

Social reporting in Europe  
Villa Vigoni Conference  
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# **„Adding meaning to numbers”: the (pragmatic/eclectic) approach of the Hungarian Social Reports**

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## Outline

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- Social reporting in Tarki: three series
  - General features of our approach
  - A few examples of data presentations
  - Conclusions
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# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 1: The Hungarian Social Report

### History

80's: Andorka and Harcsa: Monitoring Hungarian social development on the long run

1990-2008 Social report

Editors: 1990, 1992, 1994 1996: Andorka, Kolosi, Vukovich

1998, 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006: Kolosi, Tóth, Vukovich

2008: Kolosi, Tóth



**TÁRKI**  
TÁRSADALOMKUTATÁSI INTÉZET RT.

# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 1: The Hungarian Social Report

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### Administrative details

Financing: Ministry of welfare (or equivalents)

Non-partisan consensus

Circulation: 2000-3000 copies (English: 1000)

Main consumers: students at universities, researchers, policy makers, general audience

# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 1: The Hungarian Social Report

### Content:

#### Sources:

- Tarki research outputs
- Other empirical social research
- social indicators

#### Main topics covered:

- social stratification
- labour market
- vulnerable groups
- social policy
- attitudes

#### Other features:

- International outlook
- Policy relevance

# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 1: The Hungarian Social Report

### Indicators monitored

- Population and family demography
- Training and education
- Employment
- Social structure
- Incomes
- Consumption
- Housing
- Health
- Time use, lifestyle
- Cultural activities
- Deviant behaviour

# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 2: Changing Roles (Report on the Situation of Women and Men in Hungary)

### Topics covered

- *Political representation*
- *Employment*
- *Management positions*
- *Maternity support*
- *Fertility plans and decisions*
- *Intra household distribution of labour*
- *Health status*
- *Early retirement*
- *Poverty in Hu and EU*
- *Roma women in CEE*
- *Migration*
- *Violence in family*
- *Prostitution, trafficking*



Client: Ministry of Welfare (Hu)  
Circulation: 1-2000

# Social Reporting by Tarki Social Research Institute

## 3: European Social Report 2008

Data: EU-SILC, Eurostat, EU reports, others

Coverage: EU25 (2004)

Chapters: Demography  
Employment  
Income distribution  
Material well-being

Available: in Hungarian/English

Plan: develop to a series

Next issue: attitude climate in Europe

Chapters:

Trust,

Inequality evaluation

Risk aversion

Norms

Private/public responsibility

Hedonism

Citizenship



## General features of the Tarki Social Reporting to date

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**Main thrust:** to provide statistics and interpretations in an integrated way

**It is not only statistics:** value choices and pragmatic considerations also matter

**Selection of topics:** be relevant and be based on recently collected statistical and survey data

**Selection of authors:** references and commitment to empirical analysis

**The books:** indicators and interpretations combined

**Standards:** ethical AND scientific

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# Two important elements of quality assurance: people and procedures...

## An outline of the mission, philosophy and operating principles of the TARKI group

### (Draft translation of the Tarki Code of Conduct)

The operational regulations of Tarki activities are to be found in our basic organisational statutes. However, any organisation may find itself face to face with countless cases where formal regulations cannot offer a solution to its problems. It is these cases as well as the advancement of the coherence and integrity of TARKI's daily operation that call for a statement of our philosophy and mission. Such a statement is given in the paragraphs that follow.

The central area of activity of the TARKI group is applied empirical social research.

TARKI's most valuable asset is its good reputation. The features that have earned TARKI this good reputation, which it is committed to maintain, are the independence of the institute, the professional quality of its activities and end products, its balanced and open approach and TARKI's commitment to democracy.

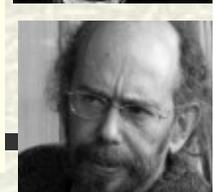
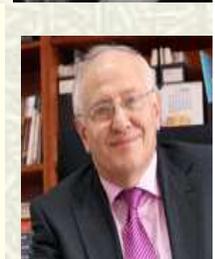
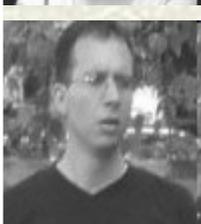
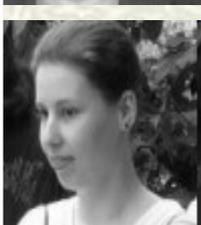
*Independence.* In developing its business policies and targeting its potential clients, TARKI seeks to ensure the institute can preserve its independence at all times. This means that TARKI's management shall follow a business policy that prevents any given interest group or political view from gaining a position of consequential influence leading to a financial dependence which might in any way jeopardise the reliability of published analyses and evaluations.

