

LIFECOURSE POLICIES AND SOCIAL REGIMES

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In search of policies for 'the good society'

- The French Revolution had it right when it called for “Liberty, Equality, and Solidarity”
- Liberty and solidarity are empty words in the absence of some measure of equality
- I share Amartya Sen’s basic intuition
 - societies should provide all of their members with the basic resources: health, education, and economic security

What is 'the good society'?

- Complex dialectics, historically contingent equilibria
- How can we assess if we are getting closer to 'the good society'?
- It has to do with
 - welfare regimes
 - and how they shape the lifecourse in different ways

“We have to move away from an assumed world of perfectly competitive and perfectly clearing markets. We have to allow for at least some of the contingencies for which the welfare state was created.”

Anthony B. Atkinson
in the first KEELA Lecture, 2004

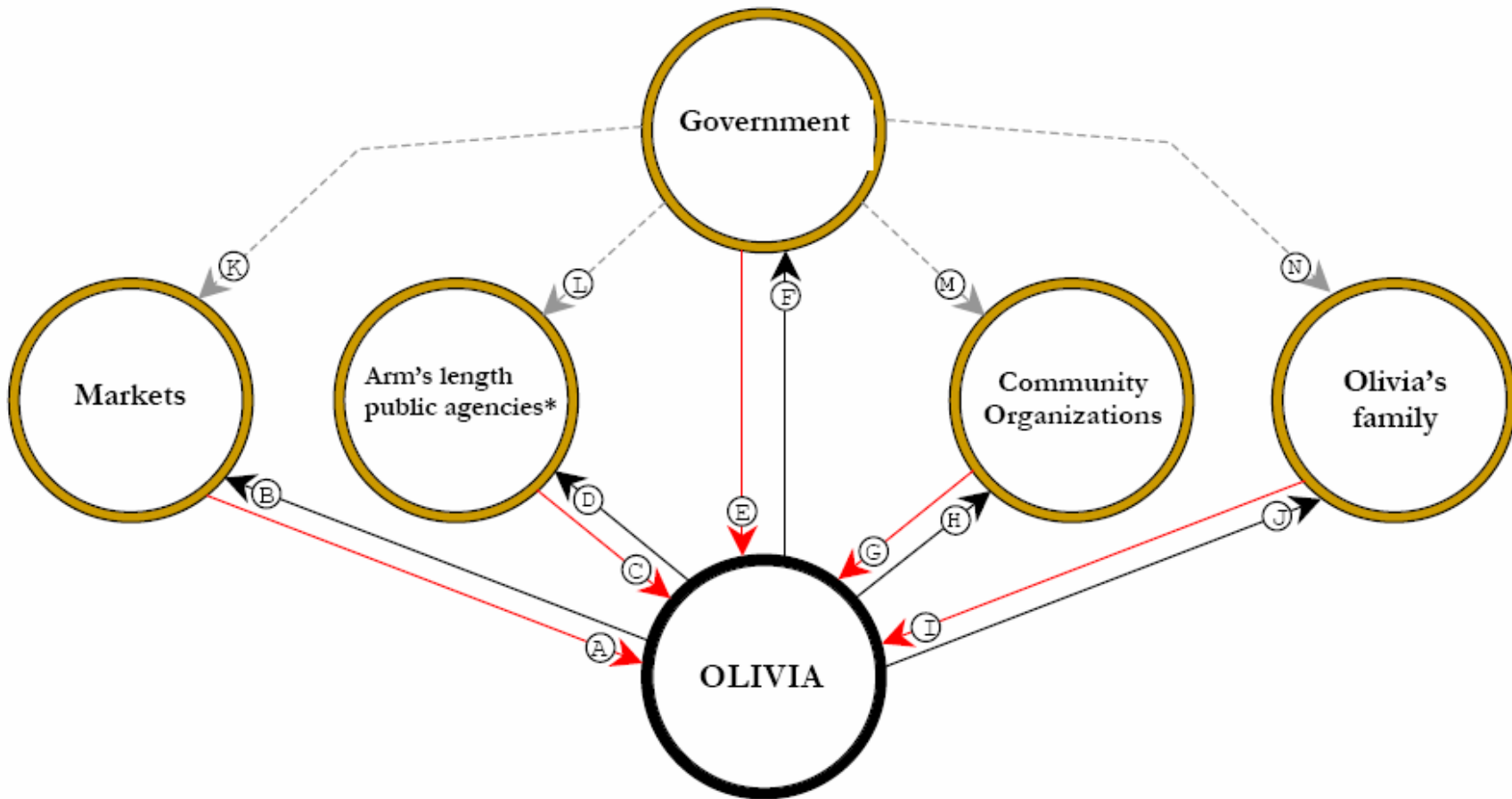
THE LIFECOURSE FRAMEWORK

The lifecourse perspective

Two representations of the lifecourse perspective

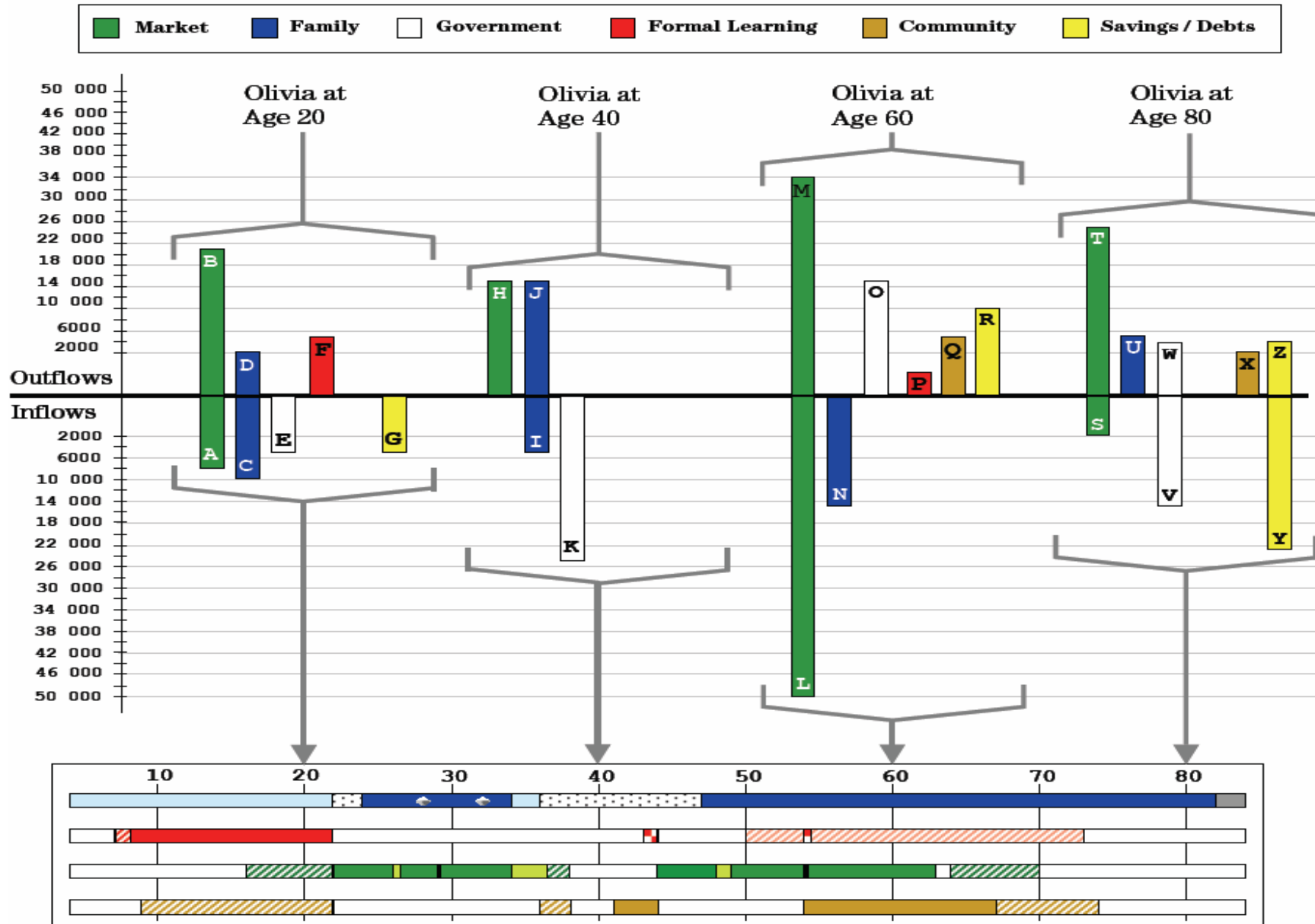
- The Canadian Policy Research Initiative's "A lifecourse approach to social policy analysis" : *Olivia's story*
- Multiplex causal processes in people's trajectories and the need for general household panel studies

