

## Discussion Paper

# Careers and the Character of Nations: Professional Identities, Capitalisms and Capital Signalling

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# Careers and the Character of Nations: Professional Identities, Capitalisms and Capital Signalling

## **Abstract**

This paper examines cross-national differences in the distinctiveness of specific professional groups, in terms of their capitals (economic, social and cultural), in turn reflecting different ‘rates of return’ for career actors in different occupational fields. In pursuit of career strategies, professionals invest in signalling their capitals, but this process is under-researched, especially in a cross-national context. Using large-scale household expenditure surveys from three European countries we compare ‘capital-signalling’ investments of several professional groups and find important differences within national contexts. We also draw cross-national comparisons of relative capital-signalling behaviours for the same professional groups and discuss professional identities, partly shaped by isomorphic institutional influences. The paper largely supports the claim about ‘professionals with borders’ and highlights the benefits of Bourdieu’s theory and the comparative capitalisms approach in cross-national analysis in explaining context-specific agents’ career strategies. We discuss unequal value of capitals in different professional and national contexts, implications for career actors, HRM-practices and wider cross-national management.

## **Keywords**

Bourdieu, comparative capitalisms, career fields, professional identity, signalling behaviour

## **JEL Classifications**

D12, J62, M50

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## **Practitioner notes**

### **What is currently known**

- There are international career research calls to explain how career contexts – national, organisational, occupational – influence career-related behaviours.
- Individuals' career strategies involve signalling behaviours and demonstration of career agents' portfolios of capitals.
- Prior qualitative work, based on Bourdieu's conceptual framework and comparative capitalisms, allows expecting unequal value of capitals across contexts.

### **What this article adds**

- This article provides quantitative evidence about unequal value of capitals for career agents of the same profession, but distinctively different institutional contexts.
- Contributes to explaining commonalities and differences of capital-signalling behaviours of career actors, in different professional contexts, across three national settings.
- Demonstrates a mismatch between the forms of capital prized in different professional and institutional contexts.
- Introduces Bourdieu's methodological approach for capturing capitals into the HRM literature.

### **The implications for practitioners**

- Knowledge about unequal value of capitals in different professional and national contexts can be used in preparing expatriates for immersion in, and adaptation to, new environments.
- The findings can be employed for evaluation of cultural fit of employees, alignment of practices and cross-national collaboration with MNEs.

# 1 Introduction

Recent developments in career research highlight the importance of comparative cross-national and multi-national perspectives. A recent editorial of *HRMJ* (Mayrhofer et al., 2020, p. 329) called for career studies to embrace a wider, international, perspective, “that cuts across national cultural and institutional boundaries”, is embedded not only in the geographical, but also in the social space, and pays more attention to different professional contexts. Prior comparative cross-national research is often mainly based around culturalist frameworks, reliant on countries as units of analysis. However, influential writers admit that within-country cultural differences and such factors as socio-economic class, profession, and contextually unique patterns of behaviour predominant in, and expected from, local career actors, remain neglected (Beugelsdijk et al., 2017; Briscoe, Hall & Mayrhofer, 2011; Kirkman et al., 2016; McCann & Monteath, 2019; Pudelko et al., 2015; Reiche et al., 2018). Recent pioneering research on professions, linking the perspectives of comparative capitalisms and Bourdieu’s theoretical framework, has shown that professional identities and expectations regarding career actors in the same professional field may substantially vary across societies (Spence et al., 2016; Spence et al., 2017).

Qualitative comparative research on specific professional groups, such as accountants and legal professionals (Muzio and Falconbridge, 2012; Spence et al., 2017), has revealed significant cross-national differences in professional behaviours, conduct and ethos. Local professional fields may have different rules of the game of “who gets in” and “who gets on” in career progression compared to their country of origin. Such rules are strongly culturally embedded, based on the development and display of various forms of capital (economic, social, cultural and symbolic) (Bourdieu, 1986). These rules, however, are insufficiently explored. For example, Levy and Reiche (2018) have called for research on how the value of cultural capital appreciates or depreciates owing to cross-border mobility. They note that expatriates often experience low returns on their credentials and competencies, owing to their outsider status and imperfect fit with the new country’s cultural norms and values. A related explanation is that firms’ preferred “weighting” of cultural capital, relative to other forms of capital - social, technical and other (Bourdieu, 2011) - may vary significantly between nations. Thus, what is considered an ideal “portfolio” of capital forms in the expatriate’s country may be less valuable in the host nation.

Given the growing importance of cross-cultural competence and adaptive thinking, for organisations and career actors (Selmer, 2006), it is vital to understand the unequal value of capitals within the same professional fields across different national contexts (Spence et al., 2017). From individuals’ perspectives, understanding of cross-national differences in the value of capital forms and the ways

these are signalled is instrumental to navigate international careers, as this motivates acquisition of relevant competencies, encourages socially-appropriate behaviours within professional networks, and facilitates socialization, adaptation and, eventually, personal effectiveness.

These questions have important implications for cross-national migration and firm internationalisation. Spence et al. (2016: 15) noted that symbolic capital is accumulated in different ways across different countries, implying that 'optimum' portfolios of capitals for in-field advancement must vary cross-nationally. Similarly, Samaluk (2016) noted immigrants' struggles to acquire and convert capitals recognised as symbolic in their host nation. Meanwhile, Behtoul and Neergaard's (2010) study of immigrant workers in Sweden found that, when social capital variables were taken into account, the wage gap between stigmatised immigrant groups and native workers narrowed significantly.

Also, scholars recognise that employees' "cultural fit" and appropriateness of behaviour affects their performance (Haslberger et al., 2013; Rivera, 2012; Selmer, 2006). Extensive cross-national movement of workers and corporations has contributed to problems experienced by migrant workers, including members of the "service class" (managers and professionals), around language difficulties, discrimination, societal culture, and informal barriers. Understanding of the subtle cross-cultural differences in practices of professional domains is a part of work-related adjustment vital for effective interaction with host nationals and success in overseas assignments (Reiche et al., 2018). Thus, from the organizational perspective, understanding the unequal value of capitals has implications in relation to effectiveness of cross-national teams, preparation of expatriates for immersion in new cultural environments, and evaluations of "cultural fit" of current and potential workers. Moreover, HRM scholars suggest that national practices of hiring and promotion rely on contextually-favoured patterns of professional identity. For example, candidates' professional values and "cultural fit", or alignment to the organization's values, are often prioritized over technical capability in Anglo-Saxon cultures, while technical competencies are more important in other European nations (Brewster et al., 2016).

Prior qualitative studies have mainly focused on elite professionals, in firms at the top of their industry's status pyramid, such as the leading international law practices and the "Big Four" accountancy firms (e.g. Ashley and Empson, 2017; Spence et al., 2016; Spence and Carter, 2014). While such research highlights the phenomenon of social closure at the top of elite professions, which is an important source of wider inequality, they omit the vast majority of professionals who work in smaller, less prestigious, firms. Compared to the growing body of qualitative literature in

comparative career research, quantitative research in this area is very limited and even qualitative studies using this approach have typically focused on single professions.

In line with recent literature (Chudzikowski and Mayrhofer, 2011; Iellatchitch et al., 2003; Spence et al., 2017), we employ Bourdieu's (1984, 1986; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) framework of 'habitus', 'capitals' and 'field' to explore how career strategies and the capitals that underpin them are reflected in individuals' behaviour (including consumption), which in turn enables measuring capitals using consumption patterns – the approach employed by Bourdieu. This analysis also draws on the cross-national comparative capitalisms (CC) approach, to highlight the unequal value of capital forms for the same professional groups in different national settings (Spence et al., 2015, 2017). We pose more general research questions: "Are there differences between the forms of capital prized in the same occupations cross-nationally and can these differences be explained using comparative capitalisms theory?"

Despite the growing popularity of Bourdieu's framework in HRM (Al Aris & Syed, 2011; Joy et al., 2018), previous studies have not attempted to quantify differences in dominant capitals cross-nationally using Bourdieu's approach. Manifestations of different forms of capital (qualifications, networks, appearance, vocational training, linguistic accomplishment) - and relevant investments in these - represent part of individual career strategies, conveying signals intended to raise organisationally perceived value and validate professional identity (Barney & Lawrence, 1989). Bourdieu's (1984, p. 184) approach of capturing 'capitals' using consumption patterns (family expenditure) allows exploring capital-signalling as part of career strategies.

We infer differences in capitals via large-scale household survey data for different types of visible expenditure. This approach has advantages, including overcoming the focus of previous cross-national research on elite groups and practitioners (Mayrhofer et al, 2020, p. 335; Spence et al., 2016; Spence & Carter, 2014). Incorporating non-elite practitioners into the sample is likely to reveal stronger national differences, as non-elite actors are less impacted by internationalist influences.

We explore patterns of capital-signalling behaviours of professional/managerial groups, evidenced by their consumption strategies, in different national contexts. Following the logic of distinction (Bourdieu, 1984), relative investments in capital-signalling (as part of consumption strategies to enhance social position) reflect the emphasis placed on different forms of capital by employers, co-workers, and clients. Comparing such investments for four distinctive professional groups – managers; and business, technical, and educational, professionals - in presentation, socialization and informational (cultural) goods, as well as the broad status-signalling expenditure cluster, we explore whether consumption behaviour conforms to what theory suggests are the dominant capitals for

each occupational group. We explore to what extent the dominance of certain capital forms varies between the three distinctively different institutional contexts - Britain, France, and Hungary.

We make several contributions to the literature. The paper contributes to understanding of commonalities and differences of capital-signalling behaviours of career actors in different professional contexts across three national settings. It provides quantitative evidence about unequal value of capitals for career agents in the same profession, but within distinctively different institutional contexts. It introduces Bourdieu's approach of capturing investments in capitals using consumption patterns into HRM. And it demonstrates how institutional theory may explain a mismatch between the forms of capital prized in different professional and institutional contexts.

Following an outline of the theory, we set a number of expectations about between-occupational and between-country differences in those species of capitals that dominate certain managerial/professional groups and how they are expected to vary between the three countries, owing to their institutions and recent history. We then discuss our analytical approach and categories of capital signalling: investments in presentation, socialisation, and culture. The outline of data and methods is followed by the results section. We conclude with a discussion of our key findings and their implications.

## 2 Conceptualising 'who gets in' and 'who gets on': Bourdieu's framework

Pierre Bourdieu (1984, 1986; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) developed a coherent, multi-layered model where individuals develop portfolios of economic, social and cultural 'capitals' that are symbolic in their career fields. Fields have their own formal and informal rules and roles, with participants augmenting and displaying their field-relevant capitals to improve their position in the career pyramid. Such capitals have to be 'acknowledged' as valid currency in their respective fields in order to be 'symbolic', and possession of the 'right' forms of capital determines agents' symbolic power in the field (Bourdieu, 1986; Chudzikowski & Mayrhofer, 2011).

Bourdieu (1986, 2011) emphasises the diversity of capital forms that individuals can use to develop, signal and augment employment relationships, and individual-based capitals also represent assets for organisations. Bourdieu (1986, p. 21) defines social capital as actual and potential resources "linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition". Cultural capital may take institutionalised form (degrees, qualifications), or be embodied capital, expressed in individuals' behaviour, conduct and language,



and is regarded as a major 'gatekeeper', excluding entry of individuals without such capital to top career paths in elite sectors such as professional service firms (Friedman & Laurison, 2019; Rivera, 2012).

