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# *Social Bonds and Coping Strategies of Unemployed People in Europe<sup>1</sup>*

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## **Abstract**

Experiencing unemployment, especially when it lasts longer than the legal period for receiving allowances, threatens the *organic participation bond* in post-industrial society as it raises questions, at least partially, about both the material and symbolic *recognition* of work and the social *protection* that stems from employment. The question is whether or not unemployment, goes together with a breakdown of the other types of bonds: the *lineal bond* (between parents and children), the *elective participation bond* (between people chosen based on affinities) and the *citizenship bond* (between individuals united by a core basis of rights and duties within a political community). If it does, we have to support the spiral hypothesis, if we look to the second, we are inclined to defend the compensation hypothesis (the break in the organic participation bond is compensated by the maintenance, even the strengthening, of the other types of bond). This article is based on in-depth interviews conducted with unemployed people from seven European Union countries (France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Romania and Ireland). It contributes to demonstrate that unemployment in a period of crisis increases the risk of a process of impoverishment and spiralling breaks in social bonds, but it is also in particular in the Southern countries at the origin of a process of coping, based on forms of compensation. The *lineal bond* is in these countries a basic resource to compensate the break in the *organic participation bond*.

Keywords: unemployment, social bonds, coping strategies

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<sup>1</sup> This article is based on a qualitative survey supported by the European Commission and carried out with the assistance of a team of seven researchers who undertook semi-directive interviews among unemployed people in their own countries and drew up an initial summary.

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## 1. Introduction

The economic crisis that Europe is experiencing is having a harsher effect in some countries than in others and, within each country, among certain population groups rather than others. While statistical surveys make it possible to pinpoint households particularly exposed to poverty and long-term unemployment (European Commission, 2012, 2013) or the unemployed faced to poverty and social isolation (Gallie, Paugam, 2000; Gallie, Paugam, Jacobs, 2003; Paugam, 2006), they cannot be readily used to find out how these households and these unemployed are managing to cope with the economic misfortunes that the crisis is causing. In many respects, this question, albeit simple, is a real enigma. The purpose of this article is to try to resolve this enigma. A qualitative approach makes it possible better to assess the strategies that are being used to cope with unemployment and poverty, against a backdrop of unavoidable deprivation, and to find out whether such strategies are possible and therefore to pinpoint the main factors that explain them. What do we really mean, however, when we talk about coping strategies?

First of all, we need to examine what the experience of unemployment means in post-industrial societies, the main features of which are, as we know, production activity and the importance of work as well as the guarantee, which varies in different countries, of social protection for workers facing life's ups and downs. The compulsory social insurance system and the stable employment which spread throughout the main developed countries at the end of the Second World War helped to change the very meaning of occupational integration. To understand this, we need to look not just at the *relationship with work* but also at the *relationship with employment* shaped by the protective logic of the welfare state. In other words, occupational integration does not just mean self-realisation through work, but also an attachment, beyond the world of work, to the core of basic protection that came out of the social struggles within what can be called welfare capitalism. The experience of unemployment, especially when it lasts longer than the statutory period of benefit, threatens what I suggest to call, following the durkheimian terminology<sup>2</sup>, the *organic participation bond* (Paugam, 2008) with post-industrial society as the material and symbolic *recognition* of work and the social *protection* stemming from employment may to some extent be called into question. Unemployed people then face the risk of social disqualification.

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<sup>2</sup> According to the concept of organic solidarity developed by Emile Durkheim in his 1893 thesis entitled *The Division of Labour in Society*. The concept of organic solidarity is defined by the complementarity of roles and individuals in the world of work and, more generally, in the social system.

If we look at the theory of social bonds, the experience of unemployment can be analysed from two contrasting analytical perspectives. According to this theory, while organic participation bond occupies a basic place in the system by which individuals are attached to groups and to society overall, it is not the only bond (See table 1).

Three other types of bonds also need to be taken into account: *lineal bond* (between parents and children), *elective participation bond* (between peers or persons chosen because of their affinities), and *citizenship bond* (between individuals sharing the same basic rights and duties within a political community). Together with *organic participation bond* (between complementary individuals in the working world), there are therefore four bonds through which individuals are integrated into society. We can define each of them in terms of the two dimensions of protection and recognition. These bonds take multiple forms and differ in nature, but together they provide individuals with both the protection and the recognition that they need to exist in society. Protection includes all the support that an individual can mobilise to cope with the ups and downs of life, and recognition includes the social interaction that motivates individuals by substantiating their existence and the value that is attached to it by the other or others. The expression 'count on' fairly well summarises what individuals can hope for from their relationships with others and with institutions in terms of protection, while the expression 'count for' expresses the just as crucial expectation of recognition.

Within this analytical framework, the question is whether or not unemployment, reflecting as it does a breakdown of organic participation bond, goes together with a breakdown of the other types of bonds. If it does, we have to support the spiral hypothesis (Paugam, 1995) (unemployment is a cumulative process of breakdown of the four types of bond); if we look to the second, we are inclined to defend the *compensation* hypothesis (the break in the organic participation bond is compensated by the maintenance, even the strengthening, of the other types of bond).

As it is often seen as one of the main causes of deteriorating social bonds, unemployment is a particular concern for social science researchers and in particular sociologists.

**Table 1.** Definition of the different types of bonds according to the forms of protection and recognition

<i>Types of social bonds</i>	<i>Forms of protection</i>	<i>Forms of recognition</i>
<i>Lineal bond</i> (between parents and children)	Counting on intergenerational solidarity Close protection	Counting for one's parents and one's children Affective recognition
<i>Elective participation bond</i> (between partners, friends, selected acquaintances...)	Counting on the solidarity of elective acquaintances Close protection	Counting for elective acquaintances Affective recognition or by similarity
<i>Organic participation bond</i> (between actors of the occupational life)	Stable job Contractualized protection	Recognition through work and consequent social esteem
<i>Citizenship bond</i> (between members of the same political community)	Legal protection (civil, political and social rights) as per the principle of equality	Recognition of the sovereign individual

It has often been studied as a process through which handicaps are progressively accumulated. Surveys have placed the stress on worsening standards of living, and on the decline of social life and marginalisation vis-à-vis other workers (Bakke, 1940a, 1940b; Lazarsfeld, Jahoda, Zeise, 1933; Schnapper, 1981; Paugam, Russell, 2000).

But, studying the coping strategies that people use when they are unemployed is clearly tantamount to accepting, at least in theory, that a compensation mechanism is possible (Paugam, 2005; Demazière, Araujo Guimarães, Hirata, Sugita, 2013). Faced with a more or less permanent withdrawal from the labour market, are unemployed people able to use their lineal bond to mobilise resources by calling on potential material as well as moral and psychological support from their wider family? Can they mobilise resources from their elective participation bond (networks of elective relationships (partners, friends, close circles or local communities)? Lastly, do they always have confidence in their citizenship bond and their countries' institutions and do they turn to them in the hope that their status as citizens will provide them with protection and recognition?

