptions about the national situation, in particular economic factors, the individual's own situation and the evaluation of the situation that he or she will be facing in the future.

The voters' differing resources, their greater or lesser interest in politics and their ability to reflect on the respective codes and implications also have an obvious influence on voting. It is also through this kind of mediations, these value judgements, that particular situations and successive social contexts gain influence.

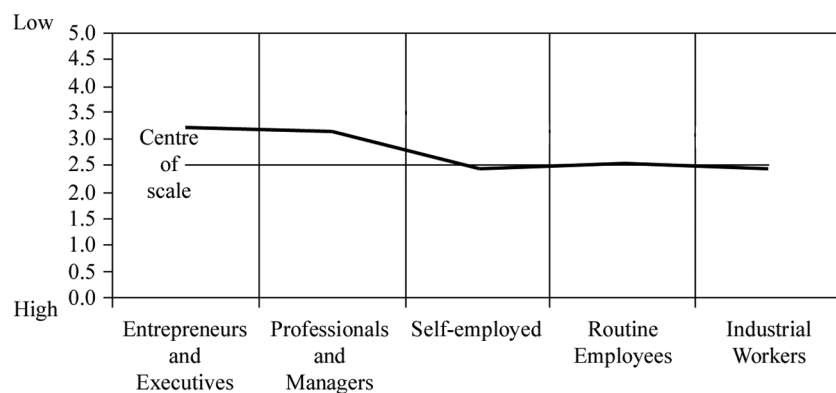
Furthermore, there are various attitudes of inertia about adhering to parties and a greater or lesser conviction or predisposition to support such and such a party or to vote in this or that way. This alone is an important factor in possible swings.

In the Portuguese case mentioned, there was a strong consistency between left/right preferences, their correlation in party terms and actual voting behaviour. On this latter plane, everything takes place as though there was a certain immunity to circumstances, as is reflected in the strong party loyalties of the different electoral sectors and the constancy of their choice.



$F(4, 1202) = 28.178; p = 0.000; \eta^2 = 0.086$

Chart 6: Combined index of the distance from politics: Portugal (averages).



$F(4, 35056) = 896.536; p = 0.000; \eta^2 = 0.093$

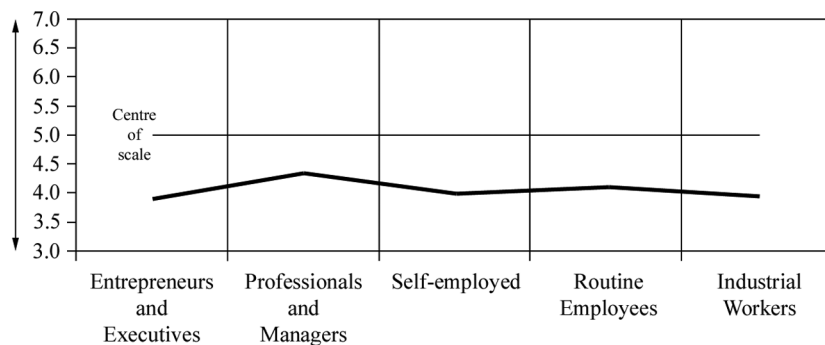
Chart 7: Combined index of the distance from politics: ESS countries (averages).

It will be interesting, therefore, to consider the exception, which, as we saw, concerns the PM. Of all the classes this one has the greatest educational and cultural resources, which allows us to suppose that, as a whole, they are also more able to make sense of politics.

In fact, neither the PM at a European level, as an average of the countries applying the ESS, nor those in Portugal think it is difficult to understand politics or take a position in this respect. Along with the EE, and more than other classes, they also consider that they could take part in a group devoted to political questions. Finally, they show a greater interest in politics than the other sectors.

This is all shown in the combined index on the distance from politics (Charts 6 and 7) which groups together the four indicators mentioned.

