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Cultural and social capital in Austria

Author

Bruno SAGMEISTER

Supervisor

Dr. Mathias SCHNETZER

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Abstract

This working paper follows Pierre Bourdieu's theory on the forms of capital in an attempt to operationalize the concepts of cultural and social capital. A review of existing research shows the importance of (especially) cultural and (to a lesser extent) social capital, as well as approaches in measuring these variables. On basis of the EU-SILC 2015 data set and Ad-Hoc module, we construct three capital-variables by aggregating data on cultural consumption, social participation and economic wealth. A descriptive analysis shows the spread of cultural and social capital across the income distribution, clearly showing an increase in the different forms of capital as the income rises. A combined look at the three forms of capital shows that those with low amounts of capital in one field also have low capital in the other two fields. Those equipped with high amounts of e.g. economic capital also have high amounts of cultural and social capital, a finding that supports Bourdieu's theory. An econometric analysis of the causal relationships between the variables is in progress, but not ready for presentation yet.

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1 Introduction

There are many studies that have examined the different kinds of transmission of inequality in Austria, most of which have found the situation to be rather bleak. Ranging from the intergenerational transmission of educational attainment (e.g. Fessler, Mooslechner, and Schürz (2012)), over the general intergenerational mobility (e.g. Altzinger, Lamei, Rumplmaier, and Schneebaum (2013)), to the distribution of wealth (e.g. Fessler, Lindner, Schürz, et al. (2019)), the channels over which one's socioeconomic status is reproduced are manifold. However, there seems to be no research on the distribution of cultural and social capital in Austria. These two forms of capital are a concept coined by the French sociologist Pierre Bourdieu, who tried to capture some of the inconspicuous ways that inequality is reproduced. Following Bourdieu's theories, a large amount of research has studied the effects of cultural and social capital on metrics such as educational attainment or the transmission of social standings (see chapter 3). As there have been many significant findings regarding these effects, it is of great interest to examine the actual distribution of cultural and social capital. This leads to the first research question of this thesis:

"How are cultural and social capital distributed across the Austrian population?"

We will operationalize the concepts of cultural and social capital on basis of the EU-SILC 2015 data set, following approaches that are discussed in the literature review. An extensive descriptive analysis will paint a picture of the cultural consumption and social participation of the Austrian population, leading to an overview of the distribution of cultural, social and economic capital. This brings us to our first hypothesis: *The distribution of a) cultural and b) social capital is unequal, favoring those with high economic capital.*

Following this descriptive approach, an econometric analysis shall shed light on the causal relationships between the different forms of capital. By using an ordered logistic regression model, we will try to answer the second research question:

"How do cultural and social capital affect one's economic capital?"

In a similar vein to the first one, our second hypothesis would be that *cultural and social capital have a significantly positive effect on one's economic capital.*

2 Bourdieu's theory on the forms of capital

The theoretical foundation of this thesis is Pierre Bourdieu's work on the different forms of capital. Bourdieu has shaped the discussion around cultural and social reproduction by coining the terms *cultural*, *social* and *symbolic capital* which exist next to the prevalent definition of capital as *economic capital*. If one strives to properly understand how the social world functions, one must account for capital in all its forms, not only economic capital as mainstream economic theory does (Bourdieu, 1986).

2.1 Cultural Capital

The first form of capital that we shall discuss is cultural capital, which is not easily measured. Bourdieu (1986) writes of three different states in which it can exist:

"in the embodied state, i.e., in the form of long lasting dispositions of the mind and body; in the objectified state, in the form of cultural goods (pictures, books, dictionaries, instruments, machines, etc.), which are the trace or realization of theories or critiques of these theories, problematics, etc.; and in the institutionalized state, a form of objectification which must be set apart because, as will be seen in the case of educational qualifications, it confers entirely original properties on the cultural capital which it is presumed to guarantee." (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 3)

Bourdieu first came upon the notion of cultural capital when researching the unequal educational achievement between children from different social standings, as the profit that children can obtain from their education differs between their social classes. He related this academic success to the distribution of cultural capital, breaking with the view that sees scholastic achievement as a result of inherent ability. Bourdieu criticizes economists as they focus only on monetary investments and profits, which fail to explain how and why there is a vast difference in how many resources agents of different social classes invest into their education. A sole focus on monetary aspects fails to see the structural differences in profits that the market offers different classes. In addition, economists do not shine light on the, according to Bourdieu, most important educational investment: the transmission of cultural capital within the family. They ignore, or cannot see, the role of the educational system in the reproduction of the stratified society. Bourdieu argues that ability and talent are not randomly distributed attributes, but products of invested time and cultural capital. Therefore, the educational system helps reproducing these differences if it does not recognize that the outcome of educational measures is dependent on the transmitted cultural capital within the families (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 3).

Embodied cultural capital is not easily transmitted, as it is linked to a person and presupposes a process of accumulation and incorporation. This requires a personal investment of time and effort and cannot be done second-hand or be transmitted from one person to another as a gift or inheritance. Cultural capital does not have to be acquired consciously (e.g. an accent), its acquisition is limited by the person's appropriating capacities and it dies with its owner. This of course makes it difficult to see how it is transmitted and inherited, giving cultural capital "the prestige of innate property with the merits of acquisition" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 5). The hiddenness of the transmission of cultural capital makes it easy to mistake it for a solely symbolic form of capital, disregarding its properties as capital and mistaking it for natural competence and authority. This also leads to the recognition of large amounts of cultural capital as something special, enabling the possessor to derive profits from it. As cultural capital is not equally distributed across society its beneficiaries are located in the upper-classes, since they have the cultural and economic means to educate their children further than the required minimum (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 5).

The transmission of cultural capital is aided by an environment with a great amount of

objectified cultural capital (e.g. an art collection or library), which again is more prevalent in families with a great amount of embodied cultural capital. Furthermore, in a family with high cultural capital, a child is going to begin accumulating cultural capital throughout their socialization, giving them an edge in learning and further accumulation. As this hidden hereditary transmission of capital is not easily controlled by society or the government, it has a greater weight in the reproduction of inequality than its more obvious counterparts. The start of the acquisition of cultural capital is earlier in the life of a child that stems from a family with high cultural capital. Further, the child then is given a greater amount of time to acquire more cultural capital without having to enter the job market (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 5f).

The **objectified form of cultural capital** is easier to transmit, as it can be simply materially giving to someone, e.g. a painting. However, to actually appropriate the painting, one must have the means to and ability to properly "consume" it, which again relies on ones embodied cultural capital. The material owners of the object (which could also be e.g. a sort of machine or instrument) have a certain amount of power over it, but they must rely on someone with the proper embodied cultural capital to operate it. The mechanics of power between the owner of the material capital and those of the embodied capital are, hence, rather complex (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 6f).

The **institutionalization** of the embodied cultural capital is what differentiates an academic from an autodidact. While the embodied knowledge and skill of an autodidact can always be called into question, an academic has a certificate of qualification and competence. In a way this certificate even stands on its own, granting the holder a certain amount of respect for his cultural capital even when this capital has already deteriorated and the holder may no longer be qualified for their title. The institutionalization also makes it possible to compare and exchange holders of the same title and to establish a monetary value for a certain kind of academic capital (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 7).

2.2 Social Capital

"Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition - or in other words, to membership in a group - which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity-owned capital, a 'credential' which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word"(Bourdieu, 1986, p. 8)

The existence of social capital is not a natural or social given, but a product of an endless process of institution. The benefit of a membership of a group depends on the advantages that this group can generate through useful relationships and symbolic profits, such as prestige. Long lasting relationships are formed through the institutionalization of "contingent relations, such as those of neighborhood, the workplace, or even kinship, into relationships that are at once necessary and elective, implying durable obligations subjectively felt [...] or institutionally

guaranteed" (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 9). The introduction of new members into the group are always bears risks of harming it, which is why most groups and societies have ways of controlling entries into them. The choice of ones partner would be a good example: in the past and the present, marriages have been a matter of interest for the whole group, not only of the people who are getting married. It may seem that today there are less constraints regarding this, but through institutions that bring together homogeneous individuals, groups can still control who is joining them through marriage or not (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 9).

To reproduce social capital one must be sociable, which means an investment of time, energy and economic capital. The profits of ones social capital are related to the persons with whom one is connected and, consequently, their capital. This leads to the situation that a person who already possesses great amounts of capital (social, but also cultural and economic) can derive greater profits from their social capital, as they are sought out by other people and do not have to invest as much time in making acquaintances (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 10).

An important part of the existence of a group is its presentation to the outside. Through a form of delegation (e.g. the pater familias, the speaker of a party, etc.) one person (or a small group of persons) can speak for the group, equipped with the collective capital and, therefore, power of the group. This position of power is highly sought after, which leads to a regulation of who can, firstly, be part of the group and, secondly, be a representative of it. Bourdieu gives the example of the nobility, who serve as the personification of their group, e.g. the King of France being referred to as 'France' (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 11).

2.3 Conversion

While economic capital lies at the root of the other forms of capital, it is not the only form of importance, as some services and goods are only available if one possesses a certain amount of social or cultural capital. Whilst the forms of capital must not be reduced to their economic roots by a purely economic view which masks their individual effects, their reducibility on economic factors must not be understated (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 12). The one factor that seems to be universal in its importance in acquiring some form of capital is labor-time, may it be time that one has to work to earn money, the time one has to invest to develop relationships or the time one devotes to the cultivation of cultural capital. The surplus time that is available to one is high for individuals who already have economic capital and do not have to spend as much time earning money as others (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 12).