*Professional quality.* One of TARKI's greatest strengths is the reliability of the analyses it delivers. The key to reliable analyses and datasets is an uncompromising commitment to sound professional skills and knowledge. For this reason, the level of professionalism is the most important measure in setting the standard for all who work for TARKI. At TARKI, the ultimate measure in the internal evaluation system cannot be any other consideration but professional achievement. TARKI's scientific analyses shall without exception conform to the most up-to-date methodological standards of systematic, analytical, empirical research.

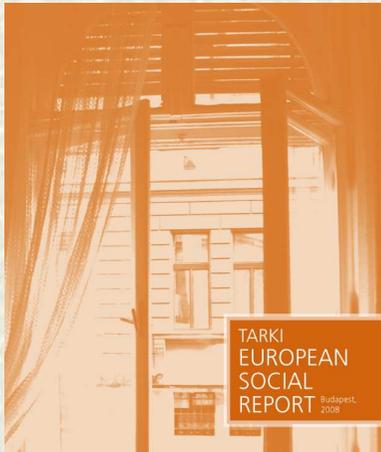
*Balanced interpretation.* Balanced interpretation is a trademark feature of all studies prepared by the team at TARKI. TARKI's analyses of empirical findings shall make manifest that whatever critical conclusions are derived from them, every conclusion may have both desirable and unwelcome consequences when put into practice. These positive and negative aspects are invariably pointed out in the studies prepared by researchers at TARKI.

*Openness.* TARKI never succumbs to either political or professional preconceptions in its activities or in the process of delivering its professional products. The team at TARKI strictly adhere to the findings of their ongoing research and to their experiences of previous professional studies in drawing research conclusions from their analyses. Professional openness also involves disciplinary openness. TARKI's analyses build on the results of a diverse range of empirical social research fields (sociology, economics, political science, demography) and a variety of analytical methods (statistics, mathematics). TARKI's political openness means that TARKI welcomes clients of from any organisation and clients representing any view provided that they respect and abide by the rules of democracy as a matter of principle. It however rejects any offer which may only arouse the suspicion that TARKI's findings may be used directly or indirectly to justify any kind of action seeking to undermine the values of democracy.

TARKI's organisation and the daily activities of the organisation are subordinate above all to the requirement to maintain an at least self-sufficient operation, and possibly achieve growth, through empirical social research activity while observing the above criteria.



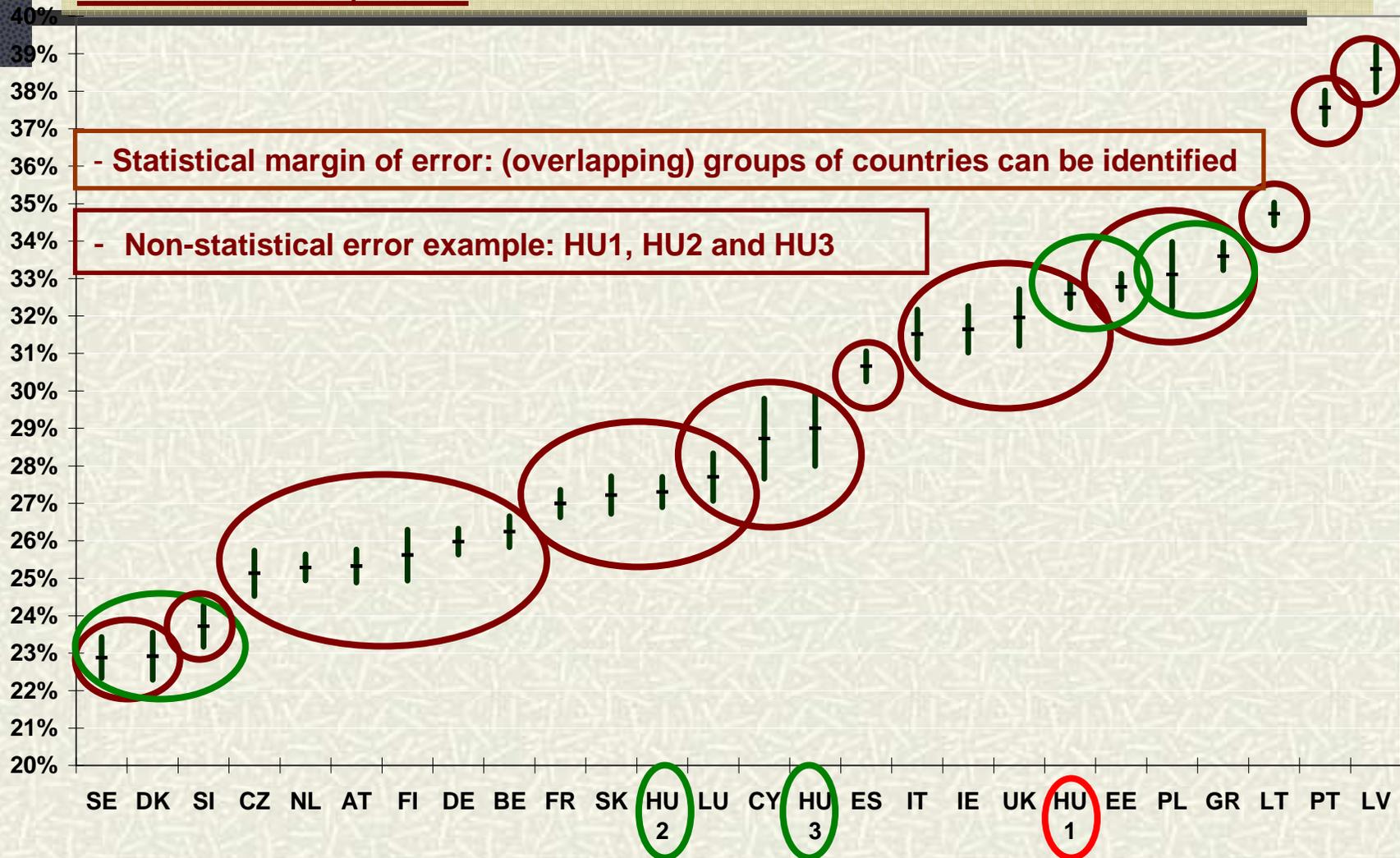
# Adding meaning to numbers: a few examples from the Tarki European (Union) Social Report