## 2. A qualitative survey

The survey took place in seven European Union Member States (France, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Romania, Ireland). In each country, we interviewed people from two types of place: a large town (often the capital of

the country) and a small town remote from a major metropolis (Paugam, 2014). We did not attempt to study all the socio-occupational groups, but gave priority to populations at the greatest risk of combining unemployment and poverty. We decided on that basis to interview people chiefly from working class backgrounds (blue and white-collar) coping with unemployment since the onset of the crisis. This choice was also justified by the assumption that we would, in this way, have a better chance of being able to study strategies to cope with unemployment and poverty.

The type of approach that we chose was the in-depth face-to-face interview. This type of interview is based on the mutual trust between the interviewer and the interviewee. It has less to do with asking questions than with getting people to talk; in other words, the interview guide provides a framework for dialogue on specific points and is not a questionnaire to be answered). Where necessary, the interviewer may merely offer fresh encouragement or ask for further details. The idea is that interviewers to some extent become 'midwives' in the sense that they ask interviewees to put themselves entirely in their hands and overcome any hang-ups that they may have because they are afraid, fear that they will be badly judged or perceived, or are keen to conceal anything that may appear to be undesirable or even deviant behaviour. The interview was preferably held in the interviewee's home so that the interviewer could observe housing conditions and standards of living in general and then use their observations to interpret the information gathered from the interview. In some cases, the interviewees preferred to be interviewed elsewhere than their home, often in a public place or a café. The in-depth interview is a comprehensive interview in the sense that it involves a sociological interpretation which attaches as much importance to the facts recounted by interviewees as to the meaning that interviewees give them and the various rationalisations that they put forward.

Our goal, which we achieved, was to interview at least 15 unemployed people in each country. The final sample included 111 people. Table 2 below shows the breakdown by three criteria: gender, age and place.

In each country a more or less equivalent number of men and women were interviewed, to the extent that the overall sample had an almost equal breakdown of 55 men and 53 women. We felt that it was important to choose people from three age-groups: 35 and under (start of working life), 35-50 (mid-working life), 50 and over (end of working life). In total, the sample included 27 people in the first group, 40 in the second and 41 in the third. Lastly, we also achieved our goal of having as many people from urban as from rural backgrounds (68 and 40 respectively).

**Table 2.** Breakdown of interviews by basic sample criteria

Country	Gender		Age			Place		Total
	M	F	<35	35<50	50+	Urban	Rural	
DE	7	8	3	8	4	10	5	15
EL	9	10	4	6	9	10	9	19
ES	9	6	2	4	9	10	5	15
FR	8	7	5	8	2	9	6	15
IE	8	9	5	5	7	9	8	17
PT	7	8	4	3	8	10	5	15
RO	8	7	4	6	5	10	5	15
Number	56	55	27	40	44	68	43	111

Several methods were tried out to contact potential interviewees: snowball sample, personal contacts, public employment agency, public welfare services, associations assisting the unemployed, sub-sample of a previous survey (see table 3).

**Table 3.** Methods used to contact unemployed people

Country	'Snowball'	Personal contacts	Public employment agency	Public welfare service	Associations assisting the unemployed	Sub-sample from a previous survey
DE		X	X		X	
EL	X			X		X
ES		X			X	
FR		X	X		X	
IE					X	
PT		X				
RO	X		X	X	X	

Overall, bearing in mind that there is no ideal method, the solution was often to use a range of methods to contact people and to try to correct, for each country, any selection bias that may have been introduced.

### 3. Lineal bond as a basic resource ?

Analysing the strategies that unemployed people in Europe are using to cope with the crisis makes it necessary to look at all the resources that may be available to them from the economic, social and institutional environment. The unemployment benefit system is not the same in the seven countries in which the interviews took place (Paugam, Gallie, 2004). Eligibility for housing



benefit also differs in different countries as well the possibility of extended welfare cover which may include health and health care. France and Germany have a social protection system which is much more developed than those of the other countries. These are also the two countries least affected by the crisis. Unemployment is much lower in Germany than in France, where the level of poverty of unemployed people is slightly higher. Despite these differences, the interviews in the seven countries show that unemployment has a direct effect on standards of living. Whatever the country, unemployment is systematically reflected by the need to cut consumption. None of the unemployed people interviewed had any experience belying this tendency. The processing of the interviews even became a little monotonous as everyone, at least on the surface, said the same thing: once any minor savings – when there were any – had been made, the unemployed interviewees unanimously said that they had started to cut their budgets for holidays, leisure, culture, trips to restaurants and purchases of clothes and that they had then been forced to manage all their expenses, including food and health expenses, in better ways. These findings also agree overall with the statistical processing of the longitudinal data collected in the SILC surveys (Guio, Pomati, 2013).

One way of coping with unemployment and precariousness is to call on lineal bond . This type of support is possible only if certain conditions are met. If there is to be family solidarity: 1) people must have and maintain relations with their families, 2) the family must have resources that it can hand out or exchange, 3) people have to accept their dependence on their family and the family has to be willing to help. There is a major difference between the countries covered by our survey – whether or not independence from the family is the norm.

What does this norm of independence mean? What are its historic cultural foundations? The southern European countries tend to have a system of attachment that may be termed ‘family-based’. The stability of lineal bond shapes family solidarity and plays a role of overall social regulation. In a family-based system, individuals have interdependent relations within both their family of orientation and their family of procreation. They support one another by abiding by the absolute rule of filial respect for elders and the duty of unflinching care for children. In such a regime, individual autonomy is possible only if it is envisaged or negotiated within the family. In countries such as France or Germany, the norm of independence has another meaning. The regime of attachment in those countries is different in nature. At least partial detachment from the family of orientation is considered to be a prerequisite for social integration, presupposing real participation in the working world and a quest for genuine organic bond with the actors of

professional life. This organic participation bond then provide individuals with a socio-occupational status and regulate the system itself, with the result that it can then be called an ‘organicist’ regime. In such a regime , independence from one’s parents is synonymous with successful social integration. It is therefore sought as such. Being dependent on parents at an age at which it seems proper not be dependent in view of the social norms in force may bring about feelings of social failure. The proportion of young people between 25 and 34 living with at least one of their parents is one indicator of the norm of autonomy (Table 4).