Technical capital, while under-theorised by Bourdieu (Friedman & Laurison, 2019), is an institutionalised form of cultural capital, based on the command of scientific and technical resources and know-how (Bourdieu, 2011). Cultural capital is field-specific and, depending on the occupational domain, develops as different species, - e.g. commercial capital (mastery in marketing and after-sales services) is vital for the accounting profession - and can be possessed by individuals and organisations (Bourdieu, 2011; Spence et al., 2017). The Bourdieusian perspective thus embraces both formal qualifications and social connectivity, which individuals seek to convert into economic capital, recouping their cumulative career investments (Bourdieu, 1986, 2011).

Together with Bourdieu's other key concepts of 'habitus' and 'fields', his 'capitals' framework provides a unified model which explains the conditions under which capital is shaped and the formation of power relations (as a result of the interplay of capitals). Habitus (Bourdieu, 1984, 2011) is the 'taken for granted' values, priorities and outlook of individual professional groups, shaped by their field. For Bourdieu, agents' behaviours are guided by the competitive, game-playing, nature of the field, where capitals are distributed, and their hierarchical relations are defined by the volume and structure of capitals (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992; Savage et al., 2005). Possession of the 'right' forms of capitals thus determines the agent's symbolic capital.

Bourdieu (1984, 1986; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) conceptualises occupational clusters as being signified by dominant capital forms, like engineers and similar specialists being rich in technical capital; educational professionals being endowed with linguistic and other embodied cultural capital; and business professionals being rich in social capital and networks complemented by demonstrations of embodied cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1984).

Bourdieu (1984) discusses the differing social value of some groups of commodities (presentational and cultural goods) and the capitals they represent for different occupational groups. He also links distinctive professional identities to specific consumption patterns and levels of spending (investment) on capital-signalling commodities, especially those that carry 'symbolic' value. Studies have noted the importance of individuals' appearance, conduct, linguistic accomplishment, and general ability to network as key determinants of career entry and progression (Anderson-Gough et al., 2002; Friedman & Laurison, 2019; Rivera, 2012).

Cross-national comparative research on professional fields shows that the value placed on the same capital forms differs across societies (Spence et al., 2016). Professional groups in pursuit of careers build and prioritise field-relevant capitals - competencies, skills, and networks (Spence et al., 2017). Institutions as 'socializing agencies' create conditions, incentives and constraints that shape the behaviours and identities of local career actors and guide their choices for investments in developing skills and competencies (Hall & Soskice, 2001). To a certain extent, institutions define the values and competencies that contribute to the symbolic power of agents in their professional fields (Bourdieu, 2011; Spence et al., 2016). Thus, the value of the same capital forms can be expected to differ cross-nationally, as local institutions shape the professional ethos.

### 3 Analytical approach

We broadly follow Bourdieu's own empirical approach, using family expenditure as a proxy for capital accumulation and signalling. Bourdieu (1984) links professional habitus to dispositions, lifestyles and, specifically, consumption patterns and levels of spending (investment) on capital-signalling commodities. Such commodities express and signal career actors' capital endowments. For example, higher levels of presentational expenditure among business professionals or cultural consumption among academics (Bourdieu, 1984), signify relative capital prioritisation in these professional fields. Career self-management entails significant personal costs, signalled by investment in positional goods, and, in Bourdieu's terms, status consumption represents a form of symbolic power. We explore status-signalling consumption as expenditure of professional groups on visible commodity clusters (Heffetz, 2011), focusing on presentational, socialisation-related, and informational expenditures. We use Bourdieu's (1984) measures of investments in presentation (appearance) which represents embodied cultural capital. The ability to develop personal and organisational social capital via networking is expressed through investments in socialisation-related goods: dining out and sports are socialising techniques that follow the logic of distinction, particularly in commercial settings (Longhurst & Savage, 1997). Informational goods (books, magazines etc.) contribute to display of cultural capital and augmentation of linguistic capital (Bourdieu, 1984). High instrumental values of goods and their ability to signal capitals for career advancement in professional fields makes such expenditure an important component of career strategies.

We use national household expenditure surveys for three European nations: France, the nation of Bourdieu's original analysis; Britain, a liberal-market economy; and Hungary, a transitional economy. Our choice of nations is largely guided by institutional distinctions from the perspective of

comparative capitalisms, as institutions shape the supply of skills and professional competencies to local labour markets (Jackson & Deeg, 2008) and, to some extent, homogeneity in professional behaviours and identities of local career actors (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). The choice of nations is also influenced by data availability - all three nations' surveys provide relatively large sample sizes for the occupations of interest, together with the variables required for analysis.

Between-occupational differences in capital-signalling investments signify differences in the values allocated to particular forms of capital in corresponding professional fields. We focus on four categories - managers, business professionals, technical professionals, and educational professionals. Alongside legal, social and health professionals, they represent the professional-managerial class, or "service class", in the Harmonized European Household Expenditure Survey. Managerial roles suggest higher levels of autonomy and represent a separate category across occupational classificatory schemas. We capture between-occupational differences via expenditure models for the three national contexts. Cross-national comparisons allow judgements regarding the relative importance of capital forms for the same professional groups, reflecting the specificities of context (Adams et al., 2015).

## 4 Capital-signalling spending, national contexts, and dominant capital forms: Hypotheses development

Institutions are viewed as "socializing agencies" that instil norms and attitudes and as a "matrix of sanctions and incentives" shaping agents' behaviours (Amable, 2003, p. 4; Hall and Soskice, 2001, p. 5). In addition to career-fields and employers, other institutions, such as employment protection, education systems and industrial (manager-employee) relationships also shape this process. Thus, in mature models of capitalism one may expect between-occupational differences in capital-signalling consumption in line with Bourdieu's findings.

Both France and the UK represent mature models of capitalism, with established industrial relations and professional codes. Thus, in line with Bourdieu's argument, professional distinction is likely to be associated with distinctive consumption patterns. We therefore expect distinctive difference between business professionals (whose professional field prizes their ability to boost the social capital of their organisations, including via employees' signals of status and professional outlook) and technical professionals (whose field tends to prioritise technical expertise over social capital and its manifestations) in signalling status and investments in appearance:

**H1(a-b):** British business professionals have higher spending on a) status-signalling goods and, in particular, on b) presentational goods, than technical professionals.

**H2(a-b):** French business professionals have higher spending on a) status-signalling goods, and b) presentational goods, than technical professionals.

Similarly, in both contexts we expect distinctive difference between business professionals and educational professionals, as the professional network of the latter does not motivate status-signalling:

**H3(a-b):** British business professionals have higher spending on a) status-signalling goods, and b) presentational goods, than educational professionals.

**H4(a-b):** French business professionals have higher spending on a) status-signalling goods, and b) presentational goods, than educational professionals.

Compared to the mature models of capitalism, Liberal (LME) or Coordinated Market Economy (CME), with established professional codes developed over time, in transitional economies these patterns may not be as clear-cut. In comparison with these established models, the ex-communist or 'transforming' states in Central and Eastern Europe (Stark & Bruszt, 1998) are still, arguably, in flux. Lane (2007) notes that these 'transition' states, having relatively recently joined, or in some cases wanting to join, the European Union, face pressures in both LME and CME directions (Bandelj, 2009). Internal diversity is likely to be high in such contexts (Boyer, 2006). These countries are influenced by international economic institutions and also experience isomorphic pressures of professionalisation.

Professionalization is not limited to formal education or legitimation in a cognitive base defined by university specialists, but is also enacted through filtering processes characteristic of local organizational fields (recruitment from a narrow range of training institutions, hiring, common criteria for promotion) and anticipatory socialization to local expectations (organizational vocabularies, style of dress, jokes etc.) (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). These processes, historically and culturally shaped, contribute to internal diversity. Moreover, internal diversity in training and education programmes is partly due to policy interventions that may work better at the subnational level (Lane & Wood, 2009). Whether integral to national path dependence or a result of a gradual process of homogenisation (Lane & Wood, 2009), compared with mature market economies, internal diversity in post-state socialist nations reduces similarities in professional ethos and symbolic capital for the same professions. Thus, we do not expect the null hypotheses H5 and H6 to be rejected:

**H5(a-c):** In Hungary, business professionals' spending on a) status-signalling goods, b) presentational and c) socialisation-related goods, is not significantly different from that of technical professionals.

**H6(a-c):** In Hungary business professionals' spending on a) status-signalling goods, b) presentational and c) socialisation-related goods is not significantly different from that of educational professionals.

Institutions shape the supply of skills and competencies, i.e. specific species of capitals, in the labour market, which makes the perspective of comparative capitalisms a useful starting point for cross-national comparative analysis (Jackson & Deeg, 2008). Labour market agents prioritise those capitals that give the highest field-specific returns in their country. While institutions foster homogenisation within national occupational domains (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983), cross-national institutional diversity implies differences in professional identities and in what constitutes the symbolic power of professional groups. Institutions, such as employment protection, education systems and industrial (manager-employee) relationships also shape this process.

The Coordinated Market Economy model (CME) is characterized by substantial employment protection and strong education systems that promote vocational training to strengthen industry- and company-specific knowledge and skills. While typical examples of CMEs are Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium, Amable (2003) argues that France follows the CME education system model. By contrast, the Liberal Market Economy (LME) is characterised by labour fluidity, typically providing generalist education. Individuals' career success depends on their own later development of marketable skills. Such economies typically have weak job security and low investment in organisation-specific human capital (Amable, 2003; Hall & Soskice, 2001), placing more emphasis on networking as a source of individual advantage (and career advancement). Social capital is further prioritised where there are many candidates with satisfactory formal qualifications, as selection from this pool has been found to favour "tacit" human capital elements, such as cultural similarities with the interviewers (Pfeffer, 1989, p. 386-7).

Management-employee relations represent another crucial difference between the models (Amable, 2003). The LME model is characterised by pluralism, while the CME system has stronger hierarchy and more formality of the managerial role. The symbolic power of the managerial role in France expects high levels of linguistic accomplishment, dress, posture, and appearance (Barsoux & Laurence, 1997, p. 84-85). A French manager gets things done by the power of position, while a British manager does so by the power of personality (Barsoux & Laurence, 1990, 1991, 1997). The British system encourages the 'qualities of emission' - charisma, pugnacity and capacity to

communicate and motivate, promoting greater reliance on individuals' networking and socialisation abilities, in contrast to the more pronounced emphasis on technical expertise and general knowledge-building in the French context. In transitional economies, still undergoing the changes caused by isomorphic pressures, internal diversity mutes distinctiveness in prioritized structures of capital portfolios.

Britain is a representative LME country, implying that local professions are likely to place more emphasis on social connectivity, networking and commercialisation of relationships, which may contrast with the French environment, especially in a professional field where social capital dominates. Therefore:

**H7:** British business professionals have relatively higher emphasis on socialisation in their national context than French business professionals.

Due to the nature of their field, educational professionals are likely to have higher levels of spending on cultural, and particularly on informational, goods. Yet recent research on professional service firms in LMEs show that higher echelons of the business domain prize linguistic accomplishment and cultural knowledge that signals employees' ability to maintain social connections with elite clients (Friedman & Laurison, 2019; Rivera, 2012). Strong competition in a fluid LME labour market is likely to make British business professionals' investments in linguistic capital (as an important market signal) closer to educational professionals, implying:

**H8:** The difference between British business and educational professionals' informational investments is smaller than the difference between the same groups in France.

## 5 Methodology

### 5.1 Datasets, samples, and restrictions

We use the secure version of the British Living Costs and Food survey 2006-2016 (LCF) (ONS, 2017) and data on household expenditure from Harmonised European Household Budget Surveys 2010 (HBS) (Eurostat). The EU HBS are among the most comprehensive household surveys; they use a common harmonised nomenclature of consumption expenditure (COICOP) to ensure compatibility between national surveys. Household surveys are conducted by the relevant National Statistical Office (NSO), which in turn provides detailed data on expenditure categories and household socio-economic characteristics.

