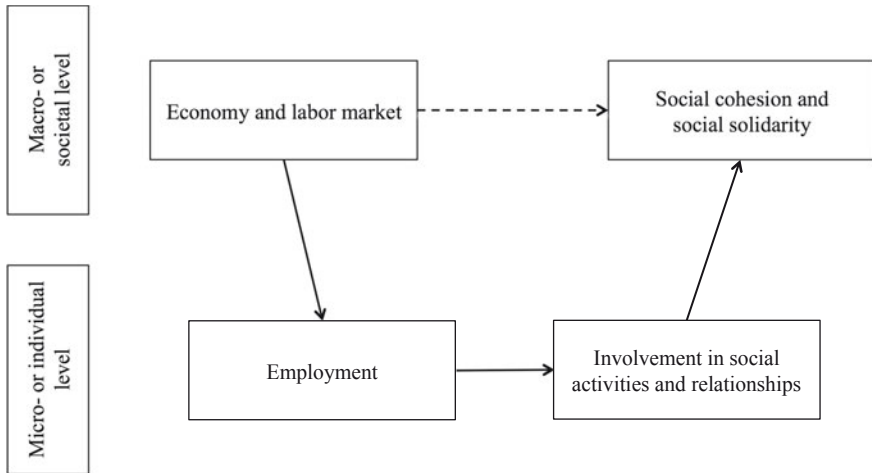


2 Social Integration and Social Involvement from a Societal and Individual Perspective

This chapter aims to incorporate people's social activities as well as labor market participation into a wider macro-sociological perspective on social integration and social order. First, the relevance of social involvement for social integration and for social cohesion will be discussed. Then the focus will turn to different theories of social integration in order to clarify which domains of social participation have been considered to constitute and contribute to social integration. In particular, the significance of different systems such as economy, community, social networks, and culture for social integration is presented from different theoretical viewpoints. Because social change may have altered the foundations on which social integration occurs, the chapter also briefly addresses this strand of theoretical literature.

While this chapter focuses on macro-sociological perspectives of social integration, the micro-level is also considered because social integration on the societal level translates into involvement and participation in different life domains on the individual level. Thus, the conceptual framework follows Coleman's (1986) idea of the micro-foundation of social phenomenon. Applying this concept (illustrated in *Figure 1*), macro-level conditions such as the economy and the labor market organization determine people's labor market engagement and their involvement in social activities and relationships, which in turn may be considered to shape social cohesion and social solidarity as aggregated individual behavior. On the micro- or individual level, people represent actors in the context of constraints and opportunities, while the macro- or societal level structures the constraints and opportunities (Coleman 1986; Udehn 2001). Following the distinction between macro- and micro-level perspectives, this chapter gives an overview of theories on social integration with an emphasis on the role of social interactions and involvement in different social domains. While considering essential domains for social integration, the focus is on how integration into various life domains translates into participation. The chapter ends with main conclusions before turning to theories of action in order to explain individuals' behavior, in particular, how unemployment may affect their social involvement on the micro-level.

Figure 1: Social Integration and Social Involvement in a Macro-Micro Framework



Source: Modified illustration by Opp (1992)

2.1 Social Integration as the Basis of Societies' Functioning

Social integration, social order, and social cohesion have continuously been fields of social-philosophical and sociological interest. Particularly in times of political, economic, social, and cultural changes, social order and social cohesion become fields of high public and scientific attention, providing diagnoses of reasons behind these phenomena and prognoses about their short- and long-term consequences (Bell 1973; Habermas and Ben-Habib 1981; Heitmeyer 1997; Sennett 1998; Tönnies 2002). Often these changes are considered to question or even threaten the underpinnings of social organization. In view of potential changes in the social, political, cultural, and economic set-up of society, theorists have proposed different models of social organization. Conceptualizing society as consisting of different subsystems, for instance, theories stress different domains and modes for social integration (Granovetter 1973; Habermas 1984; Parsons 1970b; Putnam 2000). The result is different understandings of the social glue required to generate social cohesion, and consequently, different ideas on corresponding factors of social involvement on the individual level. While some have emphasized common norms and shared values (Bellah 1996; Etzioni 1996; Tönnies 2002), other theorists stress interaction processes binding people either by mutual exchange and reciprocal dependencies or by conflict (Coser 1964;

Durkheim 1984). In addition to classical approaches and those that diagnose a transition from modern to post-modern societies, the European integration process has stimulated interest in the political and economic aspects of social integration as well as its social and cultural underpinnings (Eder 2001; Habermas 2004; J. Wienand and C. Wienand 2010).

Although some of these models will be presented in more detail in the following chapters, social integration in general can be understood as the basic requirement for making societies and their democratic systems work (Almond and Verba 1989; Putnam 2000). Since social integration is considered to be the very foundation upon which social cohesion, social solidarity, democratic and civic values (e.g., tolerance and acceptance of majority decisions) are formed, cultural, social, and economic changes are often suspected to weaken social cohesion and lead to social disintegration. In particular, changes that increase heterogeneity within and between groups in societies are believed to weaken existing social ties and often stimulate conservative ideas. In recent decades, areas of major interest in the field of social integration have included cultural changes due to individualism, globalization and technical rationalization, and immigration (Allik and Realo 2004; Realo and Allik 2009; Kymlicka and Banting 2006; Sennett 2006).

Regarding economic changes and labor market organization, the labor markets of many industrialized countries have undergone substantial changes due to globalization and technical rationalization. The results of these developments can be seen in increasing rates of unemployment, particularly long-term unemployment, as well as rising marginal or part-time employment. These changing employment patterns are reflected in relative declines in standard and continuous full-time employment biographies (Büchtemann and Quack 1990; De Grip, Hoevenberg, and Willems 1997; Schmid 2010).

Since labor market participation can be considered to be one crucial mode of social integration, these developments raise concerns about how the foundations of social organization and social cohesion may be affected. Specifically, considering employment as providing access to monetary and non-monetary resources, marginal or precarious employment, on the one hand, and unemployment, on the other hand, are suspected to prompt marginalization in or exclusion from society (Booth, Francesconi, and Frank 2002; Scherer 2004). According to arguments that (regular) employment provides resources that enable social participation while marginal employment and unemployment are associated with risks of exclusion due to a lack of resources, changes in the labor market organization also have an impact on social integration and its underpinnings. The major concern here is the fragmentation and centrifugal processes provoking potential disintegration. Because the organization of societies in general and social inequality in particular is subject to political regulations and interventions, the extent to which unemployment and losses in work-related resources translate into less social participation and into

disintegration depends on public and redistributive policies. Thus, social integration refers to a number of related topics such as social cohesion, social trust, cooperation, and tolerance towards generalized others, as well as social solidarity (Guillen, Coromina, and Saris 2011; Hooghe 2007; Portes 2000). According to which domains are considered important for social integration, theories differ in stressing the significance of economic interactions and exchanges, constitutional set-up and democratic functioning, redistributive regulations, involvement in social communities, shared values, and a shared identity.

Before different theories of social integration and its specific contextual meaning are outlined, social integration can be summarized as primarily relying on similarities between people in their values, norms, or interests as a consequence of social interactions, mutual dependencies, and tolerance of dissimilarities. Thus, involvement in social interactions and social networks seems to play a key role. However, the density of social interaction and the strength of solidarity may differ by group size and homogeneity. For instance, while families represent small, close, well-defined groups with dense interaction and a strong emphasis on mutual support, larger and open networks accommodate more heterogeneity, resulting in more importance attached to tolerance and mutual benefits of interactions and exchanges as the basis for integration and cohesion. Yet, social integration is assumed to comprise economic, political, social, and cultural aspects. Theories stressing the significance of economic and political elements for integration are mostly less challenging, whereas theories underlining social and cultural aspects consider social integration to be more arduous (Portes and Vickstrom 2011).

On a basic level, social theorists emphasize that social trust and social cooperation reduce transaction costs (Fukuyama 2001). For instance, without a minimum of social trust, economic actions result in considerably higher costs because compliance with agreements and treaties would need to be enforced by legal rights, institutions, and their representatives. Hence, even social integration as a mere economic process reflects some form of social cohesion and solidarity. However, other theorists propose more challenging forms of social integration, stressing shared values and reference to a common culture. For instance, with regard to political systems—especially democracies—Almond and Verba (1989) claimed that both republican virtues and democratic values are essential for the stability and performance of democratic systems. Accordingly, the effective performance of democracies relies on the political culture of their citizens who express political demands and take part in political decision-making. Similarly, Putnam (2000) argued that democratic structures rely on people's involvement in civic and political associations (see also Uslaner 1999). From this perspective, decreasing membership rates in organizations such as political parties, unions, and churches would reflect declines in participation and potential erosion in political culture, often to the disadvantage of the functioning of democratic sys-

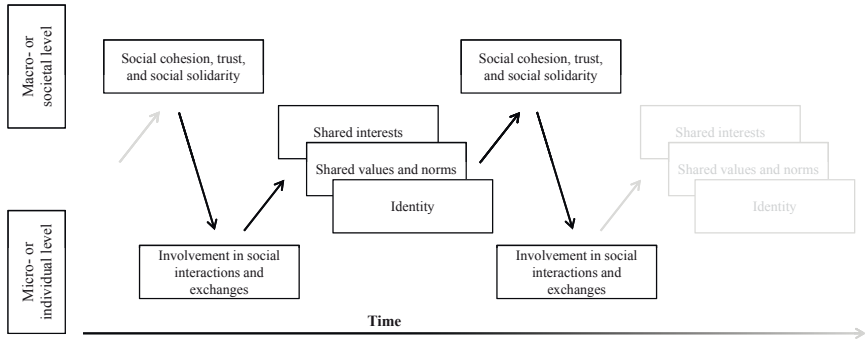
tems. Putnam (2000) identified a considerable decline in social capital in the United States since the 1950s and interpreted this as a consequence of individualization processes, citing generational change, mass media entertainment, increased spatial mobility, and work pressure as the main reasons.