**Table 4.** *Percentage of 25 to 34-year-olds living with at least one parent*

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	$\Delta$ 2013/2007
<i>DE</i>								
Total	12.6	12.9	13.5	13.0	13.7	12.9	13.1	1.03
Unemployed*	8.6	8.6	11.6	10.0	11.5	10.3	10.8	1.25
<i>EL</i>								
Total	47.0	47.9	46.3	45.6	47.5	49.2	51.3	1.09
Unemployed*	39.5	38.7	39.4	43.0	49.4	52.6	55.2	1.40
<i>ES</i>								
Total	37.3	36.5	35.2	35.7	35.8	37.6	39.3	1.05
Unemployed*	31.6	33.3	33.5	36.3	38.3	41.7	43.9	1.39
<i>FR</i>								
Total	10.6	10.7	10.2	10.9	11.4	10.9	9.8	0.92
Unemployed*	15.4	15.8	14.1	17.6	17.3	16.7	15.8	1.02
<i>IE</i>								
Total	27.3	21.6	19.1	19.2	21.3	20.2	21.7	0.93
Unemployed*	20.8	22.5	24.5	24.8	27.3	26.0	28.2	1.35
<i>PT</i>								
Total	39.9	40.4	40.1	40.1	38.9	40.9	41.5	1.04
Unemployed*	44.7	45.1	43.1	43.1	44.6	49.1	50.5	1.13
<i>RO</i>								
Total	38.1	38.5	39.2	41.7	43.8	45.8	46.6	1.22
Unemployed*	42.1	44.2	44.9	43.7	45.2	46.4	46.1	1.09

*\*and non-working, without students*

*Source : Eurostat, EU-SILC*

This is not to pass judgment on the ability of these individuals to become independent of their families, or to claim that they cannot be termed independent adults if they still live with their parents, but simply to make note of the striking contrasts observed amongst the countries studied.

The proportion of young adults living with at least one parent in 2013 was noticeably lower in France and Germany (9.8 % and 13.1 % respectively) than in other countries (51.3 % in Greece, 46.6 % in Romania, 41.5 % in Portugal, 39.3 % in Spain and 21.7 % in Ireland). How have these figures evolved since 2007, i.e., since one year before the beginning of the crisis,

particularly for the unemployed and other non-working individuals in this age group (excluding students)? The greatest increases were observed in Greece, Spain and Ireland where there were respectively 1.40, 1.39 and 1.35 times more unemployed/non-working individuals in the 25 to 34-year-old age bracket living with at least one of their parents in 2013 than in 2007. Among these three countries hard hit by the crisis, the increase for all individuals in this age bracket was much lower, and in Ireland, it was even negative. So it can be said that in these countries the family served as a particularly significant buffer during the crisis, particularly vis-à-vis those not in the labour market.

### *3.1 'Everyone has to get on by themselves': independence as a norm*

As expected, the interviews conducted for our survey clearly confirmed the differences between the *familialist* regime of the southern European countries and the *organicist* regime of France and Germany. The interviews carried out in France and Germany were very similar in terms of family solidarity and diverged quite strongly from those carried out in other countries. The French and German unemployed are clearly more likely to report that they are unwilling to seek assistance from their families, including financial assistance. They feel uncomfortable asking for this kind of help as they view it as a form of failure and social humiliation.

For family solidarity to come into play, one must first have an ongoing relationship with one's family. In the French interviews, this condition was not always fulfilled (3 out of 15). Clearly, bonds are sometimes broken or there is conflict in the family.

The lineal bond on which family solidarity is based are fragile and indeed, can break. Even so, the existence of this bond and of being on good terms with one's parents or the members of one's extended family is not in itself sufficient to bring about family solidarity. Indeed, a number of unemployed persons mentioned the embarrassment they would feel if they were to ask for assistance. The expressions they used communicated how deeply they had internalised the norm of autonomy vis-à-vis one's family. Being an adult means not being dependent on one's family. Asking for help from one's family would mean giving up and facing disgrace. The following excerpts reflect this sentiment:

*'I have my children, so... but I don't want to bother them either, especially not in that way. People need to look out for now themselves. Anyway, I still see them a lot.'* (Man, France, 59 years of age, lives alone, unemployed for 6 years, rural area).

*I'm lucky to have a family, absolutely.* But my family isn't a money faucet, either, and I'm not their child, they have children, you know what I mean? There are also limits, you can't become a burden to your brothers and sisters or your relatives, it isn't right, it goes against nature – *or even of my child! I'm going to say now that you have your degree, you've studied well, you're going to take care of your mother! That's totally ridiculous!*' (Woman, France, 46 years of age, single, lives alone with an adult-age child, unemployed for more than 6 months, urban area).

Conforming to this norm of autonomy vis-à-vis the family is clearly a matter of social honour and was widely mentioned in the interviews. There is some variation, however, with a bit more leeway in rural areas. With family nearby, there is more give-and-take about daily life experiences. The form that family solidarity takes depends largely on this kind of cross-sharing. For the mechanisms of family solidarity to operate without interfering with the norm of autonomy, they must be interwoven with a shared sense of living in a quasi-community.

In Germany, using family solidarity as a strategy happens primarily in households with children. People who live alone seem to rarely call on this type of assistance, either because they no longer have contact with their family, or because their family is unable to help, or because they do not wish to seek outside help. It is clearly important for some individuals not to become a burden on their families and friends, to retain a sense of pride, and to show that they can make it through under their own steam. There is perhaps also the fear of piling up debts.

When people do ask for financial help, it is usually within the family (parents and siblings) rather than with friends and, on the whole, even asking one's close family is something those surveyed found difficult and unpleasant. It made them feel that they weren't able to demonstrate to their parents and extended family that they were capable of being responsible adults. It is, however, easier to ask for help when there are children.

*My family also comes to my rescue, that's for certain...* But I'm someone who really doesn't enjoy receiving help from others [...] *okay, I do prefer to save up longer for something that I really want to do or to have, so, yes, my family also buys lots of things for my child because they realise they are expensive and that if I pay for all of it, it's really tough.*' (Woman, Germany, 27 years of age, single with 1 child, unemployed since 2008, urban area).

So even though many of those surveyed in the sample said they could count on their local network or their family to make ends meet or to help pay for special purchases, others refused to accept. There are several possible

reasons for refusing: first, the sometimes challenging circumstances of members of the extended family, such as unemployment and limited resources. The second reason is the personal position of the individual interviewed, who in certain cases simply did not wish to be 'kept'.

For some, family solidarity also takes the form of emotional support. Simply knowing that help is available is in itself of great help. The decision to resort to financial assistance from the family thus depends on many factors, such as the stability of family bonds, the socioeconomic status of the family, the family view on unemployment, the existence of children and psychological factors.