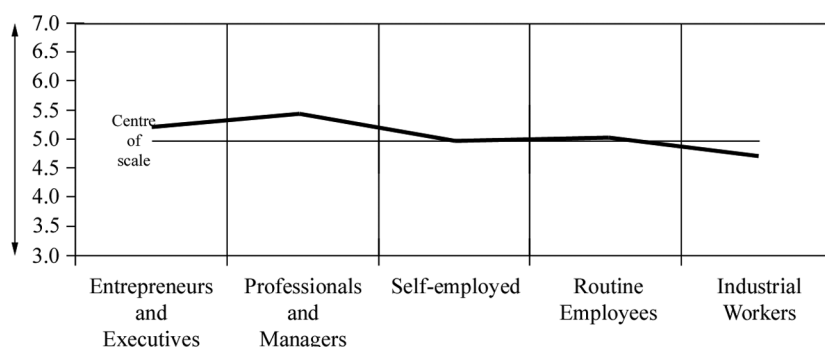
Trust in the institutions listed in the survey – the legal system, the police and politicians – records much lower values in Portugal than the



Scale: 0=no trust at all; 10=complete trust

$F(4, 1154) = 2.35; p = n.s.$

Chart 8: Combined index of political trust: Portugal (averages).



Scale: 0=no trust at all; 10=complete trust

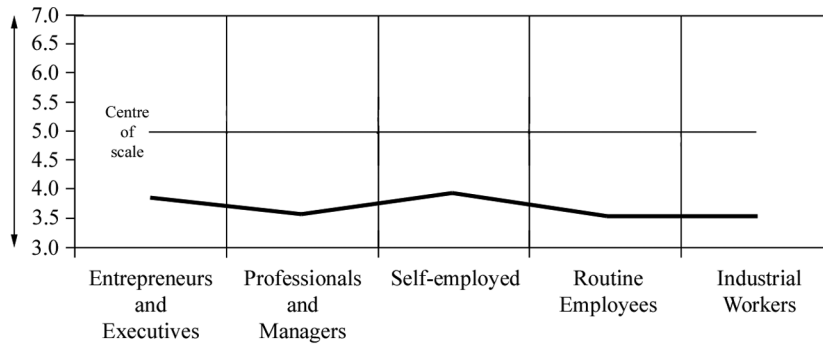
$F(4, 34606) = 170.25; p = 0.000; \eta^2 = 0.019$

Chart 9: Combined index of political trust: ESS countries (averages).

European average (Charts 8 and 9). In view of the crises that have been affecting the country at various levels, particularly since the beginning of the new century, such disaffection and lack of trust are not surprising. However, in relative terms, the PM are once more less affected than the other sectors, as the combined index of political trust shows.

Another set of indicators on education, the economy, the government, the health services and democracy sought to measure the level of political satisfaction. Here too, as is to be expected, the results for Portugal were far lower than the European average. But it is interesting to note that, with certain minor variations per indicator, the PM were among the most dissatisfied, as a whole, which is entirely compatible with the swing in votes indicated above. The combined index of political satisfaction can be seen in Charts 10 and 11.

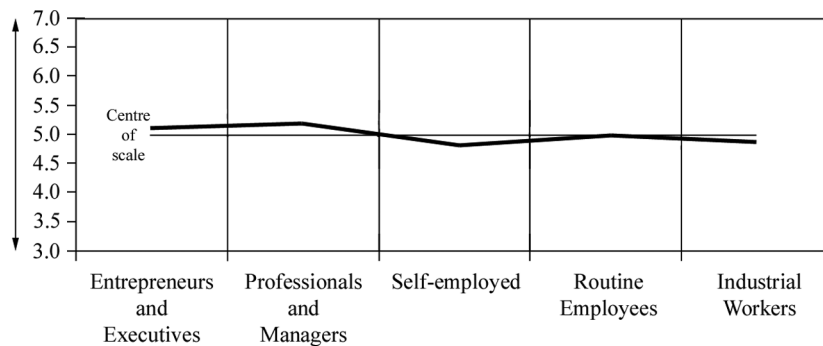
This disenchantment of the PM seems to be reflected, last of all, in the social trust indicators, which sought to measure, successively, inter-personal trust, trust in the honesty of others and trust in the altruism of others.



Scale: 0=extremely dissatisfied; 10=extremely satisfied

$F(4, 1114) = 2.6; p = 0.035; \eta^2 = 0.009$

Chart 10: Combined index of political satisfaction: Portugal (averages).