The reproduction of capital and the social standing is concealed through the existence of cultural and social capital and the profits one can derive from these. But this concealment come with a price, as there is always risk associated with the transmission of these forms of capital. With social exchanges there is always the risk of ingratitude, which nullifies the hoped for effects. Cultural capital has the problem that while it is highly disguised and effective at yielding academic success, it ultimately has to be validated through an institution, such as an academic title, if one wishes to reap all its benefits (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 12f).

Breaking the cycle of the reproduction of capital is hard, as even when e.g. laws of inher-

itance regulate the transmission of economic capital, the owners of great amounts of capital "have an ever greater interest in resorting to reproduction strategies capable of ensuring better-disguised transmission, but at the cost of greater loss of capital, by exploiting the convertibility of the types of capital. Thus the more the official transmission of capital is prevented or hindered, the more the effects of the clandestine circulation of capital in the form of cultural capital become determinant in the reproduction of the social structure." (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 13)

3 Literature review

Bourdieu's concept of the different forms of capital is quite popular and has been the basis for many research papers concerning the reproduction of social stratification. One of the main questions at issue is how to properly measure these sorts of capital and how to operationalize them. This section shall provide an overview of several papers that have discussed similar topics and that have already developed approaches to measure the forms of capital. As the EU-SILC 2015 data set, which forms the basis of this thesis, mostly collected data on cultural and social participation (e.g. visits to museums, memberships in groups, etc.) we will mostly focus on papers that have used similar data in their effort to operationalize the forms of capital.

The impact of cultural capital on the education of children is one of the central factors that Bourdieu (1986) covered, which prompted a vast on researchers to examine this effect. In his paper on cultural capital and school success DiMaggio (1982) examines the impact of social status and the related cultural participation on the academic success of high school students. In DiMaggio's interpretation, cultural capital is connected to highbrow cultural practices and should have an enhancing effect on the student's ability (DiMaggio, 1982, p. 190). DiMaggio creates a 'cultural capital' variable by combining measurement on the student's attitude towards artistic activities and occupations, their artistic activities and consumption, and their knowledge of cultural topics. Whilst they find a relatively low link between parental education and cultural capital, they find that cultural capital has a significantly positive impact on grades (DiMaggio, 1982, p. 194ff). This emphasizes the importance of examining the distribution of cultural participation in our society.

Lareau and Weininger (2003) refer to DiMaggio's approach as the dominant interpretation of cultural capital, arguing that DiMaggio's work set the stage for a great part of the research on cultural capital. This dominant approach conceptualizes cultural capital "in terms of prestigious, 'highbrow' aesthetic pursuits and attitudes, and an insistence that it be conceptually and causally distinguished from the effects of 'ability'" (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 575). Lareau & Weininger instead advise to not strictly distinguish between cultural capital and ability or skill, as their reading of Bourdieu suggests. In their operationalization on cultural capital, one must include "micro-interactional processes whereby individual's strategic use of knowledge, skills, and competence come into contact with institutionalized standards of evaluation" (Lareau & Weininger, 2003, p. 597). Whilst this approach has its merits, the availability of data concerning cultural consumption, as well as the vast array of research that has interpreted

cultural capital in a similar way to DiMaggio (1982) suggests the use of the dominant approach (e.g. De Graaf (1986), Katsillis and Robinson (1990), Kalmijn and Kraaykamp (1996), Dumais (2002), Eitle and Eitle (2002)). In addition, this thesis will include the *frequency of reading*, a variable that is often included in papers that measure cultural capital through cultural consumption *and* those papers that use approaches more in line with Lareau and Weininger (2003) reading of Bourdieu (e.g. in Blackledge (2001), Tramonte and Willms (2010)).

This aforementioned 'dominant approach' is also used in the paper of Ganzeboom, De Graaf, and Robert (1990), in which they examine the intergenerational transmission of inequalities in socialist Hungary. They measure this through six channels, one of which being cultural status, as they argue that the cultural reproduction should be a main concern because of the diminished importance of economic inheritance. The cultural status is constructed by measurement of visits to cultural institutions (theater, museum, cinema) and book-reading, which happen to be the almost exactly the same variables that are available in the EU-SILC 2015 dataset (Ganzeboom et al., 1990, p. 90). The authors found substantial connections between the status of the parents and the child's status. They conclude that whilst the educational channel is the most influential transmitter of inequality in socialist Hungary, the effect of the cultural status on education (even though still substantial) is diminishing (Ganzeboom et al., 1990, p. 100f).

Tramonte and Willms (2010) combine a measurement of 'static cultural capital' (mostly highbrow cultural consumption) and 'relational cultural capital' (concerning the relationship between parents and their children). After controlling for socioeconomic status, they could find a significant effect of static cultural capital on the student's sense of belonging to school, their reading literacy and their occupational aspirations. Relational cultural capital had a slightly larger effect on these variables (Tramonte & Willms, 2010, p. 210f).

It is apparent that measuring cultural capital through cultural consumption is a common approach that has led to a wide range of research concerning cultural and social reproduction, especially in the field of educational research. Whilst the results may vary in their intensity, the importance that cultural capital holds in the reproduction of inequality is not be underestimated.

Even though there are differences in the measurement of cultural capital, the discussions around it revolve around similar fields, whereas the research concerning social capital is much more fragmented. Some scholars discuss social capital in a macro-context, focusing on the importance of social capital for the whole society and state (e.g. R. Putnam (1993), R. D. Putnam (2000)). Important data for this kind of social capital is data on memberships in voluntary organizations, peoples trust in other people and institutions, as well as data on networks (Adam & Rončević, 2003, p. 161). However, Bourdieu's approach focuses on the micro-level of social capital, i.e. the profit a person can derive from their institutionalized relationships. As Adam and Rončević (2003) point out, even though Bourdieu's concept of social capital is well-defined it has sparked much less research than other concepts (e.g. Putnam's). Bourdieu himself has suggested how to operationalize social capital: "Social capital is the sum of the resources, actual

or virtual, that accrue to an individual or a group by virtue of possessing a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintances and recognition.” (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119)

Searching for a way how to measure social capital, Narayan and Cassidy (2001) have found that across all studies they reviewed the variables on 'memberships in groups' and 'trust' are included. In their effort to construct a questionnaire on social capital for a study in Africa, they have gathered the different dimensions of social capital, which are group characteristics, generalized norms, togetherness, everyday sociability, neighborhood connections, volunteerism and trust (Narayan & Cassidy, 2001, p. 63ff).

4 Data

To explore the distribution of cultural and social capital across the Austrian populace, we use data from the European Union Statistics on Income and Living Conditions (EU-SILC). The EU-SILC is an instrument that collects cross-sectional and panel data across member states of the European Union, as well as a few other European states (EUROSTAT, 2019a). In addition to the microdata on income and living conditions that is collected in every survey, an Ad-hoc module with changing focuses is developed each year to complement the permanently collected variables. This thesis uses the cross-sectional data of the EU-SILC 2015, as the Ad-hoc module of 2015 is highlighting the social and cultural participation of the respondents (EUROSTAT, 2019b).

In the Austrian data of the EU-SILC 2015 cross-sectional dataset, there are 10935 individual respondents and 6045 households.

5 Variables

In order to properly examine the distribution of cultural and social capital across the Austrian society, we must first operationalize the variables "Economic Capital", "Cultural Capital" and "Social Capital". Economic capital may be the most straightforward variable, captured through disposable household income, rent income and capital gains. Although the EU-SILC 2015 includes questions regarding the cultural and social participation of the respondents, there is no appropriate variable that signals the amount of cultural/social capital the person has. As we will see in the following description of the available variables, most variables regarding cultural participation measure the amount of times a person has visited specific kinds of cultural events or locations, with a few questions regarding cultural consumption and creative activities. Social participation is captured through the frequency of contact with several different social groups (relatives, friends, neighbors, etc.), as well as the frequency of social commitment, memberships in social groups (e.g. voluntary organizations) and active citizenship (EUROSTAT, 2015, 344ff).

One of the main variables used in this paper is the equivalised disposable household income, which is calculated by dividing the disposable household income by the equivalised household size using the OECD equivalence scale (EUROSTAT (2019c)). We are not using the personal

income, as a person could have a low personal income, but live in a household with a high earning partner, leading to a high household income and a high standard of living. If one were to compare this person to another person with low income who lives in a single household, it would not be an accurate comparison. As the main focus of this thesis is to compare the different kinds of capital across the Austrian populace, it is of utmost importance to have a comparable income variable.

The equivalised disposable household income is then arranged by the income level and cut into 10 deciles, ranging from the bottom 10% to the top 10%. In the later following descriptive part of the analysis, most of the other variables (e.g. frequency of visits to museums) will be plotted against these income deciles.

5.1 Economic Capital

This variable is, as mentioned above, captured through three variables that are collected in the EU-SILC 2015 dataset: the equivalised disposable household income; rent income; and capital gains above a certain threshold.

If a person falls into a certain *income decile* they get awarded points, ranging from 0 for the lower three income deciles, to 3 for the upper 10% of the income distribution. This follows the logic that a person with higher income in general has higher economic capital, which should not be a controversial statement.