While social trust and cooperative attitudes may form the foundation of democracies and well-functioning economic systems, social integration is often associated with additional aspects, including shared social norms and cultural values. The larger the common ground with respect to social norms, cultural values, and traditions, the stronger people's attachment and identification with others, resulting in greater social solidarity and cohesion (Hunt and Benford 2004; M. Taylor 2006). Since homogeneity can be thought to lead to higher consensus and therefore relatively more direct benefits from group decisions for each member, social solidarity and cohesion are claimed to be lower in more heterogeneous and pluralistic societies (Etzioni 2004; C. Taylor 2003). The importance of values, norms, and identity reflects the more communitarian perspective, whereas approaches emphasizing civic values, deliberation, and tolerance as a result of mutual dependencies are more liberal (Moore 2009; Walzer 1990). Despite their differences, the two schools of thought agree on the crucial role of involvement in social interaction and social exchange processes. Involvement in social interactions and exchanges reflect and stimulate social cohesion and social solidarity. More specifically, engaging in heterogeneous networks in social interactions with people outside their family, individuals learn and practice basic virtues such as trust and tolerance. The problem of endogeneity and causality of involvement and identity, social cohesion, and solidarity, however, is still under discussion (Friedkin 2004; Portes and Vickstrom 2011). Thus, as shown in *Figure 2*, social involvement and social participation both require and promote social cohesion and solidarity, and this can be understood as a bi-directional process over time.

In the European context, concerns about social solidarity and cohesion are strongly linked to state intervention in economic processes and welfare policies. Since redistribution policies and subsidies represent state intervention with disadvantages for certain population groups for the sake of improving living conditions for others, in democratic systems, in theory, welfare policies and state intervention express the political preferences of the people. As has been pointed out above, social solidarity, including the acceptance of financial losses (e.g., through taxes), is assumed to increase with shared cultural frameworks such as values and norms. In line with this perspective, social interaction and social exchange processes represent and sustain reciprocity and social solidarity. According to Kymlicka (Kymlicka 1998; Kymlicka and Banting 2006), for instance, viewing the winner of redistributive politics as someone similar to oneself can be assumed to raise the acceptance of interventions in (market-based) inequalities. Increases in public expenditure for welfare subsidies and social security have propelled debates about

social cohesion, social solidarity, and their cultural foundations (Leibfried and Obinger 2003; Leitner and Lessenich 2003; Pierson 2002).

Figure 2: The Social Integration Process



Source: Own illustration

Besides these economic and demographic-related developments, according to a more communitarian or conservative perspective, multiculturalism, pluralization, and individualization processes have been suspected of undermining a common cultural framework for social interactions and social attachments (Kymlicka and Banting 2006; Mau 2004). However, in contrast to shared cultural values yielding positive effects for social solidarity and cohesion, there are clear drawbacks to shared values and their function for social integration as well. Strong cultural ties require relatively homogeneous groups. As a result, following the inclusion-exclusion nexus, integration on the basis of similarities and homogeneous characteristics is accompanied by exclusion of people who deviate or do not meet these group characteristics. On the basis of cultural similarities, characteristics permitting inclusion or exclusion are not acquired but instead are related to people's ethnic and cultural background, i.e., characteristics that cannot be changed. Thus, the cultural grounds of identity and inclusion adhere to discrimination, suppression, or even genocide (Mann 2005). For insiders, on the other hand, a strong emphasis on homogeneity means that group members at least partly subordinate their interests to group norms or, in other words, restrict individual freedom for the sake of compliance with cultural norms (Feldman 1984; Opatow 1990; Scott 1976).

Accounting for this dark side of substantial cultural references as the foundation of social integration, even representatives of the communitarian approach such as Etzioni (1996) emphasize the role of social interaction and communica-

tion processes as bottom-up practices for agreeing and enforcing cultural norms and corresponding behavior. However, despite differences in the assumed role of cultural values and social norms, social integration is assumed to be a consequence of social interaction and exchange processes. In other words, theories on social integration and the functioning of society as a social entity assign a key role to people's engagement in social groups, their interactions and exchanges across and beyond family and friendship networks.

As well as from a macro-sociological perspective, social involvement has been argued to be essential from a micro-sociological viewpoint. With respect to Aristotelian thinking, philosophers, such as Nussbaum and Sen considered the involvement of individuals in social relationships as one of humans' main basic needs (Alexander 2008; Allardt 1993; M. C. Nussbaum 1997; Sen 1993). Thus, people's well-being relies on social integration, which is understood here as taking part in social activities and social interactions within and beyond the household. In addition, sociological literature on the subjects of social capital and social support emphasizes that social involvement represents access to material and non-material resources. Following this argument, societies, social groups, and individuals, in particular, depend on involvement with social ties and networks for their prosperity. This argument will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3, whereas the following sections of this chapter will give an overview of different theoretical perspectives on what constitutes social integration and the relevant domains in which social integration can occur.

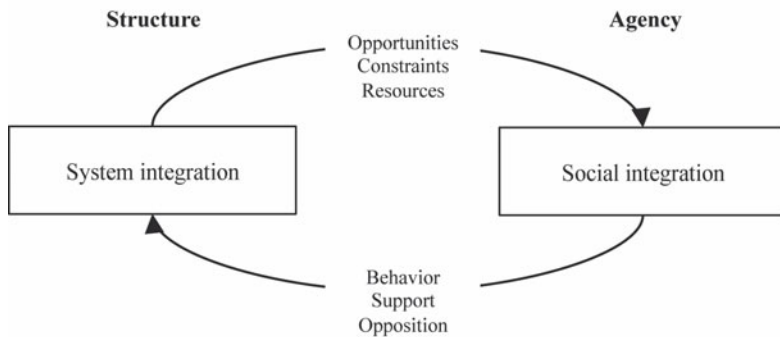
2.2 Theories of Social Integration—Community and Society

The term "integration" refers to the inclusion of units forming a higher-level entity. From a sociological perspective, entities of principal interest are societies and social groups while social groups and individuals represent subordinated units. These units become incorporated through interaction and exchange processes, more precisely, by attuning and harmonizing values and behavioral patterns (Durkheim 1984; Hillmann 1994). Disintegration, in contrast, refers to processes of dissolution of the higher-level entity into its lower-level components, accompanied by a decrease in interactions and interdependencies and an increase in conflicts and disagreement that perpetuate centrifugal tendencies (Heitmeyer 1997). As engagement in social interactions and social groups, social involvement represents the basic process by which integration occurs and, thus, is claimed to be essential for the functioning of societies in a number of ways. According to Hirschman (1970), units in a system have three *modi operandi* that affect the system: loyalty, voice, and exit. Whereas "loyalty" results in maintenance of the system "as it is",

“voice” corresponds to changes in the system, i.e., the fact that changes are implemented but the system itself is maintained. “Exit” represents abandonment of the system and therefore no further participation in it (Hirschman 1970). All three indicate changes in social integration and its organization over time as tied to social change. Correspondingly, social change in the underpinnings of social integration is a central theme in the literature on social organization.

Literature on social organization and social integration mainly addresses two related questions. First, it focuses on how subsystems of—mostly national—societies are organized in order to constitute a superior entity. Second, they ask how the structure of societies and their subsystems relate to the actions of individuals. Although these two questions are linked, Lockwood (1964) suggests an analytical distinction between system integration and social integration (see also Archer 1996) which is depicted in *Figure 3*.

Figure 3: System Integration and Social Integration



Source: Own illustration

The first approach is represented by structural-functionalist perspectives concentrating on social order and social organization of subsystems within the higher-level entity. The second focuses on the relationship of individual agents to each other. The second approach follows a more micro-sociological perspective in that it addresses how individuals become incorporated on the basis of their values and their behavior. However, despite the analytical distinction, both questions are interrelated. The functioning of systems, for instance, determines economic security and therefore economic resources on the individual level, whereas people’s behavior at the aggregate level affects how the subsystems operate. Despite the correlation of system and social integration, most theories predominantly concentrate on changed modes of relationships between individuals. Accordingly, their focus is on social integration (as opposed to system integration).

In the following sections, social organization and social integration will be examined according to Durkheim, Parsons, and Habermas. Instead of providing a comprehensive picture of theories on social organization in general, these sections will concentrate on classical approaches which stress the importance of the economic sphere and the organization of work in shaping the organization of social relationships and solidarity.