Scale: 0=extremely dissatisfied; 10=extremely satisfied

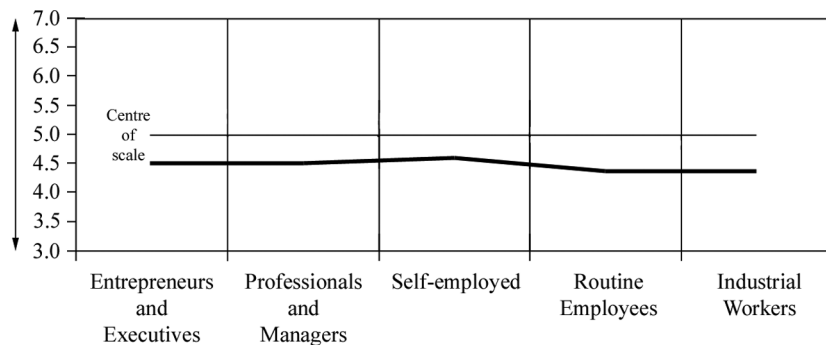
$F(4, 32658) = 52.174; p = 0.035; \eta^2 = 0.006$

Chart 11: Combined index of political satisfaction: ESS countries (averages).

Here the combined index of social trust shows a pattern that contrasts with the European average in which the PM are clearly above the median point on the scale and above all other classes. In Portugal, the distribution is indistinct (Charts 12 and 13).

Despite their disenchantment, it is worth noting that the interest in politics declared by the PM continued to be reflected in voting behaviour, since they were the ones who abstained least in the 2002 elections, with a significant degree of difference from the other classes.

All the information presented seems to help to explain the different capacity shown by the PM to form a critical appreciation of a particular situation, an appreciation reflected in their voting behaviour. With this behaviour, they went against their basic, declared, party-political preferences. It should be observed that making a choice against these preferences without abandoning them is a completely different matter from the voting instability that reveals modifications in these basic options themselves.



Scale: 0=no trust at all; 10=complete trust

$F(4, 1233) = 0.863; p = n.s.$

Chart 12: Combined index of social trust: Portugal (averages).



Scale: 0=no trust at all; 10=complete trust

$F(4, 35899) = 254.958; p = 0.000; \eta^2 = 0.028$

Chart 13: Combined index of social trust: ESS countries (averages).

Whatever the case, there are a number of implications on this front, including those that involve the efficiency of electoral campaigns in relation to the main target-population.

It is also worth making a very brief reference to ‘trans-situational or high-order values’, such as result from the application of Schwartz’s scale in the ESS (Figures 2–4). The two dimensions of the model oppose ‘openness to change’ to ‘conservation’ and ‘self-transcendence’ to ‘self-enhancement’.

It should be noted that, on average in the European countries, the PM position is close to ‘openness to change’ and ‘self-transcendence’, i.e., at the opposite end to the values of ‘conservation’ that characterize the SE and IW. They maintain also the same distance from ‘self-enhancement’ preferred by the entrepreneurs and executives.

In Portugal, the EE are also in the self-enhancement area, whereas the PM are still opposite to the IW and SE in that they move closer to openness to change (Figure 4 and Charts 14 and 15).

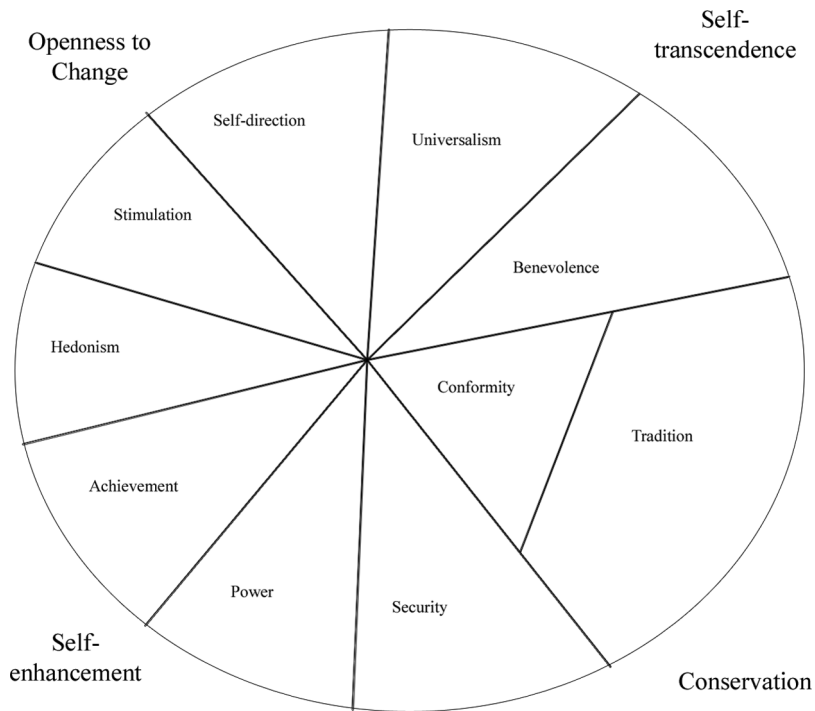


Figure 2: Schwartz model (1992).