Figure 1 - The flow of resources between Olivia and the main institutions of society
(The agents or pillars of the welfare state)



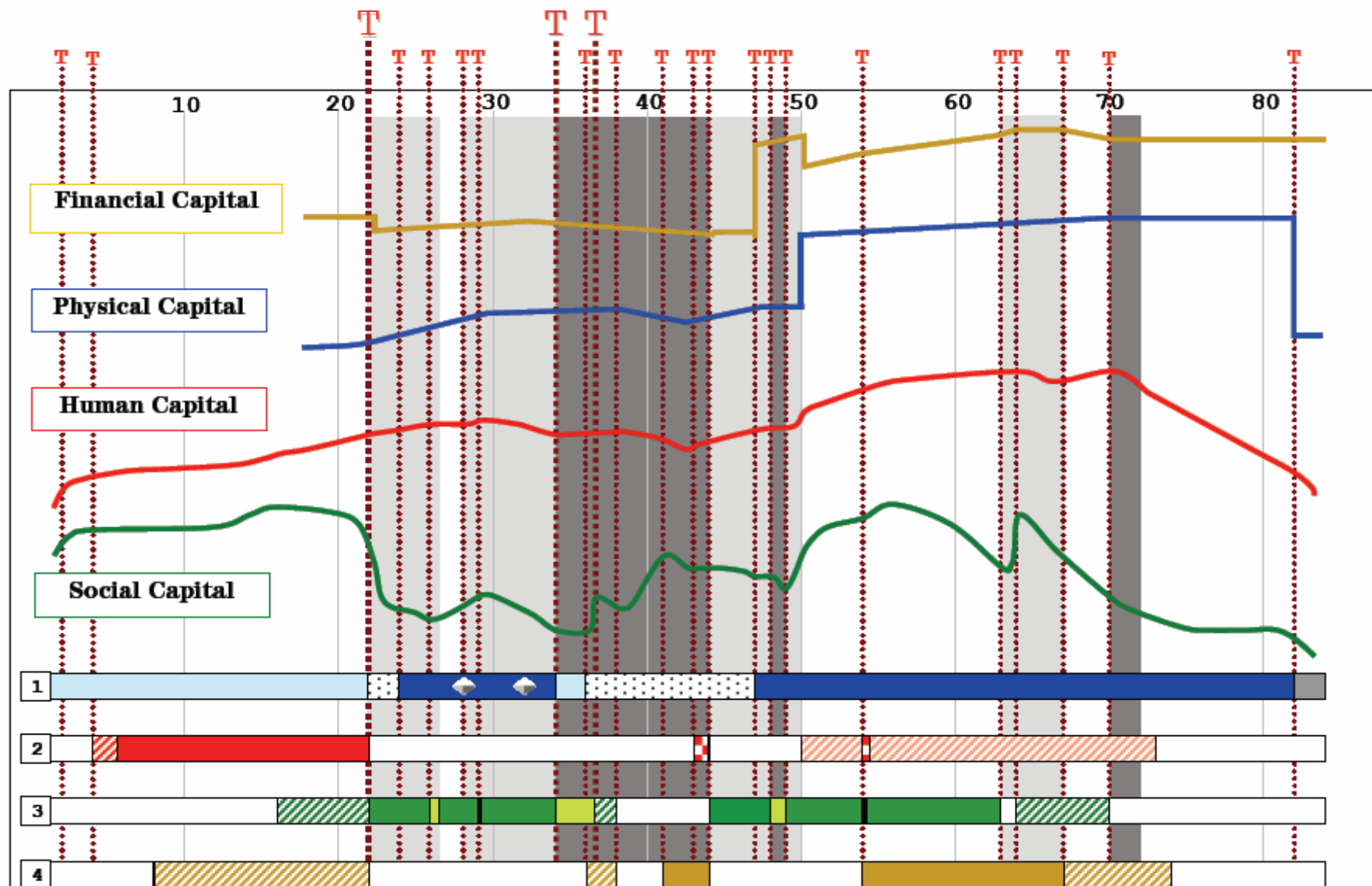
Source: Policy Research Initiative

Figure 4. Financial Flows: Olivia's income, expenditures and savings at four specific times