In Austria, one of the most important factors in one's personal wealth is one's housing situation. A person who owns their apartment or house already has a drastically higher personal wealth than people who are tenants. However, someone who owns several domiciles and is able to rent them to other people is in a completely different financial situation, as they gain income solely because of their wealth. Therefore, persons who gain *income from rental property* also gain 2 points towards their economic capital.

The third and last indicator of economic capital is *income interest, dividends and profits from capital investments*. If a person gains more than the median household income through this financial income, they are classified as a "capitalist", as they are able to sustain solely through their capital. This nets them 2 points for their economic capital.

Table 1 presents an overview over the points awarded for each criterion, as well as the calculation of the three classes of economics capital and the number of individuals in each class.

Table 1: Calculation of Economic Capital

Variable	Specification	Points
<i>Income Decile</i>	1st - 3rd	0
	4th - 7th	1
	8th - 9th	2
	10th	3
<i>Rent Income</i>	Yes	2
<i>Capital Gains</i>	above 24.299€	2

Economic Capital	Points	Number of individuals
<i>Low</i>	0 - 1	7082
<i>Medium</i>	1 - 2	2275
<i>High</i>	>3	1578

5.2 Cultural Capital

As discussed in the literature review, one of the most common ways to measure cultural capital is to observe the cultural participation and consumption of individuals and to then assign them their cultural capital through some form of indexing. The EU-SILC 2015 dataset contains several such variables, which we can use to construct a measure of cultural capital. In the later following descriptive analysis we will also shed light on the reasons the respondents listed as to why they did not participate in each cultural activity.

The first variable included is the *frequency of visits to cultural sites* (e.g. museums, historical monuments, etc.) in the past 12 months.¹ Corresponding to the frequency of the visits, we will again assign points which range from no visits (0 points), over less than 3 visits (0.5 points), to more than 3 visits (1 point).

Next on is the *frequency of visits to live cultural events* (e.g. plays, concerts, operas, etc.), which again range from no visits in the past 12 months, to more than 3 visits. The same scoring system as the one used for cultural sites is used for this variables as well.

In a similar vein to the two variables above, we include *visits to the cinema* in the last 12 months. However, as the cinema does not hold the same importance in the high society lifestyle as e.g. the opera (Gerhards (2008)), we will assign it less points than for the two other variables on cultural consumption.

The institutionalized form of cultural capital, i.e. an academic title, is probably the most direct measurement of cultural capital that we can find in our data set. Therefore, the inclusion of one's highest educational attainment is imperative. The Austrian educational system mandates compulsory schooling and, therefore, all children receive an education until the 9th grade. However, as Bourdieu points out, the scarcity of cultural capital is what enables its holders to derive profit from it (Bourdieu, 1986, p. 5). Hence, we will only assign points to formal education starting at the secondary level. Individuals who have completed secondary education will

¹The exact questions asked can be found in the Appendix

be awarded one point towards their cultural capital, whilst those who have completed tertiary education will be awarded 2 points.

The last variable included in our analysis of cultural participation and consumption is the frequency of reading. As mentioned in the literature chapter, the frequency of reading is a popular measure of cultural capital. Whilst daily reading is awarded 0.5 points towards the cultural capital of an individual, weekly reading only nets 0.25 points and anything below that does not warrant any points at all.

Table 2: Calculation of Cultural Capital

Variable	Frequency or Level	Points
<i>Cultural Sites</i>	0	0
	less than 3	0.5
	>3	1
<i>Live events</i>	0	0
	less than 3	0.5
	>3	1
<i>Cinema visits</i>	less than 3	0
	>3	0.5
<i>Formal Education</i>	Below Secondary	0
	Secondary	1
	Tertiary	2
<i>Reading</i>	less than weekly	0
	weekly	0.25
	daily	0.5

Cultural Capital	Points	Number of individuals
<i>Low</i>	0 - 1.5	6007
<i>Medium</i>	1.5 - 3.5	3299
<i>High</i>	>3.5	1629

5.3 Social Capital

The capturing of social capital is complicated, as there were very few variables collected that fall into Bourdieu's framework of social capital. In the literature review we have discussed the several different approaches to social capital and came to the conclusion that Bourdieu focuses on the micro-level, i.e. how social capital affects an individual. An important aspect of Bourdieu's definition of social capital is the institutionalization of it (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992, p. 119), but unfortunately only two fitting variables are collected on memberships of various groups. Therefore, we also include variables on the ability of asking for help, as well as the frequency of which one meets their friends, concluding that these two variables should also help to capture the benefits one can reap from one's social capital.

One of the two variables that capture memberships of groups in some form is *participation in formal voluntary work*. If an individual does participate in formal voluntary work they are awarded one point towards their social capital. We do not include informal voluntary work as that would lack the institutional aspect that we focus on.

Next on is *active citizenship*, which captures if the individual is active in some form of political organization or local interest group, as well as in other forms of political involvement. If someone was an active citizen, we will assign them one point for their social capital score. The non institutionalized variables award less points towards the individuals social capital. The frequency of *getting together with friends* awards 0.5 points if someone meets their friends at least weekly and 0.25 points if they meet them at least several times per month. If someone can *ask their friends, family or neighbors for help*, they are also awarded 0.5 points towards their social capital.

Table 3: Calculation of Social Capital

Variable	Frequency or Level	Points
<i>Formal Voluntary Work</i>	No	0
	Yes	1
<i>Active Citizenship</i>	No	0
	Yes	1
<i>Meeting friends</i>	less than monthly	0
	more than monthly	0.25
	more than weekly	0.5
<i>Can ask for help</i>	No	0
	Yes	0.5
Social Capital	Points	Number of individuals
<i>Low</i>	0 - 1	3835
<i>Medium</i>	1 - 2	4588
<i>High</i>	>2	2512

6 Descriptive Analysis

6.1 Cultural participation

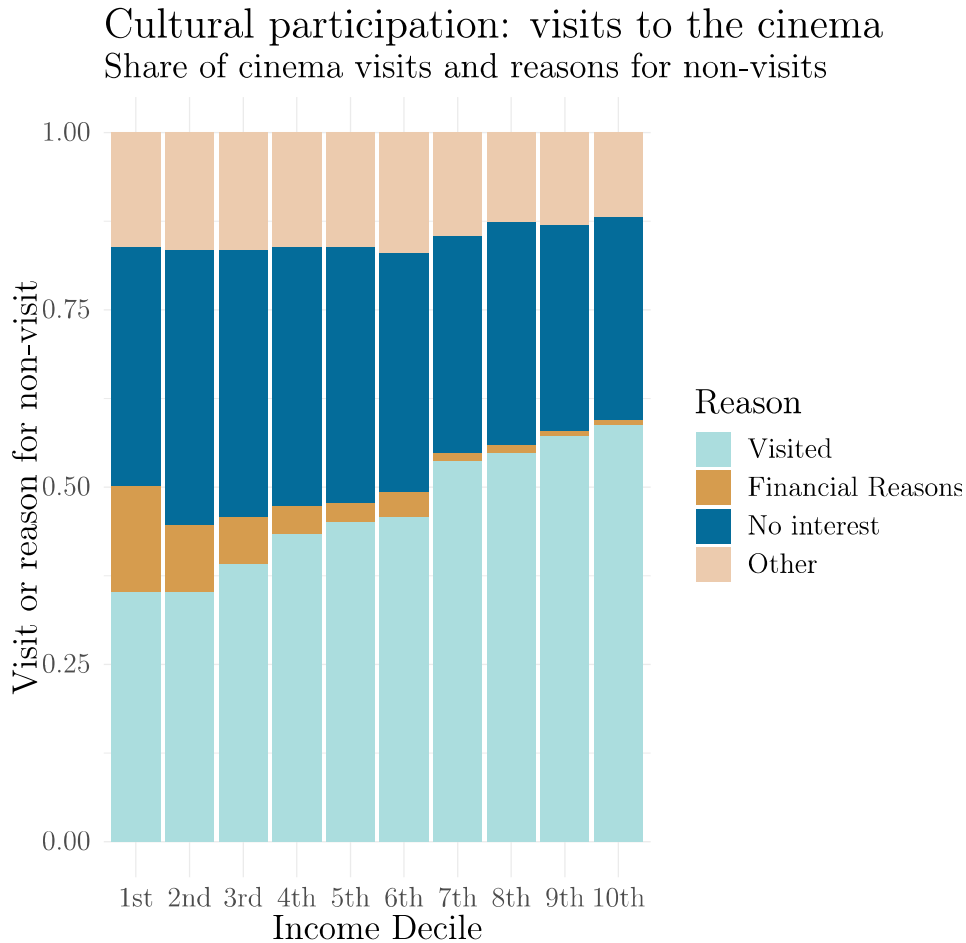


Figure 1: Cinema visits across the income distribution

Now that we have outlined which variables are of interest, we can start to analyze their distribution across the Austrian population. We start this by looking at the cinema visits, as depicted in Figure 1. We can see an increase in visits as the income rises, with around 36% the first decile of the income distribution having been in the cinema in the past 12 months, as opposed to around 60% of the 10th decile. One can clearly see the importance of financial reasons in the lower half of the income distribution, especially in the first three deciles. The upper four deciles do very seldomly list financial factors as reasons for not going to the cinema, instead listing the lack of interest, as well as other reasons that are no further specified. Interestingly, lack of interest is a rather frequent reason for not going to the cinema, with fewer differences between the deciles than in the other specifications. One reason could be that there is not the same kind of prestige connected to going the cinema as there is to going to the opera, a museum or other highbrow activities.