In a more general sense, the embarrassment the unemployed feel at asking for help from one's family must be understood as the same expression of a strong normative pressure as it is for anyone likely to experience difficult times. In reality this pressure reflects the power of the norm of autonomy that exists both in Germany and in France. In these two countries, more than in any of the other five in which the survey was conducted, admitting dependence on one's family is equivalent to saying one is incapable of living as an adult. Living apart from one's family does not mean the absence of bonds, it simply means one is not dependent on their family to cover daily expenses. The norm of autonomy has been so strongly internalised that the inability to conform to it is anxiety-provoking. That is why the unemployed we spoke with were overwhelmingly in agreement. But what we observed in France and Germany was much less common in the other countries.

### *3.2 'We're all in it together': family solidarity as a principle*

In the southern European countries, it is common for the unemployed to stay with their families until they can get their own home, a model that can be referred to as long-term familial cohabitation (Van de Velde, 2008). We saw striking regional differences across these countries.

The level of economic development is an important determinant of the structure of unemployment, but it also impacts family structures. In the poorest areas, family solidarism is more developed. Autonomy vis-à-vis the family increases with the level of economic development, and also with the level of social protection. When there are limited employment opportunities, the risk of poverty is higher, and it is essential to maintain relationships with family members to cope with the difficulties of life (Paugam, 2005). But we cannot attribute these phenomena solely to constraining factors – otherwise, why wouldn't all young unemployed Europeans be living with their parents?

We must take two additional factors into account. First, the tradition of family solidarity is more widespread in the southern European countries than

it is in other countries. The obligation of family solidarity falls in particular to the parents and is reinforced in the household through an extensive division of labour. In these models, the head of the family is most often the man, whose primary role is to ensure the financial autonomy of the household by providing resources earned in his professional occupation, while the woman devotes herself to the organization of domestic life and the children, even after they have reached adulthood (the traditional 'male breadwinner' model). However, this model varies across countries. In Portugal, women have made up over 60 % of the workforce since the early 2000s, compared with 46 % in Greece and 48 % in Spain<sup>3</sup>.

"As a rule, in southern European countries, the normative obligation of prolonged cohabitation applies to both parents and children. Adult children cannot afford to live independently as a couple until they are assured of a job or stable employment. So it seems normal for them to stay with their parents, and they participate fully in household life" (Reyneri, 1992).

The qualitative survey confirmed that the unemployed in southern Europe look to their extended family for the protections they need. Many grown children live in their parents' home, including those of an advanced age. In certain cases, the entire household may be sustained by a grandfather or grandmother's pension. The interviews we conducted in Greece were very clear on this point. A 55-year-old farmer in difficult straits due to the collapse of agricultural product sales along with increased expenses and taxes admitted that he, his non-working wife, and their two children were living on the pension of their retired parents, who also lived with them.

*'There are plenty of problems, but here in X the jobs haven't disappeared, so more or less everyone has something to do. There is invisible aid – we have oil, grapes, the pensions of our parents who live with us, it's not like in Athens, where a couple that has lost their jobs is done for.'* (Man, Greece, 55 years of age, married with 2 children, non-working partner).

*I have my parents who receive a € 700 pension, and by scrimping, together we manage. My sister is also at home, but she has been blind since she had an accident ten years ago. We tried to get her a disability pension, but still haven't been able to, and she owes taxes, too. How can you pay when you have health problems? We get by with my*

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<sup>3</sup> In Romania and Ireland, this rate is also nearly 60% and for the 25-54 age bracket, the rates averaged 74% in Portugal, 67% in Romania, 65% in Ireland, 55% in Greece and 63% in Spain during the period studied.

*parents' retirement and whatever money I manage to make. But if I run into trouble we're all sunk. There's no way out* (Man, Greece, 40 years of age, farmer, single, rural area).

The pensions received by people over 60 represent a larger share of the income in the households of the poor and unemployed in Spain and Portugal than in France and Germany, but it is even higher in Greece, at times representing the most significant source of income (European Commission, 2012, source SILC) It is therefore clear that in the southern European countries, and particularly in Greece, there is still a tendency for resources to be shared in households where several generations live together. This represents a sort of family solidarism in the face of poverty.

Only two unemployed persons we interviewed in Spain were under 35, the age bracket at which support from the family is greatest. Both cases dealt with young people who felt that their aspirations had been stymied by the crisis. They suffered a profound feeling of frustration, particularly since their parents were also directly or indirectly affected by unemployment. This prolonged situation is seen as a very negative experience since it delays the process of setting out on one's own. For example, young people in romantic relationships cannot begin a life together. Yet in both instances, the family's support was essential.

*'My grandmother, yes. She lives in San Sebastian and she does give us, like, three hundred (euros) per month or, for example, to help me pay hairdressing school tuition... I always can rely on family, or should be able to.'* (Woman, Spain, 25 years of age, single with no children, unemployed since 2009, urban area).

The norm of familialist solidarity does not only pertain to youth. It is also found with older people, such as this 53-year-old woman who has been unemployed for several years and works illegally in the informal economy.

*'Well, there's always someone who gives you a hand (...) For everything, multiple things, whether it is having dinner, then you are not charged, everyone pays yours, which is also a way of helping, or 'I bought something', and they give you a Tupperware, so, things like that...'* (Woman, Spain, 53 years of age, lives alone, long-term unemployed and undeclared work, urban area).

Note, however, that family solidarity has its challenges and is subject to strain. In order to benefit from extended assistance from one's family, one must have parents who are well-situated enough to respond to those needs. But in a crisis context, the social strata that were once insulated from poverty

and were in a position to help out their unemployed children can suddenly find themselves in dire financial straits. Under these conditions, intergenerational redistribution is no longer a given. This does not necessarily mean that the parent-child relationship is broken, but that family solidarity is not robust enough to effectively avoid poverty (Laparra et al., 2012).

The familialist model of the southern countries has traditionally been based on the pivotal role of the 'male breadwinner', who through his stable position in the working world was able to uphold the standard of living for his wife and family, including his grown children and even his dependent parents. The crisis has often had the immediate effect of disturbing this balance. In many cases, it is the male breadwinner who has lost his job and so himself has become dependent on his family.

*'My children, I want them to live their lives... I don't want... no, no. I don't like it. I just don't like to disturb anybody, not even 'name of friend with whom he lives' (Man, Spain, 57 years of age, separated, due to unemployment, 2 children, urban area).*

This example is highly significant. It shows that family solidarity is much easier to accept when it is the child, even an older child, who asks for help, while it reaches its limit in the other direction, i.e., when the person requiring help is the parent. This is not because children don't care about their parents, but rather because parents are uncomfortable becoming dependent on their adult children, particularly when they are still of working age. Asking for help under these circumstances goes against the norm whereby those who are established in the working world should help those who are not yet steady. The experience of unemployment for these individuals causes suffering with an even deeper meaning, since it means they cannot live up to the norm of familialist solidarity.

