

# Social Cohesion and Between-Group Relationships

Exploring Social Relationships and Connectedness  
The Friends of the Chair (FoC) Group on Social and Demographic Statistics

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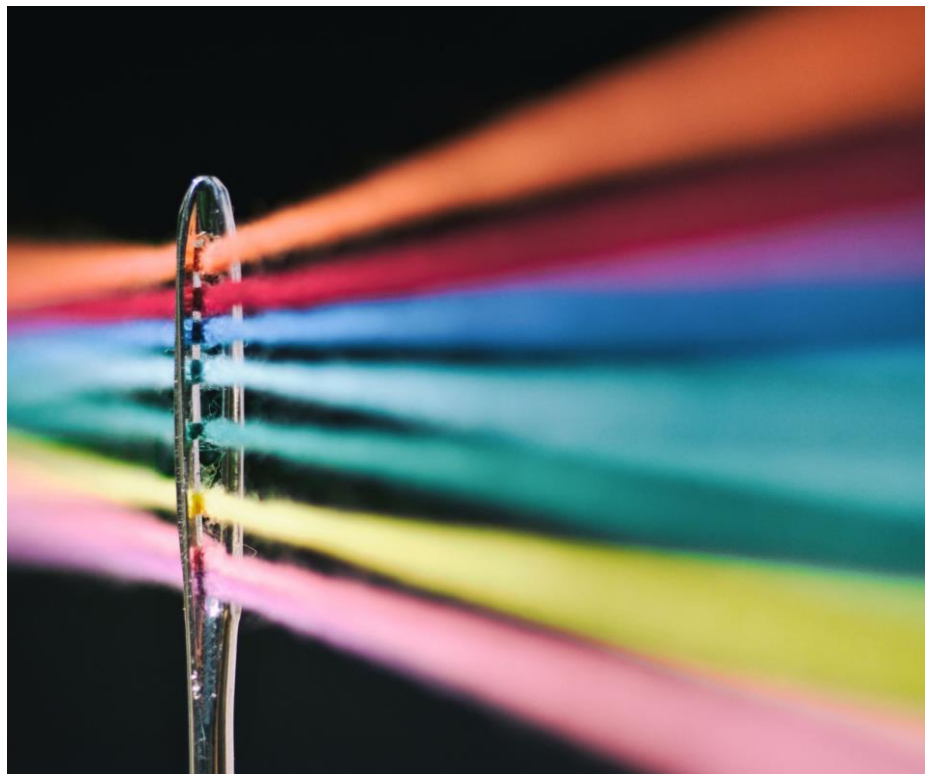


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# What is social cohesion?



- **Social cohesion** has been described as fabric that knits society together.
- **Social cohesion is a latent concept** and can only be indirectly measured through **constituent dimensions** (e.g., trust, shared values).

**Reference:** MacIsaac, S. D. Wavrock and G. Schellenberg (2023) "What holds us together? Measuring dimensions of social cohesion in Canada." *Statistical Journal of the IAOS*. vol. 39. issue 3. pp. 589-604. <https://doi.org/10.3233/SJI-230055>

# Why focus on between-group relationships?

- Numerous measures of relationships with individuals in one's own network (e.g., family, friends, coworkers, neighbours).
- Yet, few measures of relationships between groups, which could overlook between-group tensions.
- Affective distance, both **within and between groups**, can adversely impact social cohesion.

## Within-group



## Between-group



# Timeline of UNECE CES work (2022 – 2024)



# Summary

**Key message:** Important to consider relationships with other groups/individuals outside one's immediate network.

**What do we need to know?**

- Tensions/divisions and uniting factors among latent clusters of people.

**Why do we need to measure between-group relationships?**

- By limiting the scope to one's in-group, one risks overestimating cohesion.