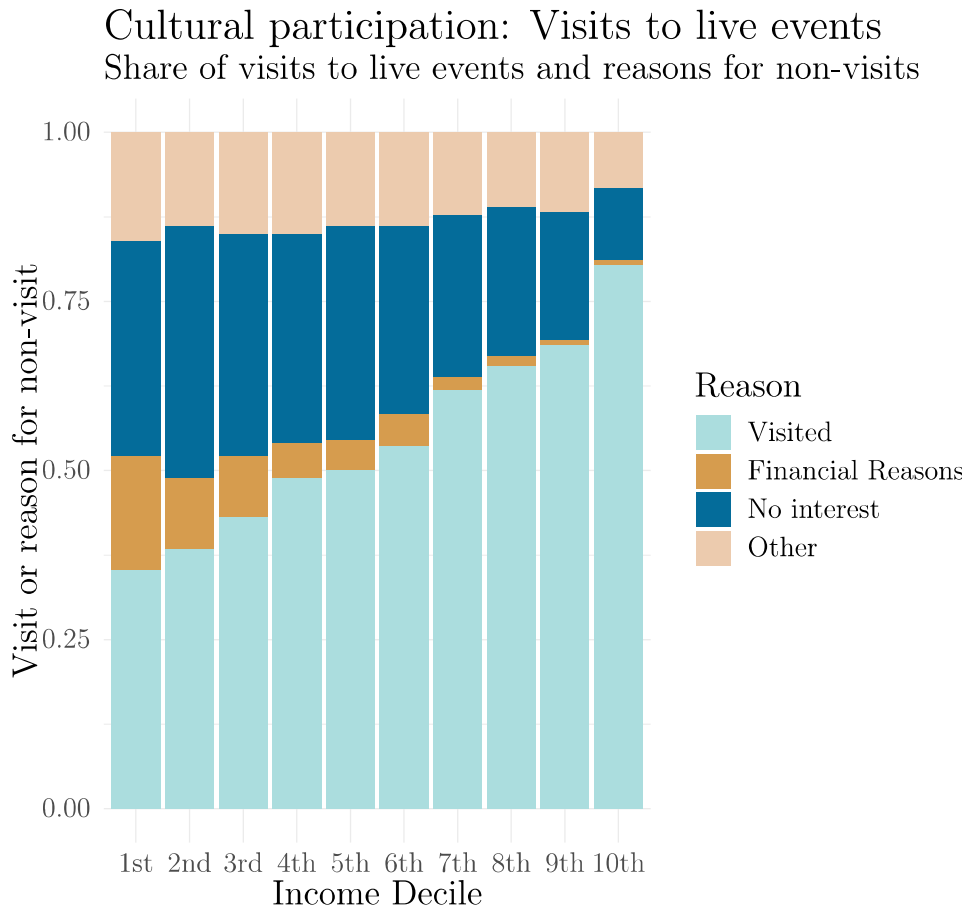


Figure 2: Visits to live events across the income distribution

A much more distinct picture is drawn in Figure 2, which shows the shares of visits to live events across the distribution. 35% of the individuals in the lowest decile of income have been to live events in the past 12 months. Of those who have not been to any live events, 16% give financial reasons for their non-visit and 31% simply had no interest in going to any live such events. In the highest decile of income the share of visits is around 81%, what is more than double the amount of visits than in the lowest decile. Financial reasons do not play any role in the decision if one goes to such an event or not, with lack of interest and not specified reasons being predominant in the non-visitor group. Interestingly, if one were to add the individuals who did not visit any live events because of financial reasons to the actual visitors, the bottom half of the income distribution would look very similar, with these two specifications summing up to around 50%. Similarly, the amount of those not interested stays around 30% until one gets to the 7th decile, where this reason starts to sink drastically as the income rises. This ties closely to the concept of cultural capital, where people of the upper class either already possess cultural capital or strive to amass it. If one already possesses cultural capital, they are more likely than not interested in the theater, opera and alike, as those are events that have high cultural "value". And, maybe, if one does not already possess cultural capital, they might not admit that they are not interested in those high-culture events, as they do not want to seem uncultured.

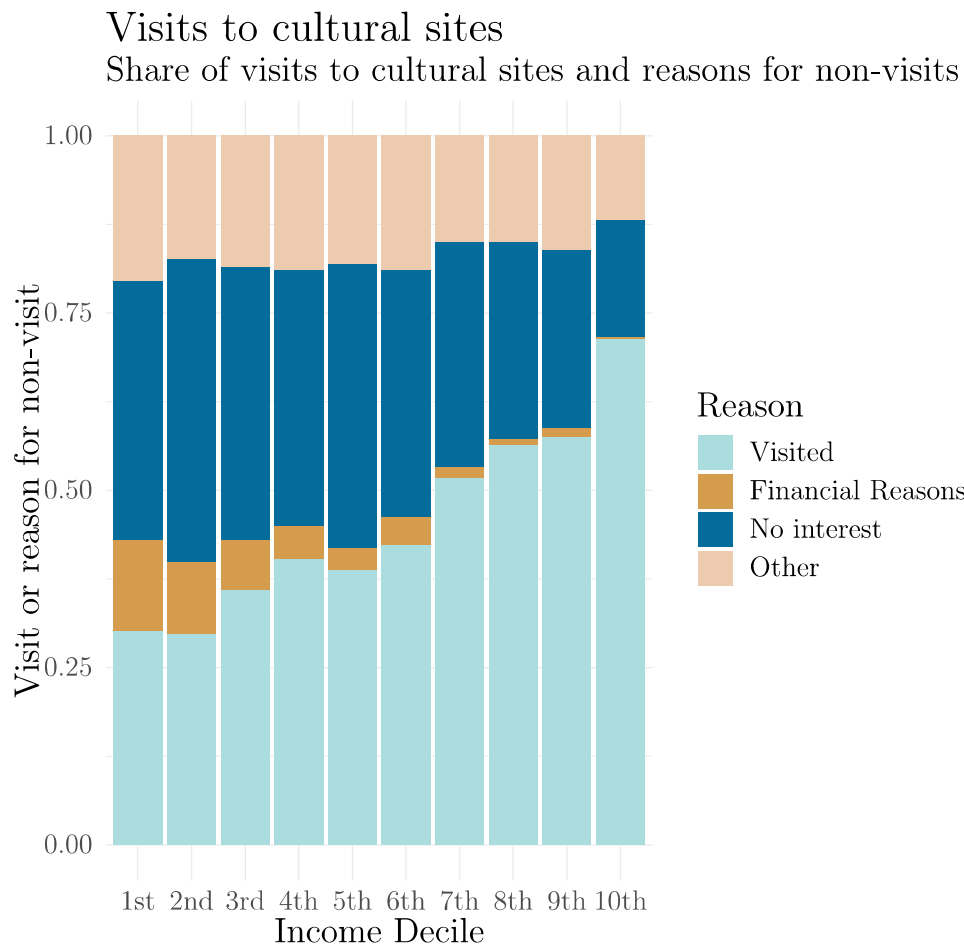


Figure 3: Visits to cultural sites across the income distribution

In Figure 3 the situation is similar to Figure 2, with large discrepancies between the highest and the lowest deciles. With 72% in the 10th decile more than double the amount of individuals have been to cultural sites in the past 12 months than in the first decile, where only 31% have visited such sites. The general trend is very similar to the two figures we that we have already discussed: the share of visits rises, whilst the share of financial reasons for non-visits declines until it is no longer relevant. Again, if one were to add up the visits and those that could not visit because of monetary issues, one would not see large differences in the bottom 6 deciles. The not interested share of the population hovers around 35-40% in the lower half of the income distribution and starts to fall of around the 7th decile, with an especially strong drop-off occurring at the top 10%.