In the interviews conducted in Portugal as well, it also became clear that the family formed the bedrock of material and emotional solidarity (Loison, 2006). In the excerpts below, the pre-eminence of the concept of family solidarism is clear:

*'And I had to tell my mother 'For 2 or 3 weeks I won't have money to eat...'; and she 'Oh, don't worry, we'll work something out'...' (Woman, Portugal, 26 years of age, couple with children, unemployed more than 1 year, working partner, urban area).*

*'I'll tell you, for example, the meat we eat is mostly paid for by my mother-in-law. We go to the butcher, we order it, my mother-in-law goes there, pays, we don't even know how much it is (Man, Portugal, 59 years of age, couple with children, unemployed for more than 2 years, working partner, urban area).*



Parents perceive assistance to their children as a moral duty, even when these children have become adults, for example when adult children are still at home with their parents. When children work and have their own budget but continue to live in their parents' home, they can undertake certain expenses, such as the rent or utilities. When they set up their own households, they rarely contribute to their parents' expenses. And when the parents are in need, they disguise their problems and are reluctant to accept relief from their children, as we see in the following examples:

*'He [the son] wanted to [contribute financially]; I told him, 'If I need it, I'll ask you'. So, I didn't want him to. (...) [Question: It could be out of necessity, it was not in the sense that...]. Yes, I also told him that 'If I need it, I'll tell you', but, for now, I still have some money in the bank, I'll keep trying to find some odd jobs, I'm holding up.'* (Woman, Portugal, 54 years of age, single-parent family, unemployed for more than 2 years, urban area).

*'I know that they are not satisfied with the situation that I have, but I also don't want to have..., I don't want to be a ... a charity case for my daughters, is out of the question; I'd rather walk around with 20 cents in my wallet, because I don't want that, I want to get a job and...'* (Woman, Portugal, 62 years of age, lives alone, unemployed more than 1 year, rural area).

While in the interviews conducted in Portugal, the unemployed stated that it was possible to receive assistance from their family members, it is not without challenges that unemployed individuals in difficulty return to the home of their parents, when previously they were employed and had independent lives. Indeed, this entails relearning how to live together. The obvious advantage is the reduction in housing costs, but the trade-off is resignation to the cohabitation of multiple economic units in one household and the potential of incompatible lifestyles. Several excerpts from the interview mention the issues that arose from this involuntary cohabitation.

*'I am not independent, I am not autonomous; if I think about it coldly, I am not..., I have to live.... basically, with others' support'* (Woman, Portugal, 47 years of age, couple with children, unemployed for more than 2 years, working partner, urban area).

Finally, we note how familial solidarity is firmly rooted in local networks. The unemployed we spoke with rarely lived isolated from their family. Most of the time, there was at least one member of the extended family they could call upon: a parent, brother, or sister, sometimes cousin. The unemployed

man we just mentioned who lives with and cares for his parents also has a brother in his immediate circle. He acknowledges that both his brother and sister-in-law see him as a member of their family.

While family solidarity in the southern European countries plays an important role in reducing the risk that unemployment will lead to poverty, this does not imply that the aid provided in northern countries in the name of national solidarity leads to a weakening of family support. This must be seen above all as the effect of a social system (Wolff, Attias-Donfur, 2007; Börsch-Supan, Brandt, Litwin, Weber, 2013). When a large segment of the population is equally disadvantaged, family solidarity is the logical collective response needed to stave off poverty. Reciprocal exchanges serve an important purpose. Each individual gives and reaches out, since everyone else is doing the same in order to make it through hard times. This is why in areas with severe unemployment and poverty, there is a greater likelihood of finding long-term familial solidarity based on a reciprocity which has been imposed by the need to confront hardship collectively<sup>4</sup>. While family solidarity may not have entirely disappeared in the most economically developed regions, it nevertheless no longer serves this vital function. The individual desire for autonomy and the reduced homogeneity of families leads overall to a more flexible, more informal, and also more fragile form of family solidarity. When the exchanges within the family become strongly skewed in one direction, they may prevent recipients from giving and from reaching out in their turn, which ultimately can only serve to disqualify them.

#### **4. Elective participation bond: do it help to cope with unemployment and poverty?**

As we have seen, lineal bond may provide help in coping with the crisis. Is the same true of elective participation bond? This bond is forged by socialisation outside the family during which individuals come into contact with other individuals whom they get to know in various groups and organisations. This socialisation takes place in many different places: the neighbourhood, groups, circles of friends, local communities, religious, sports and cultural organisations, etc. As part of their social learning, individuals are both constrained by the need to be integrated, but are at the same time independent in so far as they are free to build their own network of belonging within which they can establish their personalities in other people's eyes.

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<sup>4</sup> This observation draws on Mauss's theory on gift giving, which is particularly salient in the analysis of familial solidarity. (On this point, see also: Paugam, Zoyem, 1997).

Elective participation bond needs in practice to be differentiated from the other social bonds because of their specific nature, i.e. the fact that they are elective, giving individuals a real freedom to forge interpersonal relationships in accordance with their own wishes, aspirations and emotional values. These bonds include various kinds of voluntary attachment. Bonds defined in this way entirely encompass the notion of friendship. Friendship is not really institutionalised. It can be publicly suggested and encouraged when it is associated, for instance, with the notion of fraternity, but it is not strictly regulated in any way. It is socially accepted and valued. It is seen as disinterested and detached from the social contingencies that characterise the other kinds of social interaction. The question that may be asked is whether or not networks of friends and, more generally, the social interaction that is covered by elective participation bonds offer support for unemployed people attempting to cope with the crisis.

The negative impact of unemployment on the social life is well known. In the early 1930s during a full-scale economic recession, the survey conducted by Lazarsfeld and his team in Austria at Marienthal described an Unemployed Community (Lazarsfeld, Jahoda, Zeise, 1933). The authors of this survey invite us to go into this small town, and to discover for ourselves the melancholy indifference of its more or less abandoned places: 'People are living here who have become accustomed to owning less, doing less and expecting less than they had considered essential to life in earlier days'. While this industrial town had in the past had a very lively cultural life, with its theatre, sports clubs, carnival, etc., it has become dull and inert. Work at the factory was central to social life in the sense that it provided workers not just with work and wages, but also gave them a *raison d'être*, a feeling of usefulness and social recognition. The interviewers tell how despondent they feel about the decline in social life. In general, the community as a whole has become weary. The decline in activity has impacted on the life of various institutions (the municipal library, leisure clubs, the theatre, etc.) and is gradually eating away at the private lives of these unemployed people.