While COICOP and a range of variables are harmonised in HBS, some variables and categories related to specific household characteristics may not be consistent across the national surveys, including occupation-related variables. As occupation-related data are not available in the British HBS, we use the secure version of the UK LCF alongside the French and Hungarian HBS. SOC2000 and SOC2010 classifications are employed in the UK sample to derive occupational groups similar to the ISCO08 divisions used in the HBS for France and Hungary. Sample sizes for occupational groups are provided in Table 1 below.

The LCF survey (ONS, 2017) provides weekly spending equivalents, based on household diaries for regularly purchased items and interviewing the same households regarding less frequent items. Further details of methodology and survey data are available on request from the first-named author. Full restricted samples are 23,400 (UK), 9,314 (France) and 6,648 (Hungary) observations. Among them business professionals constitute 1,729, 974, and 561 respectively, Science, engineering and ICT professionals - 1,946, 976, and 541, educational professionals – 1,279, 549, and 404, and managers – 3,287, 562, and 327 respectively.

Comparing between-group investments in capital-signalling provides insights into preferred capitals for professional/managerial groups. For example, Figure 1 shows that educational and technical professionals in Britain place less emphasis on presentation/ appearance, compared to business professionals and managers. Academics dominate in terms of informational spending (Figure 2). Ambitions to enhance one's cultural fit to 'get on' in the professional field drives investments in informational goods (magazines, newspapers, books) as sources of knowledge about personal transformation, relationships, and ambition that facilitate construction of lifestyles to match their aspired-to habitus.

[Figures 1 & 2 here]

## 5.2 Model

For each national context, between-occupational differences from expenditure models (Engel curves methodology) are captured as pairwise comparisons in levels of expenditure. The Engel curve, which allows estimating income elasticities, is the most common approach in grouping goods (Douglas and Isherwood, 1979, p. 68). We explore log-transformed values of the visible, presentational, socialisation-related, and informational expenditure aggregates (full description is provided in Supplement Table S3), as our dependent variables, via OLS-models:

$$\log(S_i) = \alpha + \beta_i \log Y_i + \Phi N_i + B X_i + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where  $S_i$  is expenditure on each aggregate (weekly equivalent expenditure plus one),  $Y_i$  - household income;  $X_i$  - household reference person's (HRP) and household characteristics,  $N_i$  - HRP's occupational group of HRP,  $\alpha$  - the individual specific unobservable effect,  $\varepsilon_i$  - error term. The set of predictors (UK) includes log gross normal household weekly income, the HRP's occupational group, age, gender, education, marital status, household size, number of children, region, and survey year. For the French and Hungarian samples the predictors are log income, where income is net income, age category (5 year intervals), education, occupational group of the HRP, gender, marital status of the HRP, family size, whether the household has children and regional control variables. We also employ generalised linear models (GLM) to address heteroscedasticity and predict expenditure for professional groups on a raw scale (see methodological notes in the Supplementary material section).

## 6 Results

The GLM models, by controlling for relevant socio-demographic factors, allow estimating the significance and magnitudes of between-occupational differences (contrasts) in levels of capital-signalling expenditure (Table 1).

[Table 1 here]

In the UK and France, we observe a clear distinction between business and technical professions in status-signalling (supporting H1a and H2a): the former spend about 8-10 percentage points (ppt) (at  $p < 0.05$ ) more on visible goods than the latter. In money terms, the predictions from GLM, which admittedly should be treated as an approximation, show that, for example, at the 75th income percentile business professionals spend, on average, £380 per week on visible goods compared to £349 by technical professionals. There is about 6% difference between business and educational professionals in the UK (H3a), but not in France (H4a), which probably reflects the relatively higher status of French educational professionals compared to Britain.

[Table 2 here]

Such between-profession distinctiveness is not observed in the Hungarian sample (H5a, H6a) where professional identities may not have developed in the same way. Technical professions in the UK are signified by egalitarian cultures (Marks & Bauldry, 2009) that suggest relatively lower status-signalling (H1a). However, technical orientation does not act to diminish the status of technical



professions in Hungary and their relative status-signalling spending. Hungarian business and management professionals generally spend more than educational and technical professionals (Table 1).

Business professionals are distinctive, compared to educational professionals, in levels of appearance-related expenditure both in France and the UK (H3b, H4b). The contrasts between these groups are more pronounced in France – the 20ppt difference (at  $p < 0.01$ ) (Table 2) translates into a weekly €15 difference at the 75th percentile income level. In the UK, the most distinctive contrast of 16% (or about £10 weekly at the 75th percentile level) relates to the difference between business and technical professionals (H1b).

Hungary does not show significant differences between professional groups (H5b, H6b), but managers place relatively more emphasis on appearance-related expenditure compared to other groups (Table 2). While managers, a historically distinctive group with high social status, stand out on the basis of their presentational spending, the professions are otherwise largely undistinctive.

British business professionals show higher emphasis on socialisation (as a means for building social capital), compared to other professional groups (Table 2). The predicted values at the 90th percentile income level show an average £25-40 monthly difference between business and other professionals. Conversely, French business professionals are not particularly distinctive relative to other professional groups (which supports expectations on H7).

[Table 3 here]

Investments in informational goods are highest for educational professionals in both France and Britain (Table 3), but not (statistically-significantly) in the Hungarian context – perhaps, as a result of the general emphasis on the value of self-education. As expected (H8), British business professionals are much closer to educational professionals in their pursuits of linguistic capital and the difference between the two habituses (14ppt) is less than half the corresponding difference in the French context (37ppt).

## 7 Discussion

The findings allow observing how professional communities relate to one another in terms of capital-signalling behaviours. Our findings are broadly consistent with Bourdieu's, regarding the dominant capitals underpinning individual occupations within the 'service class'. In our mature capitalism cases (UK and France) we find important between-occupational differences in symbolic capital. Both in France and Britain, managers and business professionals lead in terms of investment

in status-signalling, with technical professionals substantially behind. Both British and French business professionals invest substantially more in appearance, relative to other professionals, which signals embodied cultural capital, instrumental in business professions to ensure cultural fit. Ability to generate social connectivity is also partly reliant on this form of capital (in line with Bourdieu's argument of conversion of capitals). These between-occupation differences represent important findings given that, despite Bourdieu's similar use of household expenditure surveys to test his theories, such data have been neglected in subsequent studies using his framework. Such distinctiveness of capital-signalling implies that changes to another professional field (where social capital and status are less prized) may question the appropriateness and the "cultural fit" of these signals.

The comparative capitalisms framework highlights some differences between members of the same professions in these distinctive capitalism models. British technical professionals are particularly distinctive, with significantly lower status-signalling and presentational expenditure compared to other professional-managerial groups, which implies lower status of technical capital in their national context. This aligns with the argument of Friedman and Laurison (2019) about the dominated position of technical capital in the UK. By contrast, such distinction of technical professions is not observed in Hungary and is less pronounced in France. On the other hand, in line with our expectations, distinctiveness in manifestations of ability to augment organisational social capital expressed by the business professionals (the group that most prizes this form of capital compared to other "service class" occupations) is strikingly contrasting in the British context. The emphasis on socialisation and social capital manifestations by British business professionals compared to other professions implies the higher relative weight of social capital in this LME context.

Yet the most striking and important differences concern comparison of the mature capitalism nations (UK and France) with our transition economy nation (Hungary). While occupational distinctiveness within the "service class" is strong for both the UK and France, it is much weaker in Hungary, reflecting Eastern Europe's egalitarian culture prior to the disintegration of the Warsaw Pact and the eastward extension of the EU. This has important implications for East to West migration in Europe or West to East multinational expansion. There are significant differences in what are regarded as the ideal 'portfolios' of capitals between Western and Eastern Europe.

While prior qualitative evidence of contextual specificity and unequal value of capitals (Spence et al., 2017) challenge the universalist, "one-size-fit-all" approach, more systematic approaches to comparative research is beneficial which, in turn, calls for quantitative methodology. Admitting the

difficulties in measurability of capitals, we attempted quantification of capital-signalling behaviour to make within-country and cross-national comparisons, to generate some insights about what constitutes the symbolic capital of professions and the portrayal of dominant capitals in professional settings in different national contexts.

Our methodological approach, inspired by Bourdieu's (1984) *Distinction*, suggests a quantitative approach to tracking the habitus across national contexts, in terms of capital-signalling behaviours. There are, however, some caveats to be taken into account – while occupational effects in family expenditure, where occupational membership is defined by the occupation of the head of household, is the common approach in research with similar methodologies, double-earner households act to reduce the distinctiveness of occupational effects, and, thus, alternative, individual-based, measures of capital-signalling in professional settings are expected to show even stronger distinctions. Another limitation of our approach is that there is a chance that the subsamples of professional groups might comprise some migrant households whose consumption patterns may not fit the local patterns and add to heterogeneity.

To summarize, as expected, distinctiveness of professional identities is more pronounced in mature capitalism nations. Professionalisation and homogeneity of professional ethos occurs under the long-term isomorphic influence of institutions (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983) and transitional economies are yet to shape distinctive professional identities. However, cross-border penetration of professional practices and socialisation within multinational teams may facilitate this process. Furthermore, distinctiveness of professional habitus and capital-signalling between the mature models of capitalism supports the claim of 'professionals with borders' (McCann and Monteath, 2019; Spence et al., 2017, 2018).

## 8. Implications

Career studies has long promoted multidisciplinary approaches (Barney and Lawrence, 1989; Iellatchitch et al., 2003; Khapova and Arthur, 2008), with calls for systematic comparisons of different aspects of careers across national context and in different settings (e.g. Mayrhofer et al., 2020). Capitals, their signals, and their relative value across national contexts, while being important aspects of career strategies, remain under-explored. This is partly due to measurability problems, as sociological analytical categories are often too abstract and detached from quantification (Jackson and Deeg, 2008). However, drawing on career studies and Bourdieu's framework has allowed us to partly address the challenges of capital "measurement," using consumption-based measures which

we hope can be further developed in future research into within-country and between-country distinctions of professional groups.

Our cross-national comparison of capital-signalling behaviours implies cross-national differences in the value of capital forms/species and perceived rates of return for specific capital forms, based on a framework rooted in sociological theory (Bourdieu, 1984, 1986, Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) and supported by prior research (Spence et al., 2018). What constitutes an ideal mix of intellectual and social capital for an individual or a social unit in one environment is not appropriate in another national setting, emphasised by international movements of staff, alignment of practices, and cross-national collaboration within MNE's. While broader national and organisational cultures are of primary interest for management scholars and practitioners, occupation-level cultures should not be neglected. Nationally prioritised capitals are also important cultural differences – Pudelko et al. (2015) fairly criticise HRM for parochialism and argue that “cultural differences are more multifaceted than the country scores of one or four of Hofstede's dimensions being plucked into a regression”.

Based on our findings, which imply unequal value of capitals in different national contexts, one may expect that a Hungarian expatriate in the UK with a professional-managerial background can find that their manifestations of technical capital take a relatively dominated role in the host country, while socialisation-initiatives may require more emphasis compared to their home country; such distinctions may not be as evident if the host country is France. These findings confirm the suggestions of influential scholars that the initiatives of “cultural fit” and alignment to the organization's values are often prioritized over technical capability in Anglo-Saxon cultures, while technical competencies are more important in other European nations (Brewster et al., 2016).