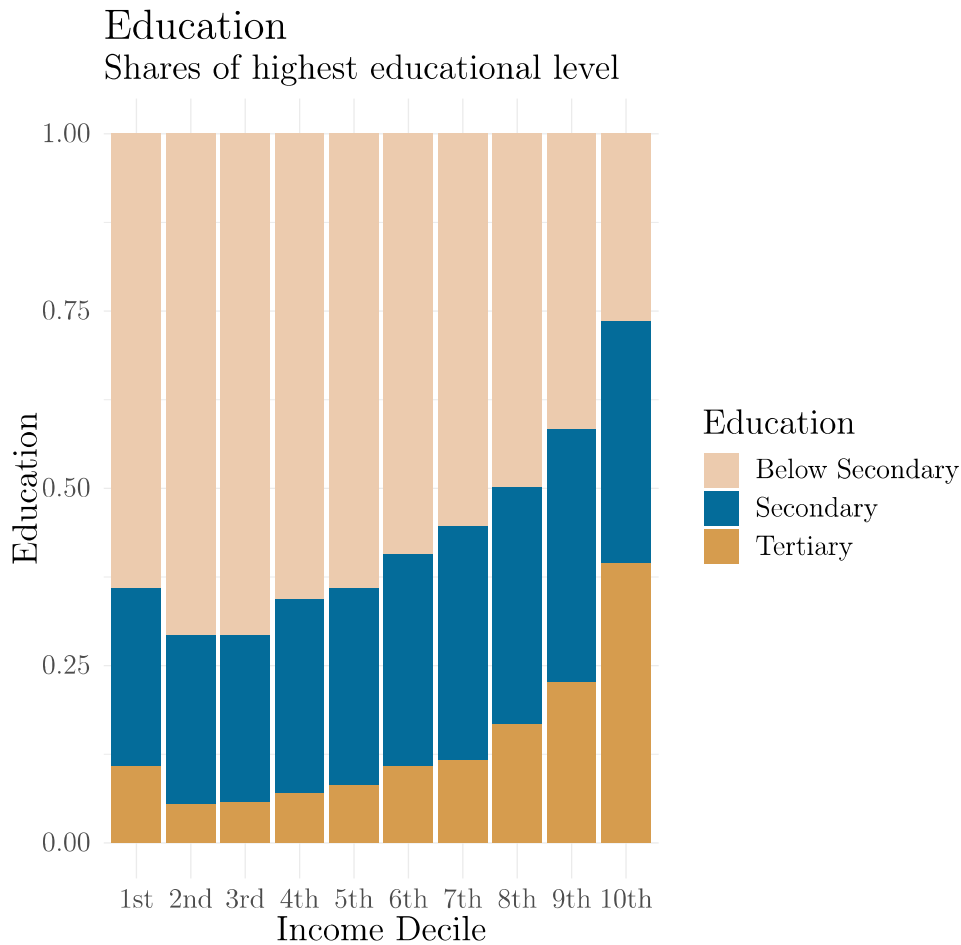


Figure 4: Share of the highest education level across the income distribution

Figure 4 shows how the three aggregated levels of education are distributed across the income distribution. Whilst there is a modest rise in secondary and tertiary education starting from the second income decile, there is a sudden jump in tertiary education at the highest decile. In the first 9 deciles the category 'below secondary education' constitutes a plurality, with secondary education following more closely as the income rises. Only in the 10th decile does tertiary education suddenly become the most common level of education. There is an anomaly in the bottom 10%, as the share of tertiary education is on the same level as in the fifth decile and onward, which could be explained by students and maybe pensioners who may have an academic title but only little income.

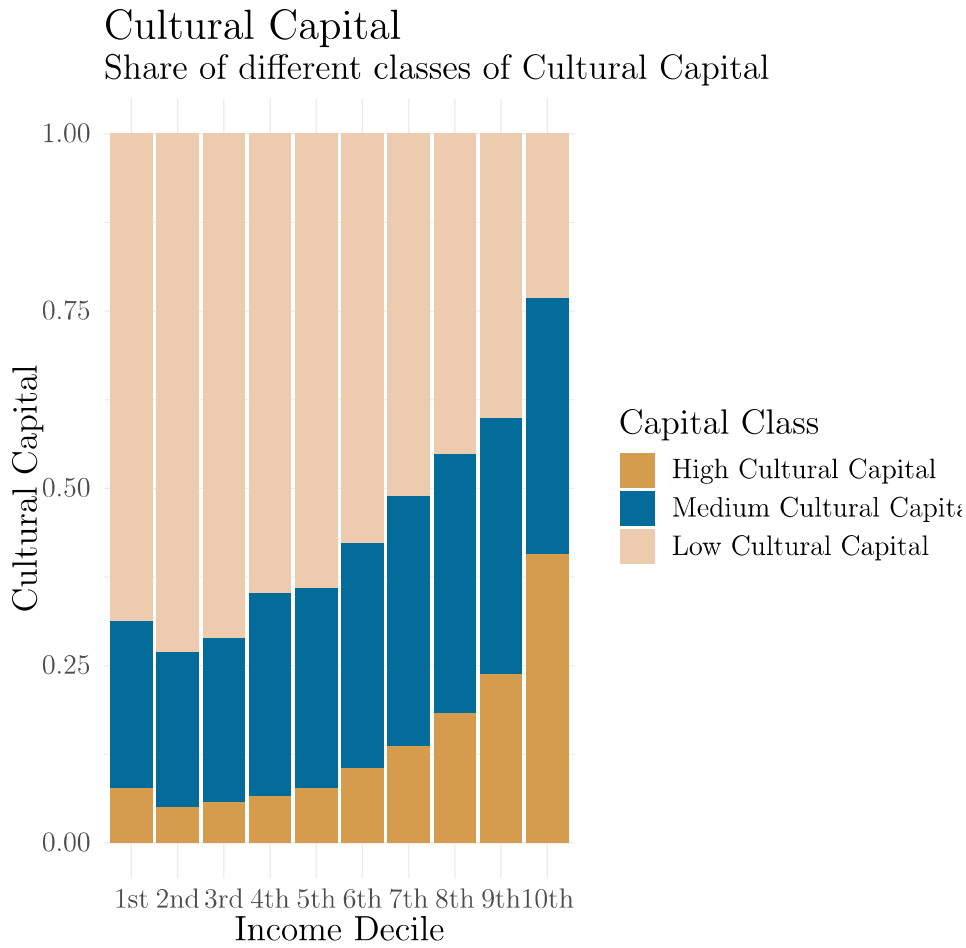


Figure 5: Aggregated cultural capital across the income distribution

Finally, Figure 5 presents the distribution of cultural capital across the income distribution. The different classes of cultural capital have been aggregated as shown in Table 2, capturing the cultural consumption of the Austrian population and deriving their cultural capital. The variable on the frequency of reading is included, although it is only shown in the appendix in Figure 11, as the fundamental differences between the income deciles are rather small. Whilst there is a larger difference in daily reading between the bottom and top 10%, the share of those who read less than weekly is low across all deciles.

One can see a clear rise in cultural capital as one moves up in the income distribution. In the bottom 50% of the income distribution, the share of high cultural capital remains between 6 - 8%. This share then starts to rise in increasing steps with every income decile. The spike in *high cultural capital* in the 10th decile is especially noticeable, as the highest class of cultural capital now constitutes a plurality with 41% of those in this decile having high cultural capital. This is remarkable, as in every other decile *low cultural capital* has the highest share of all capital classes. However, *medium cultural capital* is the second most common class in every decile. Additionally, the difference between the 9th decile and the highest decile is with 17% more than three times higher than the difference between other neighboring deciles. This graph also highlights the importance of education in one's cultural capital, as Figure 5 closely follows the distribution of educational levels across the income distribution.

6.2 Social participation

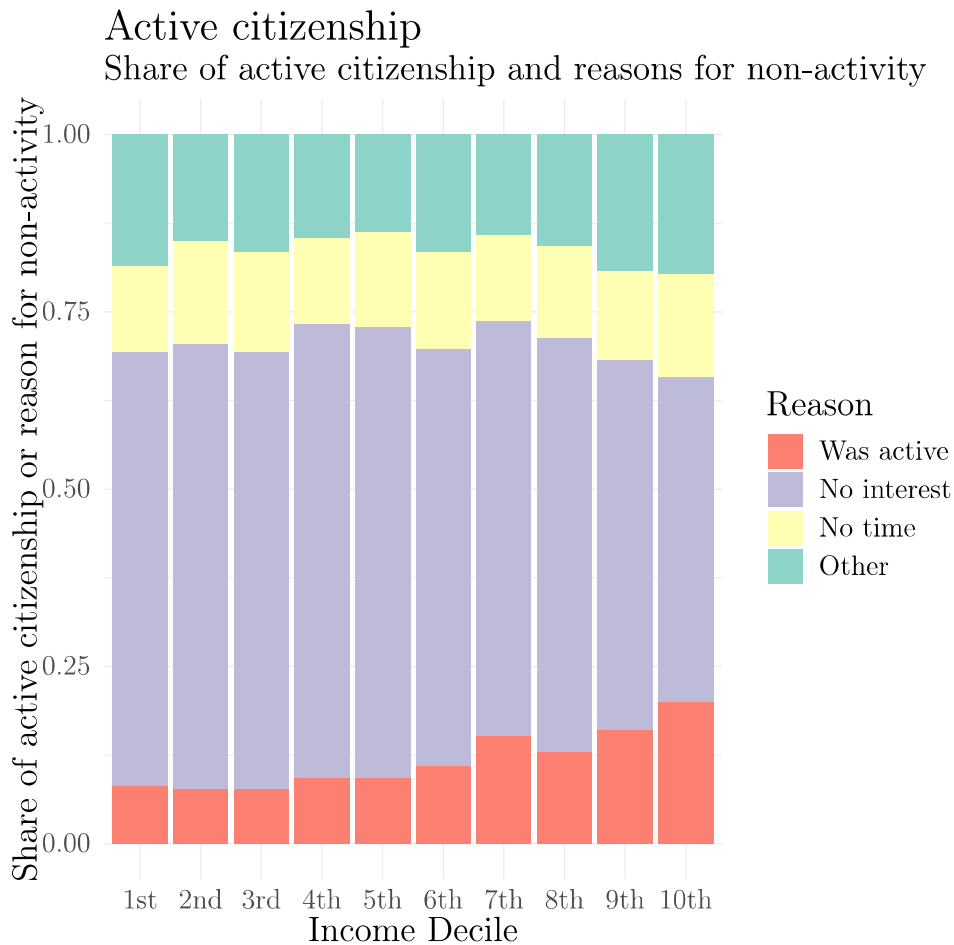


Figure 6: Active Citizenship across the income distribution

When we look at the variables describing social participation in Figure 6 we also see an unequal distribution, even though on a lower level. Only 8-9% of the lower half of the distribution are active citizens, whilst this percentage rises up to 20% in the top decile of the income distribution. The share of people who did not have time to participate remains around 12-14% across the distribution, whilst the share of those who are not interested falls off as the active share rises in the upper parts of the distribution. If we follow Bourdieu's theories on the forms of capital, this variable would actually be the one that is closest to his definition of social capital, as the groups that are included in this variable, e.g. political parties and advocacy groups, are trying to influence society through their combined power.