This survey has become an essential reference whenever the social isolation of unemployed people is being examined. We know from experience that unemployment tends to make social relations less intense, especially within associations. Cultural clubs, sports clubs and charitable associations all declined significantly from the time at which the people of this town suffered the closure of its main factory.

In the 1990s, analyses of the Community Household Panel showed that unemployment always had an adverse effect on the life of associations in the main industrialised countries (Paugam, Russell, 2000). The survey among unemployed Moulinex workers in Normandy two years after their mass

redundancy in the early 2000s also bears out the overall trend towards a weakening of social bonds, especially elective participation bond (Rougnel-Fuentes, 2011). What conclusion can we reach on this issue from our survey interviews?

The interviews confirm that one of the immediate effects of unemployment is to reduce social life. That does not mean that friends disappear from one day to the next and that unemployed people all end up experiencing a social vacuum. Friends may continue to play a valuable part in warding off day-to-day loneliness. Many unemployed people told us that they had valuable relationships with friends on whom they could still rely. More or less generally, however, whatever the country in question, our unemployed people stressed that the intensity of their social life had been drastically reduced.

This is not to say that friends vanish overnight and that the unemployed all end up facing a social vacuum. Friends may remain supportive. Many unemployed individuals told us that they had enduring friendships on which they could still rely. But in all of the countries we looked at, the unemployed nearly universally observed a dramatic ebb in their social life. This can be explained both the high cost of maintaining social relationships (drinks, rounds at the pub) and by feeling stigmatised.

*'...I went as far as the pub and looked in the window, I saw them, but I didn't have a [expletive] fiver to buy the first pint, so I looked in and I knew if I got in, If I went in, you know it would happen, you know, so I drove all the way in, I got in went to the pub and looked in, I seen everybody and I went [expletive] home.'* (Man, Ireland, 50 years of age, couple, unemployed since 2008, unemployed spouse, urban area).

Some look for strategies which will not only prevent them from slipping into relationships of dependence toward their acquaintances (or families), but also allow them to withhold the real reason for passing up certain activities:

*'So I often say I don't feel like it. But it isn't true that I don't feel like it, it's just that I don't have the money'* (Woman, Germany, 42 years of age, single with 1 child, unemployed since 2012, urban area).

*'Before, we mingled with people who both made a good living, but now we've distanced ourselves a bit. Not because we don't like them or because they splash their money around, but because we can't keep up with them. Impromptu things like going out to dinner or seeing a show. You cannot do it, you always have to back out and say something like 'No, we can't do it'. And after a while it becomes uncomfortable and we kind of fall out*

of those circles.’ (Woman, Germany, 52 years of age, couple, with children, working partner, unemployed since 2010, rural area).

However, the subject of costs does not generally seem taboo since friends who may or may not be working also face challenges that can easily be explained by the crisis and austerity policies.

*‘But then again most of our friends would be in pretty much the same position there’s nobody really going out for extravagant nights out because even people who are still working at this stage they’re struggling with all the austerity measures.’* (Man, Ireland, 55 years of age, married, 2 children, unemployed since 2010, disabled partner, rural area).

The status of being unemployed is also an issue. Some of the unemployed have described in great detail the increasing isolation they have experienced. This arises in part from the contempt-tinged glances they often receive, but also from the tendency of the unemployed to avoid contact with others for fear of rejection or belittlement. This behaviour appears more frequently to be the act of withdrawing than of being excluded by others.

*‘I was making good money at my first company, I mean really good, and had a lot of friends, it’s true, and then when things went south, many of them disappeared. Your status changes and you find yourself alone.’* (Man, France, 45 years of age, divorced, 4 children, unemployed for more than 2 years, urban area).

In the southern European countries, which have had massive unemployment for several years, the economic crisis also seems to have profoundly affected the elective participation bond. As we have seen, without money, the ability to go out, enjoy entertainment and meet friends in restaurants and cafes is sharply curtailed. But while it’s almost a given that the time spent socialising dissipates, the unemployed distinguish between true friends on whom they can rely, who remain friends, and the rest, with whom they only had superficial relationships which were sorely tested and ultimately faded. This scenario plays out in Portugal, Spain, Greece, and even in Romania.

*‘It’s different now – some [friends] have become closer and others have disappeared. The crisis really caused havoc. Casual acquaintances who just wanted to meet up for a drink have disappeared... Now that you have no money, you don’t go out. People nearby who you like come around to visit. A few superficial relationships are eliminated. But you become even closer to your true friends. So you separate the wheat from the chaff.’* (Woman, Greece, 51 years of age, single mother, urban area).

Withdrawal from the working world also results in an erosion of social relationships, since the opportunity to meet friends from work both inside and outside the workplace is lost. Only one interviewee saw her inability to find employment as having a positive impact on her social relationships.

*'When I was raising [my son] and looking after my nieces, my world got very small. It was mostly family, maybe one or two outside friends. But when I went to VTOS [training programme], I made some fantastic friends who were in exactly the same boat as me and, actually, they're coming to my house tonight just for a chat. But I made fantastic friends and all in the same boat and we still - we're keeping in contact.'* (Woman, Ireland, 59 years of age, single with no children, unemployed since 2008, rural area).

Ultimately, the lessons of Marienthal are again borne out. Elective participation bond is weakened when people are unemployed. While very close bonds of friendship continue, especially in the southern European countries where unemployed people continue overall to be more integrated into local networks of solidarity often linked to the family, a massive reduction in standards of living means, in all the countries, that opportunities to socialise become much fewer and further between.

## **5. Distrust of institutions: the inequal strenght of the citizenship bond**

The citizenship bond is based on the principle of belonging to a nation. In principle, the nation recognises that its members have rights and duties and gives them the status of full citizens. In democratic societies, citizens are equal before the law, which does not mean that there are no economic or social inequalities but that efforts are to be made within the nation to ensure that all citizens are treated in the same way and together form a body having a common identity and shared values. It is normal nowadays to differentiate between civil rights that protect individuals in the exercise of their fundamental freedoms, in particular against encroachments by the State that are deemed unlawful, political rights which enable them to participate in public life, and social rights which provide them with a degree of protection against the ups and downs of life. This extension of individual fundamental rights enshrines the universal principle of equality and the role devolved to individual citizens who are considered 'automatically' to belong, over and above their particular social status, to the political community.

Citizens' trust in their institutions is a prerequisite for the exercise of democracy and the respect of principles of civility in the public arena. Several

indicators nevertheless seem to be showing that this feeling of trust is gradually being eroded in the collective mind.