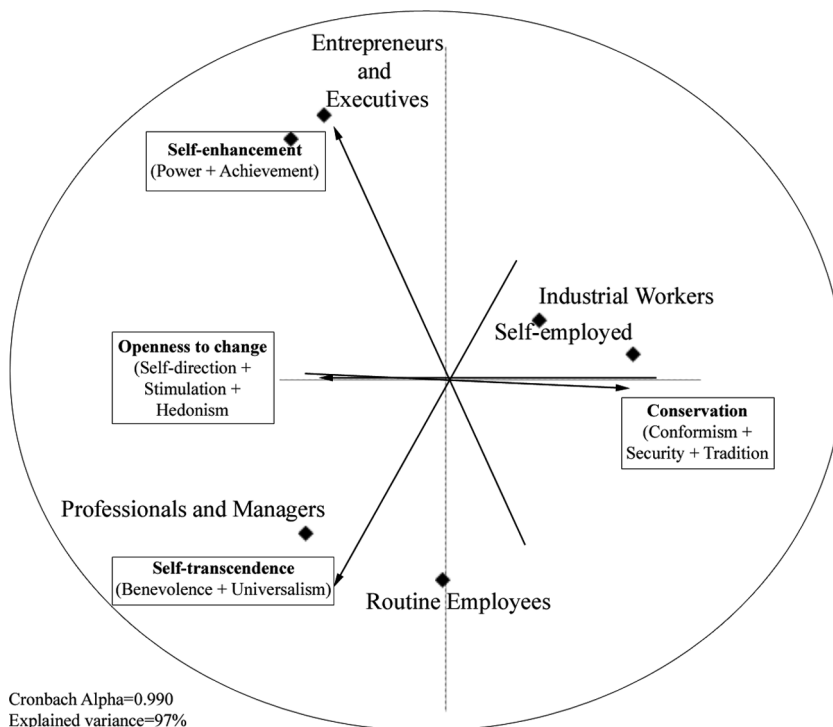


Figure 3: The human values of Europeans by social class.

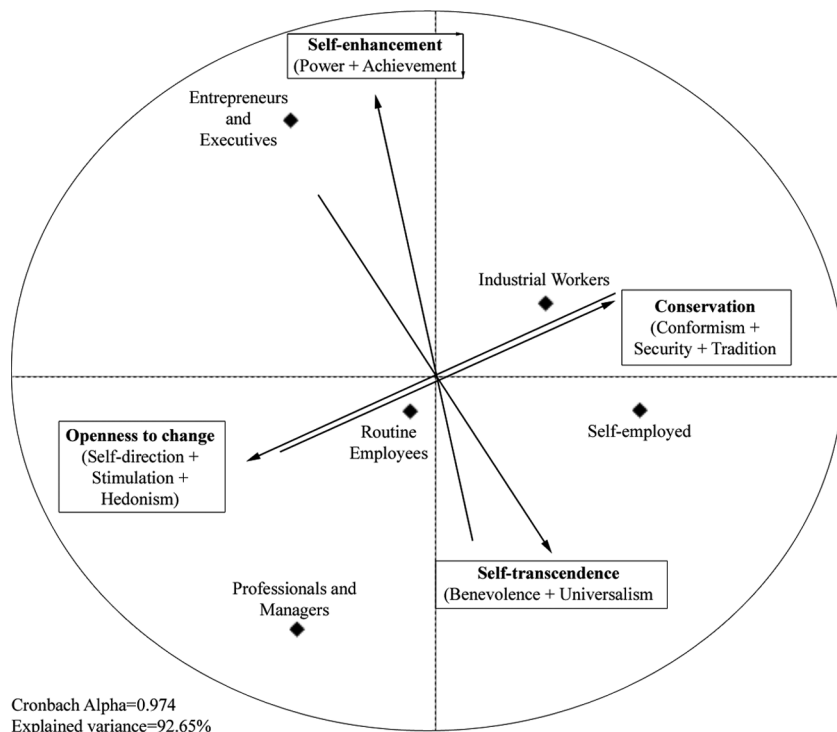


Figure 4: The human values of the Portuguese by social class.