The claim about unequal value of capitals has implications for various labour market actors. First, from a career actor's perspective, it suggests that career transitions between occupational fields may require corresponding adjustments in consumption strategies, or other ways of signalling the ‘right’ capitals. Careers entail a series of social adjustments in response to cultural pressures and career actors should expect to adapt to contexts, not only moving between professional domains within their national context, but also across national borders (Pudelko et al., 2015). Career actors' expatriation/migration may require keen attention to local field-specificity of capital-signalling behaviours, to facilitate socialisation, intercultural effectiveness, and advancement.

Indeed, the findings probably under-estimate the extent to which an employee's capitals are discounted following migration, especially from countries with markedly different national cultures. Bourdieu noted that capitals must be “symbolic” (recognised) to command value. However, capital

considered symbolic in one country may have less, or no, symbolism in another. For example, a good knowledge of professional rugby may be a valuable aspect of cultural capital for some service class occupations in Britain but would be of little value in Germany or the Netherlands. Further research taking the vantage point of occupation-specific capital structures in diverse institutional environments using alternative methodologies would thus be valuable.

There are also implications for HRM practices. Capitals and capital-signalling behaviours are important dimensions of cross-cultural competence that should not be neglected in training, mentoring and development of expatriates, as these have implications for effective operation of cross-border teams and adaptation to social environments. Understanding these dimensions in the local versions of professionalism may improve inter-cultural effectiveness and the outcomes of cross-national collaborative work of expatriate employees and those undertaking overseas assignments.

Moreover, implications are not limited to multinational production firms, but also relate to staffing practices of global professional service firms, that claim to transcend national boundaries. However, unique sets of country-specific institutions create barriers to the effective implementation of globally shared management practices (Boussebaa et al., 2012). Understandings about what are the “right capitals” in the professional domain may differ by national context (e.g. relative “weights” of commercial versus technical capital in global professional service firms (Spence et al., 2017)), as country-bound professional ethos, determined by the institutional setting, defines the relative value of these competencies in local professional networks. Appreciating distinctive cross-national differences in the values of capitals, local staffing practices (prioritized competencies and capital-based selection criteria) can be analysed in terms of the extent to which these are guided by locally-prioritized capitals and are distinctively different from headquarters’ occupational cultures.

Our findings have implications for economic migration and MNE expansion, especially given the strong trend for western European firms to set up subsidiaries and branch plants in eastern Europe (Bruno et al., 2012). Western European managers may find it difficult to correctly appraise the calibre of local staff if their expectations are based on the symbolic capital displays of their home country employees. This may lead to unnecessarily large numbers of local jobs being filled by imported staff, while local staff are given posts that do not fully exploit their capabilities. This might in turn lead to excessive local labour turnover, as workers realise that their displays of capabilities and skills are being lost in translation.

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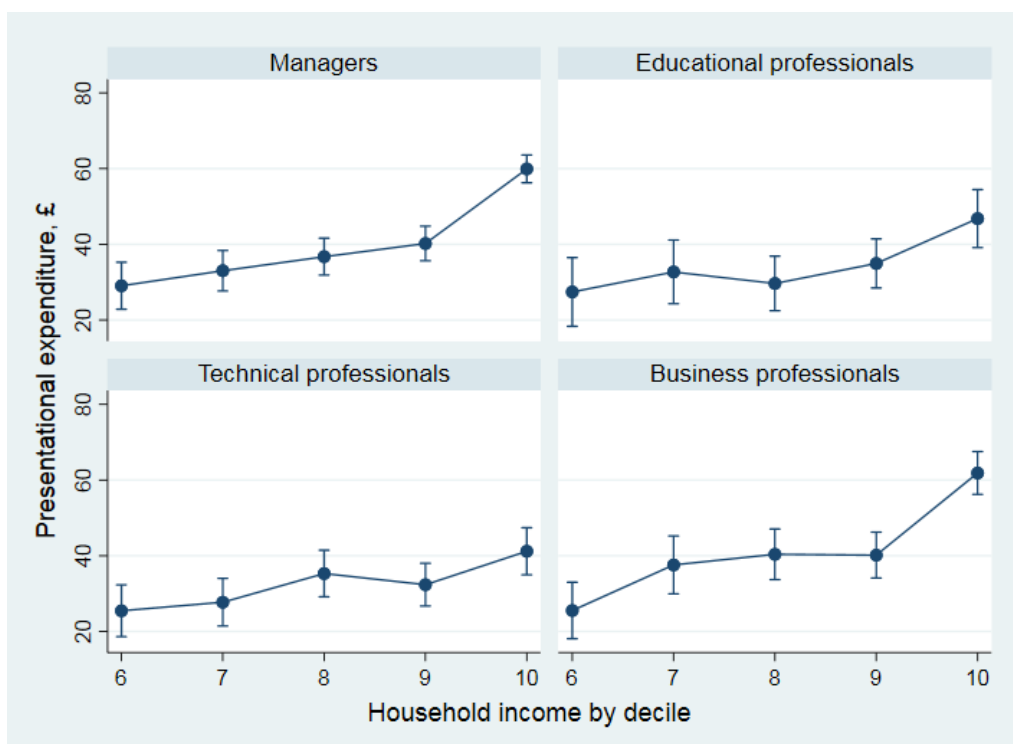


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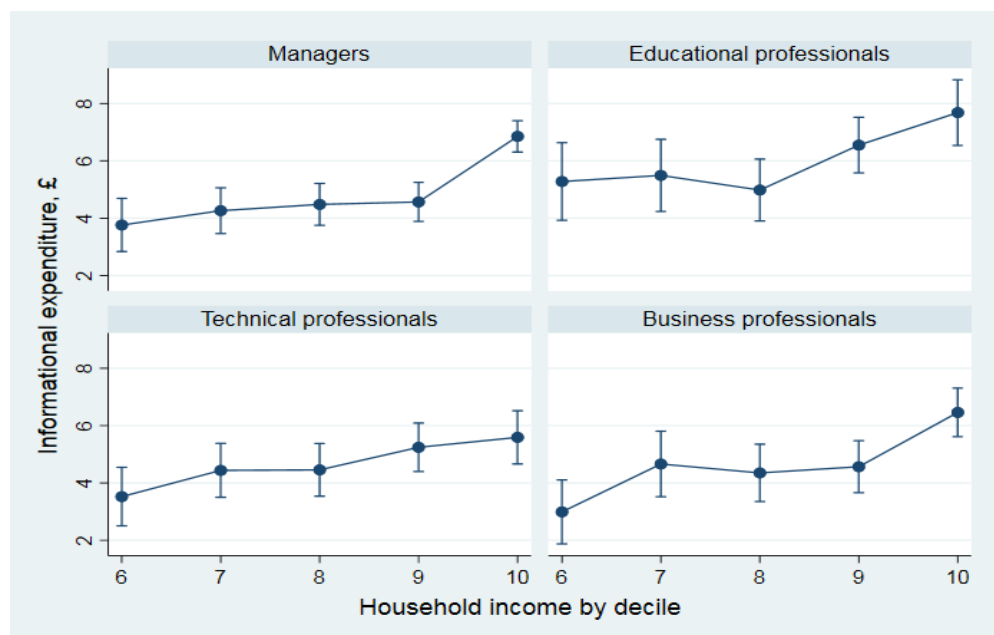
## Figures and tables

*Note for Figures 1-2:* Data shows equivalised weekly presentational (Fig. 1) and informational (Fig. 2) expenditure by occupational group and income decile. X-axis starts at the 6th income decile, as most professional-managerial groups are found in this income range. Data accounts for weighting, clustering and regional stratification employed in LCF and is adjusted for inflation using consumer price index (CPI) (in 2016 prices). ‘Whiskers’ represent pointwise 95% confidence intervals. N=22,716 observations.

**Figure 1. Appearance-related spending across professional groups in the UK**



**Figure 2. Informational spending across professional groups in the UK**



**Table 1. Pairwise comparison of visible expenditure levels between professional groups**

	UK	France	Hungary
<b>Visible expenditure</b>			
Educational profs vs Managers	-0.05** (0.024)	-0.022 (0.053)	-0.152*** (0.057)
Technical profs vs Managers	-0.087*** (0.021)	-0.053 (0.04)	-0.097* (0.054)
Business profs vs Managers	0.012 (0.022)	0.018 (0.041)	-0.08 (0.054)
Technical vs Educational profs	-0.037 (0.026)	-0.031 (0.05)	0.055 (0.051)
Business vs Educational prof.	0.062** (0.027)	0.04 (0.05)	0.071 (0.048)
Business vs Technical prof.	0.099*** (0.024)	0.071** (0.036)	0.016 (0.044)

*Note.* Pairwise comparisons of expenditure levels between professional groups are the contrasts between the marginal occupational effects estimated from GLM models (full results in Supplementary document, Table S1a, S1b, S2a and S2b). Predictors include age, education, gender, marital status of HRP, household size, whether have children (number of children - for UK sample), regional (and time - for the UK) controls. Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Table 2. Pairwise comparison of presentational and socialisation expenditure levels between professional groups**

	UK	France	Hungary
<b>Presentational expenditure</b>			
Educational profs vs Managers	-0.104** (0.043)	-0.166*** (0.06)	-0.138* (0.076)
Technical profs vs Managers	-0.151*** (0.037)	-0.098* (0.054)	-0.133* (0.071)
Business profs vs Managers	0.009 (0.038)	0.033 (0.054)	-0.088 (0.073)
Technical vs Educational profs	-0.048 (0.045)	0.068 (0.057)	0.004 (0.062)
Business vs Educational prof.	0.113*** (0.046)	0.199*** (0.055)	0.05 (0.062)
Business vs Technical prof.	0.160*** (0.041)	0.131*** (0.048)	0.046 (0.049)
<b>Socialization expenditure</b>			
Educational profs vs Managers	-0.026 (0.041)	-0.032 (0.097)	-0.286** (0.141)
Technical profs vs Managers	-0.055* (0.034)	-0.087 (0.089)	-0.144 (0.126)
Business profs vs Managers	0.08** (0.036)	0.022 (0.09)	-0.161 (0.125)
Technical vs Educational profs	-0.028 (0.044)	-0.056 (0.091)	0.142 (0.127)
Business vs Educational prof.	0.106** (0.045)	0.054 (0.089)	0.125 (0.124)
Business vs Technical prof.	0.134*** (0.039)	0.109 (0.082)	-0.017 (0.114)

*Note.* Pairwise comparisons of expenditure levels between professional groups are the contrasts between the marginal occupational effects estimated from GLMs (full results are provided in the Supplementary document). Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

**Table 3. Pairwise comparison of informational expenditure between professional groups**

	UK	France	Hungary
Educational profs vs Managers	0.201*** (0.061)	0.387*** (0.147)	-0.042 (0.082)
Technical profs vs Managers	0.027 (0.049)	-0.246** (0.114)	-0.112 (0.081)
Business profs vs Managers	0.057 (0.05)	0.016 (0.117)	-0.069 (0.084)
Technical vs Educational profs	-0.175*** (0.064)	-0.633*** (0.142)	-0.071 (0.081)
Business vs Educational prof.	-0.144** (0.063)	-0.371*** (0.14)	-0.027 (0.084)
Business vs Technical prof.	0.031 (0.052)	0.262** (0.106)	0.043 (0.079)

*Note.* Table shows contrasts between occupational margins estimated from GLMs (full results are provided in the Supplementary document). Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$ , \*\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*  $p < 0.1$

## Supplementary material (online-only)

### Appendix S1. Additional Notes on Methodology

#### Survey methodologies and data definitions

The UK LCF survey employs a complex multi-stage stratified random sample design with clustering, using postal sectors as primary sample units (ONS, 2010). The basic unit of analysis is the household. The LCF survey design accounts for unequal selection probability using weighting to compensate for non-response and to match population distribution in terms of age groups, regions, and gender. The sample is restricted to household reference persons (HRP) aged between 18 and 65 who had positive values of gross weekly disposable household income. The notion of HRP as a household representative is used from 2001-02 in UK government-sponsored surveys, to replace the “head of household” (the oldest adult male present, regardless of relative income). HRP refers to the owner or renter of accommodation in which the household lives (or the eldest, in cases where there are more than one owner/renter). Household income is the gross weekly normal household income of all its members plus allowances.