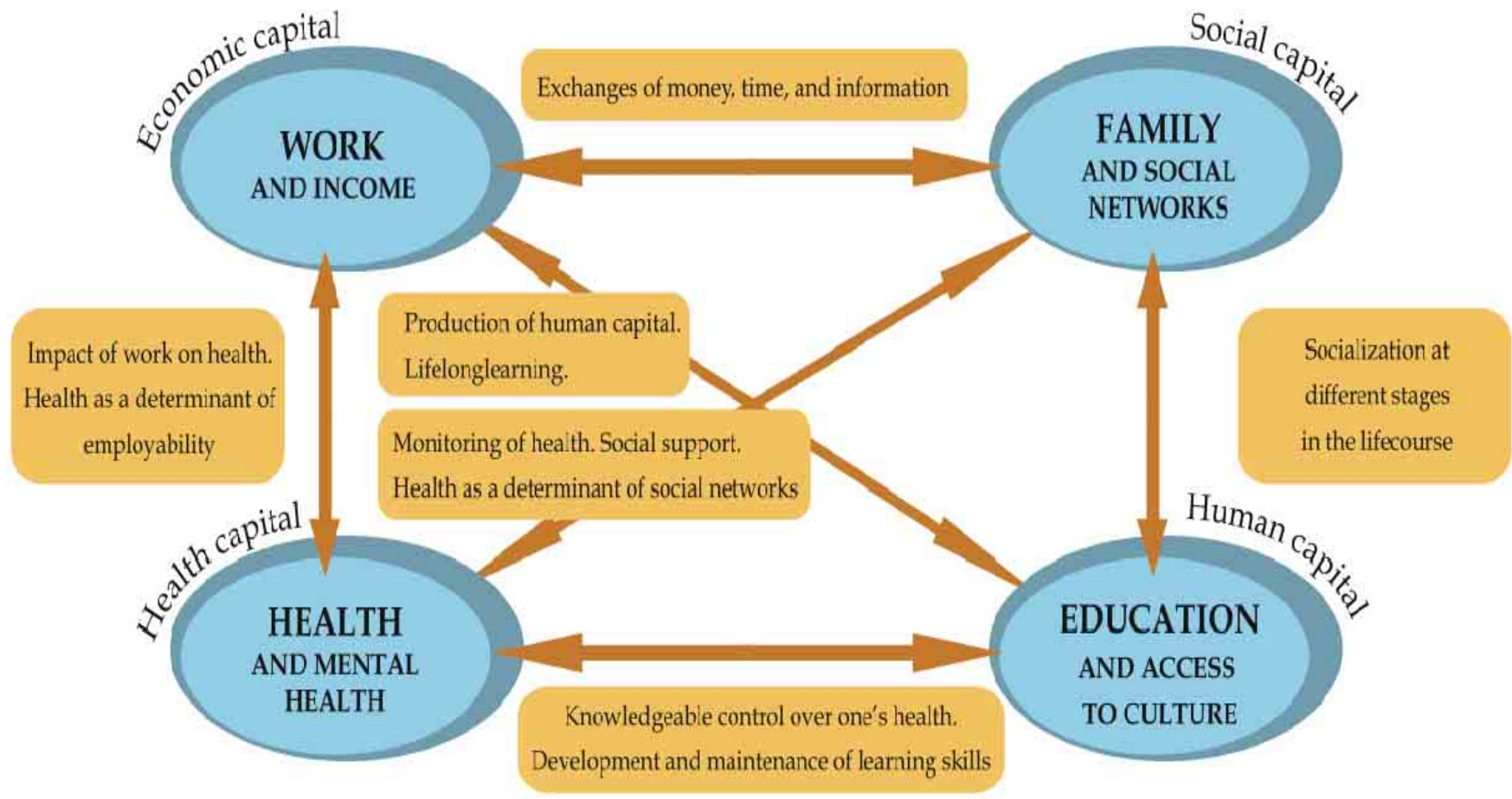
Source: Policy Research Initiative

Figure 6 – Putting it all together
Transitions, pressure points, resources, and well-being
over the course of Olivia's life



Source: Policy Research Initiative

A representation of the lifecourse perspective



The lifecourse framework

The lifecourse framework rests on four related principles

- Life is longitudinal
- Life is multi-faceted
- Lives are linked
- Lives unfold in socially constructed contexts

Life is longitudinal

- Individuals, as human agents, build their future on the basis of the constraints and opportunities provided by their past
- The process is iterative
- There are significant disparities
 - in circumstances
 - in the quality of the knowledge available
- The process is cumulative: initial advantages or disadvantages often are amplified with time

Life is multi-faceted

- Individuals use, and also accumulate or lose, various interdependent forms of capital over their lifecourse
- Three basic resources (health, literacy, and economic security) can be seen as both causes and consequences of one another as the lifecourse unfolds
- Social capital: through social networks, individuals can mobilize other useful resources for themselves, their families and their communities

Lives are linked

- Individuals are involved in “*linked lives*”, largely through family and generational relationships
- Linked lives mean that the lifecourse of individuals is profoundly affected by what happens in the lifecourse of their family members, and vice versa

Lives unfold in local contexts

- Local communities offer
 - various levels of opportunities (for instance jobs, quality of schools and childcare services, physical security, quality of the environment, availability of commercial services)
 - and various levels of support (sociability, community organizations)
- These obviously shape the trajectories of residents, especially for the more place-bound sub-populations, such as children, the aged, the handicapped, and the poor.

Lives unfold in societal contexts

- Provincial and national jurisdictions also play a key role in shaping the lifecourse, through their belonging to regimes
- Historical context is also important to lifecourse. It is well captured in the socio-demographic conceptual triptych of
 - *age*, the individual passage of time from early dependence to independence, and then to some dependence again
 - *cohort*, the conjunctions of biographical and historical time
 - and *generation*, the interpersonal aspect of the passage of time

The power of the notion of lifecourse

- A paradigmatic idea
 - lifecourse may become for social policies
 - what national accounts have been for economic policies
- The lifecourse also reaches across and brings together three related levels: practice, research, and policy.

The lifecourse and the changing of policy mindsets: examples

- Poverty and economic mobility
- The importance of the early years (and the role of generations)
- The dynamics of retirement and active aging
- Health and the earning/caring balance

The challenges of lifecourse policies

- The challenge of horizontality and indirect effects of policies
- The challenge of the longer term
- The challenge of orienting policies to families, households and communities
- Collaboratively rethinking governance using the lifecourse framework

How do societies and polities differ in their approach to the lifecourse?

- The *liberal* approach: individuals and families largely fend for themselves over their lifecourse, with means-tested social protection and very unequally distributed incentives
- The *conservative* approach: attending to important specific risks so as to maintain the position of individuals, and indirectly of families, over their lifecourse
- The *social-democratic* approach: adopting a broader, lifecourse approach to risks, thus inducing individuals and families to be active and contributing to the sustainability of the welfare regime

SOCIAL REGIMES

What do regimes mean?

- Regimes are
 - global and
 - resilient
- Regimes refer to the way societies divide up the work and organize the responsibilities for producing and distributing well being between
 - markets
 - states
 - families, and
 - communities