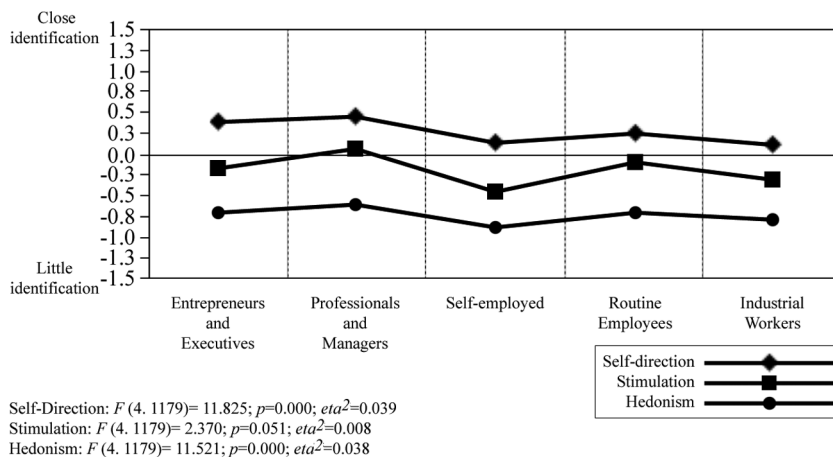


Chart 14: Openness to change: Portugal.

In effect, the PM values are high for self-direction and go on to outstrip the other classes, more strikingly than their European equivalents, with regard to hedonism.

It can be concluded from this that in trans-situational values there is also an extension of what we found in the applied values for politics.

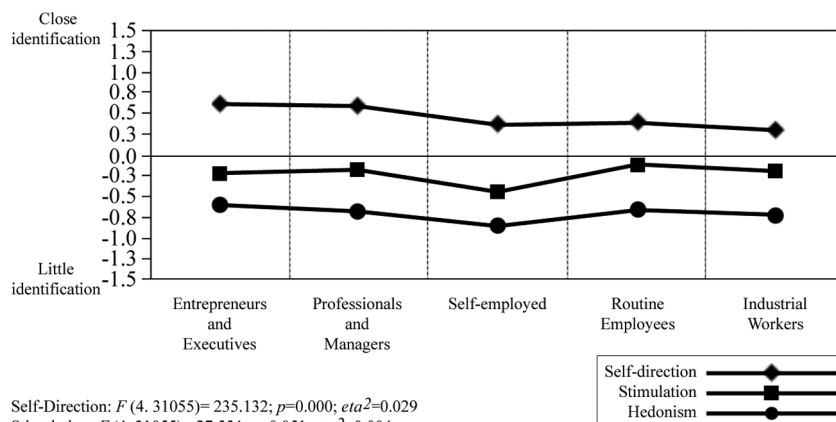


Chart 15: Openness to change: ESS countries.

In their symbolic dimensions and values, our late-modern societies have undergone significant developments, which several authors identify, describe and seek to explain in different ways.

One phenomenon that is definitely not taking place is the death of ideologies. Citizens are certainly able to reflect more on their circumstances in life and are more focussed than before on personal fulfilment. Without spreading uniformly through the society, this trend consistently seems to move towards the idea that it is increasingly less worthwhile to wait for future happiness and less reasonable to make great sacrifices for that hypothetical happiness. Personal well being must happen now. Citizens are also increasingly assuming their right to choose and combine – freely, for themselves – political, religious and ethical elements of the ideologies available, without having to obey their precepts *en bloc*, as they did before.

This is not the place for examples of these complex processes, which at a certain level can be summed up as a new form of do-it-yourself with ideas, in the service of the search for pragmatic objectives (Almeida, 1995). But it is clear that the most regular and virtuous practitioners of this DIY craftsmanship and of the flexibility that it implies are among professionals and managers.

As a result of their cultural, scientific and technical abilities, it is also members of these social sectors who usually have the greatest access to means of communication and, therefore, greater capacities to spread their values and attitudes, opinions and tastes on a broad scale.

The development of this social class throughout Europe in recent decades has demonstrated sustained quantitative growth, which will also tend to increase its influence.

In all cases, there is no doubt that in our reflexive societies all our analytical and prospective efforts demand that we attentively monitor what is happening not only at the level of social composition but also at the level of values patterns.

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