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*Social cohesion in African countries.
The role of remittances and the size of the welfare state*

Summary

Social cohesion may be considered as a factor of economic development and therefore of paramount importance to African countries. Yet, there is limited number of studies that would aim to measure social cohesion in the African continent. This paper offers a social cohesion indicator grounded in an axiological model of social cohesion; it is based on the assumption that a society needs to share certain values in order to be cohered. This study provides a social cohesion rank for 13 African states and reveals that countries from North Africa are on average more cohered than the ones south of the equator. Also, Muslim countries prevail among the leaders of social cohesion. Furthermore, based on the OLS regression model results, the relevance of private remittances and the size of the welfare state as determinants of increased social cohesion in Africa is suggested.

Key words: social cohesion, Africa, social policy, remittances, economic development

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Introduction

Ensuring social cohesion in the developed countries of the European Union is considered an important task for the Community in the changing global environment (Hannequart 1992; Rakauskiene, Ivashinenko 2011; Farole et al. 2011; Johns 2012; Boucher 2013). Cohesion policy has had a major impact on the European economy, helping to cushion the impact of crisis, reducing economic differences and promoting environmental and social development (Farole et al. 2011; Rakauskiene, Ivashinenko 2011). However, Boucher (2013) warns that trends towards the polarization of societies into nationals/immigrants and poor/rich (deepened by economic crisis and neoliberal austerity programmes) have increased the popularity of populism and turned it increasingly against both economic globalization and European integration. The socio-political turmoil following economic migrations to Europe and the reception of refugees from Syria is a clear example of the necessity to embrace the issue of social cohesion in a spectrum not limited to Community (Abrams 2016). Therefore, it is important to concentrate not only on local, European problems, but to adopt a broader approach which would allow an understanding of social interactions and their implications also in the context of socio-economic situation of other regions.

The centre of economic gravity of the world has progressively shifted from the West to the East and from the North to the South, resulting in a new geography of growth, as reported by OECD (2011a). The fastest growing economies are located in Asia and Africa. However, the distribution of wealth and the quality of life, especially in Africa, lags behind other regions. Despite the increasing performance of sub-Saharan economies especially since the 2000s, driven mostly by the conjuncture on commodities, growth is not translated into sufficient development achievements, since it leads neither to structural change, nor to industrialisation, nor to labour mobility towards more productive sectors (Lipton 2012; Rodrik 2014). The region still needs more investments in human resources and physical infrastructure, accelerating opportunities for private sector development, improving the quality of governance, strengthening institutional capacity, and according to Husain (1994) most importantly — maintaining national solidarity and social cohesion. However, societies in the region face not only strong external competition in the markets, but also inland rivalry, which results in an unequal distribution of income, uneven access to education and health, and the threat of social exclusion of vulnerable groups (Loewenson 2010; HDI 2017). Furthermore, the development of social capital and social networks in the region was jeopardized by foreign interventions in social structures (Grishow 2008; Bertocchi, Guerzoni 2012; Prior 2013). It is indisputable that colonialism and neocolonial policies in Africa were exogenous interventions into social processes in the continent, which caused a lot of harm at different societal levels. Even after 1960 colonial powers interfered with social structures, imposed governments and distracted newly independent states fostering social and ethnic conflicts.

Poverty reduction and convergence with high-income states requires long-term sustainable and inclusive growth (Lin 2011). The debate on social policies and social capital which refers to the networks, relations of trust, and patterns of reciprocity that

facilitate collective action and bond members of particular communities (Green et al. 2003) has been receiving increasing attention in development studies. Researchers attempt to demonstrate the relevance of concepts grounded in social capital theory with economic performance of societies; however most of these studies concentrate on the case of developed countries. Nonetheless, some studies raise the issue of social cohesion in Africa, generally from a country level sectoral perspective (Chachage 2004; Lange 2006; Grischow 2008; van Rooyen et al. 2012; Fonner et al. 2014; Barolsky 2012; Mwesigye, Matsumoto 2016). This sparse, but valuable, research provides a regional perspective which emphasizes the importance of social cohesion for economic development. A cross-country study by Balamoune-Lutz (2008) indicates that social cohesion has a general positive impact on fragile states in Africa. According to Birdsall (2007) building social capital and social cohesion may contribute to the growth of middle class in African states and the establishment of healthy institutions and sound policy states.

Social cohesion is a broad concept which combines the sense of belonging and active participation, trust, and mobility (OECD 2011b); it reflects a social force embodied in a society, which may contribute to overcoming inequality issues and hence advancing the process of economic development. Therefore, the conceptualisation of social cohesion in Africa may improve the understanding of development process and serve policymaking in the region.

The primary goal of this study was to measure social cohesion in African states. The indicator offered in this paper is theoretically grounded in an axiological model of social cohesion (Guibet Lafaye 2009) and based on selected values. The components of the indicator correspond with methodology adopted by Green et al. (2004).

The second aim of the study was to verify the impact of private remittances and the size of the welfare state on social cohesion. The analysis covered 13 African states, based on maximum regional data availability, covering nearly 60% of Africa's population. Countries included in the sample represent all geographical and income regions of African continent, so since the results need to be interpreted with caution, a case can be made that they may be an indication for the whole region. A number of researches in African studies uses a limited country sample restricted by the data availability (i.a. Walley, Cushing 2013). In the research proceedings, the region of Africa was treated as confined system, while sub-Saharan Africa as its sub-system.

