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Measuring social connectedness in OECD countries

A scoping review

Working paper

More info 



Social connections

Structure

- Time spent with others
- Type of social contact
- Network composition

Function

- Social support
- Loneliness

Quality

- Satisfaction with relationships
- Emotions associated with social interactions

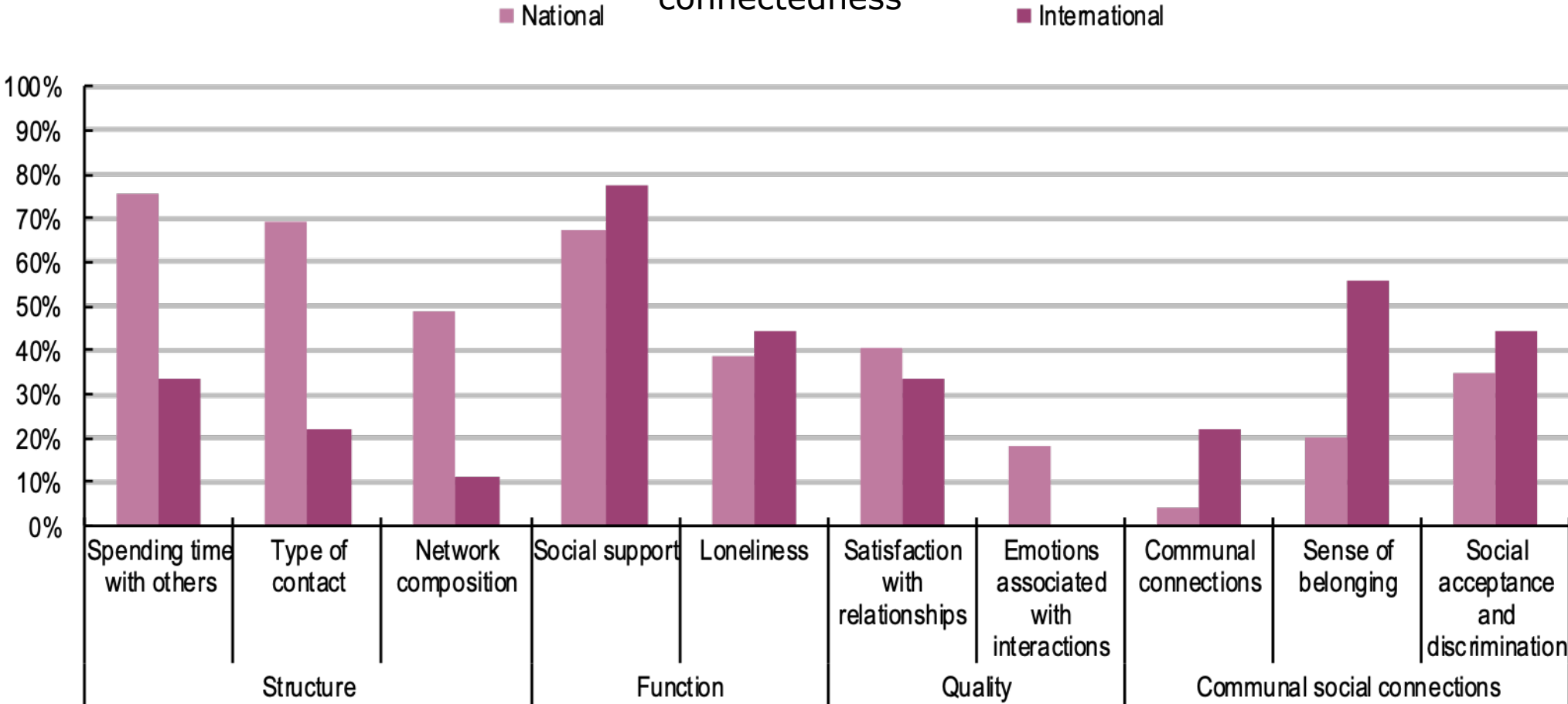
Community & societal connectedness

- Communal / group connections
- Sense of belonging
- Social acceptance and discrimination