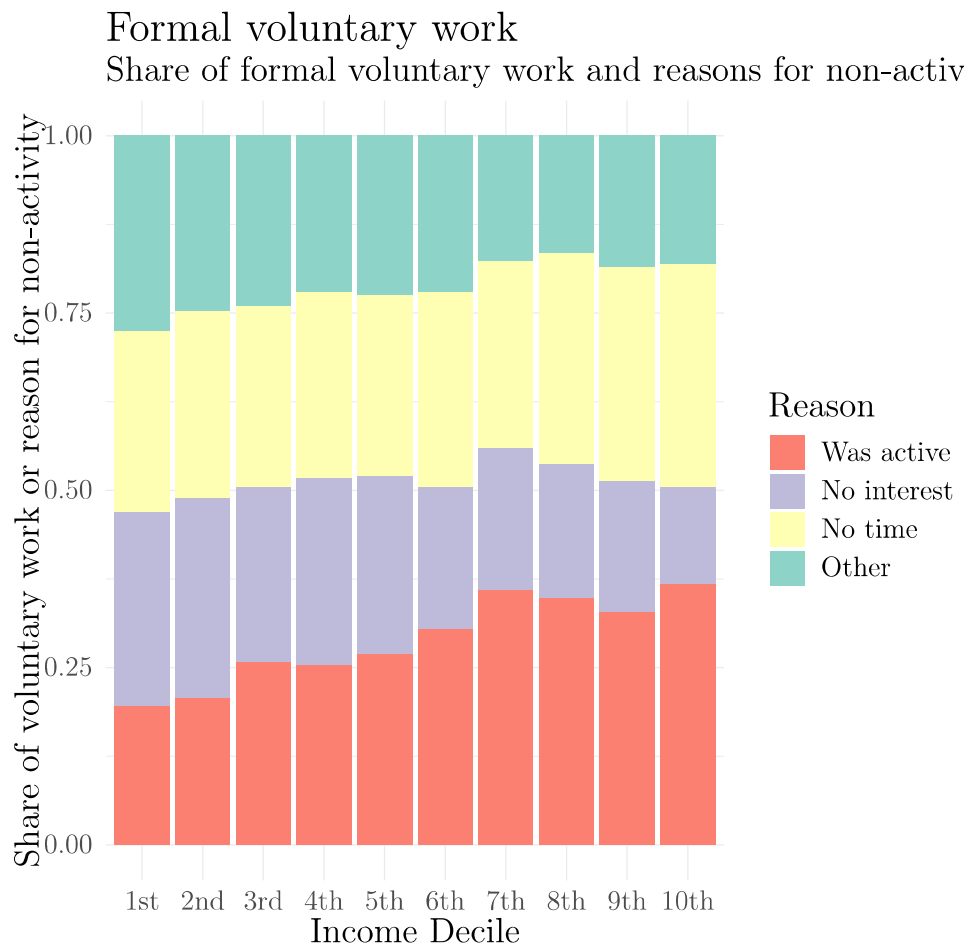


Figure 7: Formal voluntary work across the income distribution

A larger share of people is active in a formal voluntary organization, as one can see in Figure 7. In the first two deciles of the income distribution around 20% of people have been active in some form of formal voluntary work, a share that rises across the income distribution until it stays around the same level around 33-37% from the 7th decile on. Interestingly, the reason "no interest" shrinks as the income rises, while at the same time a lack of time is getting more common as a reason for non-activity.

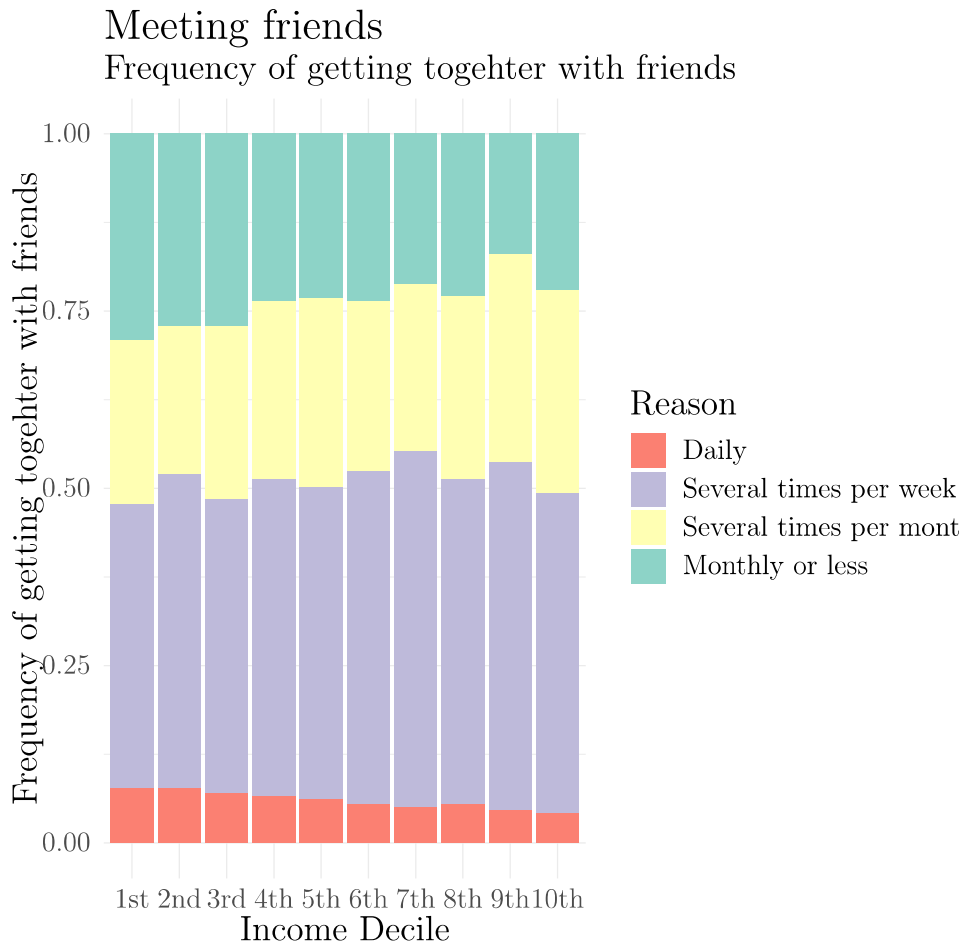


Figure 8: Frequency of getting together with friends

Figure 8 shows the frequency in which one is meeting their friends, ranging from daily to monthly or even less frequent meetups. Interestingly, this is the only graph in this descriptive analysis in which the suspected 'best answer' (daily meetups) is declining as the income rises. However, the share of people who meet their friends every day is small across the board, with only a few percentage points between the shares of the bottom 10% and the top 10% of the income distribution. On the other hand, the share of those who meet their friends several times per week rises with the income and, moreover, the share of those who meet their friends rarely falls. This could be interpreted that whilst high-earning people do have friends and see them frequently, they do not have the same amount of time as some of those with lower-income.

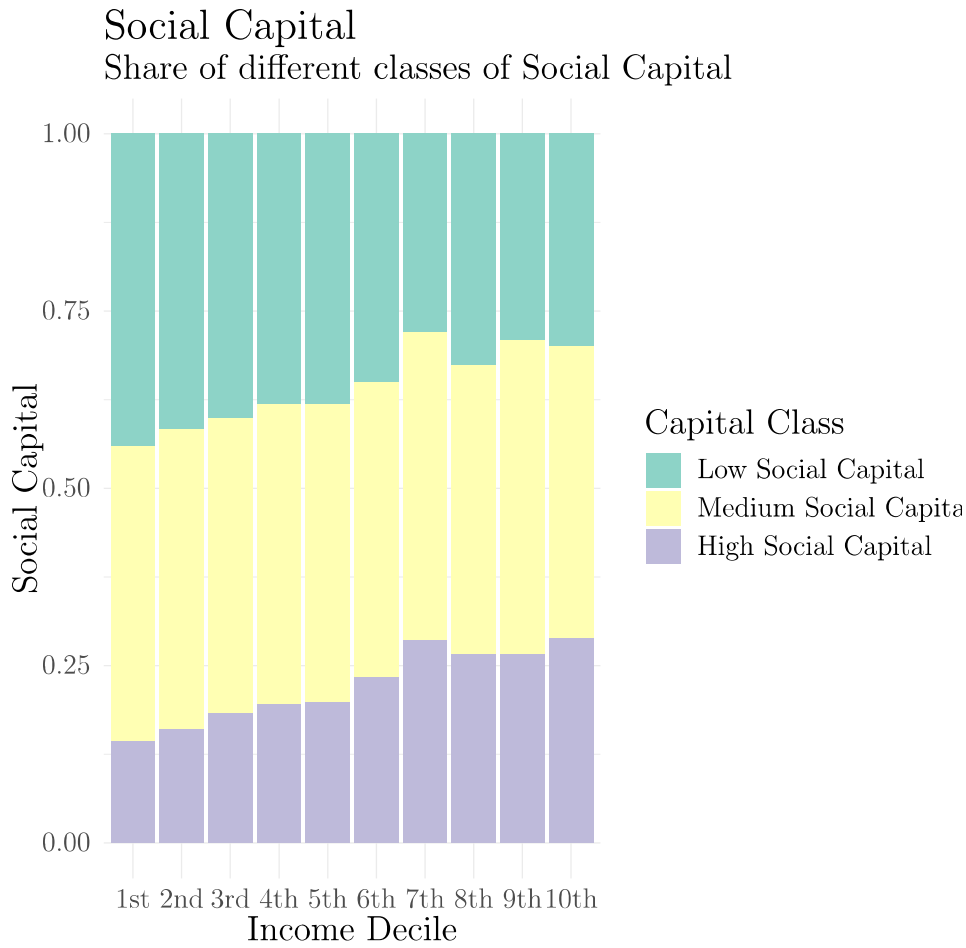


Figure 9: Social Capital across the income distribution

If one takes a look at Figure 9 one can see the distribution of our aggregated social capital variable across the income distribution. It is clear that the share of '*High Social Capital*' rises as the income rises and that '*Low Social Capital*' falls, whilst the share of '*Medium Social Capital*' keeps at around 40-44%. Even though Figure 9 is not as impressive as Figure 5, the difference in social capital between the lowest and the highest deciles is still striking: only around 15% of the people in the lowest income decile have *high social capital*, in contrast to almost 30% in the top 10% of the income distribution.