The contribution of this paper is as follows. First this paper aims to fill in the lacuna in the sparse research on social cohesion in Africa in a broad regional context. Next, it offers a methodology of social cohesion indicator measurement, which is not limited to regional context. Also, based on the results of the study, the importance of policies that would facilitate international remittances transfer and improve social security programs are stressed. The paper is divided into 5 sections. The literature review concentrated on social cohesion in Africa is followed by the conceptual framework on social cohesion indicator. Next, the rank of social cohesion in Africa is presented and the results of the indicator computations are explained. Finally, the results of the OLS regression are summarized and discussed, followed by the conclusions.

Literature review

Measuring social cohesion

The review of the existing social cohesion literature attempts to tackle two important tasks, first to provide theoretical grounds of social cohesion indicator developed in this study, and second to provide the context on determinants of social cohesion identified in African region.

Measuring social cohesion requires approximation of what the author assumes that the *indicatum* of social cohesion represents (Kurowska 2011). There is a vast literature on conceptualization of social cohesion, which refers to different aspects of this notion, with an impact on networking, values, or bonds. This research draws from August Comte' axiological concept of social cohesion, which requires "some shared values" to form a society (Guibet Lafaye 2009). Values are the ends towards which behavior is directed and, as such, may be considered as predictors of behavior (Small et al. 2010). Constructing an indicator of social cohesion based on values, craved for adoption of suitable techniques that capture the inherent multivariate nature of these phenomena. Accordingly, expressions of values representing tolerance to other people, trust in people², confidence in the authorities, honesty (lack of justification for cheating), and affiliation, were its main components (Tab. 1). Consideration of the role of trust, partly rooted in game theory, suggests that in the groups where more trust can be found, cooperation is also more likely (La Porta et al. 1997). Knack and Zak (2001) claim that trust is higher in "fair" societies. They also claim that cheating is more likely when the social distance between agents is larger. Based on that, the appreciation of honest attitudes was also included in the indicator. Apart from that, as respect towards others is recognized as important value in social capital theory (Tabellini 2008), it was decided that appreciating the virtue of having tolerance and respect for others in children might indicate social cohesion. Rooted in the same logic, the confidence if parliaments were included, as representing respect for the representatives of the community, but also the affiliation with state as an organisation. Inclusion of this variable allows us to control for the overall reliability of parliament; levels of social cohesion may be lower if people are not able to trust in the authorities. Therefore, the elements of trusting people — but also having confidence in institutions, were included in the indicator. Adding elements of honesty and respect was inspired by the imperative of shared values recognition as the *sine qua non* of social cohesion in its axiological conceptualization, which has been prioritized in this research.

² The indicator included in the research covers deterrence-based and benevolence-based trust, the first type corresponds to trust produced by formal institutions and informal sanctions such as ostracism, while the latter type can be identified loosely with social homogeneity, as defined by Knack and Zak (2001). I follow Knack and Zak (2001) and assume that the "Trust" question in WVS is stated generally enough to cover both dimensions of trust. Lower trust implies higher distance between the agents and increased social heterogeneity.

Social cohesion is a construct multivariate in its nature. In the attempt to embrace it, apart from including approximated society values measured in qualitative research (World Value Survey), the range of variables was extended to data on the ratio of intentional homicides and GINI index. Intentional homicides represent the lack of appreciation of values expected in a cohered society and the inefficiency of a state in providing security, while GINI index reflects the inequality in the division of incomes, which indicates the existence of excluded groups within a society, as reported by social cohesion literature. In Small et al. (2010) research on cultures of poverty, Lewis is cited to claim that sustained poverty generates a set of cultural attitudes, beliefs, values and attitudes, and practices, and that this culture of poverty would tend to perpetuate itself over time, even if the structural conditions that originally gave rise to it were changed. We reject the suggestion that people are poor because of their values, but living in poverty and unequal social structures may impact social attitudes, as much as maintenance of certain values may stimulate (or not) social cohesion. This is consistent with Malunga's (2014) claim that when people cannot put food on the table, when they are not responsible contributors, they may engage in risky behaviors just to survive.

The poverty trap is more likely when institutions — both formal and informal — which punish cheaters are weak. It is emphasized in the social capital theory that community and social cohesion are foundations of development, because certain behaviours and values expressed in norms can facilitate trust, fairness, and cooperation in a diverse array of interactions (Henrich et al. 2010). In the social capital approach, the building of trust, with the use of strengths and assets of poor communities in participatory, bottom-up processes, is possible thanks to social cohesion in informal and formal institutions (Fay 2005; Spolaore, Wacziarg 2013; Busso, Storti 2013). Based on the analysis of literature, both subjective values variables which are considered here as input to social cohesion and the more objective data on inequality and crime which may indicate the output of behaviors based on these values were included in the indicator constructed in this study.