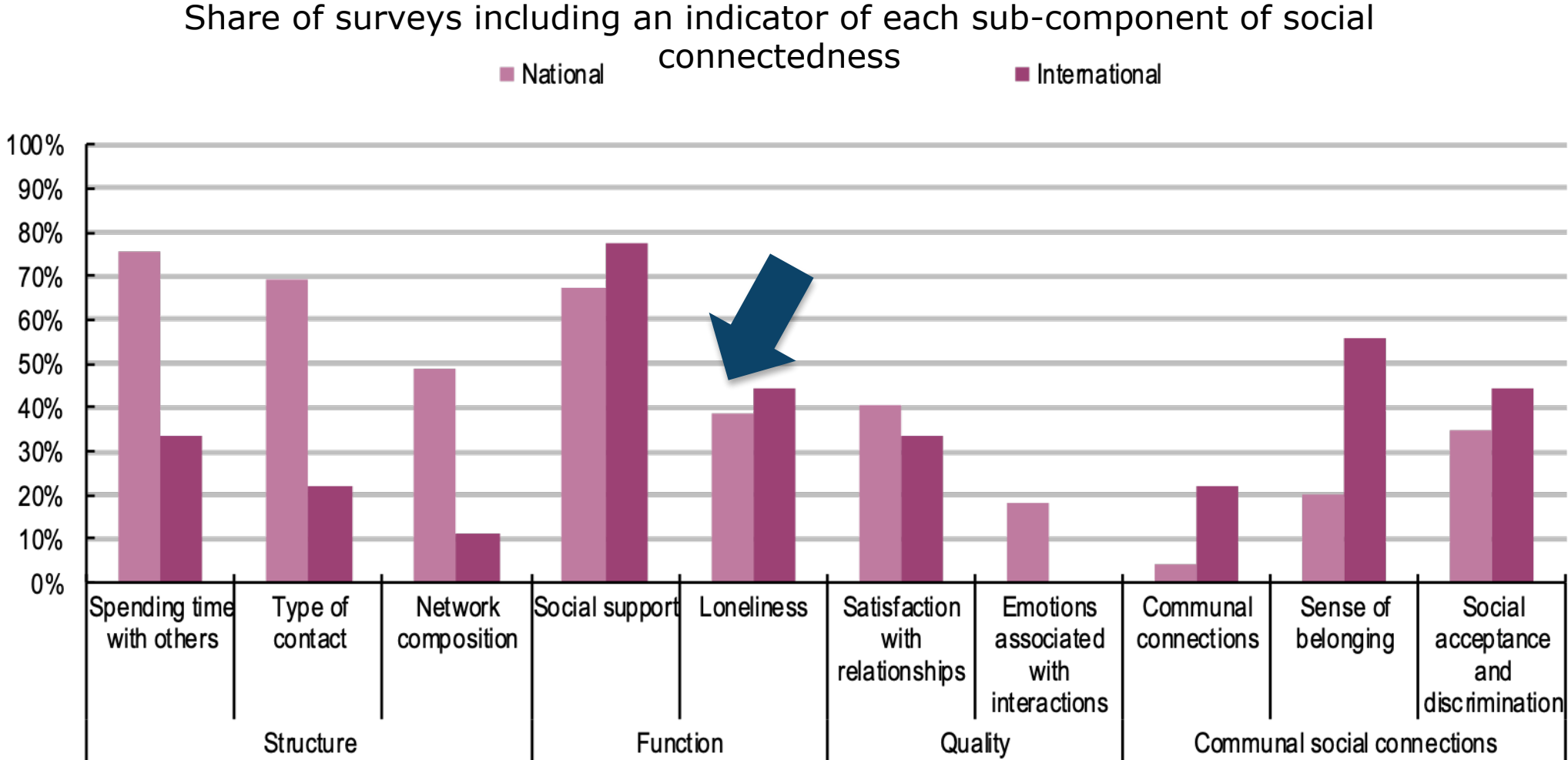
(1) Social connections are multifaceted

(2) All OECD countries are already measuring social connectedness

Share of surveys including an indicator of each sub-component of social connectedness



... but despite increasing policy attention, loneliness is less likely to be measured



(3) A lack of harmonisation within conceptual areas means data are not comparable

Differences in **question phrasing, response scales** and **recall period**



EU-SILC (Eurostat)

How much of the time over the past four weeks have you been feeling lonely?

All of the time, most of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, none of the time



Social Survey (ISR)

Do you ever feel lonely?

Frequently, sometimes, seldom, never

How long has this situation lasted?

Less than 16 months, 6 months or more and less than 1 year, 1 year or more and less than 2 years, 2 years or more



Opinions and Lifestyle Survey (GBR)

How often do you feel lonely?

Often/always, some of the time, occasionally, hardly ever, never



Social Pulse Survey (COL)

In the last 7 days have you felt loneliness?

Yes, no



UCLA Loneliness Scale

How often do you feel that you lack companionship?

How often do you feel left out?



How often do you feel isolated from others?

Hardly ever or never, some of the time, often



(4) Moving to more frequent collection is key for policy uptake

Share of surveys fielded with degree of frequency, by survey vehicle

■ General Social Survey ■ Thematic Survey ■ Time Use