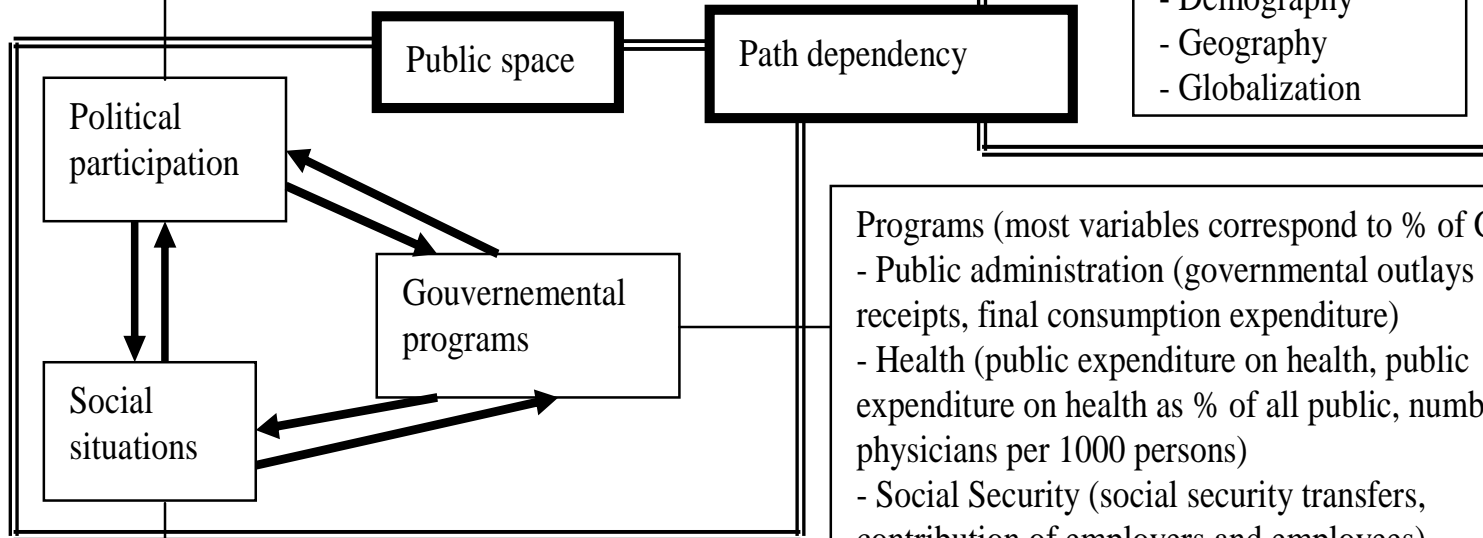
Three successive analytical approaches using social indicators

1. Welfare regimes and the causes of their resilience
2. From welfare regimes to gender regimes
3. Social regimes and the lifecourse perspective

1 - Welfare regimes and the causes of their resilience

- Pursue an exploratory avenue, guided by Esping-Andersen's seminal work
- Avoid dependence on any arbitrary subset of indicators (inductive approach)
- Take into account policies (20 indicators), outcomes (12) and civic participation (4) on 20 OECD countries
- Use data reduction methods: cluster analysis of standardized indicators

Institutional mechanisms that support political mobilization:
Voter turnout at the latest elections, union membership, daily newspaper read, level of trust...



Situations :

- Economic (growth, inflation, etc.)
- Labour market (participation rates, unemployment rates, long-term unemployment, general government employment)
- Family (female labour participation rate, fertility rates, average age of women at birth of their first child)
- Health (life expectancy at birth, infant mortality rates)
- Education (R&D: scientists and technicians)

Programs (most variables correspond to % of GDP):

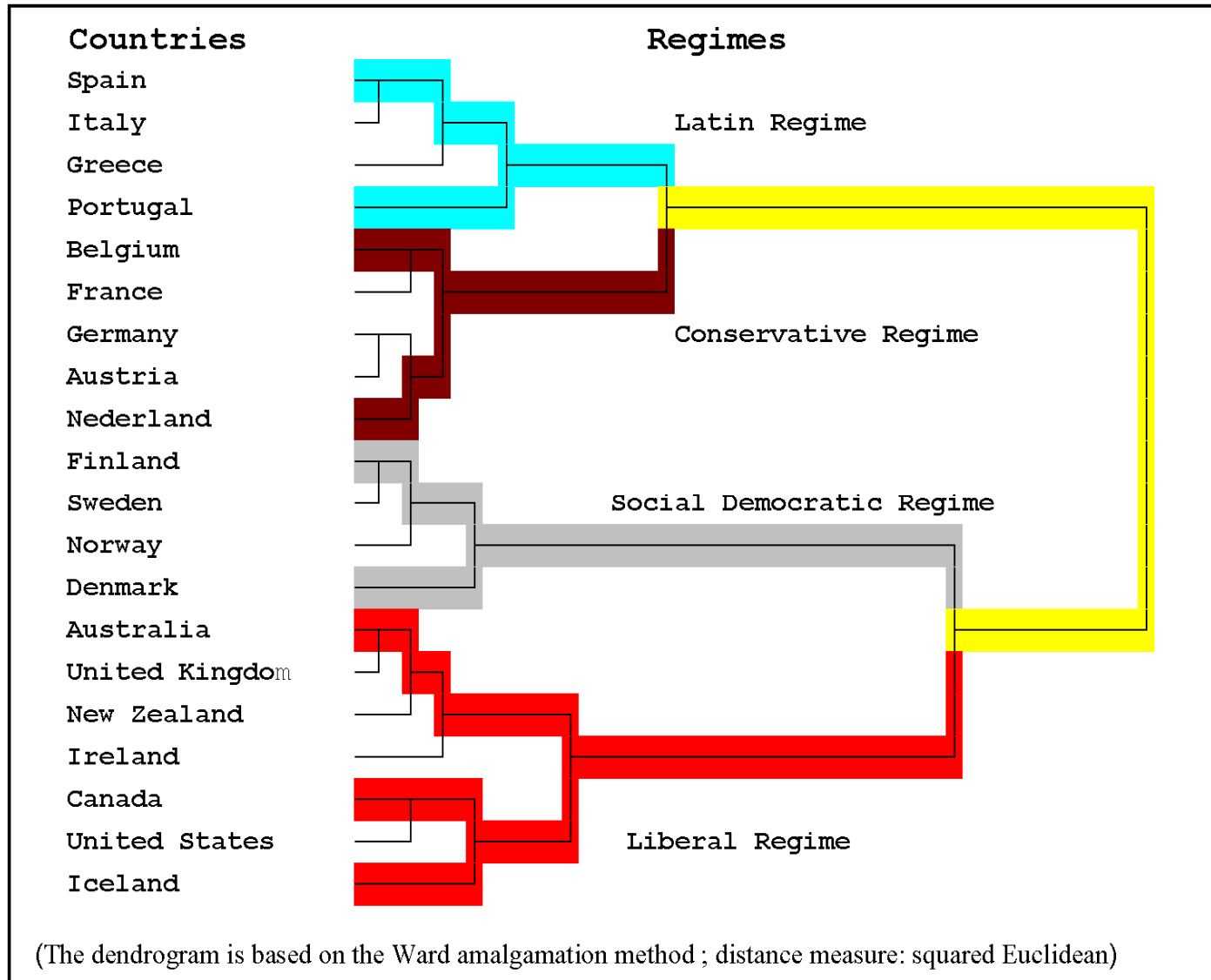
- Public administration (governmental outlays and receipts, final consumption expenditure)
- Health (public expenditure on health, public expenditure on health as % of all public, number of physicians per 1000 persons)
- Social Security (social security transfers, contribution of employers and employees)
- Professional training (public expenditure)
- Fiscal (investment, debt interest payments, income tax, subventions and other transfers)
- Education (public expenditure on education)
- Number of years (benchmark is 2000) since the first law on: (1) old age, disability and death, (2) sickness and maternity, (3) unemployment, (4) work injury, (5) family allowances.