1. Present data uncertainties
2. Suggest new frames of references
3. Go beyond presenting elementary data

# Example 1: Present uncertainties of data!

## Gini indices and bootstrapped 95% confidence intervals for EU countries, 2005



Source: EU-SILC 2006. Note: bootstrap confidence intervals were obtained by 1000 replications.  
Hu 1: EU-SILC 2006. Hu2: U-Silc 2005. Hu 3: Tarki Household Monitor 2005.

## Example 2: Suggest new frames of reference!

### EU CITIZENS IN THE „OVERALL EUROPEAN SOCIETY”

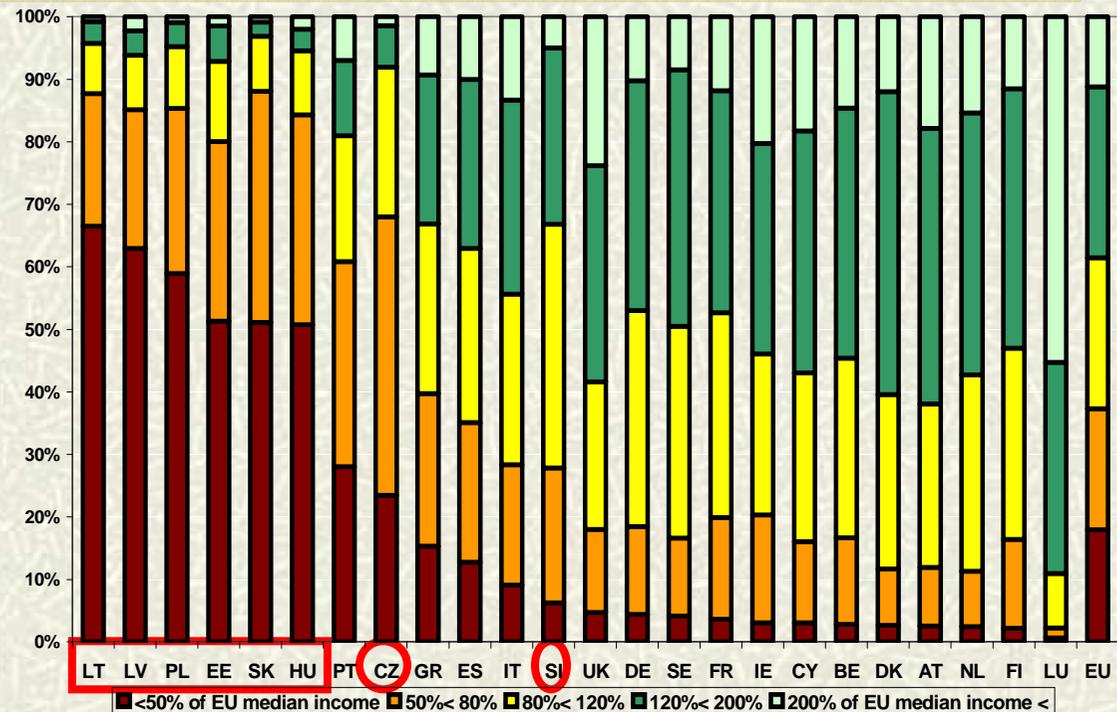
#### The distribution of the population among categories of the overall European income distribution by country (%)