Determinants of social cohesion in Africa

First, an important factor, one which can be indicated as a potentially influential for social cohesion, is state policy, particularly the engagement of a state in solving social problems of a society (Andreotti et al. 2012; Andrews, Jilke 2016; Borsenberger et al. 2016). From a historical point of view, Adésinà (2009) argues that there were two phases of social policy in the Africa region; first, a nationalist phase from 1960 to 1980; and a second, framed by the neoliberal policy regime, which marked the last two decades of the 20th century. One can clearly see that these shifts most likely followed the market vs. state failures debate pendulum. As a consequence, international institutions and aid donors imposed on Africa the relevance for “growth enhancing” policy implications, which had consequences for the shaping of social policy and hence social cohesion. The first phase played a transformative role — intrinsic and instrumental. It was concentrated on education and health; while the second brought what Adésinà (2009) calls a massive entitlement

failure and the crisis of citizenship and statehood. According to this research, only in the first phase nationalist model did social policy serve the functions of production and social cohesion, over and above those of reproduction, redistribution, and social protection normally associated with social policy regimes. Both these phases were at least inspired by the foreign community. These had a negative impact on the normative content and social reception of these policies, which were not sufficiently designed to increase social cohesion. Today, there is a demand for strategies of social policies that would be inspired by the African tradition, based on values which are adequate to respond to the conditions of current economic and social surrounding.

The quality of social policy in African states may be approximated with health care systems outputs, as lack of appropriate policies is likely to coexist with more health issues in a given state. Moreover, the problems of communicable diseases, which are among the major causes in morbidity and mortality in resource-poor settings, are themselves a determinant of social cohesion, since they affect people in their prime lives (Lange 2006). Several studies analyze the AIDS pandemic's destabilizing effects on the region (Pates, Johnson 2004). HIV devastation in weak states increases vulnerability to extremists and terrorists. More economically disadvantaged and marginalized communities are more likely to be exposed to the negative effects of HIV (Loewenson 2007). The vulnerable groups risk being approached with the attempt to involve it in corruption or cooperation with terrorist groups. It was found that HIV infection rates among African armed forces are two to three times higher than those of civilian populations; this constitutes a clear risk for military stability (Pates, Johnson 2004), but also shows a disquieting pattern. Malunga (2014) claims that large numbers of unemployed youth who have become dependent on family or society fall prey to risky social behaviors that can lead to HIV/AIDS. Studies in disadvantaged groups inside society, depict that higher levels of social cohesion and social participation are associated with protective behaviors, and inversely associated with experiencing social discrimination and violence (Fonner et al. 2014). Interestingly, in a case of the Malawi HIV crisis, the use of a combination of cultural and religious mechanisms influenced the increase of social cohesion. Religious leaders leveraged their authority to reinforce social cohesion. To prevent the spreading of HIV they promoted religion focused on family, both in Christian and Muslim teachings (Loewenson 2007).

Another possible determinant of social cohesion are remittances. These personal transfers from abroad are closely related with rising migrations from low and middle income to high income countries (OECD 2013; Abrams 2016)³. From the perspective of the country of emigration, migrations are a multidimensional phenomena which may serve as a measure of input and output of different social processes. Particularly, once emigrants decide to provide for their families that have remained in their country of origin, remittances reflect social capital embodied in a society. In turn, increasing flows of remittances are positive for social cohesion, as they promote existing social links and ameliorate the life quality of

³ In fact, in regional context, the importance of cross-border intra-migration is more influential for societal relations, than the outflow of migrants to Europe.

its recipients. According to Anyanwu and Erhijakpor (2010), remittances are a derivative of social cohesion and they have a positive impact on poverty reduction. The policies that allow cash flows for the sake of private households, such as reduced costs of money transfer, may contribute positively to increased levels of social cohesion (Esser et al. 2009). Nnyanzi (2016) claims, that not only remittances are more important in African states than in other developing countries (in terms of contribution to GDP), but also they play a key role in the improvement of the welfare of households particularly at their times of a great need. Therefore we may assume that they constitute a potential output, but also input to social cohesion, by reinforcing the bonds from which they originate.

In sub-Saharan region a number of social, politic and economic factors hinder rather than foster social cohesion. The already mentioned communicable diseases (including tuberculosis, malaria, Aids), despite generally improving health protection in Africa, are still a burden for building social networks. Further, among the problems that characterize the region, the density of population, ethnic problems and local migrations are mentioned in the literature as potentially decreasing social cohesion. Easterly and Levine (1997) claim that ethnic diversity has a negative effect on economic growth based on their results of a cross-section countries analysis. Potentially negative implications of high ethnic fractionalization on social bonds and, in consequence, on society's ability to develop harmonically is also found by Posner (2004). Mwesigye and Matsumoto (2016) suggest that population pressure and internal migration weakens social cohesion and hence negatively affects community-specific informal land arrangements and conflict resolution mechanisms, which result in land conflicts. In South Africa, social fragmentation is to large extent the heritage of apartheid, and requires social discourse on all societal levels (Barolsky 2012). Different initiatives are undertaken to address ethnic differences problems. For example, in Nigeria and Tanzania, policy on public school system was treated as a vehicle for national cohesion to bring together students from different regions of the country (Adésinà 2009). As this literature is acknowledged and appreciated, it is noteworthy that group cohesion has other markers than ethnicity, including economic interests and religious affiliations, which create multiple loyalties (Hopkins 2009).