6.3 A combined view on the forms of capital

Finally, we can combine the newly created variables on cultural, social and economic capital in a single plot. In Figure 10 one can see the combination of the different forms of capital, split into three facets, each one corresponding to a level of economic capital. The plot is presented as a so-called jitter-plot, which includes a random separation of the dots as they would otherwise all be concentrated on the point of intersection between the different forms of capital. When observing this graph, one should remember that the different classes of capital have declining amounts of observations as the amount of capital rises, e.g. the group "low cultural capital" has more members than "medium cultural capital", which again has more members than "high cultural capital".

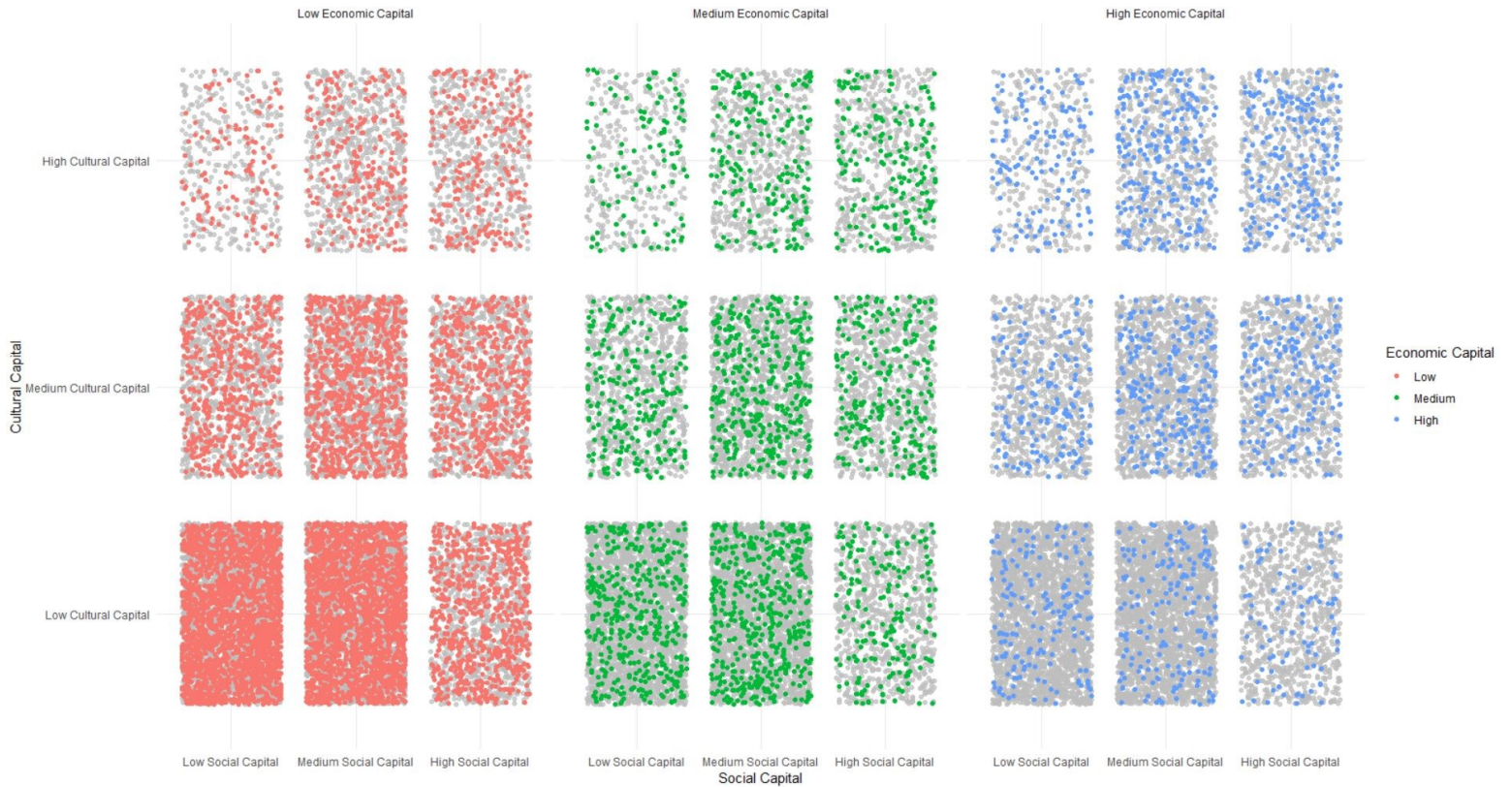


Figure 10: Combination of the three forms of capital

The left side of the plot presents the distribution of individuals with low economic capital (red dots) across the cultural and social capital classes. One can clearly see the concentration of individuals with low economic capital in the fields of low cultural capital: 4573 of the 7082 individuals equipped with low economic capital are also equipped with low cultural capital, whose majority moreover holds either low or medium social capital. As cultural capital rises, the amount of individuals with low economic capital sinks, a statement that also holds for social capital. However, the cut off between low and medium social capital seems to be less connected to one's economic capital. One can also see the relationship between three forms of capital, as there are much less observations in some special cases, such as people having high cultural, but low social capital. Everything considered, it seems that cultural capital has a higher effect on one's economic capital than social capital.

The middle part of the plot shows the observations that are holders of medium economic capital in green color. It is harder to see a distinctive pattern in this distribution than in the previous one, as there seem to be clusters in the low (44% of observations) and medium (36%) cultural capital categories, as well as in the low (31%) and medium (41%) social capital fields.

Looking at the right side, one can see the distribution of individuals with high economic capital across the other forms of capital. Of the 1578 individuals with high economic capital, 36% own high cultural capital, as opposed to only 8% of those with low economic capital. Whilst there is a tendency for wealthier individuals to also have more social capital, it is less extreme: 20% of those with low economic capital have high social capital, in opposition to 31% of the high economic capital individuals. Furthermore, of those equipped with high economic

capital only 28% have low social capital, as opposed to 37% of those with low economic capital. One can also clearly see that there are much less observations in the low cultural or social capital categories, what would suggest that those that are wealthy are also equipped with a decent amount of other forms of capital as well.

7 Discussion

The descriptive analysis above has brought up several findings that are in line with the expectations which the literature review has set. Across all variables we can see an increase in cultural and social consumption and participation as a person's income rises. This is in line with Bourdieu's theory on the forms of capital, as individuals that already have a certain amount of capital are in a better position to acquire more capital, may it be economic, cultural or social.

Taking a look at cultural capital, we found that the lack of interest is the most important reason for not visiting cultural events. Whilst financial reasons are still a relevant factor in the bottom half of the income distribution, they lose relevance whilst income rises, especially starting from the 7th decile, from which on they do not play any significant role. If one were to add up the actual visits to cultural events with the share of people who could not afford those visits, one would see that the bottom 50% would actually not differ much. The lack of interest stays around the same level until the 6th or 7th decile, from which on it starts to decline. One could argue that that follows Bourdieu's theory, as the upper class not only has the money and time to acquire cultural capital, but through their already embodied cultural capital also have the interest in participating in high-culture. This could be underpinned by looking at the distribution of cinema visits, which shows a much smaller difference between the different income deciles. While cinemas are of course part of the cultural world, they have not the same standing in the society as e.g. the opera or a museum, which leads to a lower interest from those who want to cement their social standing by attending high-brow events.

The further analysis of cultural capital poses one problem, which is the inclusion of education in the aggregated variable of cultural capital. While there is no doubt that a person's scholastic titles must be included in one's cultural capital, it could also skew the results, especially if one is evaluating the effect of cultural capital on economic capital. Studies have shown (e.g. EUROSTAT (2016)) that higher education has a positive effect on one's income, which leaves the question of how much of the effect of cultural capital on income could be reduced to the higher educational level of its holders.

The analysis of social capital brings less decisive results, as the distribution of social capital seems to be much more equal than that of cultural or economic capital. Still, there is an upward trend in social capital across the income distribution.