2.2.1 Social Integration via the Labor Market

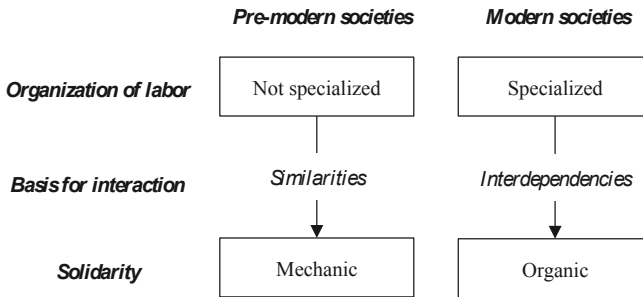
In light of economic, cultural, and social changes in the transition from agricultural to modern industrialized societies, many theorists such as Hobbes and Locke, Mills, Hume, Bentham and Spencer, and Comte and Saint-Simone have contributed important ideas on what constitutes societies and what role people's preferences, interests, and values might play (Coleman 1994). However, combining ideas from these various approaches, Durkheim (1984), developed a theory on changes in the structural underpinnings of social integration. Given the increasing division of labor and the decreasing relevance of religion, Durkheim detected a structural weakness resulting in a crisis of the moral system and of social integration in general. Consequently, he addressed the question of how a society characterized by increasing differentiation and labor division, secularization, and individualization processes could develop a moral system and modes of social integration that correspond to the new structural and cultural conditions. His conclusions, in short, refer to the mutual dependency and interaction of dissimilar people in the context of specialized economic production. Thus, division of labor can itself generate social cohesion (Durkheim 1984).

According to Durkheim, social integration can be understood as a social organization based on collective solidarity and collective consciousness. Collective solidarity and consciousness rely on social regulations and norms as well as enforcement to act according to these norms (Durkheim 1984). Social norms are thought to be based on a collective community. The crux, however, is that in modern societies the ongoing social differentiation and individualization would be expected to undermine collective solidarity and collective consciousness.

According to Durkheim, in traditional and agricultural societies collective solidarity relies on high similarities between people. With close, kin-based relationships and strong homogeneity in values, interests, and behavior and no further specialization in terms of work and responsibilities, collective cohesion in pre-modern times results in mechanical solidarity (Durkheim 1984). Yet, economic specialization and secularization lead to diversification of previously similar groups and individuals. Consequently, social cohesion cannot rely on mechanical solidarity as the foundation for social organization. Instead, in differentiated and

specialized societies, interdependencies and reciprocal exchanges of units generate solidarity. In particular, interdependence result from people's different positions in manufacturing and providing necessary or desired goods in the system of labor division (Durkheim 1984). According to the idea of labor division, members of the differentiated society cannot produce and provide all the goods and services required, but rely on other members of the society and their labor. Both types of solidarity differ considerably in their nature as shown in *Figure 4*.

Figure 4: Durkheim's Concepts of Solidarity



Source: Own illustration

Over time, the division of labor reflects the increasing differentiation and specialization of people. Thus, division of labor undermines shared values and norms as a basis of solidarity. Instead, cooperation and interaction generate organic solidarity and replace mechanical solidarity. Durkheim emphasizes that by virtue of mutual dependencies and the continuous direct and indirect exchange of specialized products and services—despite their differences—people are able to generate a collective consciousness. Thus, even among self-interested and formalized interactions and group membership, this collective consciousness can constitute the basis for social integration. According to Durkheim, whenever people cooperate repeatedly, their interactions generate rules and form the basis for shared ideas, beliefs, and collective social norms (Durkheim 1984).

However, the collective consciousness resulting from labor market division and mutual dependence relies on certain preconditions. Without a belief in the legitimacy and justice of the system of labor market division, Durkheim suggests that solidarity decreases, producing a lack of rules and anomie (Durkheim 1984). In addition, anomie can also result from the division of labor itself: first, from insufficient cooperation between different parts in the labor system; second, from

enforced division of labor that does not match people's natural talents and skills; and third, from people's perceptions of normlessness. Durkheim claims, for instance, that if people *perceive* injustice or exploitation of some social groups to the advantage of others, this fosters anomie and thus undermines social solidarity founded upon labor division.

Summarizing Durkheim's concept of social cohesion in modern societies, social integration stems from people's participation in the division of labor. Through their involvement in the increasingly specialized production of goods and provision of services, people also take part in reciprocal exchange processes, both contributing to and benefitting from them. In addition, in the process of working together, people generally develop common norms and routines from their joint project and repeated interactions. From this perspective, participation and social involvement work on the basis of individuals engaging in the process of producing and providing goods and services. Consequently, employment represents *the mode* and the labor market represents *the domain* for social integration from a macro-level perspective and for social involvement from an individual perspective. Because unemployment is equivalent to exclusion from producing goods and services that are exchanged in a labor-specialized society, on the one hand, and from work-related interactions, on the other hand, according to Durkheim's theory, unemployment poses a threat to collective norms and solidarity.

2.2.2 *Social Integration through Cultural Norms*

In his earlier work, Durkheim proposes that interest-based cooperation and exchange processes are key to social solidarity, including an expressive and emotional component. In his later work, however, Durkheim emphasizes that neither emotional bonds between members of a society nor collective norms could develop from exchange and cooperation between specialized workers without referring to a previously existing common consciousness (Durkheim 1984). Instead, collective norms can only rely on something beyond the individuals and their individual relationships.

Thus, in his later work, Durkheim conforms to ideas that are more critical of and pessimistic about the potential for a strong sense of collective identity and belonging in individualized societies that do not draw on pre-existing shared values and norms. Specifically, social solidarity in modern societies would presuppose social norms and a collective consciousness that stem from previous historical periods when labor was not specialized (Durkheim 1984). Instrumental exchanges and self-interest-based interactions cannot serve as the source for social cohesion according to Durkheim's revised concept. Using Tönnies' (2002)

terminology and Lockwood's (1964) distinction, with the absence of affective bonds and shared norms, integration would preclude social integration yet at the same time be limited to system integration.

In contrast to what Tönnies (2002) calls social integration, system integration takes place through economic and market-oriented interactions that are characterized by rationality and efficiency, but do not produce social solidarity or cohesion beyond self-benefits. Correspondingly, communitarian representatives stress the cultural and normative underpinnings of social integration (Etzioni 1995, see also: Khatchadourian 1999; MacIntyre 2007; Moore 2009; Sandel 1998; Tam 1998; M. Taylor 2006; Wallach 1987). Since the functioning of societies is determined by the willingness of people to—at least partly—restrain their self-interest on behalf of the common good of the collective, shared cultural norms and moral beliefs are the common values upon which mutual commitment and social integration occur (Bellah 1996).

Durkheim's later views, which are in line with more conservative theorists, highlight that in order to generate and maintain social solidarity, people must refer to cultural norms and values. Hence, social integration is assumed to rely on people's activities beyond those participating in the labor market as well as interactions based on production and consumption. In contrast to economic, work-related, and instrumental engagement in interactions and exchanges, people's involvement in the community and various groups on the basis of shared ideas and norms fosters social solidarity and social integration. Correspondingly, close ties within family and kinship networks as well as other forms of social interactions where people act collectively on the basis of shared cultural references, traditions, and values are considered to form the core of social integration (Etzioni 1995).

With respect to cultural values, norms, traditions, and common heritage, strong ties are linked to exclusion of outsiders and the sanctioning of deviants (Portes 1998). In contrast, interactions between people from different backgrounds are assumed to foster tolerance, openness, and mutual recognition. Hence, engagement in formal associations and groups provide a context in which people from different social, cultural, and economic backgrounds meet and interact (Portes 1998). Since admission to and membership in formal associations and organizations are regulated by potentially achievable characteristics (e.g., citizenship and membership contributions), engagement in these groups is assumed to foster universal norms, democratic values, and tolerance. This comes from the belief that people are exposed to more heterogeneity than in family networks or private friendships (McPherson et al. 2001). In other words, engagement in formal activities that refer to cultural norms and follow democratic values serves, to some extent, as a bridge for otherwise disconnected individuals. Formal activities could include political organizations and associations, volunteer groups, and leisure clubs, for example.

However, according to Durkheim's later attitude, people's engagement in social groups and social networks specifically rely on cultural norms. Participation in the system of labor division and instrumental interdependencies demonstrate an insufficient basis for social integration. Consequently, non-participation or withdrawal from activities and groups that reflect these norms can be considered to undermine social integration. This means, in contrast to Durkheim's early views, where (mass) unemployment could result in declining social solidarity, exclusion from work-related social interaction may pose a potential threat to social cohesion *only* if unemployment results in people withdrawing or being excluded from activities and groups that reflect and provide norms allowing social integration.

2.2.3 *Social Integration as a Multi-Dimensional Concept*

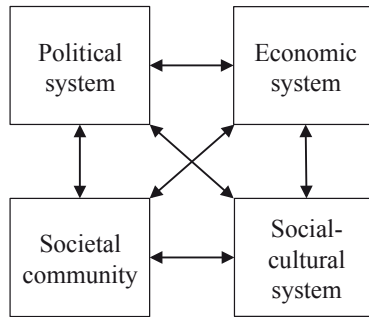
So far, participation in the system of labor market division and in the social-cultural system have been proposed as the main domains on which social integration and social solidarity rely. However, according to Parsons (1970b), society consists of more subsystems that are interlinked, and social integration is based on interactions in and across these subsystems. Distinguishing between different subsystems and emphasizing the correlations between them, his theory addresses to what extent integration in one domain relies on involvement in other domains and resources acquired in these. As a result, Parsons' concept of societal subsystems can be linked to questions of dynamics of social inequality in general and spillover effects and compensation opportunities in particular.