Literature offers a number of important insights on socio-economic determinants of social cohesion specifically in the region of Africa, particularly the effectiveness of states' social policy (fighting communicable diseases, health care system), social attitudes (remittances), and heterogeneity (existence of excluded groups, political stability, ethnic fractionalization) (i.a. Easterly, Levine 1997; Chachage 2004; Lange 2006; Loewenson 2007; Anyanwu, Erhijakpor 2010; Barolsky 2012)⁴. Based on this evidence it is assumed that providing higher levels of social security and health care, as well as more cohered social attitudes (represented by higher transfers of private money transfers from abroad)

⁴ In this research the subject of education and social cohesion was not included, however one shall note that in the literature, this idea was also raised i.a. by Drukheim 1977, Putnam 1995, Helliwell and Putnam 2007 and in the context of Africa by Chachage (2004), who claims that there is an influence of the perception of education as means to forging national cohesion and reducing inequalities left by the colonial legacy.

will indicate higher levels of social cohesion. On the contrary, the presence of deaths caused by communicable diseases, ethnic fractionalization, or political instability are identified as potentially producing negative effects for social cohesion in Africa. Provided limits in access to data, in the following sections the research will focus on testing the hypothesis which relate to positive factors of social cohesion, social policy and remittances.

Data and methodology

In order to determine factors of social cohesion in Africa, the first social cohesion indicator was computed. The indicator ranges in value from 0 to 1. It is based on a weighted mean of positive factors of recognized values (60%) (qualitative variables) and the reversed values of homicides (20%) and GINI index (20%) (quantitative variables). The idea was to achieve a balance between qualitative prevailing variables and quantitative data, giving priority to inputs to social cohesion. The choice of particular weights was arbitrary however the idea was that each value received equal meaning. This was consistent with the rationale for creating the indicator rooted in the axiological model of social cohesion, driven by recognitions of norms and values and sharing respect for them on the society level (Guibet Lafaye 2009). Methodologically, the indicator is a modification of a corresponding indicator created by Green's et al. (2003). The data was extracted from World Value Survey (WVS) and World Development Indicators (WDI). The computation were made according to the following formula:

$$SocCoh_i = 0,6 \times \left(\frac{mWVS_i}{100} \right) + 0,2 \times \left(1 - \left(\frac{HomIn_i}{100} \right) \right) + 0,2 \times \left(1 - \left(\frac{GINI_i}{100} \right) \right) \quad (1)$$

where, SocCoh is social cohesion indicator in a state i , mWVS stands for mean of values variables included in the study as described in Tab. 1, HomIn is the intentional homicides ratio for a given country, while Gini is the value of GINI index for that country. Since WVS surveys were conducted in a limited sample of African states, the indicator might have been computed for 13 observations. Data was extracted from waves 5⁵ (Burkina Faso, Ethiopia, Mali, Zambia,) and 6⁶ (Algeria, Egypt, Ghana, Morocco, Nigeria, Rwanda, South Africa, Tunisia, Zimbabwe) taking the latest data available for each country. The data used for computation of social cohesion indicator is shown in Tab. 2. Variation coefficient of variables analysis suggests that the countries differed most in the number of intentional homicides, placing Burkina Faso and South Africa on two poles. Burkina Faso is one of the ten safest states in the World, based on the homicide variable collected by the World Bank. The least variation was found for the variable indicating the importance of teaching children tolerance and respect for other people.

⁵ The data from earlier wave 4 was collected in 2000–2004. Inclusion of this data would permit two more observations, Tanzania, Uganda. However, in the Wave 4, 2 survey questions altered significantly from Wave 5 and 6, moreover it was considered that the data was too old, so the record for Tanzania would be difficult to interpret.

⁶ Data for Libya was not included, because to much data on GINI index was missing and excluded the possibility of computing the social cohesion coefficient.

Table 1. Social cohesion indicator components

Variable	Value included in model	Variable code	Database
Child qualities: tolerance and respect for other people ^a	Share of: mentioned	V16	World Value Survey
Confidence: Parliament ^b	Share of answers: A great deal and Quite a lot	V117, V140	World Value Survey
Most people can be trusted ^c	Share of answers: Most people can be trusted	V24, V23	World Value Survey
Trust: People you meet for the first time ^d	Share of answers: Trust completely	V105, V128	World Value Survey
Justifiable: avoiding a fare on public transport ^e	Share of answers: Never justifiable	V199	World Value Survey
Justifiable: cheating on taxes if you have a chance ^f	Share of answers: Never justifiable	V201, V200***	World Value Survey
Intentional homicides (per 100,000 people)	Ratio of a country value to the highest homicide value in the World (Honduras)*	VC.IHR.PSRC. P5	World Development Indicators
GINI index	Coefficient of inequality in income distribution	SI.POV.GINI	World Development Indicators**

^a — Child qualities: tolerance and respect for other people — Question wording: Here is a list of qualities that children can be encouraged to learn at home. Which, if any, do you consider to be especially important?: Tolerance and respect for other people; ^b — Most people can be trusted — Question wording Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?; ^c — Question wording: I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?: Parliament; ^d — Trust: People you meet for the first time, Question wording: I 'd like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely, somewhat, not very much or not at all? People you meet for the first time; ^e — Justifiable: avoiding a fare on public transport, Question wording: Please tell me for each of the following actions whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between: Avoiding a fare on public transport; ^f — Question wording: Please tell me for each of the following actions whether you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between: Cheating on taxes if you have a chance

* Mean value for years 2010–2012, based on data availability was taken into account. The length of data is also justified by the fact, that for some countries the data was available only for year 2012 (Ethiopia and Mali), 2010–2012 for Zambia, Burkina Faso, 2010 for Rwanda, 2010–2011 for Egypt and Ghana.