Using social indicators and data reduction methods to characterize welfare regimes (2)

Testing convergence vs. resilience of welfare regimes with data from the mid to late 80s and from the mid to late 90s

- In the 90s, 3 + 1 regimes: social-democratic, liberal, conservative and familialistic (“latin”)
- In the 80s, the same clusters
- Why this resilience?
 - The same structure of clusters obtains when we use in the analysis only policies, only outcomes, and only civic participation
 - This suggests a causal mechanism for the resilience of regimes: policies, outcomes and civic participation bear the imprint of one another

Figure 4 - Hierarchical cluster analysis using all variables (1993-1998)

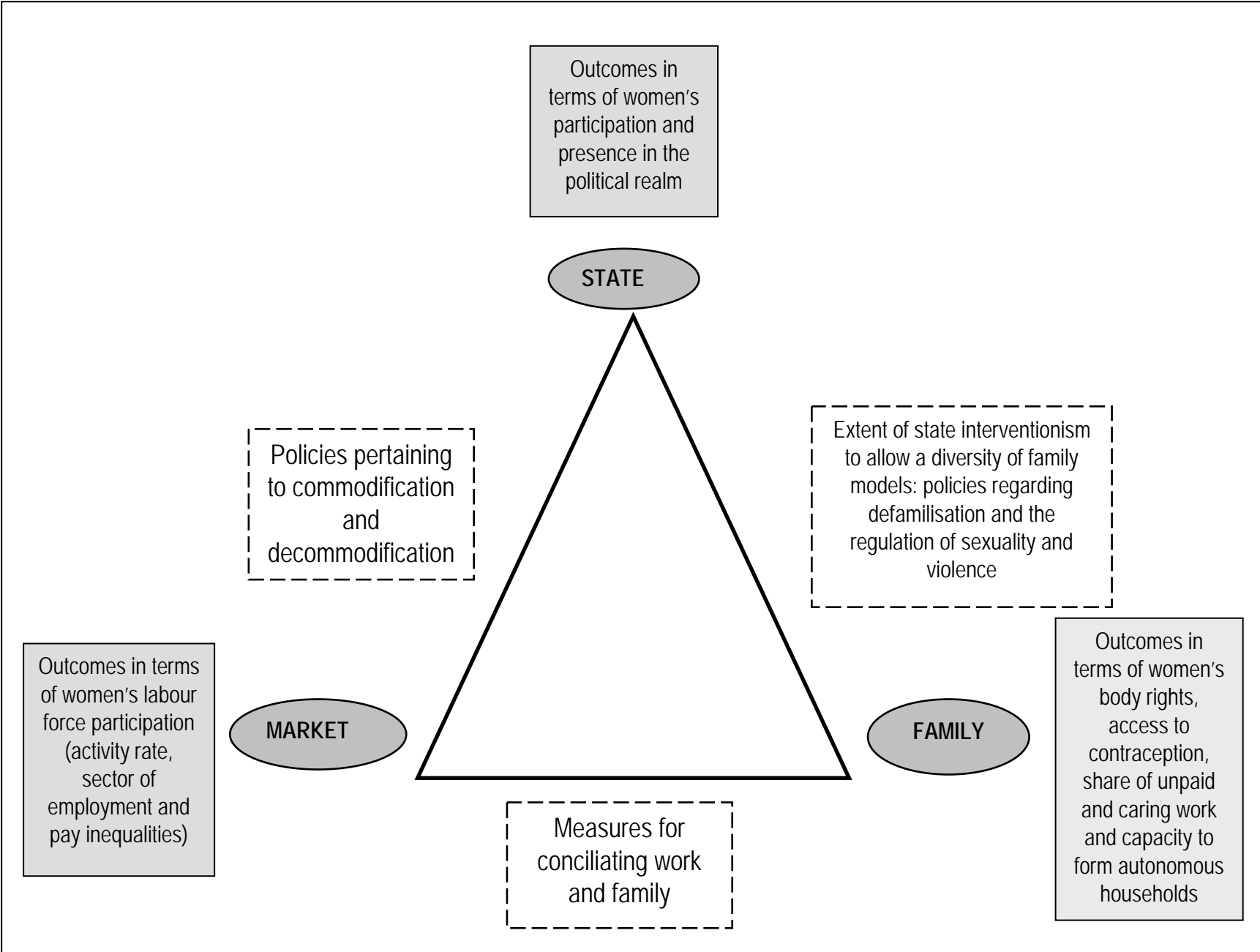


2 - Gender regimes and welfare regimes

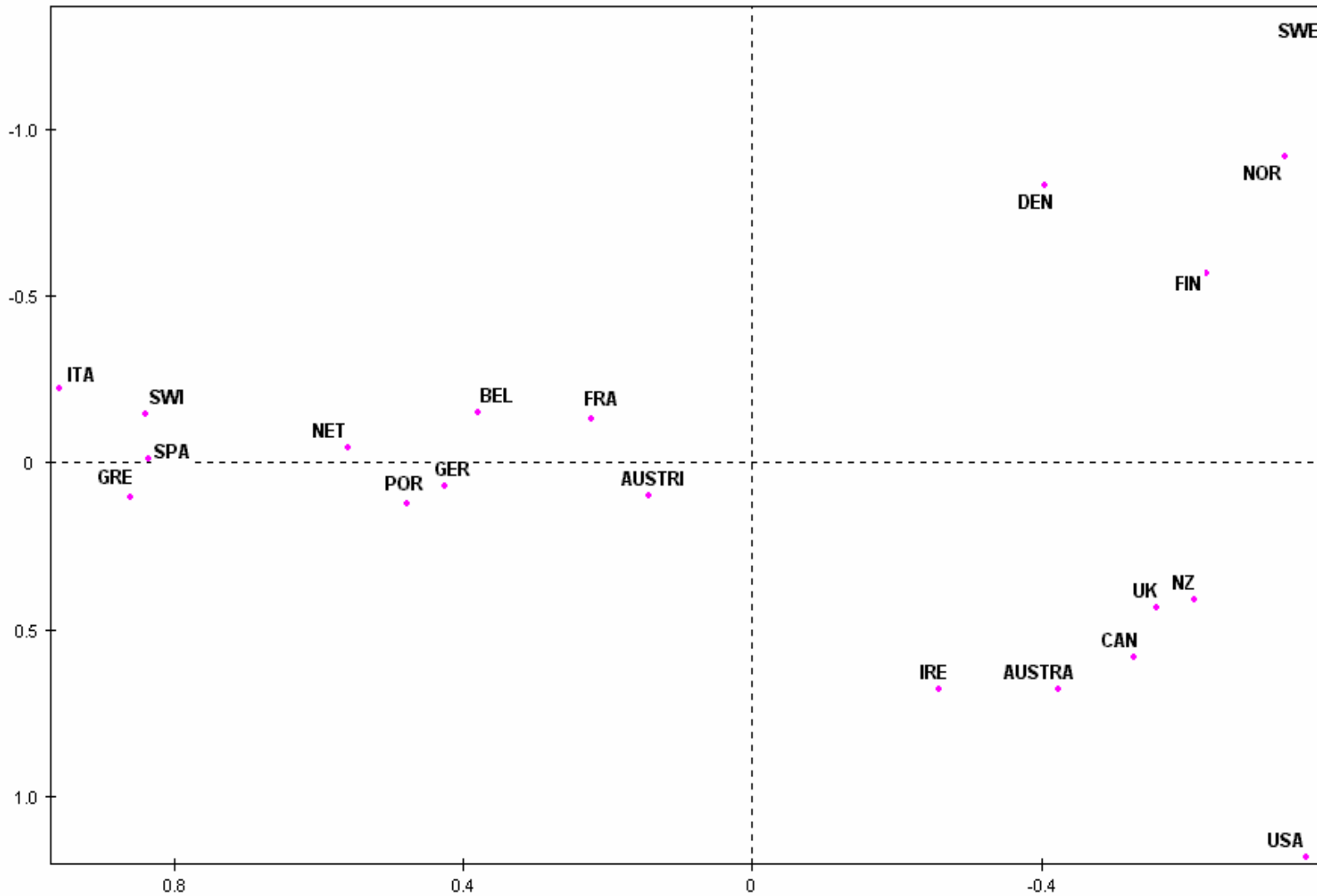
- A feminist critique of welfare regimes:
 - A male-dominated model? Decommodification and commodification
 - Where is the family?
- Basic issues:
 - reconciling earning and caring
 - while allowing women to lead an autonomous life