Parsons outlines a theory in which he combines a macro-structural and micro-level perspective on social integration. Starting from a macro-structural perspective, Parsons (1970b) proposes that four domains are essential for the effective functioning of every social system: the economic system, the political system, the social-cultural system, and the societal community. These subsystems operate by means of domain-specific media and are connected to one another by people applying and drawing on these media (see *Figure 5* below). According to Parsons (1970b), social integration proceeds from the intersections among these different systems and their media.

The economic system is maintained through money, whereas the medium of the political system is power. The societal community draws on the attachment of values and norms, with moral beliefs and shared norms thought to operate through institutions such as education systems and the family (Parsons 1970b). The social-cultural system represents the development and maintenance of general values. Economy and politics as well as the media through which they operate are clearly specified. In contrast, media for the societal community and the social-cultural system remain more diffuse, with the social-cultural system even

more so. Whereas the societal community domain indicates the role of people's engagement in interactions for the social system and social integration, the emphasis on values and shared symbols in the social-cultural system provides the background for individuals to interact and understand each other. However, both domains at the bottom of *Figure 5* emphasize the importance of people's involvement in non-market and non-instrumental actions for the development and maintenance of social cohesion and, thus, social integration. Accordingly, on the behavioral level, here it is proposed that the socially incorporated role of these domains is reflected in people's participation in social networks, their social ties, and their social activities, which support the production and reproduction of culture and a collective community.

Figure 5: Parsons' Concept of Social Integration



Source: Modified illustration by Münch (2004:93)

Parsons' theory of the four different social subsystems and their interdependence for social functioning from a micro-sociological perspective suggests that the concepts outlined above fail to fully explain the requirements for social integration. Because societies consist of several domains with subsystems linked by various media on which people draw for their participation, Parsons' (1964, 1970b) theory suggests that involvement in the labor market and the societal community demonstrate necessary but not sufficient conditions for social integration.

Furthermore, according to the four functions these subsystems fulfill for maintaining society, social integration on the individual level can be considered to rely on participation in all four subsystems. Parsons emphasizes the additional role of participating in the economic system, the political system, and the cultural system. Transferring Parsons' macro-structural concept of subsystems to the micro-level, it can be concluded that social integration requires people's participation in the economy, politics, culture, the community, and social relationships.

The prerequisites for participating in these four fields can be seen in legislation such as civil rights as well as in political and social rights (Marshall 2006).

However, participation refers to people's involvement and actions in the various subsystems due to their control and possession of the domain-specific media (Münch 2004). As far as integration into the economic sphere is concerned, this means people's involvement in production and consumption. Here, social integration goes beyond people's inclusion in the system of labor division and the resulting interdependency, as suggested by Durkheim (1984). Social integration in its economic dimension also refers to the possession and control over financial resources as the domain-specific medium. Social integration in the political sphere comes with power and refers to people's action-based involvement in processes of political bargaining and decision-making in order to pursue their interests. Thus, it is linked to people's social status in general as well as to their involvement and activities in political groups, organizations, and social networks. It is difficult to distinguish the social-cultural system from the societal community in terms of different spheres of involvement because Parsons does not provide clear definitions of either, and both are to some extent linked to cultural frameworks and social relationships. In fact, both seem to suggest social networks and participation in interactions and groups that refer to shared symbols and some shared cultural frameworks that represent social integration on the individual level.

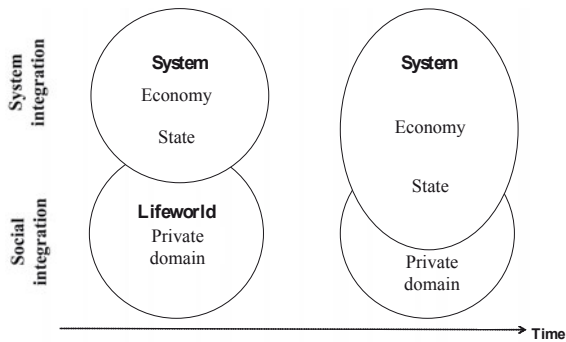
In line with Parsons' emphasis on subsystem-specific media, non-participation or exclusion from one domain is also associated with unequal amounts of resources that may be beneficial and necessary for access to the media of other subsystems. From a micro-level viewpoint, therefore, a lack of resources gained in one domain can lead to disadvantages and exclusion from other domains, resulting in spillover effects. Since on the macro-level, accumulation of disadvantages can be understood to produce disintegration processes, it is crucial to ask, first, to what extent activities and networks are connected to the societal community and collective consciousness and, second, how labor market participation and unemployment are causally related to people's social engagement in other areas.

2.2.4 Social Change and Individualization

Parsons' (1964, 1970b) perspective on social integration aims to provide an ahistorical and rather universal theory of social integration and its requirements. In contrast, the other concepts outlined above are tied to specific historical periods in so far as they outline changing requirements and foundations of social integration that depend on social, economic, and cultural conditions in pre-modern and traditional versus modern and industrialized societies (Durkheim 1984). Therefore, these concepts factor in social change.

Habermas (1984), for instance, divides society into two parts, system and lifeworld. The system represents the economic and work sphere and is fully directed towards and rationalized in terms of productivity and efficiency (see *Figure 6*). Thus, integration into the system is not seen to provide anchors for social interactions based on values, norms, or attachment (Habermas and Ben-Habib 1981). Instead, according to the logic of the system, people integrate by fulfilling their function of operating efficiently in this system. In contrast, according to Habermas, the lifeworld constitutes the field of social integration on the basis of mutual social interactions and communication processes in which people take part with their specific interests, values, and beliefs. By emphasizing value-based social interactions for social cohesion, his ideas correspond closely to the later theories of Durkheim and the communitarians. Yet, Habermas also supported a liberal understanding of social integration by stressing social interactions as processes for establishing a common understanding. Rather than viewing a collective consciousness and a shared cultural framework as pre-requirements, Habermas (1994) argues for a common understanding as a *result* of social interaction processes. However, in the course of the differentiating between the system and the lifeworld, the logic of efficiency and control expands into the lifeworld. Termed by Habermas as the “colonization of the lifeworld” (Habermas 1984), it is seen to undermine cultural norms and values through instrumental and rational orientations. With this in mind, the basic function of the lifeworld for social cohesion and people’s identity declines. Following Habermas’s arguments, then, involvement in the social-cultural sphere is important to counterbalance the increasing dominance of the system.

Figure 6: Habermas’ System and Lifeworld



Source: Own illustration.

Similar to Habermas, Sennett (1998, 2006), Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) point to the destructive components of the efficiency-orientated and instrumental rationalities of modern societies, particularly in terms of their economic and bureaucratic subsystems since the 1960s and 1970s. Accordingly, the transition from industrialized capitalism to an even more flexible and globalized economy has changed people's relationships and, as a result, social organization. The demands for flexibility, mobility, and efficiency dictated by the economic system and the market encourage, even force, people to adapt to lives characterized by short-term commitment and discontinuity (for instance, regarding employment trajectories and job changes). As a result, people are assumed to behave flexibly, developing weaker attachments and looser relationships while simultaneously improving their talents, skills, and productivity for the market (Sennett 1998). Seeing individualization as the source of pluralized lifestyles, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim refer to people as being forced to lead a reflexive life (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002). In line with Sennett's (1998, 2006) arguments, people's growing challenges and responsibilities undermine their chances of and motivation for long-term attachments and commitments. Corresponding to the dissolution of involvement in long-term relationships and communities, Sennett (2006) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (2002) argue that these growing challenges may provoke alienation and anomie.

However, according to the theory of different and segmented labor markets, the negative effects of these changes do not affect all working people equally. Instead, transitions to more flexibility, efficiency, and rationalization have led to flexible, short-term, insecure jobs with routine and automatic tasks for low-skilled, easily replaceable workers while fewer changes have occurred for professional high-skilled workers (Blossfeld and Mayer 1988; Doeringer and Piore 1985; Kalleberg 2003). Depending on education, talents, skills, and productivity, people face different challenges *and* differ in their capacity to cope with these changes (Giesecke 2009; Giesecke and Groß 2003). Following Sennett (1998, 2006), Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), alienation and anomie are presumably more widespread among those with low labor market positions and insecure jobs. Given the relationship between job positions and educational attainment, occupational training, and skills, the consequences of restructured labor markets affect low-skilled and less educated workers more because they are more prone to be employed in low-paid, insecure, and routine jobs (Becker 1993; Kalleberg and Sorensen 1979). Hence, participation in the labor market in post-modern societies does not necessarily contribute to social cohesion as suggested by Durkheim (1984) and Parsons (1970b). On the contrary, it can be seen as potentially undermining people's involvement in cultural and social domains (Sennett 1998). Increasing challenges and responsibilities might therefore endanger the foundation of social cohesion and social integration.