** For Algeria and Zimbabwe, latest available data was extracted from Solt (2016).

*** In Wave 5, the question was: Justifiable, cheating on taxes.

Source: own elaboration based on Solt, 2016, WVS and WDI databases online.

It implies that these values are widely educated in the region. In Burkina Faso nearly 70% of respondents found it an important child quality.

The societies in Africa under study differed in trusting people met for the first time. The high value of this variable was found for South Africa and Mali, while low for Zimbabwe and Zambia. This is quite surprising in the case of South Africa, where safety is a big issue, also based on the aforementioned intentional homicides ratio. The distribution of trusting people met for the first time variable is the only right skewed among qualitative variables, which are generally left tailed. This suggests that trusting people met for the first time is not common in most of the countries in the sample (for 8 countries the value is lower than the mean value for the sample). The highest range is observable for the confidence in parliament variable. This is mostly because of the fact that Tunisia is an outlier, with a very low value of confidence in elected authorities. It may be explained as the reaction to the Arab Spring in 2010–2011 in the country, since the data was collected in 2013. However, in other North African states, despite the fact, that they were surveyed in the same wave in years 2011–2014, the confidence in parliament was much higher than in Tunisia. The highest confidence in elected authorities can be found in Rwanda and Ghana.

There is a difference in attitudes towards cheating on public transportation fare and on taxes. It seems that people in the region find cheating on taxes less justified than avoiding a fare on a public transport. Strongest opposition towards cheating is found in Ghana, Morocco, and Ethiopia (Tab. 2). The two questions, and especially the question regarding taxes, reflect not only integrity and honesty, but also affiliation. Paying taxes can be considered as contributing to the public interest and realization of shared responsibility by the society. In Ethiopia and Morocco over 70% of respondents found it never justifiable. On the other hand, in Rwanda, Zambia, and South Africa, only around a third of the society share such attitude, despite the fact that the confidence in authorities in these countries (which could explain negative attitudes towards paying taxes) is higher than the mean value for all the group.

In the second step of the study the ordinary least square model of linear regression was performed to establish possible determinants of levels of social cohesion (Soc_coh) in the studied region. The following potential explanatory variables influential for social cohesion in Africa were taken into consideration⁷:

- personal remittances, received (% of GDP) (BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS) data for 2011
- life expectancy at birth, total (years) (SP.DYN.LE00.IN) data for 2011
- cause of death, by communicable diseases and maternal, prenatal and nutrition conditions (% of total) from WDI, accessed in August 2016;

⁷ For the purposes of the study 24 possible variables were taken into consideration. They represented factors of social cohesion which were identified in the literature review and included: i.a. Ethnic fractionalization; Life expectancy at birth; Tertiary enrolment; Internet users; Coverage of social insurance programs; Labour market regulations, Gross development aid to social sectors; Number of refugees; Population density; Battle deaths; Political stability; but their insignificance or limited availability excluded them from research. Due to limited size of the observations, only significant variables were studied.

- paying taxes, labor tax and contributions (%)⁸, (IC.TAX.LBR.ZS) data for 2012 (based on availability)⁹;
- GDP per capita (constant 2000 US\$) (NY.GDP.PCAP.KD) data for 2011.

Table 2. Social cohesion indicator components for African countries

	Child qualities: toler. ^a	Most people trusted ^b	Confidence Parliament ^c	Trust: People met ^d	Justifiable: avoiding a fare ^e	Justifiable: cheating on taxes ^f	Homicide (2010–2012)	GINI
Algeria	61,40	17,20	22,00	2,00	28,40	35,40	0,93	34,53
Burkina Faso	69,40	13,80	32,30	3,10	52,20	50,00	0,63	39,79
Egypt	62,30	21,50	25,30	4,00	60,00	60,70	2,70	30,77
Ethiopia	36,10	21,40	21,90	2,70	61,30	74,10	8,00	29,83
Ghana	66,10	5,00	56,30	2,50	64,50	69,10	1,70	42,76
Mali	59,90	14,90	48,70	8,00	51,30	49,60	10,20	33,02
Morocco	56,60	12,30	35,30	1,80	72,20	71,30	1,33	40,88
Nigeria	59,80	15,00	39,80	4,50	47,40	49,90	10,10	48,83
Rwanda	56,40	16,60	65,00	5,20	48,30	32,00	4,90	50,82
South Africa	52,50	23,30	43,10	8,90	31,00	34,70	30,53	63,14
Tunisia	54,90	15,50	5,90	2,50	55,40	61,10	2,90	35,81
Zambia	57,90	10,80	39,00	1,50	35,90	32,60	5,80	54,63
Zimbabwe	63,80	8,30	48,50	1,30	52,10	52,90	5,90	68,01
Mean	58,24	15,05	37,16	3,69	50,77	51,80	6,59	44,06
Min.	36,10	5,00	5,90	1,30	28,40	32,00	0,63	29,83