Measuring gender regimes

- Quantitative indicators of policies and outcomes
- covering six aspects of the differences and relationships involving females and males
- analyzed with factorial analysis of correspondence (allowing for an examination of both countries and indicators on various dimensions)
- so as to identify the main determinants of the position of women and men in advanced societies



Facteur 2 - 10.94 %



Facteur 1 - 12.02 %

Beyond gendered welfare regimes, gender regimes

- An unexpected result: societies are grouped into gender regimes in the same way they are grouped into welfare regimes...
- ...but liberal countries do differ among themselves, as predicted by O'Connor, Shaver and Orloff
- One dimension refers to the "jointedness" of earning and caring work in women's lives
- The second dimension refers to how much public policies help women, and families, to reconcile earning and caring

3 - Social regimes and the lifecourse perspective

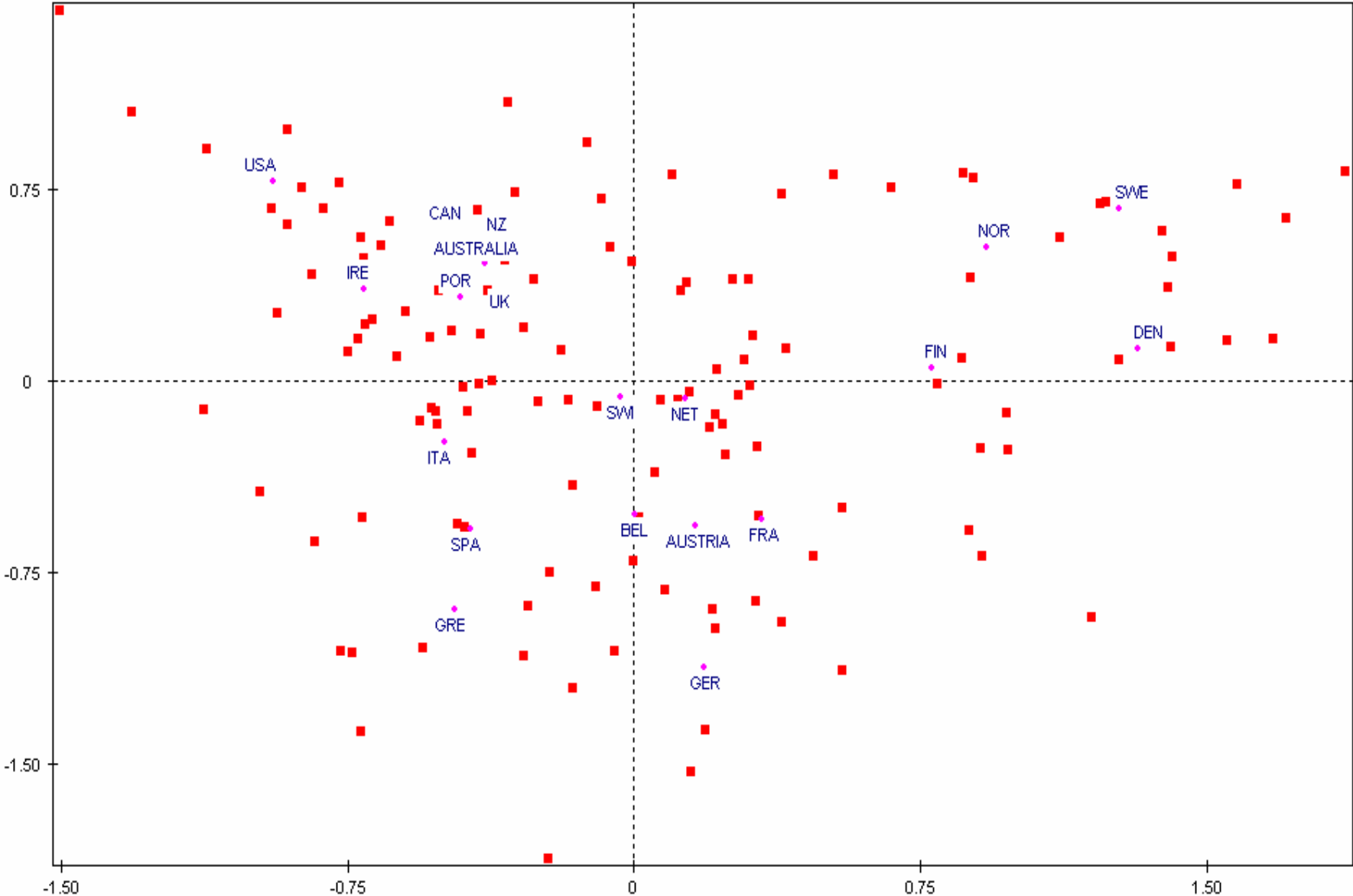
- Starting from the impressive work of Huber and Stephens
 - are welfare states retrenching
 - or being reconfigured towards more services, and indeed towards activation?
- Analyzing (with factorial analysis of correspondence)
 - a broader set of indicators (46) of policies and outcomes:
 - social expenditures (calibrated to the size of the target populations)
 - health expenditures
 - education expenditures
 - labour market public programs
 - social outcomes (poverty, literacy, demography)
 - economic outcomes (participation, unemployment)
 - on 20 advanced OECD countries
 - first for the early 2000, and then for the mid and early 90s

Sustainable welfare states: a tale of activation (1)

- Two main factors stand out in 2000
 - the first distinguishes Scandinavian from liberal and South European countries, with North European countries in an intermediate position
 - the second distinguishes liberal countries from most continental European ones, with Scandinavian countries in an intermediate position
- Cluster analysis (using 2 factors or all factors) shows that there are basically four regimes
 - Nordic
 - Anglo-Saxon
 - North European
 - South European