##### Message:

- European society

##### Findings:

- We belong to the same community/society, but very differently



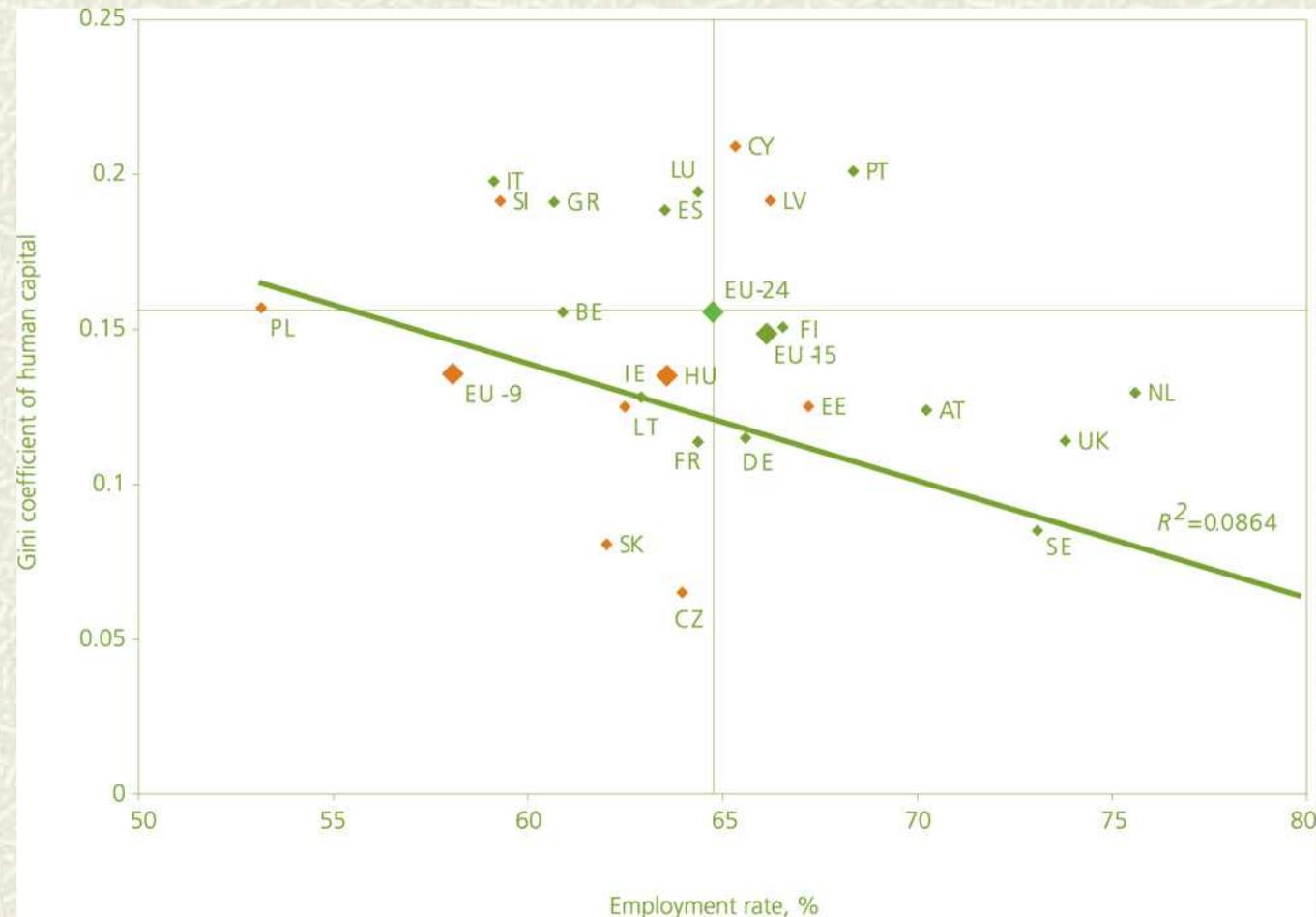
Steps of pooling EU24

- 1: merge all datafiles
- 2: weight by all-EU population weight
- 3: identify median brackets
- 4: present country distributions by belonging to EU brackets

Source: EU ILC (2006)

## Example 3: Go beyond presenting elementary data (show data structures)

Employment and education: compare levels with distribution



Employment level  
correlates with  
education Gini

## Conclusions (referring to the initial questions)

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*One cannot avoid interpretations* (they are there in any case..)

*Theoretical framework*: no aim to be critical but not against either

*Selection of sources and data*: already a value judgement!

*Critical approach to data* as well (cross-check, wherever possible for the validity of the data used)

*Selection of methods* (bivariate or multivariate): should depend on your research questions (should there be any)

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address:



[www.tarki.hu](http://www.tarki.hu)