2.2.5 Domains of Integration—An Open Research Question

The various theories and concepts about modes of social integration outlined above are united by their emphasis on social interactions as the fundamental process and the work sphere as one basic domain required for social integration. Additional theoretical approaches that conceptualize the mechanisms of social integration are, for instance, conflict theories, with Simmel's (1964), Coser's (1964), and Collin's (1975) theories as the main representatives. Simmel and Coser stressed the integrative potential of conflicts. Conflict theories and liberal approaches to social integration, as represented by Durkheim's (1984) early work and Habermas (1994), both emphasize involvement in social interactions and networks as the foundation for social integration. In particular, Durkheim's (1984) and Parsons' (1964, 1970b) theoretical approaches and Sennett's (1998, 2006), Beck's and Beck-Gernsheim's (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) concepts indicate potential spillover effects of labor market participation on the interactions and networks that are considered to be beneficial for social solidarity and cohesion.

Despite emphasizing social interactions that relate to social norms, the concepts outlined in this chapter provide complementary, although at times competing, ideas on the domains in which social interactions take place. While most theories highlight social activities and networks based on shared values and social norms outside the economic sphere, Durkheim's early theory proposes involvement in work as sufficient for social integration. Accordingly, exclusion from employment can be thought to result in lower levels of social solidarity and threats of disintegration. In contrast, Habermas (1984), Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002), and Sennett (1998, 2006) instead consider the economic and work sphere to compete with social cohesion, given that efficiency and rationality principles invade non-economic domains and undermine people's commitment and relationships. From this perspective, individual level involvement in paid work may prevent people from engaging in social and cultural activities, networks, and relationships. An extensive body of research on work-life interference and work life-balance provides indications supporting this view. Findings point to potential spillover effects of work stress and work demands on family and marital relationships, mental health, and well-being (Fisher, Bulger, and C. S. Smith 2009; Karasek 1979; Major, Klein, and Ehrhart 2002; Schieman, Glavin, and Milkie 2009).

Finally, Parsons' (1970b) theory of different social subsystems and subsystem-specific media points to involvement in different domains. More precisely, it poses the idea that social involvement in communities and social networks relies on resources obtained by engaging in the labor market and the economic system. Therefore, unemployment presumably entails losses in resources that affect peo-

ple's opportunities to engage in social activities and networks. The interdependence is confirmed by a rich literature on short-term and long-term consequences of (relative) poverty and unemployment on people's future life chances with regard to their economic standing, health, and family relationships, as well as on more subjective indicators, such as subjective well-being (Jahoda 1982; Knabe and Rätzel 2011; Lucas et al. 2004; Paul et al. 2007). Hence, while based on the macro-level perspective of social integration and correlations between different domains, the theories considered above point to the dynamics of social inequalities and social mobility. Therefore, by looking at the effects and the underlying mechanisms of labor market participation and unemployment on people's involvement in social activities and relationships, the present study contributes both to the research literature that examines social integration *and* to the literature on social stratification and social exclusion.

2.3 Participation as a Method of Social Integration

Interdependencies of different subsystems from the macro-level perspective on social integration is sometimes thought to correspond to interdependencies between engaging in different subsystems on the individual level. Given that different subsystems provide and require certain resources, the following sections describe how these different subsystems impact integration from a macro-level approach and translate into participation and engagement on the micro-level. According to the different domains suggested by the theoretical approaches on social integration and social solidarity outlined above, the focus here is on how employment and labor market participation relate to involvement in the community and the social-cultural sphere.

2.3.1 *The Economic System and the Labor Market*

The economic system is dedicated to efficient, rational production and allocation of resources. On the one hand, people are integrated into the economic subsystem through their engagement in the labor market, that is, in the process of producing goods and services. On the other hand, they take part in the economic system through consumption, that is, demanding goods and services. Except for those living from assets, consumption relies on the resources people gain by selling their manpower and skills on the labor market (see *Figure 7* below). Non-working family members such as children, homemakers, or elderly parents are indirectly connected to the labor market by those who support them (Stier, Lewin-Epstein, and Braun 2001) or welfare subsidies.

In many modern industrialized countries, the labor market has undergone severe changes since the 1960s (Bean, Layard, and Nickell 1986; Gangl 2003; Goos, Manning, and Salomons 2009; Kalleberg and Sorensen 1979). International globalization and technical rationalization in the economic system have resulted in increased rates of unemployment and atypical employment in countries that used to be characterized by full-time employment, high job security, and high wages as standard forms of labor market participation (Kalleberg 2000, 2003). These forms of standard employment allowed families and households to distribute paid and unpaid work among family members in line with the main (typically male) breadwinner model (Fraser 1994). In addition to decreases in standard employment, unemployment has become a structural component, with persistent or increasing rates even during times of economic growth (Elmeskov and Pichelmann 1993).

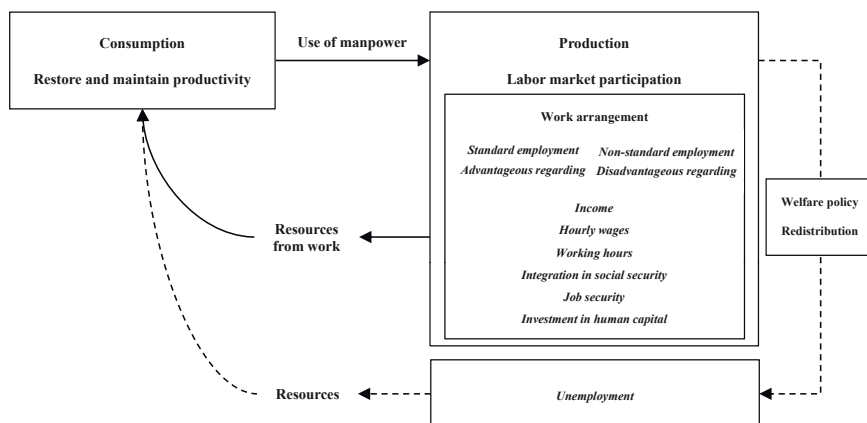
As far as Germany is concerned, official unemployment rates have risen from almost full employment, i.e., unemployment rates between 0.5 and less than 4 percent, to over 10 percent between 1994 and 2007. Unemployment in Germany peaked in 2005 with a national average of 13 percent according to statistics provided by the Federal Employment Agency (Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2012). However, given the economic underdevelopment in the former German Democratic Republic (GDR) and the economic breakdown of eastern Germany after reunification, unemployment rates have persistently been higher in eastern than in western Germany. Whereas unemployment rates ranged between 6.7 and 11 percent since 2000 in the West, they ranged between 12.6 and 20.6 percent in the East (Statistik der Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2012). However, in addition to regional differences along the previous political East-West axis, there are also regional differences between northern and southern Germany, with the south performing considerably better than the north.

Even in times of economic growth, long-term unemployment poses a problem since it undermines people's future employment and life chances. In the course of the overall increase in unemployment between 1990 and 2009, the percentage of long-term unemployed (i.e. unemployed for longer than 12 months) of total unemployed rose dramatically from 27.8 in 1993 to over 45 percent in 2007 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2012). Since 2005, both overall unemployment and long-term unemployment appear to have declined, with the percentage of long-term unemployed among the unemployed declining to about 35 percent by 2011 (Bundesagentur für Arbeit 2012).

The second trend in changed labor market participation is the relative increase in non-standard forms of employment. Although standard employment is still the dominant form of labor market participation, especially for men (Blossfeld, Mills, and Bernardi 2008), other forms have become relatively more important. Specifically, part-time employment increased from 14 percent in 1991 to 22.8 percent in 2004 (Keller and Seifert 2006). Furthermore, marginal em-

ployment and labor leasing, implemented to promote the transition from non- or unemployment to standard and full-time employment, have gained in relative importance. Although restricted in monthly income and involving less integration into the social security system, marginal employment and mini-jobs increased from 5.5 to 7.2 million people between 2003 and 2009 (Sozialpolitik aktuell 2012a). The rise in non-standard employment mainly, but not by no means exclusively, results from women participating in the labor market in addition to their non-paid work such as child care and homemaking tasks, since compatibility of family work and paid work depends on the time spent on the latter (Sozialpolitik aktuell 2012c, 2012b).

Figure 7: Economic System, Consumption, and the Labor Market



Source: Own illustration.

Despite their advantage in terms of flexibility and the ability to combine family and paid work, non-standard forms of employment have been repeatedly identified as disadvantageous compared to full-time employment in a number of ways (Booth et al. 2002; Büchtemann and Quack 1990; Kalleberg 2009). First, non-standard and atypical employment refers to jobs with lower hourly wages and less income. Second, they are normally associated with higher job insecurity, no or incomplete employment-based integration into the social security system, and (often not by choice) fewer working hours (Keller and Seifert 2004; Möller and Walwei 2009).