⁸ According to World Bank, the total tax rate measures the amount of taxes and mandatory contributions payable by the business in the second year of operation, expressed as a share of commercial profits. The total amount of taxes is the sum of all the different taxes and contributions payable after accounting for deductions and exemptions. The taxes withheld (such as sales or value added tax or personal income tax) but not paid by the company are excluded. The taxes included can be divided into 5 categories: profit or corporate income tax, social contributions and labor taxes paid by the employer (for which all mandatory contributions are included, even if paid to a private entity such as a required pension fund), property taxes, turnover taxes and other small taxes (such as municipal fees and vehicle and fuel taxes).

⁹ The data on welfare state measures based on efforts (ex. spending on social programs) was unavailable for the studied sample of countries. Taxes variable was chosen to approximate state policy/attitude towards social security issues. Correlation results presented in Table 3, confirm the positive correlation between Taxes and LifeExp, which may indicate the positive outcome of welfare state policies implementation.

	Child qualities: toler.^a	Most people trusted^b	Confidence Parliam-ent^c	Trust: People met^d	Justi-fiable: avoiding a fare^e	Justi-fiable: cheating on taxes^f	Homicide (2010–2012)	GINI
Max	69,40	23,30	65,00	8,90	72,20	74,10	30,53	68,01
Stand.dev.	8,11	5,25	15,96	2,41	12,91	14,94	7,92	12,27
Var.coef.	13,93	34,91	42,95	65,34	25,42	28,84	120,20	27,86
Skew.	-1,65	-0,22	-0,18	1,30	-0,36	0,03	2,59	0,75

Source: own elaboration based on WVS and WDI databases online, performed in Statistica.

The potential explanatory variables were chosen based on the literature review, which provided a reflection over possible factors of social cohesion in a given society. Limited data for African countries restricted the range of potential explanatory variables. Personal remittances stand for social attitudes, which may produce positive effects for social cohesion. LifeExp, CausDies, GDP per capita, approximate the outcomes of welfare state policies in a given country, while Taxes serve as a proxy of welfare state efforts. Solving the problems of health care systems is a vital issue in Africa. Governments that make efforts to tackle these problems are potentially oriented towards welfare state approach. Decreasing levels of deaths caused by communicable diseases, increasing levels of life expectancy and income may indicate successful implementation of such policies. On the other hand, tax policy may proxy the orientation of a state towards more active social security policy. This is supported by the literature review, which suggested that the liberalisation of state policies in consequence of structural adjustment programs reflected a negligence of social role of a state in Africa. It is assumed that increasing taxes on business may be a proxy of a shift towards more protective policies, as profits of entrepreneurs may be redistributed to social policies¹⁰.

It is noteworthy that there were a number of variables whose relevance was suggested in the research, but were not included in the study. In particular the ethnic fractionalization variable (Easterly, Levine 1997), education, Internet use as a proxy of increased communication (Adam, Wood 1999), and political stability (Pates, Johnson 2004; Bertocchi, Guerzoni 2012; Mwesigye, Matsumoto 2016). When included in the model, these variables were found to be insignificant. This may suggest a lack of their impact on social cohesion; however since the number of observations in the model is limited to 13, which constitutes a major constraint for the analysis from the statistical point of view, this result is not conclusive.

¹⁰ The author is aware that the indicator is only an approximation of welfare state policy. Therefore the results of the research shall be interpreted with caution.

Results and implications

The results of the social cohesion indicator computed for 13 African states are presented in Fig. 1. At the first glance, it appears that the northern part of the continent is more cohered than the southern. In the top five states two North African and three Sahel countries are found. Another implication that arises is that in more cohered societies the Muslim religion dominates, with the exception of Ghana. However, Algeria, where Muslim is the dominant religion, scores relatively low in the rank; it is also the only northern state in the bottom part of the table. Interestingly, both among the leaders and laggard cohered countries, the mean of people who call themselves religious is higher than in the whole sample, 90%, 87% and 84% respectively.