2000

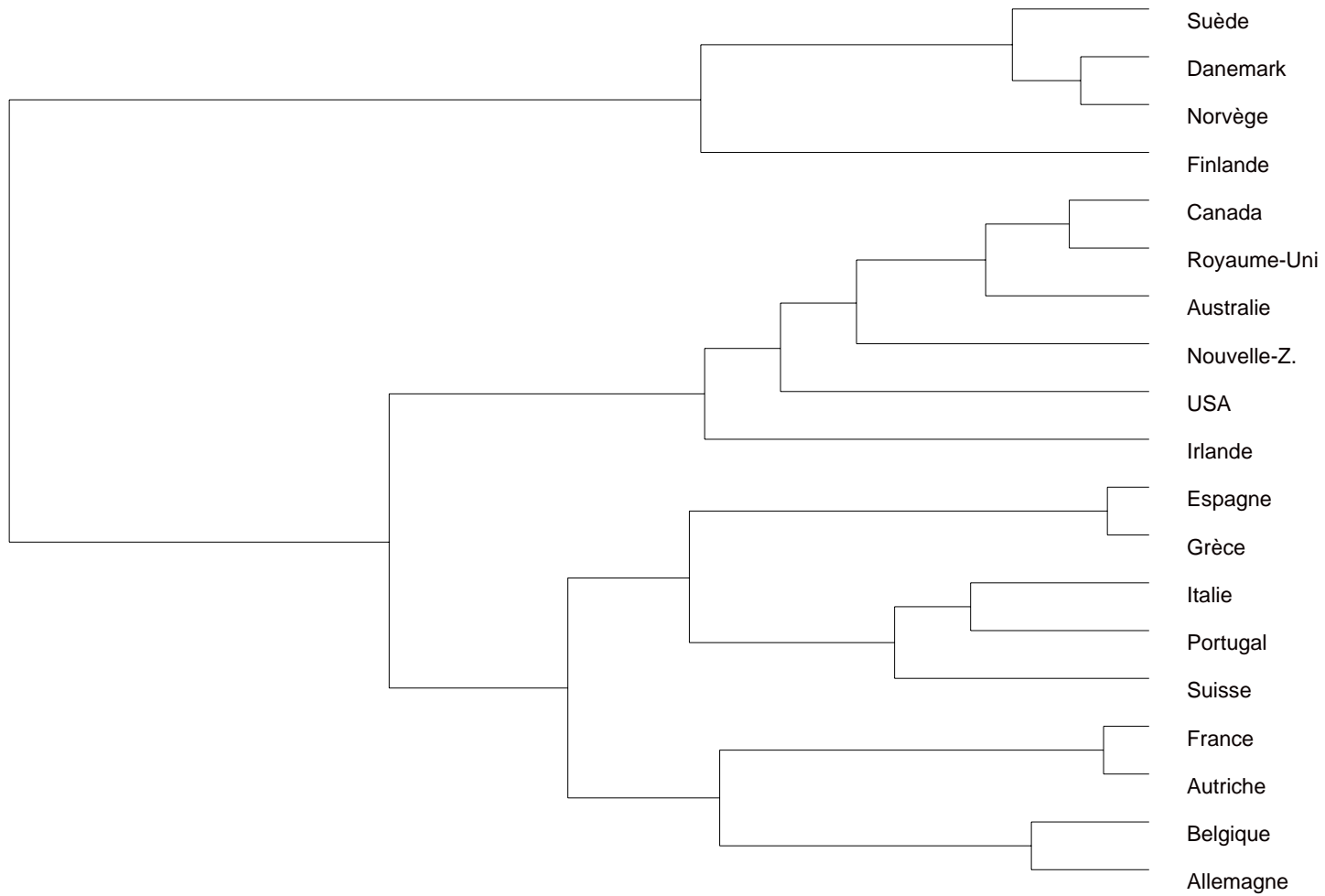
Facteur 2



Facteur 1

Cluster analysis: all factors

Classification hiérarchique directe

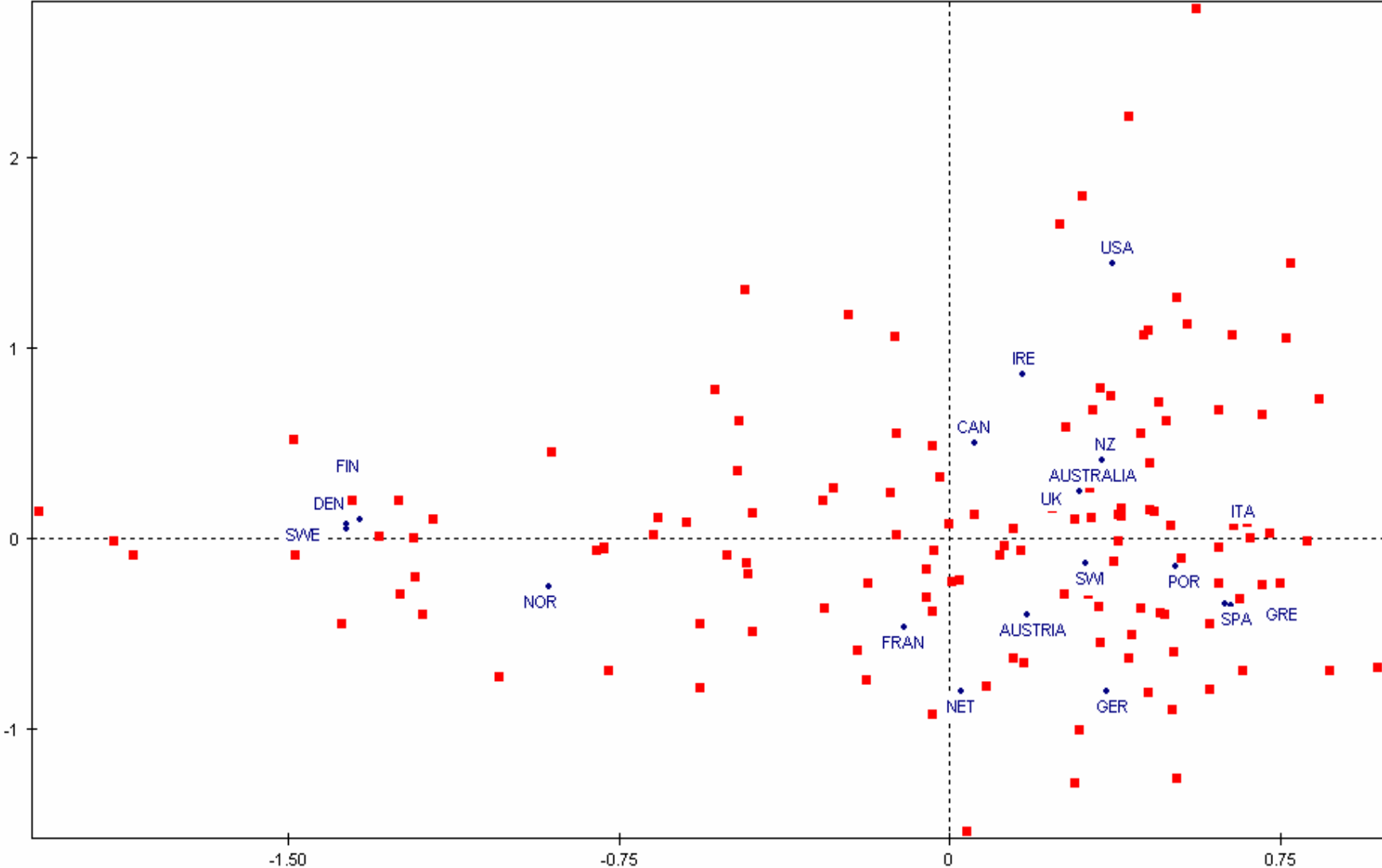


Sustainable welfare states: a tale of activation (2)