One problem in the operationalization of social capital is the fact that we can not measure the social capital of the people an individual is connected to. If someone is part of a group whose members posses great amounts of capital, they should be assigned higher social capital than someone who is in a group that is less affluent. The same goes for the greater social sphere, e.g. one's friends: if one has friends that are in leading positions in the economy or politics, one can derive much greater profit from the relationships to them. Another example would be

the variable "*Can you ask someone for help?*", as for some people that would mean "*Can you drive me to the doctor?*" while other people could associate help with "*Can you write me a letter of recommendation?*". Even though both associations would be right, a person who has friends that can help them in ways that will ultimately lead to further accumulation of capital could be considered to have higher social capital than others.

But what are the conclusions one can draw from these results? First of all, further research is necessary regarding the causal relationship of the different forms of capital. The descriptive approach above gives a valuable overview of the distribution of capital in the Austrian population, but an econometric analysis could bring forth new and important results regarding the conversion of one kind of capital into the others. This will be done in the following part of this thesis.

Next, the prevalence of financial reasons for not visiting cultural sites in the lower deciles of income are a glaring problem if one sees culture as a common good. If we are following Bourdieu's theory of cultural capital, then the inability to e.g. visit cultural sites is helping in the reproduction of social classes, as the financial costs create a further barrier to increase one's (or one's children's) cultural capital. Steps to combat this are obvious, as a reduction of prices for highbrow cultural activities, if not even free admittance, could bring those who could not afford entry into the world of high-culture. These findings are supported by Kirchberg (1998), who has found that in the lowest income bracket entrances prices are viewed as the greatest barrier in visiting museums. Moreover, this perception is deeply connected to one's education, occupation and lifestyle.

However, the lack of interest in cultural activities is harder to combat. This would mean attacking the whole construct of cultural reproduction that Bourdieu has described (as briefly summarised in the theory chapter), what would of course provoke resistance. One way would be to restructure the educational system so it does not favor those traits that arise from an upbringing around large amounts of cultural capital, leveling the playing field a bit. Another way would be a more holistic approach in transforming society by questioning the properties that constitute something of high cultural value. Although these ideas are interesting and worthy of discussion, this thesis may not be the right place to do so.

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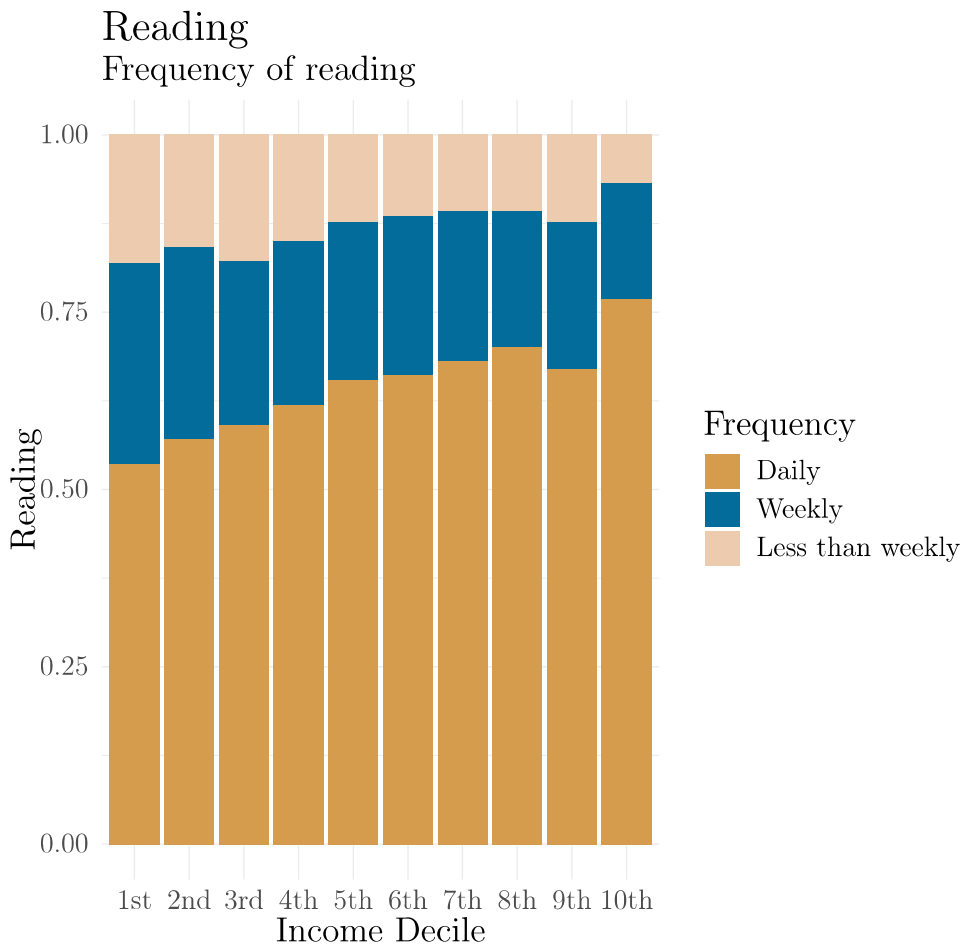
8 Appendix

8.1 Questions asked in EU-SILC

- Waren Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten mindestens ein Mal im Kino?
 - Wie oft waren Sie im Kino? War das...
 - Was war der wichtigste Grund dafür? Hatten Sie...
- Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten mindestens ein Mal Veranstaltungen wie z.B. Konzerte, Theateraufführungen, eine Oper oder Tanzaufführungen besucht?
- Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten mindestens ein Mal historische oder kulturelle Denkmäler, Museen, Kunstgalerien, archäologische Stätten usw. besucht?
- Jetzt geht es um ausgewählte Freizeitaktivitäten und wie oft Sie diese ausüben. Wie häufig lesen Sie Bücher, Zeitungen, Zeitschriften oder Magazine? Ist das...
- Wie häufig treffen oder besuchen Sie Freunde? Ist das...
- Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten Freiwilligenarbeit im Rahmen einer Organisation oder eines Vereins geleistet? Was war der wichtigste Grund dafür? Hatten Sie...
- Haben Sie in den letzten 12 Monaten an Aktivitäten einer politischen Partei oder eines Berufsverbands, an einer Demonstration oder an einem friedlichen Protest, z.B. Unterzeichnen einer Petition, teilgenommen? Was war der wichtigste Grund dafür? Hatten Sie...
- Haben Sie Verwandte, Freunde oder Nachbarn, die Sie um Hilfe bitten können?

8.2 Figures

Figure 11: Frequency of reading



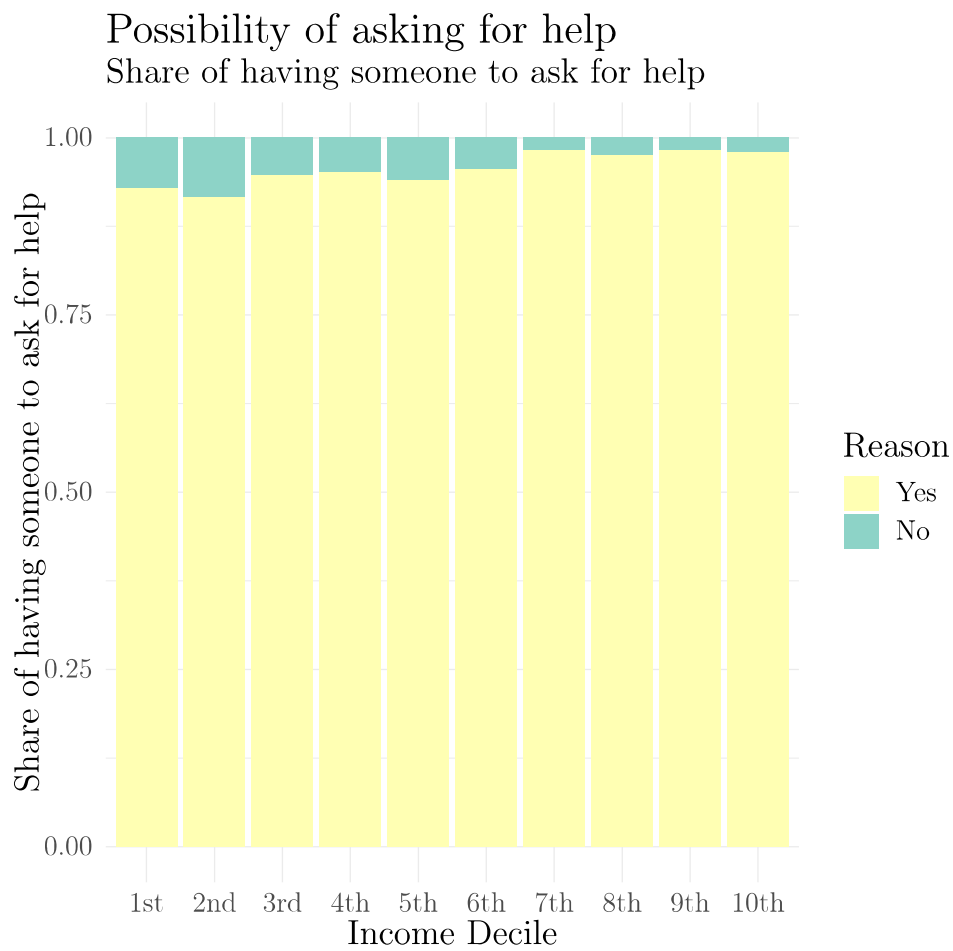


Figure 12: Possibility of asking someone for help