Corresponding to the distinction between standard and non-standard employment, labor market segmentation theory and dual labor market theory (Doeringer and Piore 1985; Kalleberg and Sorensen 1979) distinguish between

primary and secondary labor markets. The primary labor market is characterized by secure and long-term positions with relatively good pay, investment in human capital, and at least medium levels of work control. Typically, the primary labor market comprises higher status jobs performed by professional and better skilled blue- and white-collar workers, managers and specialists. The second labor market, in contrast, is characterized by routine low-skilled, and insecure job positions. To what extent insecure, low-wage jobs cause precarious living conditions, however, depends on the existing resources in the household (Büchtemann and Quack 1990; Gießelmann and Lohmann 2008).

Figure 7 shows that the level of resources that can be obtained and constraints that individuals face in order to restore and maintain productivity depend on their work arrangement, moderated by household structure and support. The dotted line between unemployment, production, and consumption indicates that welfare provisions that enable the unemployed to consume goods and services indirectly rely on production and labor market participation.

Economic integration in the form of labor market participation not only determines financial means and available resources for consumption in the short run, but due to the organization of the German welfare state, it also determines long-term effects on phases of unemployment and non-employment. The German welfare state is strongly oriented to people's continuous full-time employment so that unemployment and non-standard employment have a clear impact on people's financial situation (Heady 1997; Kalleberg 2009; Leisering and Leibfried 2001). In contrast to other welfare systems, the German social security system follows in the tradition of status preservation, which contributes towards stabilizing living conditions (Esping-Andersen 1996).

While social integration in the economic sphere is closely related to production and consumption as people obtain the necessary means to buy goods and services, there are also important non-material aspects of labor market participation. Employment is considered to yield positive effects on people's lives above and beyond mere financial and material aspects that relate to people's well-being in different ways (Jahoda 1982; Jahoda et al. 1971; Knabe and Rätzl 2011). Specifically, employment and labor structure people's daily routines, from their time allocation to their lives in general. Furthermore, beyond determining people's social and economic status, engagement in labor and paid work is also associated with social approval, self-esteem, a positive self-concept, identity, goals, and purposes. Finally, employment keeps people active and integrates them into social networks outside of the immediate family (Jahoda 1979). Hence, unemployment is associated with losses in both material and non-material resources. Research on the effects of unemployment of people's well-being shows a negative effect on people's daily routines, their life satisfaction, and their men-

tal health (Browning and Heinesen 2012; Knabe et al. 2010; Knabe and Rätzel 2011; Paul et al. 2007; Paul and Moser 2009)

Given the multi-dimensional meaning of labor and employment, changes in the organization of work over the course of industrialization and mechanization are suspected to have led to alienation (Archibald 2009; Kohn 1976; Mottaz 1981) insofar that the segmentation of production undermines workers' ability to positively identify with the goods they manufacture. Working on automated tasks in fragmented production procedures does not provide the groundwork to experience the non-material positive aspects associated with better employment. In contrast, cognitively challenging, interesting, and self-determined work that earns social recognition from and social interactions with colleagues and supervisors is essential for people's psychosocial well-being (Jahoda 1982; Karasek 1979; Van der Doef and Maes 1999). Social interactions with colleagues and staff are considered to play a crucial role in the non-material gains from employment since these not only affect people's identity and well-being, but also connect unrelated people in a context of overlapping tasks and duties. While within the work sphere social support has been shown to moderate the effect of work stress on well-being (Karasek 1979; Van der Doef and Maes 1999), involvement in work-related social networks can spill over into people's lives outside work (Pettinger 2006).

Turning to the second economic mode of social integration, participation is through purchasing goods and services in the market. While people interact in their role as consumers, these social interactions are strictly directed towards self-interest and efficiency. As a result, this kind of participation is not assumed to be an effective mode for developing and maintaining social cohesion (for instance, Habermas 1984). Instead, as pointed out above, social interactions are considered to require references to more substantial norms beyond efficiency in order to constitute social solidarity. However, from an individual perspective, participation in the market through consumption is essential for people's physical well-being as well as social prestige.

While labor market participation is crucial for material and non-material gains and is considered to represent social integration in itself, resources obtained through work also shape people's chances of participating in other domains related to social integration. Specifically, non-material dimensions of people's labor market integration may serve as vital resources for their psychological well-being, social approval, and respect. In addition, employment is associated with an extension of social networks at work and possibly in people's private lives. Moreover, material means also demonstrate resources necessary for engaging in any social activities that rely on consumption and material goods. Some examples of how financial means enable people's participation in other domains of social activities are going out with friends, attending cultural events, or joining social associations

and clubs. At least to some extent, the material aspects of labor market participation can be compensated by welfare subsidies. However, these only allow a restricted level of consumption, determined by the amount of subsidies provided. Yet, although welfare subsidies allow people to take part in consumption, they have fewer non-material resources except for time, so unemployment is associated with higher risks of social exclusion and less social involvement.

In sum, while integration in the economic system can be achieved through participation in producing goods and services as well as consumption, it is the non-instrumental interactions that foster social integration in terms of social cohesion and solidarity. Thus, within the economic system, people's labor market integration contributes more to the development and maintenance of social cohesion and social integration than participating in consumption. In addition, due to gaining various resources (Jahoda 1979, 1981), integration in the labor market may spill over into other spheres. As indicated by the literature on work-life interference and work-life balance, interdependences suggest that work and unemployment both affect people's participation in social relationships, activities, and networks, albeit in different ways (Fisher et al. 2009; Grzywacz, Almeida, and McDonald 2002; Lambert 1990; Major et al. 2002). With this in mind, the following section focuses on involvement in the community and social-cultural sphere.

2.3.2 Social Involvement in the Community and Social-Cultural Sphere

The community and social-cultural sphere have been suggested to be crucial domains for repeated, norm-oriented interactions required for social integration. This may include weak as well as strong ties (Granovetter 1973, 1983), bridging as well as bonding social relationships (Putnam 2000), family as well as non-family social networks. In addition, it may include informal forms of involvement as well as engagement in formal groups.

In general, social relationships can be classified according to different dimensions, for instance, according to their directness, their duration, and their closeness. Granovetter (1973, 1983) differentiated relationships into weak and strong ties, whereas Putnam (2000) suggested a distinction between bridging and bonding ties and social capital. Dissimilar in nature and associated with different resources, weak and strong ties are related differently to social integration on a societal level and to social involvement on the individual level. However, both forms of relationships have been argued to be essential for the functioning of societies as well as the well-being of individuals. *Table 1* illustrates the different ways in which ties are considered to be beneficial on the societal and the individual level.

Table 1: Relevance of Social Ties in Macro- and Micro-Sociological Context

	Strong ties	Weak ties
Macro	Socialization, transmission of cultural value and norms	Bridging people from heterogeneous backgrounds
Micro	Substantial instrumental and emotional support	Instrumental support, indirect access to resources

Strong relationships and bonding ties are characterized by intimacy, affective attachment, and mutual commitment. Kinship networks and, even more specifically, the bonds within the core family, fall into this category because they are highly affective and characterized by mutual responsibility (Kelley 1983). While in the past the family provided, for instance, education and care for family members unable to support themselves, in the course of modernization, professional institutions (e.g., the education system and welfare institutions) have partly taken over these functions (Hareven 2000). Historically, families represented the socializing context in which individuals learn and practice skills, habits, and values as the basis for more differentiated roles over the life course (Parsons and Bales 1955). Despite institutional outsourcing of care and educational functions, however, research has shown family background plays a key role in people's lives, transmitted by educational attainment and social status, for instance (Kohn 1995; Shavit and Blossfeld 1993).

Besides emotional support, families provide material and instrumental support of different kinds. Family members—especially the parents—are the main people individuals draw on in case of financial hardship, significant life events, and intense emotional stress. The importance of relationships with family members continues beyond childhood or adolescence (Fingerman et al. 2011; Furstenberg Jr. 2010; Kohli and Albertini 2008). Therefore, from a macro-level viewpoint, families and the strong relationships they generate, constitute the basic unit of mutual solidarity. In fact, in the German welfare system, regulations specify that people living in the same household and who have a close kinship relation are legally obligated to financially support one another in times of unemployment (Eichhorst, Grienberger-Zingerle, and Konle-Seidl 2006). Also in the event that older adults require professional care in a nursing home, the German Civil Code stipulates that family members, spouses/partners, and children are obligated to absorb the costs on the basis of their family income (BGB Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch §1106ff.).

However, instrumental support within families extends beyond financial aid during times of unemployment or health problems. As confirmed by extensive research, support provided in families covers care for toddlers and children, help

with chores or repairs, advice, financial assistance, and other material gifts (Albertini, Kohli, and Vogel 2007; Diewald 1991; Geurts, Poortman, and Van Tilburg 2012; Grundy 2010; Leopold and Raab 2011). The family, particularly intra- and intergenerational relationships within the core family, provides an essential domain of social support and reciprocity for people, regardless of their age. For this reason, recent social and cultural developments in family and couple relationships, such as increases in the divorce rate recorded by the German Federal Statistical Office (Statistisches Bundesamt 2011), have been argued to decrease strong ties and pose threats for the community and social integration.