In common with other similar surveys, there is a problem of under-reported family incomes (i.e. total expenditure in some observations considerably exceeds gross family income). Keeping the bottom 95% sample observations, with reasonable total expenditure to gross household income ratios (maximum 1.95), avoids excessive distortions in models and exploratory statistics (see Charles et al., 2009). When a complete diary is missing, normally information is imputed using diaries from respondents with similar characteristics (LCF, 2010).

Member states’ participation is voluntary, and each has freedom regarding the objectives and methodology of their national HBS (European Commission, 2003). Data from the EU HBS (Eurostat, 2010) are used for France and Hungary. The survey design uses weighting to account for non-response error. Only household reference persons (HRP) of 20-65 years old are kept in the national samples. We omit observations with non-specified values of occupational classification (ISCO08) and observations whose current activity status is “student”, “fulfilling domestic tasks,” “permanently disabled,” “in military service” or not specified. As with the British survey, we deal with underreported income bias by constraining the sample to observations with plausible total expenditure to gross household income ratios (the bottom 95% observations in the French sample,

maximum ratio is 2.05; and the bottom 99% observations in the Hungarian sample, maximum ratio is 1.99). Models also account for weights provided by the survey methodology.

Detailed descriptions of expenditure variables are provided in Table S3, with reference to their use in prior research. Summary statistics about visible expenditure aggregates are provided in Tables S4 and S5 below. Details of the national samples in terms of household characteristics are provided in Tables S6, S7 and S8.

Generating occupational clusters in the UK sample employs SOC codes as follows: Managers (Major division 1 of SOC) (Office for National Statistics, 2010), Educational professionals (two-digit SOC 23), Scientists, engineers and ICT professionals and associate professionals (21 and 31), business and admin professionals and associate professionals (three-digit 242, 353), health, legal, cultural and social professionals and associate professionals (22,241, 243, 321, 351, 355). Administrative and secretarial – SOC major division 4, services and sales (SOC major divisions 6 and 7), skilled trades – SOC major division 5, plant, machinery operators (SOC 8), elementary occupations (SOC 9). Armed forces remain in the category of legal, health, social and cultural professionals as in the original SOC.

Generating occupational clusters in the French and Hungarian samples employs ISCO08 codes as follows: Managers include chief executives, senior officials and legislators; Administrative and commercial managers; Production and specialized services managers; Hospitality, retail and other services managers. Educational professionals are ISCO08 category 23. Technical professionals include science, engineering and ICT professionals and associate professionals (ISCO08 21, 25, 31 and 35). Business professionals include business and administration professionals and associate professionals (ISCO08 24 and 33). Health, legal, social, cultural and related professionals and associate professionals are captured by ISCO08 codes 22, 26, 32 and 34. Skilled agricultural workers is joint with the craft and trades category, as the former has a very small sample size and these two categories are traditionally combined, as for example, in SOC2000 and SOC2010.

In French and Hungarian samples, compared to the original education-variable, the category “no formal education” is added to “Primary education” due to the small sample size of the former.

## Modelling procedure

Application of generalized linear models (GLM). The double-logarithmic model, while being a conventional way of modelling expenditure, may suffer from heteroscedasticity bias and makes expenditure predictions on the logarithmic scale (Manning and Mullahy, 2001). It is beneficial to explore the models using the generalised linear models (GLMs) to address heteroscedasticity and

predict expenditure for professional groups on a raw scale. Also, GLM does not require the normality of distribution, which allows verifying the robustness of our results (McCullagh and Nelder, 1983; Manning and Mullahy, 2001).

Endogeneity. While long being incorporated into consumption models, social (or occupational) class may potentially be partially endogenous to models. Prais and Houthakker (1955) note that the difficulty in identifying separate effects of occupation is their association with other characteristics. However, they suggest that this source of endogeneity can be overcome with larger occupational subsamples to obtain a sufficient range of variation.

### Additional notes for Figures 1-4

Data account for weighting, clustering and regional stratification employed in the Living Costs and Food survey design and are adjusted for inflation using Consumer Price Index (in 2016 prices). Income categories are income deciles, obtained using the values of equivalised household income in the restricted samples.

## References for Methodological notes

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## Appendix S2. Additional tables

Appendix S2 provides full results for OLS (Tables S1a and S1b) and GLM (Table S2a and S2b) models for visible, presentational, socialization-related and informational expenditure aggregates in the UK, France and Hungary (not included in the main text of the paper).

**Table S1a. Estimates from OLS regressions for expenditure aggregates (UK)**

	Log Visible	Log Presentation	Log Socialization	Log Information
Log family income	2.123*** (0.081)	1.159*** (0.132)	1.171*** (0.145)	0.139 (0.099)
Log family income squared	-0.101*** (0.006)	-0.040*** (0.010)	-0.020* (0.011)	0.014* (0.008)
Managers	0.064*** (0.020)	0.064* (0.033)	0.140*** (0.036)	0.060** (0.025)
Educational professionals	0.039 (0.027)	0.061 (0.045)	0.173*** (0.049)	0.243*** (0.034)
Science, engineering and ICT profs	-0.015 (0.023)	-0.051 (0.037)	0.128*** (0.041)	0.074*** (0.028)
Business professionals	0.089*** (0.024)	0.137*** (0.039)	0.277*** (0.043)	0.119*** (0.029)
Health, legal, soc, cult profs	0.069*** (0.021)	0.093*** (0.034)	0.156*** (0.037)	0.126*** (0.025)
Admin secretarial	0.015 (0.023)	0.053 (0.038)	0.123*** (0.041)	0.115*** (0.028)
Services & Sales	-0.058*** (0.021)	-0.024 (0.035)	-0.073* (0.038)	0.039 (0.026)
Skilled trades	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Machine operatives	-0.069*** (0.022)	-0.092** (0.036)	-0.183*** (0.040)	-0.116*** (0.027)
Elementary	-0.177*** (0.022)	-0.071** (0.036)	-0.323*** (0.039)	-0.063** (0.027)
Age of HRP	0.005*** (0.000)	-0.000 (0.001)	0.001 (0.001)	0.019*** (0.001)
Education (finished 16-19)	0.019 (0.013)	0.040* (0.021)	0.048** (0.023)	0.037** (0.016)
Education (finished 20+ yo)	-0.053*** (0.014)	-0.039* (0.023)	0.080*** (0.025)	0.035** (0.017)
Female HRP	0.089*** (0.012)	0.304*** (0.020)	-0.033 (0.021)	0.051*** (0.015)
Household size	0.131*** (0.012)	0.148*** (0.020)	-0.028 (0.022)	0.170*** (0.015)
Number of children	0.106*** (0.008)	0.314*** (0.013)	0.133*** (0.014)	0.089*** (0.009)
Marital status (married=1)	-0.044*** (0.009)	-0.068*** (0.015)	-0.132*** (0.016)	0.020* (0.011)
Controls: region, year				
Constant	-5.031*** (0.268)	-3.825*** (0.439)	-4.451*** (0.479)	-1.287*** (0.330)
R-squared	0.4482	0.2467	0.2517	0.1927
Observations	23,400	23,400	23,400	23,400

Notes: Number of observations in each occupational group is provided in Table 1. Standard errors in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1.



**Table S1b. Estimates from OLS regressions for expenditure aggregates (France and Hungary)**

	France				Hungary			
	Log Visible	Log presentation	Log socialization	Log information	Log Visible	Log presentation	Log socialization	Log information
Log family income	3.867*** (0.317)	4.046*** (0.549)	2.850** (1.152)	2.013** (1.021)	3.112*** (0.395)	3.310*** (0.489)	-3.144** (1.395)	4.896*** (0.941)
Log family income squared	-0.143*** (0.015)	-0.155*** (0.026)	-0.066 (0.054)	-0.052 (0.048)	-0.116*** (0.022)	-0.136*** (0.027)	0.222*** (0.076)	-0.229*** (0.051)
Age	-0.038*** (0.005)	-0.034*** (0.008)	-0.170*** (0.017)	0.138*** (0.015)	-0.040*** (0.004)	-0.074*** (0.005)	-0.172*** (0.015)	0.007 (0.010)
1. Managers	0.283*** (0.043)	0.370*** (0.074)	1.216*** (0.156)	0.724*** (0.139)	0.204*** (0.048)	0.253*** (0.059)	0.446*** (0.170)	0.103 (0.115)
2. Educational professionals	0.233*** (0.048)	0.344*** (0.083)	1.473*** (0.174)	1.394*** (0.154)	0.021 (0.051)	0.044 (0.063)	-0.144 (0.180)	0.097 (0.121)
3. Technical professionals	0.191*** (0.034)	0.290*** (0.058)	1.061*** (0.122)	0.573*** (0.109)	0.118*** (0.041)	0.132*** (0.051)	0.341** (0.145)	-0.001 (0.098)
4. Business professionals	0.280*** (0.036)	0.489*** (0.062)	1.362*** (0.130)	0.937*** (0.115)	0.129*** (0.041)	0.120** (0.051)	0.458*** (0.145)	-0.023 (0.098)
5. Health, legal, soc. cult. profs	0.274*** (0.039)	0.340*** (0.068)	1.359*** (0.142)	1.088*** (0.126)	0.112** (0.044)	0.117** (0.054)	0.180 (0.154)	-0.037 (0.104)
6. Clerks	0.178*** (0.040)	0.283*** (0.068)	0.879*** (0.144)	0.513*** (0.127)	0.076* (0.042)	0.037 (0.053)	0.095 (0.150)	-0.053 (0.101)
7. Service Sales	0.136*** (0.034)	0.304*** (0.059)	0.601*** (0.123)	0.125 (0.109)	0.128*** (0.032)	0.079** (0.040)	0.189* (0.114)	0.106 (0.077)
9. Plant Machine Operators	0.050 (0.035)	0.106* (0.060)	0.139 (0.126)	-0.133 (0.112)	0.031 (0.030)	-0.030 (0.038)	0.097 (0.107)	0.050 (0.072)
10. Elementary occupations	-0.010 (0.037)	0.034 (0.064)	0.115 (0.135)	-0.056 (0.120)	-0.106*** (0.036)	-0.083* (0.044)	-0.245* (0.127)	-0.164* (0.085)
11. Armed Forces	0.055 (0.098)	0.275 (0.169)	0.338 (0.355)	0.528* (0.315)	0.159* (0.082)	0.114 (0.101)	-0.032 (0.289)	-0.050 (0.195)
Lower secondary	0.300*** (0.067)	0.414*** (0.116)	0.938*** (0.243)	0.350 (0.215)	0.152*** (0.030)	0.039 (0.037)	-0.006 (0.106)	0.300*** (0.071)