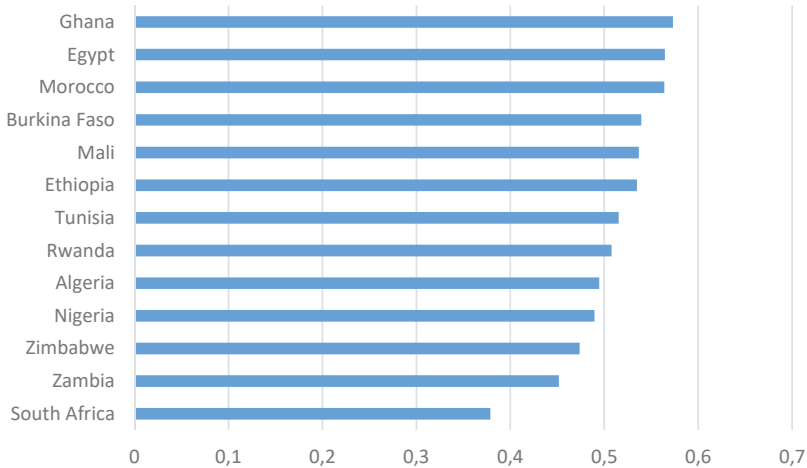
The high level of social cohesion in Morocco may be a consequence of a strong affiliation within the community in the Berber and Arab culture. High scores of Ghana and Burkina Faso indeed reflect the atmosphere of these countries, where the role of family relations, a strong feeling of responsibility, and the obligation to share profits between kin is strong (WVS database 2017). Ghana is also one of the relatively well-governed states with low corruption and positive democracy scores, where religion plays an important role in people's lives. Burkina Faso is a low income agricultural landlocked country, where Muslim and Christian communities coexist peacefully. Thomas Sankara, a political hero of the country, changed its name from Upper Volta to the present one, which means "the land of honest people" in 1984. One could say that his heritage is reflected today in the national identity¹¹. In Burkina Faso and Ghana the African community model can be recognized; the household's labour and level of contribution are recognised in sharing benefits. Every member of the community is expected to make a contribution to society, according to their ability (Malunga 2014).

The country with lowest level of social cohesion is South Africa, followed by Zambia, Zimbabwe and Nigeria. This implies that neither the size of the economy nor the pace of growth matters for social cohesion. South African society has suffered intensively because of years of apartheid policy, which created an ethnical division in the society, causing a lot of violence and inequality. A continued disregard of culture in the country's development perpetuates the apartheid legacy of spatial infrastructure network it seeks to eradicate (Nawa et al. 2014). According to Kirsh (2014) Zambian society faces some religious contradictions, and a stress on consensuality manifested on the micro-social level produces discordance on the macro level of sociality. The society of Zimbabwe suffers under a strong authoritarian rule of the President (a national hero for many) for a couple of decades now and a severe economic distress caused by economic policy, which reflects a racial bias (a political retaliation for Rhodesia). Nigeria, being the most populated and ethnically diversified state, also suffers from inequalities within social hierarchy and between regions. The Boko Haram crisis, despite its regional character, is a reflection of social problems with which Nigerian society needs to cope. Rwanda ranked higher than

¹¹ These remarks are based on the experiences from a study conducted in Burkina Faso in 2009 by the Author.

these countries, despite the genocide in its relatively recent history. The society united under the strong power of Paul Kagame seems focused on economic growth. This suggests a great recovery from a long lasting ethnic crisis in this country. However, the score of Rwanda is driven more by the confidence in the authorities and rule of law rather than in trusting other people.

Figure 1. Social cohesion in African countries



Source: own elaboration.

António (2001) notes that Africa's own civilization, traditions, and values were reflected in the spirit of solidarity, harmony and peaceful coexistence for which the African peoples were renowned, but then neglected and destroyed under the process of colonization. The results of this research are consistent with this claim, as countries with a more complicated story of foreign interference in different levels of internal relations, such as Zimbabwe, Algeria, Rwanda, or South Africa, tend to depict lower levels of social cohesion, as measured by the values-based indicator in this study.

The second step of the research aimed to identify the determinants of the computed values of social cohesion in Africa. The correlation matrix between dependent and explanatory variables is given in Tab. 3. We observe that the dependent variable (social cohesion) is positively correlated with the remittances share in GDP, which is the most influential explanatory variable. However a weak positive impact of life expectancy and high taxes on business is also presumed. At the same time, it may be suggested that in countries with higher level of taxes, also the life expectancy of the population is higher (while the number of deaths caused by communicable diseases is lower). The correlations of Life exp. and Taxes and GDP per capita and Life exp. are higher than their correlation with the dependent variable, therefore it was logic to choose Taxes as an indicator of welfare state policies in further proceedings.

Table 3. Correlation coefficients

Social coh.	Log of remit.	Taxes	Life exp.	Log of GDP pc	
1.0000	0.5576	0.4865	0.4337	-0.3624	Social coh.
	1.0000	0.0602	-0.1164	-0.3531	Log of rem.
		1.0000	0.5373	0.2451	Taxes
			1.0000	0.4072	Life exp.
				1.0000	Log of GDP pc

Note: using the observations 2–13 (missing values were skipped) 5% critical value (two-tailed) = 0.5529 for $n = 13$

Source: own elaboration in Gretl.

To determine the factors of social cohesion ordinary least square method was applied. Proceedings were constrained by the restricted number of observations and general problem of data availability for the African region, so two explanatory variables were included in the final model. The goal of the proceedings was to verify the hypothesis that social attitudes and welfare state policies contribute to social cohesion (Anyanwu, Erhijakpor 2010). However, it is important to note that the cross-sectional nature of the data allows us to interpret these results only as significant correlations, not causal relationships. The model received the following form:

$$Y_i = \alpha_0 + \alpha_1 \text{Rem}_{\log_i} + \alpha_2 \text{Taxes}_{\log_i} + \epsilon_i \quad (2)$$

where Y_i is the social cohesion in a country i , and ϵ_i is the error of normal distribution. The variables were significant and positive. A positive impact of Taxes variable was accepted despite relatively high p-value, 0,07 (Tab. 4). The results of the estimations are presented in Tab. 4. Variance Inflation Factors was checked for both models, but no collinearity problem was found. Next the Breusch-Pagan was performed to check the model against heteroscedasticity, but it was not present.