- The structure is much the same in the mid-90s
- In the early 90s, the first factor is just about the same, but there is more confusion on the second factor, with Anglo-Saxon and continental European countries more interspersed, though some laissez-faire countries (USA) and Southern European ones stand out
- In other words
 - the Scandinavian model has been present for the whole period
 - the (neo-)liberal model has been expanding to most Anglo-Saxon countries, although the USA stands out
 - Northern continental Europe has moved somewhat in the direction of the activation model

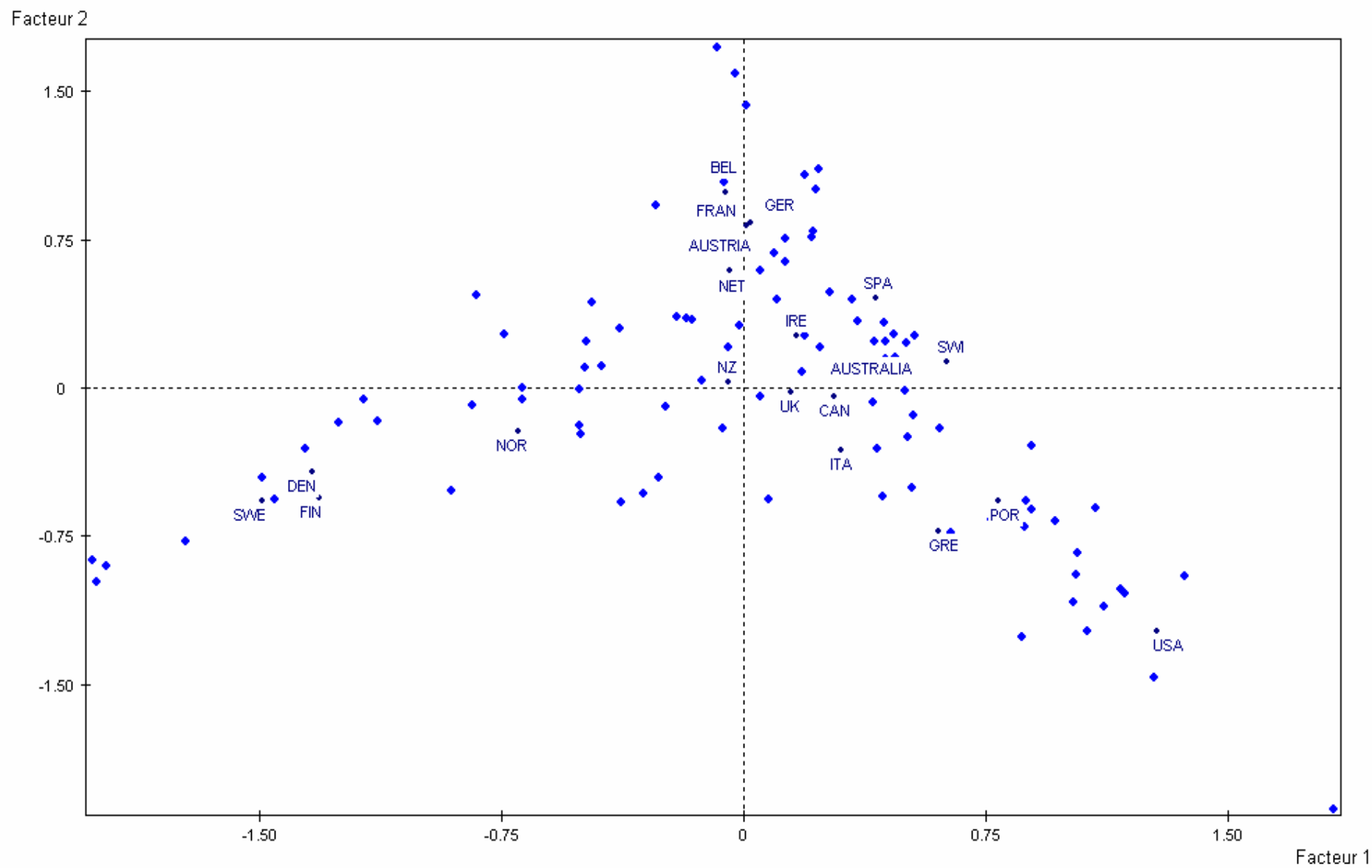
1995

Facteur 2



Facteur 1

1990



Sustainable welfare states: a tale of activation (3)

- The first factor concerns activation, not only in the labour market, but in all of society: *social investment*
- The second factor differentiates countries according to their more or less generous traditional programs: *transfer welfare*
- The reason we need two factors and not only one is that liberal countries tend to have neither type of programs

What does a social investment state mean? (1)

- Social expenditures
 - Parental leaves
 - Old age services
 - Childcare
 - Family services
- Health and education expenditures
 - Public expenditures in education
 - Public expenditures in health
 - Expenditures in primary, secondary and tertiary education

What does a social investment state mean? (2)

- Labour market programs
 - Active programs
 - Employment services
 - Professional training
 - Helping the handicapped to work

- Outcomes
 - Overall mid-high literacy, except for the very high scores for Finland
 - Very high participation rates for males and females, and for mothers
 - Very low child poverty rates

What does a transfer welfare state mean?

- Large old age benefits
- Large passive expenditures with respect to the labour market
 - unemployment compensation, especially for long term unemployment
 - early retirement compensation
- High levels of unemployment and long term unemployment
- Very large differences between males and females in rates of unemployment and long term unemployment

A three way race... but not necessarily to the bottom

- Nordic countries: high activation and high social investment regime, with lifecourse-oriented policies, costly but possibly sustainable
- Anglo-Saxon countries: a high activation, low social investment regime, competitively advantageous (at least in the short run) because it is inexpensive
- Continental European countries: a low activation, high transfer and low social investment regime, probably fiscally unsustainable and thus in need of reform
- Hence the historical importance of discussions on the "European social model"

Conclusion (1): towards “social regimes”

- From welfare to globalized neo-liberalism, or to social investment?
- Social investment means integrating policies around the notion of lifecycle
- The productive society and sustainable welfare regimes
- Gender and defamilialisation are a key components of the social investment welfare regime
- The new frontiers of welfare states
 - active ageing, and indeed lengthening the whole working life (Atkinson)
 - immigration
- Active welfare states require public services, not only transfers

Conclusion 2: How to elaborate policy in a lifecourse perspective?

- The key role of causality in research and policy work
- The importance of comparative work
- The only useful science is genuine, independent science