Friendships demonstrate another kind of strong social ties. In fact, given reduced family sizes and an increase in spatial distance between family members, friendships have arguably gained in importance (Allan 2008; Spencer and Pahl 2006). In contrast to family and kinship relationships, friendships represent an optional and selective form of social relationship, sometimes termed as “elective affinities.” According to this definition, friendships are characterized as relationships that provide reciprocal support and mutual commitment, similar to family networks. The support and commitment, however, is thought to result from attachment, intimacy, and affection formed from shared interests, attitudes and values, mutual respect, and an approval of one another’s personality. In contrast to family membership, people can choose their friends and regulate the closeness, commitment, and mutual responsibility of their friendships (Allan 2008; Pahl 2000; Spencer and Pahl 2006; Wiseman 1986). Thus, friendships can be thought to represent social relationships that match people’s interests, values, and moral orientations potentially better than family networks (Hartup and Stevens 1997; Pahl 2000). Of course, there is often some overlap between friendships and family relationships.

While friendships may be classified as strong ties, they are more open in nature and subject to people’s decisions about the closeness and intimacy of the relationship. Thus, they rely on individuals’ preferences, given their opportunity structure. For this reason, friendships incorporate people in a more heterogeneous network—at least compared to family ties—and connect people from more diverse contexts who would otherwise not be connected. Besides spatial proximity, research has shown that similarities in social characteristics, shared interests, attitudes, and values are the main predictors of the development of close relationships such as friendships (McPherson et al. 2001). Thus, friendship networks are still limited in terms of the social, cultural, and economic diversity people are exposed to. At the same time, given that friends have other friends, too, these relationships provide bridges to a wider and therefore potentially more heterogeneous network. Thus, friends operate as connecting agents by generating opportunities to extend the individuals’ social contacts (Burt 2001).

While, by definition, strong ties refer to relationships that are characterized by mutual affection and commitment that produce reciprocal support and frequent interactions, weak ties consist of less affectionate and committed relationships (Granovetter 1973; Putnam 2000). Although weak ties may also include relationships that are based on repeated and frequent interactions, weak ties are formed on the grounds of particular interests such as in leisure or political clubs, or because of specific social roles individuals have in different settings. In other words, with weak ties, people only interact in a very limited way on the basis of their functional or social role in different settings. Accordingly, commitment to maintaining weak ties is based on self-interest or dependency. Hence, weak ties are assumed to rely less on direct interactions than strong and close relationships. This applies particularly to face-to-face interactions. Although strong ties may develop and be maintained by utilizing electronic devices and the Internet, close relationships are considered to still be essentially based on face-to-face interaction (Boase and Wellman 2006). Correspondingly, the increasing popularity of social media, such as Facebook and Google+, has provoked concerns that people's relationships are becoming increasingly superficial, in that a higher number of weak and indirect relationships replace strong and direct relationships. Empirical research, however, suggests that social media function as extensions of existing relationships, not as a replacement for a small set of strong ties characterized by frequent face-to-face contact (Ellison, Steinfield, and Lampe 2007; Vitak, Ellison, and Steinfield 2011; Wellman et al. 2001). In fact, it has been demonstrated that social media are used to complement interactions with strong ties as well as extending the scope for weak ties.

In general, interacting with weak ties requires less effort, time, and commitment. Whereas for certain kinds of activities such as leisure groups, physical co-presence is indispensable, social interactions in other fields of leisure activities can remain loose, such as in online games or communities. As a result, people can engage in a variety of activities and networks. By being involved in different joint leisure activities such as social clubs, political groups, associations, and interest groups, individuals become connected to people of various demographic, social, cultural, or economic backgrounds. Compared to family and friendship networks, weak ties help integrate people into the wider society. In support of this view, Granovetter notes "social systems lacking in weak ties will be fragmented and incoherent" (1983:202).

While linking unconnected individuals may be considered to be the main benefit of weak ties from a macro-sociological perspective (Van Der Meer and Van Ingen 2009), activities and domains that refer to collective norms and collective affairs are considered to be of particular value for social integration (Durkheim 1984; Etzioni 1995; Khatchadourian 1999). Thus, while membership of hobby groups and sports clubs also constitute weak ties, volunteering, engag-

ing in community affairs, political groups, and associations represent weak ties that are more relevant for social solidarity. Directed towards a collective good, they reflect interest in and care for people, and it has been argued that the process of negotiating and formulating conflicting opinions and interests express and foster democratic and civic values (Cornwall 2008; Putnam 2000; Tocqueville 2003). Particularly by guaranteeing access on the basis of formal criteria, formal volunteer groups and political associations are considered to connect individuals to people with competing and contradictory attitudes and values.

Given the relevance attributed to engagement in civic, political, and cultural groups for social integration, membership rates and time spent engaging in these groups can be seen as indications of a vivid democratic, well-functioning civil society, and social capital that is fundamental for social trust and solidarity. Conversely, decreasing membership and participation rates are regarded as centrifugal processes that undermine social cohesion and social solidarity. Considering membership rates and engagement in formal associations, Putnam diagnoses a decline in social capital in the United States (Putnam 2000). Party and union membership rates show a similar trend in Germany (Van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke 2012; Ebbinghaus 2002). However, critics have noted that including engagement in informal groups and associations beyond formal civic and political organizations shows no clear downward trend in overall participation, but even a tendency towards more participation (Ladd 1996; Offe and Fuchs 2002). An increase in informal forms of engagement can be interpreted in two ways. On the one hand, due to their informal nature, groups and associations could be more susceptible to discriminate or exclude on the basis of ascriptive attributes than formal organizations. On the other hand, considering the fundamental values and norms required for these collective affairs, weak ties from engaging in more informal contexts can be regarded as equally beneficial for social integration from a macro-level perspective. The main characteristic of engaging in both formal and informal groups is the interaction with more heterogeneous people by extending the social network beyond kin and friendship relationships.

It can be concluded that strong and weak ties complement each other in their benefits. On the macro-level, strong and weak relationships cover different functions that are equally important for social integration (see also *Table 2*). For individuals, rewards from strong and weak social ties also complement each other. Family and friendship relationships provide support and approval on the basis of the person's personality, interests, and values, while weak ties provide access to additional information and resources, as well as social approval on the basis of social roles and positions (Franzen and Hangartner 2006; Granovetter 1983; Lin, Ensel, and Vaughn 1981; Wegener 1991). The benefits on the individual level will be dealt with in more detail in Chapter 3.

Table 2: Characteristics of Social Ties

	Family	Friends	Acquaintances
Tie/ commitment	Strong	Strong	Weak
Basis of relationship	Birth/blood relationship	Similar personalities, identity, shared interests	Domain-specific social role and particu- lar shared interests
Contact	Frequent, affection-based	Frequent, affection-based	Occasional, irregular, role-based, or interest- based
Freedom	Moral obligation	Choice	Domain-specific moral and legal obligation and choice
Reciprocity	Generalized, long- and short-term recip- rocal norms, altruistic	(Rather) Short-term reciprocal norms	Hypothetical reciprocal (low-cost situations)
Support	High financial, instrumental, and emotional support	Medium instrumental and emotional support (direct and indirect)	Low instrumental and emotional support

However, as indicated by the benefits of social ties for labor market outcomes as well as by the effects of work spilling over into other domains (Fisher et al. 2009; Kelly, Moen, and Tranby 2011; Lin 1999; Schieman et al. 2009; Strazdins et al. 2006), the subsystems and people's participation in these are not autonomous. Rather, the dynamics of social stratification imply that participation in one domain is associated with resources related to the other domains. Consequently, the next section deals with how these are related, followed by a description of an action model of people's participation that will serve as the basis for the hypotheses of the present study.

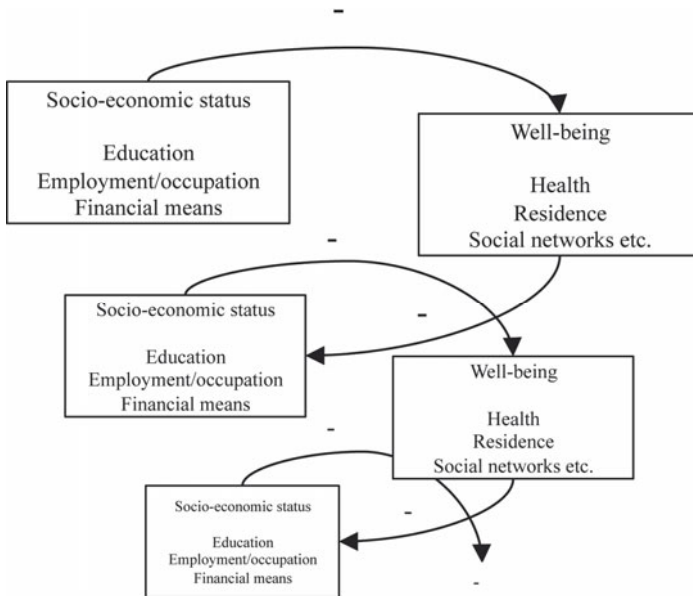
2.3.3 Correlation between Areas of Participation

Up to this point, the question addressed has been how integration in the economic and labor market system and integration into the societal community and social-cultural sphere translate into participation and social involvement on the individual level. In this section, the focus is on the correlation between them. According to Parsons' (1970b) theory of different subsystems that operate and communicate through system-specific media, resources gained in one domain

may alter people's access to and chances of participating in other domains. In line with this idea, the interdependence between participation in both spheres will be examined, looking at required resources and people's access to and control over these resources. Hence, this section addresses the distribution of resources, social stratification, and the dynamics of social inequality.