This can be seen in all the European Union's Member States (see Table 5). Europeans' trust in the European Union fell from 57% in September 2007 to 31% in September 2013. Europeans' trust in their national parliaments fell from 43% to 26% over the same period. The same trend can also be seen in Europeans' trust in their national governments. It is interesting, however, that unemployed people's trust in these same institutions, whatever the period, has been even lower and has fallen to a greater extent. Unemployed people's trust in the European Union was 52% in 2007 and 23% in 2013, i.e. 2.3 times lower in comparison with 1.8 times lower among all the people polled.

**Table 5.** *Trust in the European Union, national parliaments and national governments from 2007 to 2013 in all EU Member States among all the people polled and among unemployed people*

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	$\Delta$ 2007/2013
<i>European Union</i>								
All	57	50	47	42	41	31	31	1.8
Unemployed	52	47	37	37	36	25	23	2.3
<i>National Parliament</i>								
All	43	34	32	31	33	28	26	1.6
Unemployed	33	26	21	22	21	11	16	2.1
<i>National Government</i>								
All	41	32	32	29	32	28	25	1.6
Unemployed	31	23	22	20	22	16	14	2.2

*Source: Eurobarometers (spring of each year). Question: For each the following institutions, can you tell me whether you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it?*

Similarly, unemployed people's trust in their national parliaments fell from 33% in 2007 to 16% in 2013, i.e. 2.1 times lower in comparison with 1.6 times lower among all the people polled. Lastly, unemployed people's trust in their national governments fell from 31% to 14% over the period, i.e. 2.2 times lower in comparison with 1.6 times lower among all the people polled.

One way of coping with unemployment may be to exercise one's rights and turn to the institutions to find a job. In many interviews, the unemployed interviewees said that the institutions in their countries left them feeling helpless. The crisis has worsened this lack of trust. There were nevertheless two different attitudes. The first, more qualified, was to criticise some institutions more than others and to look for solutions; the second, where institutions were felt to be in total collapse, was much more radical.

In many of the interviews, the unemployed expressed their disillusionment with their country's institutions, and the crisis has only exacerbated their distrust. Nevertheless, we can distinguish between two different attitudes. The first involves a nuanced critique of national institutions which differentiates amongst them and seeks solutions, while the second is far more radical, suggesting that the institutions are systematically disintegrating.

A nuanced confidence was expressed in three countries: France, Germany and Ireland. In France, the unemployed interviewees shifted between bitterness and protest. The view of a France in decline was voiced in the interviews. At times, various forms of racism against foreigners was mixed in to this position. Above all, the interviewees were aware of the powerlessness of those in government to reverse the current situation. As we saw, the view toward the employment centers was emblematic of this disillusionment. Most of the unemployed felt sacrificed and abandoned by their country's institutions.

*'I think it's a basic mistake to have trust in companies. Companies only have one goal and that's to make a profit. The common good is not one of their goals. And this is really a problem today, because we give power to the banks, to companies and to lobbyists, and politics is stuck in between, and that is the mess we're in today. The only thing we have left of value is the schools, but I think they are also in very bad shape, because there as well...'* (Woman, France, 44 years of age, single, no children, graphic designer, unemployed for less than 6 months, urban area).

But while there was concern among those we interviewed in France, the criticism of institutions was not systematic. In spite of everything, many unemployed French people still recognize that some public services continue to function well. The health system, for example, is viewed positively overall. In short, while there is real distrust of institutions, it is the pervasive sense of decline that the crisis situation has exacerbated.

Neither is there widespread distrust toward institutions among the German unemployed. As we saw earlier, while unemployed Germans may criticize the functioning of Job Centers, they recognize that employment services for the recently unemployed are now noticeably more welcoming and efficient. While unemployed Germans' comments on their institutions may generally seem fairly nuanced, it is in large part because the impact of the crisis on their economic and social situation has seemed milder. However, the issue of low wages is often mentioned.

*'Germany is not getting sorted out. I don't think it is. Who is doing well in Germany? The people working for peanuts? No one is doing well, having to work 8 hours a day and only*



*bringing home € 600, you can't call that "doing fine"*. (Man, Germany, 53 years of age, single with 1 child, unemployed since 2007, urban area).

In Ireland, successive governments were judged particularly severely. The main criticism shared by the people we met was how the measures implemented hurt those who already had so little, and the fact that the justification for this suffering did not seem valid. This criticism was also accompanied by the fact that the politicians did not comprehend the reality of people with low incomes and, even worse, they didn't care because the only thing that mattered to them was their own interests.

The criticism of successive governments also led to a judgment of Europe's role in the eruption of the crisis, particularly because of the control of the Troika on Irish politics. For some, Europe is partly responsible since it provided easy access to credit, which led to the abuses that occurred in Ireland. This description of events is presented widely in the Irish media. Politicians are also accused of favoring the expectations of Europe over those of their fellow citizens. A number of people lamented the many obligations to Europe, which is seen as a creditor, and this was also expressed as a loss of sovereignty.

*'I think an awful lot went wrong with this country when the government decided that they needed to look good in Europe rather than look good to their own population I suppose.'* (Woman, Ireland, 32 years of age, single, 3 children, unemployed since 2012, rural area).

*'Some of the European things that come in are good, with the farmers, grants for farmers and things like that but, it seems like we have given control away from Ireland, they have borrowed all this money and then like it's just getting ridiculous, like if we also if we had maybe our own currency again like we used to have probably would be better, because England seem to be doing better and their own currency and they don't have as much European control over them.'* (Woman, Ireland, 22 years of age, single with no children, lives with her parents, unemployed since 2012, rural area).

Nevertheless, the deep distrust felt toward the Irish political class and to a lesser extent toward the European institutions, did not translate into democratic disengagement.

*'I do vote, but what's the point? Do you know what I mean? I do vote. I mean, a vote... I'm very proud of voting, because a vote is your chance to voice your opinion, but I mean, there's no this group or this group, they're all just the same.'* (Man, Ireland, 48 years of

age, married, no children, spouse employed, unemployed since 2011, urban area).

But the disillusionment seems even more acute in the southern European countries. The following excerpts portray the climate in Greece and in Portugal:

*I've stopped listening to the commentators. I've stopped worrying about politics. It just tells me that it's every man for himself in life.*' (Woman, Greece, 43 years of age, married, 1 child, working partner).

*We don't trust the politicians anymore, because they have been a total disappointment. We can't believe a thing they say anymore. [...] There is also this downgrading of education by the government and it forces us to dig our hands into our pockets to pay for extra classes, you know, but meanwhile we pay our taxes and are supposed to have an education system, but this current downgrading of education is very disappointing...The parties have taken over the State, and we don't see any difference. The State has even become our predator.'* (Man, Greece, 55 years of age, married with 2 children, non-working partner).