Table 4. Results of OLS models of social cohesion in Africa (Model 1) and sub-Saharan Africa (Model 2)

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-ratio	p-value
Model 1				
Const	0.4583	0.0217	21.13	1.25e-09***
Log of rem	0.0182	0.0076	2.407	0.0368**
Taxes	0.0023	0.0011	2.064	0.0659*

Note: For the Model 1 R2 amounted to 0.51, while adjusted R2 to 0.42. Residuals standard error equaled to 0,04. F statistics amounted to 5.35 with p-value of 0.02. Variance Inflation Factors for explanatory variables was 1,004.

The results confirmed positive influence of taxes, as well as remittances on the levels of social cohesion (Adésinà 2009; Anyanwu, Erhijakpor 2010). Nevertheless, the explanation of the results is ambiguous. First the sample is very limited, so the number of possible explanatory variables was reduced. Second the R-squared value is 0.51, which means that 51% of variability of dependent variable was explained by the model.

Data availability was the most important limitation of the research, which may have influenced the results obtained in the regression model. The missing data restricted the sample to 13 countries. Further, missing data decreased the set of possible explanatory variables, which could indicate determinants of social cohesion. Moreover, the indicator based on survey research instrument may contain a cultural response bias. In the future research it would be interesting to extend the analysis to other regions. Despite these limitations, however, this paper adds to the existing literature in three ways. First, it provides an overview of research conducted on social cohesion in Africa and highlights its crucial points in regional perspective. Secondly, it offers a social cohesion indicator and measures the level of social cohesion for a sample of 13 countries, representing nearly 60% of Africa's population. Finally, it verifies the positive impact of private remittances and welfare state policy on levels of social cohesion.

Conclusions

Based on the results of this research, a number of conclusions related to Africa can be drawn. The differences of levels in social cohesion in Africa are related to the region (North-South), but neither the size of the economy nor the pace of growth is important. It was found that the level of social cohesion in North Africa is generally higher than in South Africa. In the countries with high social cohesion, Islam is the dominant religion, which implies that Muslim communities are more cohered in Africa. The results do not allow the conclusion that the Muslim religion fosters social cohesion, however, provided that beliefs may foster certain values and traits such as honesty or trust (Autiero, Vinci 2016), it is notable and indicates possible direction of future research. The largest economies of the continent, South Africa and Nigeria, were found to have the least social cohesion based on the evidence presented in this paper. These countries require political discourse on social policy, including religious and ethnic issues, which would allow the elimination of current inequalities and insecurity. Based on the evidence from Ghana, it is plausible to say that a quality development process may be an outcome of a combination of high social cohesion and sound policies.

As the problem of inequality and growth nexus persists in Africa, rising incomes do not automatically translate into social cohesion. As reported in other research, recently increasing flows in remittances partly aim to solve these issues (Anyanwu, Erhijakpor 2010). Based on the results of this study, the amounts of remittances transferred to a country appear to correlate positively with the level of social cohesion. These need to be accepted with caution, considering the data representativeness. Sustaining the links and supporting families in the country of origin both reflects and induces the solidarity

of the community. From an African culture perspective, relatives are expected to provide for their kin. The economic impact of the African diaspora represented by share of remittances to GDP is higher in Africa as compared to other regions. This implies that the policies of African states should facilitate the flow of remittances to the region, for the benefit of living standards, but also development of small business, and the overall social impact expressed by social cohesion.

Given the data sample, the results of linear regression should be interpreted with prudence. However, a positive effect welfare state policy on social cohesion in the region is suggested by the results of this research. As implied by (Adésinà 2009) what we face now is the challenge of African and sub-Saharan policy-makers to rethink the former strategies, and to design new ones which would adapt to existing conditions (eg. globalization, migrations, young populations, raising nationalisms and religious issues in international relations, environmental challenges, renewable energy potential, weak institutions, lagging in technology development), however based on past experiences. It was assumed that the states that collect higher taxes, conduct a more active redistribution policy and provide higher levels of social security. This is anticipated by the positive correlation between life expectancy and payable taxes; higher life expectancy can be considered an outcome of effective social policies, in particular in health care and fight against communicable diseases causing deaths. Extended life span may also suggest effective policies in conflict prevention and social security. A society is more cohered once more social security is provided. The extent of inequality of income distribution in Africa requires an active state policy, to provide social services, which are otherwise inaccessible to the population. African states need to solve the most pressing problems and urgent needs of the societies in order to effectively realize long term development strategies.

It is noteworthy that the relevance of remittances is not expected to impact social cohesion in other regions, as providing for kin members doesn't have corresponding cultural relevance in all societies (Malunga 2014). On the contrary, the importance of welfare state policies and political stability is expected to produce similar effects in all regions.

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