**Table S2. OLS regressions for expenditure aggregates (continued)**

Upper secondary	0.293*** (0.063)	0.344*** (0.108)	0.985*** (0.228)	0.168 (0.202)	0.280*** (0.034)	0.221*** (0.042)	0.517*** (0.120)	0.579*** (0.081)
Post-secondary non-tertiary	0.314*** (0.064)	0.391*** (0.112)	1.403*** (0.234)	0.356* (0.208)	0.346*** (0.044)	0.228*** (0.055)	0.901*** (0.157)	0.632*** (0.106)
Tertiary stage 1	0.263*** (0.067)	0.378*** (0.116)	1.487*** (0.243)	0.319 (0.215)	0.433*** (0.044)	0.283*** (0.055)	1.220*** (0.156)	0.847*** (0.105)
Tertiary stage 2	0.308*** (0.066)	0.323*** (0.114)	1.481*** (0.240)	0.481** (0.213)	0.622*** (0.049)	0.593*** (0.061)	1.816*** (0.174)	1.216*** (0.117)
Unallocated	0.206*** (0.062)	0.268** (0.108)	0.916*** (0.226)	0.024 (0.200)				
Gender (Female)	0.026 (0.020)	0.307*** (0.035)	-0.099 (0.074)	0.083 (0.066)	-0.036* (0.021)	-0.003 (0.026)	-0.224*** (0.074)	0.347*** (0.050)
Single	0.050** (0.021)	0.100*** (0.037)	-0.124 (0.077)	0.001 (0.068)	-0.189*** (0.021)	-0.121*** (0.026)	-0.022 (0.074)	-0.147*** (0.050)
Household size	0.072*** (0.008)	0.229*** (0.015)	0.120*** (0.031)	0.156*** (0.027)	-0.008 (0.008)	0.083*** (0.010)	-0.102*** (0.029)	0.343*** (0.020)
W/children	0.070 (0.048)	0.048 (0.083)	0.083 (0.174)	-0.115 (0.154)	-0.109* (0.061)	-0.203*** (0.075)	-0.721*** (0.214)	-0.225 (0.145)
<i>Regional controls</i>								
Constant	-16.309*** (1.676)	-19.202*** (2.902)	-18.870*** (6.092)	-14.248*** (5.401)	-11.353*** (1.815)	-12.987*** (2.247)	13.657** (6.408)	-23.689*** (4.325)
Observations	9,314	9,314	9,314	9,314	6,648	6,648	6,648	6,648
R-squared	0.361	0.215	0.177	0.142	0.489	0.376	0.184	0.224

Notes: Standard errors in parentheses \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Table S2a. Generalised Linear model results for four expenditure aggregates in Britain**

	Log visible	Log presentational	Log socialization-related	Log Info
Log family income	1.963*** (0.098)	1.731*** (0.165)	2.285*** (0.200)	1.124*** (0.244)
Log income squared	-0.090*** (0.007)	-0.078*** (0.012)	-0.109*** (0.015)	-0.050*** (0.018)
Managers	0.065*** (0.020)	0.097** (0.042)	0.084** (0.034)	0.089** (0.043)
Educational professionals	0.015 (0.026)	-0.007 (0.051)	0.057 (0.046)	0.290*** (0.061)
Technical professionals	-0.022 (0.022)	-0.054 (0.045)	0.029 (0.038)	0.115** (0.048)
Business professionals	0.077*** (0.024)	0.106** (0.048)	0.163*** (0.039)	0.146*** (0.050)
Other professionals	0.032 (0.020)	0.059 (0.043)	0.037 (0.034)	0.157*** (0.044)
Admin secretar	-0.001 (0.023)	0.018 (0.047)	0.044 (0.039)	0.119*** (0.046)
Services & Sales	-0.038* (0.022)	-0.006 (0.044)	-0.079** (0.038)	0.062 (0.046)
Skilled trades	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)	0.000 (0.000)
Machine operatives	-0.065*** (0.022)	-0.071 (0.045)	-0.138*** (0.042)	-0.150*** (0.045)
Elementary	-0.154*** (0.022)	-0.026 (0.046)	-0.240*** (0.043)	-0.033 (0.055)
Age of HRP	0.005*** (0.000)	0.001 (0.001)	0.004*** (0.001)	0.024*** (0.001)
Education (finished 16-19)	0.014 (0.012)	0.041 (0.025)	0.046** (0.022)	0.089*** (0.027)
Education (finished 20+ yo)	-0.033** (0.014)	-0.026 (0.023)	0.117*** (0.024)	0.205*** (0.032)
Female HRP	0.063*** (0.012)	0.251*** (0.023)	-0.058*** (0.021)	0.086*** (0.028)
Marital status (married=1)	0.103*** (0.012)	0.041* (0.022)	-0.051** (0.021)	0.149*** (0.027)
Household size	0.074*** (0.008)	0.205*** (0.014)	0.113*** (0.014)	0.136*** (0.020)
Number of children	-0.030*** (0.009)	-0.044*** (0.015)	-0.128*** (0.016)	-0.001 (0.022)
Controls: region and year	Yes			
Constant	-4.129*** (0.326)	-5.064*** (0.552)	-7.318*** (0.671)	-5.192*** (0.823)
Observations	23,400			
Variance function:	V(u) = u <sup>2</sup> [Gamma]			
Link function :	g(u) = ln(u) [Log]			
Modified Park Test, Coef. at p=0.000	1.765	1.665	1.536	1.566
Modified Park Test (for Family), Results:				
Family				
- Gaussian	4722.49	682.92	593.76	496.48
- Poisson	887.62	109	72.33	64.88
- <b>Gamma</b>	83.44	27.59	54.14	38.09
- Inverse Gaussian	2309.95	438.69	539.18	416.11
Testing log-link:				
<b>Pearson Correlation test</b> (p-value in brackets)	-0.0174 (p=0.0079)	-0.0551 (p=0.000)	-0.0117 (p=0.0738)	-0.0307 (p=0.000)
<b>Pregibon test:</b>				
xb (at p-value=0.000)	1.096	1.559	1.138	1.198
xb-squared (p-value in brackets)	-0.011 (p=0.198)	-0.0818 (p=0.000)	-0.0252 (p=0.077)	0.0708 (p=0.010)

Notes: All GLM models employ the gamma variance function and the log-link function. Robust standard errors are provided. \*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

**Table S2b. Generalised Linear Model results for four expenditure aggregates in France and Hungary**

	France				Hungary			
	Log Visible	Log presentation	Log socialization	Log information	Log Visible	Log presentation	Log socialization	Log information
Log family income	0.792*** (0.017)	0.527*** (0.033)	0.938*** (0.051)	0.598*** (0.067)	0.919*** (0.031)	0.771*** 0.031	1.021*** (0.091)	0.507*** (0.048)
Age	-0.028*** (0.004)	-0.018** (0.007)	-0.071*** (0.012)	0.088*** (0.016)	-0.038*** (0.005)	-0.064*** 0.005	-0.095*** (0.016)	-0.002 (0.008)
1. Managers	0.166*** (0.037)	0.289*** (0.056)	0.395*** (0.105)	0.347** (0.156)	0.173*** (0.058)	0.237*** 0.078	0.309** (0.142)	0.107 (0.075)
2. Educational professionals	0.144*** (0.041)	0.123** (0.059)	0.363*** (0.107)	0.734*** (0.177)	0.021 (0.055)	0.100 0.068	0.023 (0.146)	0.066 (0.082)
3. Technical professionals	0.113*** (0.029)	0.191*** (0.049)	0.308*** (0.096)	0.101 (0.123)	0.076* (0.045)	0.104** 0.050	0.165 (0.126)	-0.005 (0.068)
4. Business professionals	0.184*** (0.031)	0.322*** (0.050)	0.417*** (0.098)	0.363** (0.143)	0.092** (0.045)	0.150*** 0.053	0.148 (0.126)	0.038 (0.073)
5. Health, legal, soc. cult. profs	0.193*** (0.034)	0.188*** (0.058)	0.406*** (0.101)	0.463*** (0.139)	0.102** (0.050)	0.161** 0.064	0.260* (0.139)	0.090 (0.073)
6. Clerks	0.110*** (0.034)	0.166*** (0.055)	0.187 (0.115)	0.133 (0.154)	0.067 (0.046)	0.113** 0.057	0.109 (0.135)	0.037 (0.077)
7. Service Sales	0.087*** (0.029)	0.161*** (0.050)	0.234** (0.097)	-0.031 (0.128)	0.127*** (0.040)	0.076* 0.041	0.208 (0.141)	0.063 (0.054)
9. Plant Machine Operators	0.034 (0.030)	0.078 (0.052)	0.020 (0.105)	-0.146 (0.161)	0.025 (0.035)	0.004 0.038	0.055 (0.117)	0.027 (0.047)
10. Elementary occupations	-0.054* (0.032)	0.016 (0.065)	-0.122 (0.112)	-0.125 (0.195)	-0.107** (0.042)	-0.036 0.049	-0.152 (0.159)	-0.086 (0.064)
11. Armed Forces	-0.032 (0.084)	0.081 (0.097)	0.200 (0.352)	0.290 (0.236)	0.120 (0.081)	0.151 0.095	-0.242 (0.202)	0.070 (0.130)
Lower secondary	0.141** (0.058)	0.245*** (0.094)	0.351* (0.206)	0.380** (0.168)	0.137*** (0.036)	0.071* 0.040	0.028 (0.144)	0.252*** (0.050)
Upper secondary	0.151*** (0.054)	0.202** (0.087)	0.358* (0.196)	0.146 (0.137)	0.242*** (0.039)	0.210*** 0.046	0.418*** (0.149)	0.388*** (0.058)
Post-secondary non-tertiary	0.149*** (0.056)	0.233** (0.091)	0.445** (0.197)	0.355** (0.149)	0.336*** (0.054)	0.188*** 0.061	0.493*** (0.174)	0.457*** (0.076)