*My country is over, my country has no hope for me. Neither to me, nor to my wife, nor even to my son or my son-in-law! My country, simply died. My country, if it continues to be ruled by these people, by the idea of the people who are now governing, my country will die soon'* (Woman, Portugal, 29 years of age, single-parent family, unemployed for more than 2 years, rural area).

The distrust of institutions was also the theme of many interviews in Spain where the unemployed people have a tendency to shift responsibility for the crisis to foreigners, who they accuse of taking jobs away from native-born Spaniards. In reality, the persons we spoke with sought to compensate for the failings of the State and the policies carried out in the sphere of their family relationships, and this led them to defend a local 'we' that stood in opposition to the national institutions and, more generally, to the ruling political class. Hopes for upward social mobility have been destroyed. Under these conditions, frustration is at a peak. Ultimately, integration itself is under threat. Overall, the decreasing trust in the national institutions during the crisis is the expression of the weakness of the European unemployed citizenship bond.

## **6. Conclusion**

The qualitative survey of a sample of 111 unemployed people, distributed in a balanced and reasoned way between seven EU Member States, does not

just have the advantage that it fleshes out a quantitative approach. It supplements the statistical results largely because it makes it possible to understand experiences of unemployment in a recession. Asking unemployed people about the steps they are taking and the reasons why they are taking these steps helps to provide a more detailed level of analysis and understanding. It was in this spirit that this survey was drawn up.

The question that we tried to answer is whether the process at play in the coping strategies used by unemployed people is a spiral of precariousness or whether, in contrast, it involves forms of compensation. Unemployment represents a breakdown of bond with the working world – which, in conceptual terms, corresponds to a breakdown of organic participation bond. Does this breakdown bring about others? Does it affect family relationships – lineal bond – social relationships with friends – elective participation bond – and relations with public institutions – citizenship bond? In other words, are these various types of bond, that go together with organic participation bond, eroded because of an overall process of social disqualification or are they, in contrast, vital resources for coping with unemployment?

In order to answer this question, we looked successively at the resources given of three types do social bonds: the lineal bond, the elective participation bond and the citizenship bond.

Calling on family solidarity does not just depend on the resources available in an unemployed person's family, but also on the system of norms current in the country in question. One of the most striking findings is that there was a very clear contrast between the general attitude of the unemployed French and German interviewees who were embarrassed to ask for this type of help and the attitude of unemployed people in the southern European countries for whom it was normal and legitimate to turn as a priority to family members in cases of need, even though this kind of dependence may be perceived as a constraint. The norm of independence is the only way of explaining this difference. In Germany and France, the unemployed interviewees considered themselves primarily as independent people who were not at all keen to become dependent in any permanent way on their families. That did not necessarily mean that they had bad relationships with their parents or other family members, but that they had internalised this norm of independence which was, for them, a question of social honour.

In the southern European countries, the system of attachment – in the sense of social bonds – is family-based. This system is regulated by the hold that lineal bond has over other types of bonds. It is more widespread in regions where industrial development is low, in rural areas where the economy is still largely based on small relatively self-contained production units or on a geographically limited sector. It may also continue, however, in more

developed regions by providing a family-based foundation for the capitalism of small entrepreneurs showing solidarity with one another. This system goes together with major social inequalities which may not be strongly fought. They are in some ways 'naturalised'. Poverty is part of the social system, poor people accept their circumstances and the circumstances of their families as fate, and something that they cannot do anything about. Survival is then sought as a priority within the family network, which is the key entity of integration. We saw the extent to which this principle of family solidarity is the absolute norm in Spain, Portugal and Greece. Many of the unemployed interviewees had returned to live with their parents. Some even accepted that they were surviving because of the retirement or disability pensions of their father or mother. While, in practice, they justified this approach by saying that deprivation had forced them into it, they also felt that there was reciprocity within the family unit because their presence or the assistance that they gave provided valuable help for their ageing parents.

While, as we have seen, family solidarity takes different forms, there appear to be few differences as regards relations with friends. In all the counties, the unemployed interviewees stressed that their network of friends had got smaller. Only 'true' friends remain and the others disappear. This is a constant in studies of unemployment right from Paul Lazarsfeld's survey in Marienthal in the 1930s. The lack of work affects the community overall. Social exchanges decline. The home becomes the focus. In the southern European countries and in Ireland, survival strategies are becoming primarily family-based.

Lastly, while a loss of trust in the institutions of their countries was a clear tendency among all the interviewees, it has reached very high proportions in the southern European countries. All institutions without exception were slammed and there was massive disillusionment about the country. In these circumstances, there is obviously little public-spiritedness. Several unemployed people stressed that the politicians in their countries were often corrupt and that the public institutions in general were being used to satisfy individual or sectoral interests, including in the health field, which they considered to be a scandal. The family-based system encourages very strong family solidarity to cope with poverty, which remains massive because the labour market has little to offer in the way of general protection and paves the way for an informal economy on the fringes of the minimum wage, with the result that institutions no longer offer any guarantee of the common good. In Germany, France and Ireland, criticisms were not as hard-hitting and focused on some rather than other institutions, in particular the employment agency. In Ireland, the unemployed interviewees continued to be patriotic about their

country, and in Germany and France they knew how much they owed to the education and health systems.

Overall, the coping strategies of the unemployed are strongly different in the European southern countries comparatively to France and Germany. If the *lineal bond* is in Spain, Portugal and Greece a basic resource to compensate the break in the *organic participation bond*, is because this type of bond plays a regulative function in the whole society. While an integrating bond attaches individuals to groups, a regulating bond has an additional function consisting of producing a set of rules and norms the influence of which modifies the initial normative conception of the other types of social bonds within a given regime. The regulating bond, thus defined, generates values and principles of moral education likely to permeate the rest of society. If we consider that the function of an attachment regime is to produce overall normative coherence that enables individuals and groups, beyond differentiation and their potential rivalry, to form a society together, we can identify a specific attachment regime for the European southern countries as a *familialist regime*. This is the reason why the unemployed from these countries find more easily in the lineal bond a basic resource to cope with their economic and occupational difficulties. In France and Germany, the regulating bond is the organic participation bond. The regime is not 'familialist' but 'organicist'. In this regime, the system of social protection is quite advanced along the path of decommodification but remains fragmented into a myriad of separate sub-systems, thereby expressing a logic of statutory distinction and categorical claims with regard to access to specific rights and to defence of previously gained benefits. Is the reason why the Unemployed in France and Germany are more likely to research coping strategies in using first the resources given by the local or national institutions which are specialized in the protection of the unemployed.

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