Theories on social inequality investigate the distribution and access to goods in high demand but scarce supply within societies and social groups (Bourdieu 1984; Dahrendorf 1959; Marx 1992; Weber 1978). With social positions stratified in a hierarchy, access to and exclusion from resources and goods are highly associated with people's positions in the stratification system. While those individuals with high social status in the hierarchy hold advantageous positions with relatively easy access to desirable goods, those with lower social status have more restricted access to resources (Giddens, Duneier, and Appelbaum 2007; Hurst 2004). Accordingly, low positions in the social hierarchy lead to higher levels of exclusion by limiting people's chances to properly participate in different social domains in both the short and long term (Barnes et al. 2002; Paugam 1996). These dynamics are shown in *Figure 8*.

Figure 8: Dynamics of Social Exclusion



Source: Own illustration.

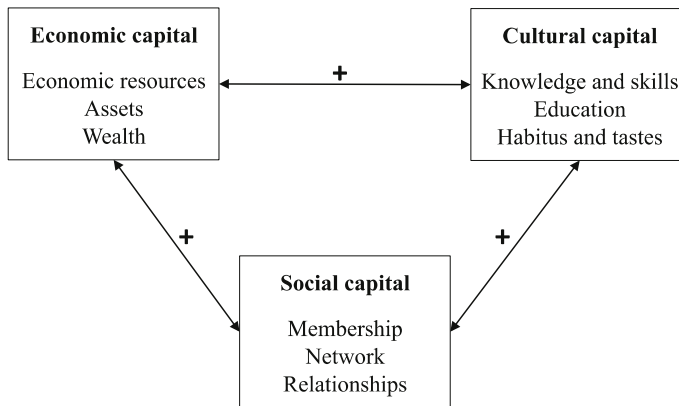
Welfare policies are directed towards buffering and restricting the potential accumulation of disadvantages (Steinert 2007). Significantly, people's positions in the vertical social structure are not only seen to potentially shape their material living conditions, but are also assumed to influence people in non-material terms. Accordingly, a long sociological research tradition since the nineteenth century has studied how material living conditions and people's social and economic positions influence their habits, aspirations, and orientations as potential mechanisms through which social inequality is reproduced (Bourdieu 1984; Kohn 1995; Marx 1992).

Historically, characteristics determining people's positions in the social hierarchy as well as possibilities of social mobility have been subject to changes (Diewald and Faist 2011). In pre-modern societies, people's positions in the stratified system were determined by birth (i.e., being born into a certain family and/or occupational group), which, therefore, determined their social class. In the course of modernization and individualization, individual merit and achievement have become the main determinants of people's socio-economic positions. Specifically, education, occupation, financial resources, prestige, and power demonstrate people's status in the social hierarchy—with individual skills and educational attainment forming the basis of other resources and characteristics tied to social class (Van Leeuwen 2009; Van Leeuwen and Maas 2010). Nowadays, social status is thought to result from individual effort and achievement, with modern societies characterized by more social mobility (Parsons 1970a). Hence, the focal point of stratification and inequality research has been directed towards educational achievement, socio-economic status, and the role of family background. Research indicates that educational success and status attainment still vary according to social and economic background (De Graaf and Huinink 1992; O. D. Duncan et al. 1972; Goldthorpe 1996; Bukodi and Goldthorpe 2012). As a result, research has been directed towards decomposing institutional, economic, social, and cultural underpinnings of the transmission of educational and socio-economic status.

Bourdieu (1984) outlines a theory of social reproduction of social inequalities and claims that social classes differ in habits, orientations, preferences, and cultural tastes. These serve as the basis for social reproduction of the upper class's power and prestige. According to Bourdieu (1986), economic resources, social networks, educational attainment, and cultural tastes represent different types of capital: economic capital, social capital, and finally cultural capital (see *Figure 9*). These are considered to be convertible into one another. Thus, in line with other researchers studying the reproduction of social elites (Hartmann 2000; Pareto 1991), Bourdieu's (1984, 1986) theory suggests that with increasing access to and control over previously exclusive resources and positions by lower

social classes, the leading class would secure its superior position by redefining the criteria for high social status. Changing the criteria for accessing resources and redefining the characteristics of higher status reflects the process of social closure (Parkin 1974; Weber 1978). Accordingly, the association between factors assigning people to different positions within the social hierarchy and controlling scarce and desirable goods is circular. Attributes associated with higher positions themselves become desirable aspects and goals that people pursue. Social closure is, thus, a strategy of the collective group to secure their control over scarce resources by restricting the eligibility to insiders and excluding outsiders on the basis of certain characteristics (Weber 1978).

Figure 9: Bourdieu's Capital Concept



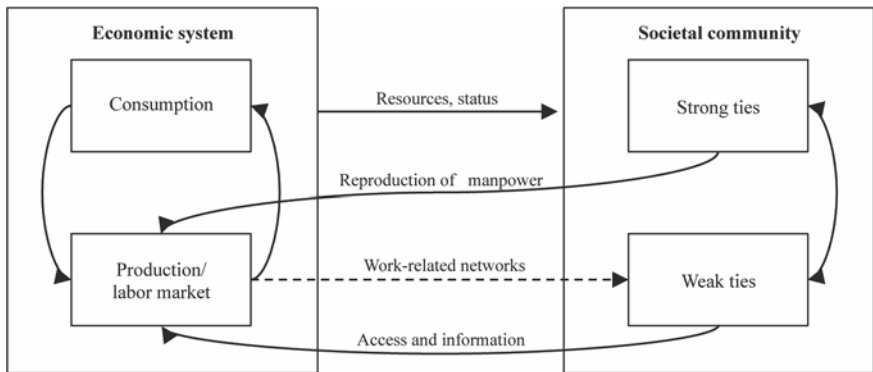
Source: Own illustration.

With respect to social integration, the literature on social closure presents several implications for interdependencies between different domains such as the economic and the social-cultural domains. More precisely, their implications for access to or exclusion from other domains are of interest, that is, to what extent resources tied to participating in one domain enable people to or restrict them from participating in other domains. In line with Parsons' (1970b) and Bourdieu's (1984) views, it can be assumed that labor market and economic position are related to access to and control over cultural capital and social networks. However, another strand of research suggests that by becoming more permeable, social classes decrease their impact on structuring people's lives in material and non-material terms. In other words, with intergenerational as well as intra-

individual social mobility, social status becomes less important in shaping people's living conditions, orientations, and habits in the medium and long term (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002; Bell 1973; Hradil 2004).

Following the literature suggesting the persistent impact of social class *or* the literature suggesting a diminishing formative effect of socio-economic status, different interdependencies of social status position and resources can be expected. According to the classical perspective on social inequalities that emphasizes the relevance of education, occupation, income, and wealth for people's living conditions and participation in other domains (Erikson and Goldthorpe 2002), labor market exclusion leads to further disadvantages, including exclusion from participation in social networks and cultural and social activities. This is shown in *Figure 10*.

Figure 10: Interdependencies between the Economic System and the Societal Community



Source: Own illustration.

In contrast, arguments that claim a decrease in the formative impact of classical inequality factors (Beck 1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 2002) suggest that participation in different domains reflects particular lifestyles and that the strength of interdependent relationships differs by horizontal characteristics. Different interdependencies can, for instance, be explained by a life course perspective and people's previous experience (Berger, Steinmüller, and Sopp 1993; Brückner and Mayer 2005; Elder 1975), people's future orientations and expectations (Benabou and Ok 2001; Kahneman and Tversky 1979), or background characteristics such as household composition, material resources, and non-material resources (Büchtemann and Quack 1990; Diewald 2003).

Questions of interdependencies between social participation in different social domains are clearly framed by the macro-sociological context of social stratification and inequalities, institutional structures, and political regulations. However, the economic sphere and the labor market are crucial domains in shaping people's living conditions and participation in the social-cultural domain (Bourdieu 1984; Goldthorpe 1996; McPherson et al. 2001). Since participation refers to individuals' engagement, people are considered to be acting agents. However, interdependencies between the different domains mean that resources in one domain restrict and enable participation in other domains. Addressing the interdependencies, Chapter 3 is devoted to outlining the theoretical foundations for the effect of labor market participation and unemployment on people's involvement in activities, groups, and social ties in the social-cultural sphere.

To recap, in this chapter, it was shown that unemployment has the potential to undermine social integration and social cohesion. While following Durkheim's (1984) early views, unemployment aggregated across individuals constitutes a loss of social solidarity, theories emphasizing engagement in domains other than work (Bellah 1996; Etzioni 1996; Putnam 2000; Tönnies 2002) indicate that unemployment can fuel social disintegration, particularly if it is associated with decreasing engagement in social networks, groups, and activities beyond the work sphere. This poses the question to what extent social involvement in other social domains relies on employment and work-related losses. Using action theory to explain people's engagement in the labor market and social groups, networks, and activities at the micro-level, access to and the rewards from participation in work and social domains are examined.

Dependencies and Mechanisms of Unemployment and
Social Involvement

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Sonnenberg, B.

2014, XVI, 239 p. 32 illus., Softcover

ISBN: 978-3-658-05354-3