**Table S2b. Generalised Linear Model results for four expenditure aggregates in France and Hungary (continued)**

Tertiary stage 1	0.131** (0.058)	0.204** (0.095)	0.498** (0.201)	0.321** (0.158)	0.396*** (0.050)	0.254*** 0.060	0.753*** (0.168)	0.602*** (0.076)
Tertiary stage 2	0.117** (0.057)	0.200** (0.093)	0.541*** (0.198)	0.497*** (0.156)	0.520*** (0.054)	0.473*** 0.064	0.950*** (0.175)	0.802*** (0.079)
Unallocated	0.070 (0.054)	0.234*** (0.088)	0.273 (0.195)	0.205 (0.144)				
Gender: Female	-0.001 (0.018)	0.121*** (0.030)	-0.151*** (0.050)	0.067 (0.089)	-0.053** (0.024)	0.018 0.028	-0.259*** (0.074)	0.132*** (0.038)
Single	0.051*** (0.018)	0.034 (0.029)	-0.115** (0.055)	-0.136* (0.076)	-0.151*** (0.023)	-0.100*** 0.026	0.012 (0.072)	-0.099*** (0.038)
Household size	0.052*** (0.007)	0.129*** (0.011)	-0.002 (0.022)	0.121*** (0.025)	-0.016* (0.009)	0.073*** 0.009	-0.141*** (0.035)	0.170*** (0.016)
W/children	0.046 (0.041)	-0.005 (0.088)	0.104 (0.134)	0.029 (0.200)	-0.109* (0.064)	-0.110 0.071	-0.070 (0.250)	-0.256*** (0.095)
<i>Regional controls</i>								
Constant	0.625*** (0.176)	1.679*** (0.343)	-2.736*** (0.545)	-1.803** (0.719)	-0.768*** (0.279)	-0.912*** 0.281	-3.669*** (0.826)	-0.994** (0.429)
Observations	9,314	9,314	9,314	9,314	6,648	6,648	6,648	6,648
Variance function	[Gamma]	[Poisson]	[Gamma]	[Poisson]	[Gamma]	[Gamma]	[Poisson]	[Poisson]
Link function	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]	[Log]
Log-likelihood	-96273	-8920815	-75146	-3408697	-57143	-47400	-1226564	-339634
Modified Park Test, coef.	1.71 $p=0.000$	1.457 $p=0.000$	1.515 $p=0.000$	1.370 $p=0.000$	1.61 $p=0.000$	1.667 $p=0.000$	1.325 $p=0.000$	1.439 $p=0.000$
Modified Park Test, Chi2-value for each exponential family (for all coefficients $p=0.000$ ):								
- Gaussian	1905.22	420.1	207.34	97.86	848.55	437.33	338.81	513.93
- Poisson	330.99	<b>41.27</b>	24.02	<b>7.15 <math>p=0.008</math></b>	121.89	70.03	<b>20.42</b>	<b>47.85</b>
- Gamma	<b>52.74</b>	58.47	<b>21.14</b>	20.67	<b>49.69</b>	<b>17.43</b>	87.78	78.07
- Inverse Gaussian	1070.48	471.61	198.73	138.42	631.95	279.52	540.9	604.6
Testing goodness-of-fit								
Pearson correlation test	-0.0942 $p=0.000$	-0.0175 $p=0.092$	0.101 $p=0.000$	-0.0017 $p=0.868$	-0.109 $p=0.000$	-0.0763 $p=0.000$	-0.010 $p=0.400$	-0.034 $p=0.005$
Pregibon test								
xb	3.215 $p=0.000$	2.691 $p=0.000$	2.354 $p=0.000$	0.878 $p=0.081$	1.629 $p=0.000$	2.217 $p=0.000$	0.922 $p=0.009$	2.422 $p=0.000$
xb-squared	-0.119 $p=0.000$	-0.111 $p=0.000$	-0.096 $p=0.002$	0.009 $p=0.844$	-0.043 $p=0.019$	-0.101 $p=0.000$	0.004 $p=0.91$	-0.153 $p=0.000$

Notes: GLMs employ the gamma variance function and the log-link function for all four expenditure models in the UK sample. In the French and the Hungarian samples gamma function is employed for expenditure aggregates, except for presentational and informational aggregate in the French sample (Poisson variance function) and socialization and informational expenditure in Hungarian sample (Poisson exponential family. Robust standard errors in parentheses \*\*\*  $p<0.01$ , \*\*  $p<0.05$ , \*  $p<0.1$ )

**Table S3a. Expenditure categories and their aggregates (description and variables in surveys)**

Categories of expenditure and their aggregates		Variables in databases	
		UK LCF	Eurostat (HU and FR)
<b>Categories of visible consumption referred to by Hicks and Hicks (2014) and based on Charles et al. (2009) and Heffetz (2011)</b>			
1	Clothing and Footwear (FS3)	FS3	EUR_HE03
2	Personal care (hairdressing, beauty treatment, toiletries, hair products, cosmetics and other) (FSC1)	FSC1	EUR_HE121
3	Personal effects (jewellery, watches, leather and travel goods, sunglasses and other) (FSC2)	FSC2	EUR_HE123
4	Purchase and operation of personal transport (purchase of new and second-hand vehicles, operation of personal transport including spares and accessories, fuel, repairs and other motoring costs) (FS71, FS72)	FS71, FS72	EUR_HE071, EUR_HE072
5	Household goods and services (furniture, textiles, household appliances, tableware, tools and equipment for house and garden, goods and services for routine household maintenance) (FS5)	FS5	EUR_HE05
6	Restaurant and cafe meals (FSB11)	FSB11	EUR_HE1111
7	Alcoholic drinks away from home (FSB12)	FSB12	
8	Recreation and culture	FS9	EUR_HE09

**Expenditure aggregates used in the study:**

1	<i>Visible expenditure (broad definition) as in Hicks and Hicks (2014) and based on Charles et al. (2009) and Heffetz (2011):</i>	
	Clothing and Footwear (FS3), Personal Care (FSC1), Personal effects (FSC2), Personal transport (FS71, FS72), Household goods and services (FS5), Restaurant and cafe meals (FSB1), Alcoholic drinks away from home (FSB12), Recreation and culture (FS9)	Clothing and Footwear (EUR_HE03), Personal Care (EUR_HE121), Personal effects (EUR_HE123), Personal transport (EUR_HE071, EUR_HE072), Household goods and services (EUR_HE05), Restaurant and cafe meals (EUR_HE1111), Recreation and culture (EUR_HE09)
2	<i>Presentational aggregate:</i>	
	Clothing and Footwear (FS3), Personal Care (FSC1), Personal effects (FSC2)	Clothing and Footwear (EUR_HE03), Personal Care (EUR_HE121), Personal effects (EUR_HE123)
3	<i>Socialization aggregate:</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sports admissions, subscriptions (spectator sports, participants sports, subscription to sports and social clubs) (FS941), equipment for sport, camping and open-air recreation (FS933)</li> <li>- Restaurant and cafe meals (FSB11), Alcoholic drinks away from home (FSB12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recreational and sporting services (EUR_HE0941), equipment for sport, camping and open-air recreation (EUR_HE0932)</li> <li>- Restaurant and cafe meals (EUR_HE1111)</li> </ul>
4	<i>Informational goods:</i>	
	Books, newspapers and magazines(FS95) and TV, video subscriptions, licences (FS943)	Newspapers, books and stationery (EUR_HE095) and television, radio taxes and hire of equipment (EUR_HE09423)

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*Note.* Eurostat aggregates do not allow distinguishing between alcoholic beverages consumed at home and outside of home, so this subcategory is not included into visible and socialization expenditure for France and Hungary. Admissions to clubs, social events etc. are not outlined as separate categories in Eurostat, so these are not included into the socialization-related aggregate.

**Table S3b. Sizes of occupational subsamples in Britain, France and Hungary (full national samples)**

Occupational groups	UK	France	Hungary
Managers	3 287	562	327
Educational professionals	1 279	549	404
Science, engineering and ICT professionals	1 946	976	541
Business professionals	1 729	974	561
Legal, health, social and cultural professionals	3 273	812	464
Clerks / Admin and secretarial	2 093	812	455
Services and sales	2 911	1 182	778
Skilled Manual workers / Skilled trades	2 769	1 464	1 418
Plant Machine operators	1 884	886	901
Elementary occupations	2 229	1 011	709
Armed Forces	-	86	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>23 400</b>	<b>9 314</b>	<b>6 648</b>

*Data source:* Living Costs and Food Survey (Office for National Statistics, 2017), European Harmonised Household Budget Survey (France, Hungary) (Eurostat, 2010).

Subsample sizes are based on the restricted national samples.

**Table S4. Share of family income spent on the visible aggregate for for the categories of “service class” (UK)**

	N	Share of family income spent on visible commodity categories			Weekly equivalised family gross income, £	
		Mean	Sd	Coef. of variation	Mean	Sd
Full sample	23400	0.276	0.198	0.72	1020	841
Managers	3287	0.274	0.197	0.72	1509	1200
Educational professionals	1279	0.272	0.19	0.70	1154	748
Technical professionals	1946	0.252	0.177	0.70	1221	754
Business Professionals	1729	0.269	0.192	0.71	1436	1076
Health, legal, soc-cultural profs	3273	0.273	0.185	0.68	1231	974
Full "service class"	11514	0.269	0.189	0.70	1331	1013

*Notes:* Calculations are based on data from Living Costs and Food Survey UK (2009-2016) in the restricted sample. Data in the table account for weighting, clustering and stratification used in the survey. All indicators account for inflation and are provided in 2016 prices. The share of family income uses family gross income as a denominator.



**Table S5. Shares of family income spent on the visible aggregate for the categories of “service class” in France and Hungary**

	N	Share of family income spent on visible commodity categories			Weekly equivalised family net income, Euro	
		Mean	St.dev.	Coef. of variation	Mean	St.dev.
France						
Full sample	9314	0.302	0.215	0.71	529	383
Managers	562	0.289	0.176	0.61	822	372
Educational professionals	549	0.296	0.209	0.71	635	350
Technical professionals	976	0.303	0.189	0.62	604	439
Business Professionals	974	0.308	0.191	0.62	659	417
Health, legal, soc-cultural profs	812	0.322	0.215	0.67	699	606
Full “service class”	3873	0.306	0.205	0.67	673	484
Hungary						
Full sample	6648	0.197	0.140	0.71	129	63
Managers	327	0.243	0.163	0.67	178	81
Educational professionals	404	0.218	0.144	0.66	146	55
Technical professionals	541	0.233	0.146	0.62	181	80
Business Professionals	561	0.225	0.144	0.64	162	68
Health, legal, soc-cultural profs	464	0.229	0.150	0.65	152	74
Full “service class”	2297	0.229	0.148	0.65	164	73

*Notes:* Calculations are based on data from the Harmonized European household Expenditure Survey (Eurostat, 2010) in the restricted samples (restrictions are outlined in Section 4.3.1). Data in the table account for weighting applied in surveys. In the French and the Hungarian samples the denominator for the share of income is net family income - total income from all sources including non-monetary components minus income tax.

**Table S6. Summary statistics on household characteristics for the full sample and separate occupational groups in Britain**

	Full sample	Managers	Educ.profs	Tech.profs	Business profs	HLSC profs	Admin secretar	Services & Sales	Skilled trades	Machine operative s	Elementary
N	23400	3287	1279	1946	1729	3273	2093	2911	2769	1884	2229
HRP characteristics											
Age (mean)	43.97	45.28	45.21	42.00	42.68	43.56	45.14	42.75	44.52	45.44	43.33
Married (==1), %	0.52	0.66	0.54	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.41	0.33	0.58	0.57	0.39
Education, %											
- completed by 16yo	0.42	0.35	0.10	0.25	0.23	0.25	0.40	0.53	0.64	0.70	0.64
- completed 16 - 20yo	0.26	0.28	0.16	0.23	0.29	0.28	0.38	0.29	0.25	0.20	0.23
- completed after 20yo	0.31	0.37	0.74	0.52	0.48	0.47	0.22	0.18	0.11	0.10	0.13
Male (==1), %	0.65	0.75	0.46	0.87	0.69	0.56	0.34	0.32	0.93	0.92	0.63
0											
Household size	2.68	2.84	2.53	2.59	2.67	2.67	2.38	2.61	2.85	2.86	2.67
Number of children	0.69	0.74	0.62	0.62	0.71	0.70	0.56	0.72	0.73	0.73	0.73
Gross family income (£)	1020	1509	1154	1221	1436	1231	804	630	834	776	563
Gross family income, st.d.	841	1200	748	754	1076	974	625	419	442	414	344

Notes: Data in the table account for weighting and regional stratification of LCF survey design. Totals may not add up to decimals due to rounding. Total expenditure and gross normal weekly income are adjusted to inflation and provided in 2016 prices. The statistics are estimated for the restricted sample. Source: LCF (2017).

**Table S7. Summary statistics on household characteristics for the full sample and separate occupational groups in France**

	Full sample	Managers	Educ. profs	Technical profs	Business profs	Health, legal, soc,cult profs	Clerks	Services Sales	Skilled workers	Machine Operators	Elementary Occupations	Armed Forces
N	9,314	562	549	976	974	812	812	1,182	1,464	886	1,011	86
Gender of HRP (Male), %	65	75	47	89	55	42	36	51	93	86	43	95
Household size	2.65	2.95	2.42	2.66	2.48	2.47	2.32	2.56	2.97	2.76	2.63	3.17
Have children, %	96	100	97	96	98	95	97	93	95	94	96	93
Single, %	55	38	60	53	57	58	67	60	48	53	65	30
Education												
Primary or no education	2.1	1	0	0.9	1.4	0.4	1.6	3.4	2.9	2.9	4.4	0
Lower secondary	7.6	4.4	4.3	6	7.8	5.3	11.9	10.5	5.4	8.7	9.5	23.7
Upper secondary	18.5	9.6	3.1	16.5	11.4	5.4	20.7	21.1	30.7	29.8	21.2	17.1
Post-secondary non-tertiary	13.2	12.4	8.7	12.3	15.1	12.9	17.4	17.4	13	10.4	8.1	23.5
Tertiary stage 1	9.8	11.9	10.6	16	15.2	17.8	11	6.8	5.5	2.9	2.3	3.9
Tertiary stage 2	14.1	33.7	45.1	20.9	21.4	28.8	8	4.5	1.9	1.8	2.1	9.2
Unallocated	34.7	27.1	28.3	27.4	27.5	29.4	29.4	36.3	40.6	43.4	52.4	22.6

Notes: Data in the table account for weighting. The statistics are estimated for the restricted sample. Source: Eurostat (2010).

**Table S8. Summary statistics on household characteristics for the full sample and separate occupational groups in Hungary**

	Full sample	Managers	Educ. profs	Technical profs	Business profs	Health, legal, soc,cult profs	Clerks	Services Sales	Skilled workers	Machine Operators	Elementary Occs	Armed Forces
N	6,648	327	404	541	561	464	455	778	1,418	901	709	90
Gender of HRP (Male), %	61	63	24	81	37	32	23	51	89	77	55	88
Household size	2.81	2.95	2.76	2.79	2.57	2.56	2.34	2.65	3.04	2.96	2.97	2.99
Have children, %	98	100	100	99	97	99	98	97	97	97	97	98
Single, %	54	67	55	58	54	47	44	48	62	58	40	66
Education												
Primary or no education	14.3	0.5	0.8	0.7	0.8	1	5.7	9.8	14.6	26.3	56.7	1.2
Lower secondary	30.3	6.7	1.1	5	2.8	10.7	10	36.9	61.1	49.1	30.7	16.1
Upper secondary	24.8	22.8	4	22.9	39.5	26.7	56	37.8	17.6	20.2	9.8	28.1
Post-secondary non-tertiary	7.5	12.4	3.9	13.2	10.4	12.7	13.8	8	5	3.3	2	9
Tertiary stage 1	14.1	38.5	60.9	30	31	18.4	10.2	6	1.3	1	0.7	35
Tertiary stage 2	9.1	19.1	29.3	28.1	15.5	30.5	4.3	1.6	0.4	0.1	0.2	10.6

Notes: Data in the table account for weighting. The statistics are estimated for the restricted sample. Source: Eurostat (2010)

**Table S9. Predicted average expenditure levels of professional groups at 75- and 90-percentile levels of household income**

	UK (GBP)		France (Euro)		Hungary (Euro)	
	75pct	90pct	75pct	90pct	75pct	90pct
<b>Status-signalling</b>						
Managers	372.69	491.75	380.47	482.04	86.75	108.08
Educational professionals	365.58	482.38	372.20	471.56	74.53	92.86
Technical professionals	349.18	460.74	360.88	457.23	78.76	98.13
Business professionals	379.46	500.69	387.56	491.03	80.06	99.74
<b>Appearance</b>						
Managers	67.48	86.59	83.07	97.25	18.95	22.51
Educational professionals	62.43	80.11	70.37	82.38	15.70	18.62
Technical professionals	59.07	75.8	75.34	88.19	16.57	19.66
Business professionals	68.55	87.97	85.89	100.55	16.89	20.04
<b>Socialisation</b>						
Managers	59.15	79.9	52.70	69.74	8.35	10.67
Educational professionals	59.54	80.44	51.06	67.58	6.50	8.30
Technical professionals	57.19	77.26	48.30	63.92	7.18	9.16
Business professionals	64.02	86.48	53.89	71.32	7.97	10.18
<b>Informational goods</b>						
Managers	7.43	8.78	10.90	12.88	3.21	3.68
Educational professionals	9.26	10.93	16.57	19.59	3.56	4.08
Technical professionals	7.74	9.14	8.38	9.91	3.20	3.67
Business professionals	7.89	9.32	11.66	13.78	3.28	3.76
<b>Distribution of household income:</b>						
50th percentile	761		747.37		203.89	
75th percentile	1138		1074.36		277.98	
90th percentile	1638		1473.16		367.24	

*Note.* Predictions are the average outcomes of GLMs for expenditure aggregates estimated from UK LCF 2009-2016 and Harmonised European HBS (2010), when income is held at 75th and 90th percentile level in restricted samples.

**Table S10. Cross-national comparison of rankings of selected professional groups based on predicted levels of status-signalling, presentational, socialisation-related and informational expenditure**

	UK	France	Hungary
Status-signalling			
Managers	2	2	1
Educational professionals	3	3	4
Technical professionals	4	4	3
Business professionals	1	1	2
Appearance			
Managers	2	2	1
Educational professionals	3	4	4
Technical professionals	4	3	3
Business professionals	1	1	2
Socialisation			
Managers	3	2	1
Educational professionals	2	3	4
Technical professionals	4	4	3
Business professionals	1	1	2
Informational goods			
Managers	4	3	2
Educational professionals	1	1	1
Technical professionals	3	4	3
Business professionals	2	2	4

*Note.* Rankings are based on predicted expenditure levels from GLM with “1” indicating the highest level of expenditure within the national context.

**Table S11. Pairwise comparison of visible expenditure levels between professional groups**

	UK		France		Hungary	
	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM
Educational prof. vs. Managers	0.009 (0.026)	-0.05** (0.024)	-0.007 (0.052)	-0.022 (0.053)	-0.152*** (0.055)	-0.152*** (0.057)
Technical prof. vs. Managers	-0.052** (0.022)	-0.087*** (0.021)	-0.059 (0.042)	-0.053 (0.04)	-0.081* (0.049)	-0.097* (0.054)
Business prof. vs. Managers	0.032 (0.022)	0.012 (0.022)	0.024 (0.042)	0.018 (0.041)	-0.065 (0.049)	-0.08 (0.054)
Technical vs. Educational professionals	-0.061** (0.028)	-0.037 (0.026)	-0.052 (0.047)	-0.031 (0.05)	0.071 (0.05)	0.055 (0.051)
Business vs. Educational professionals	0.023 (0.028)	0.062** (0.027)	0.031 (0.047)	0.04 (0.05)	0.087* (0.049)	0.071 (0.048)
Business vs. Technical professionals	0.084*** (0.025)	0.099*** (0.024)	0.082** (0.035)	0.071** (0.036)	0.016 (0.043)	0.016 (0.044)

*Note.* Pairwise comparisons of expenditure levels between professional groups are the contrasts between occupational margins estimated from OLS and GLM models (full results in the Supplement Tables S1a-S2b). The dependent variable is visible expenditure; predictors include age, education, gender, marital status, household size, whether have children (number of children - for UK sample), regional (and time - for the UK) controls. Full regression results are provided in the Supplementary document. N (UK) =23,400, N (FR) =9,314, N (Hungary) =6,648. Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.1

**Table S12. Pairwise comparison of presentational and socialisation expenditure levels between professional groups**

	UK		France		Hungary	
	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM
Presentational expenditure						
Educational prof. vs. Managers	0.011 (0.042)	-0.104** (0.043)	0.021 (0.089)	-0.166*** (0.06)	-0.173*** (0.068)	-0.138* (0.076)
Technical prof. vs. Managers	-0.105*** (0.035)	-0.151*** (0.037)	-0.044 (0.072)	-0.098* (0.054)	-0.115* (0.061)	-0.133* (0.071)
Business prof. Vs. Managers	0.076** (0.037)	0.009 (0.038)	0.148** (0.072)	0.033 (0.054)	-0.121** (0.061)	-0.088 (0.073)
Technical vs. Educational prof.	-0.012** (0.045)	-0.048 (0.045)	-0.064 (0.081)	0.068 (0.057)	0.058 (0.062)	0.004 (0.062)
Business vs. Educational prof.	0.065 (0.046)	0.113*** (0.046)	0.128 (0.08)	0.199*** (0.055)	0.052 (0.06)	0.05 (0.062)
Business vs. Technical prof.	0.181*** (0.04)	0.160*** (0.041)	0.192*** (0.06)	0.131*** (0.048)	-0.006 (0.053)	0.046 (0.049)
Socialisation expenditure						
Educational prof. vs Managers	0.04 (0.046)	-0.026 (0.041)	0.277 (0.187)	-0.032 (0.097)	-0.649*** (0.193)	-0.286** (0.141)
Technical prof. vs. Managers	-0.007 (0.038)	-0.055* (0.034)	-0.139 (0.15)	-0.087 (0.089)	-0.115 (0.174)	-0.144 (0.126)
Business prof. vs. Managers	0.139*** (0.04)	0.08** (0.036)	0.159 (0.151)	0.022 (0.09)	-0.008 (0.174)	-0.161 (0.125)
Technical vs. Educational prof.	-0.046 (0.049)	-0.028 (0.044)	-0.416** (0.169)	-0.056 (0.091)	0.534*** (0.175)	0.142 (0.127)
Business vs. Educational prof.	0.099** (0.05)	0.106** (0.045)	-0.118 (0.168)	0.054 (0.089)	0.641*** (0.172)	0.125 (0.124)
Business vs. Technical prof.	0.145*** (0.044)	0.134*** (0.039)	0.298** (0.126)	0.109 (0.082)	0.107 (0.152)	-0.017 (0.114)

*Note.* Data show contrasts between occupational margins estimated from the models of presentational and socialization-related expenditure (full results are provided in the Supplementary document). Robust standard errors in parentheses.

\*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.1.



**Table S13. Pairwise comparison of informational expenditure between professional groups**

	UK		France		Hungary	
	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM	OLS	GLM
Educational prof. vs. Managers	0.178*** (0.032)	0.201*** (0.061)	0.686*** (0.166)	0.387*** (0.147)	0.055 (0.13)	-0.042 (0.082)
Technical prof. vs. Managers	0.01 (0.026)	0.027 (0.049)	-0.139 (0.133)	-0.246** (0.114)	-0.094 (0.117)	-0.112 (0.081)
Business prof. vs. Managers	0.058** (0.027)	0.057 (0.05)	0.222* (0.134)	0.016 (0.117)	-0.106 (0.118)	-0.069 (0.084)
Technical vs. Educational prof.	-0.168*** (0.034)	-0.175*** (0.064)	-0.824*** (0.15)	-0.633*** (0.142)	-0.149 (0.118)	-0.071 (0.081)
Business vs. Educational prof.	-0.120*** (0.035)	-0.144** (0.063)	-0.463*** (0.149)	-0.371*** (0.14)	-0.161 (0.116)	-0.027 (0.084)
Business vs. Technical prof.	0.048* (0.03)	0.031 (0.052)	0.361*** (0.112)	0.262** (0.106)	-0.012 (0.103)	0.043 (0.079)

*Note.* Table shows contrasts between occupational margins estimated from OLS and GLM models (full results are provided in the Supplementary document). Robust standard errors in parentheses. \*\*\*p<0.01, \*\*p<0.05, \*p<0.1