

IRT invariance test and cross-country-longitudinal assessment of attitudes towards entrepreneurship during the economic crisis in the EU

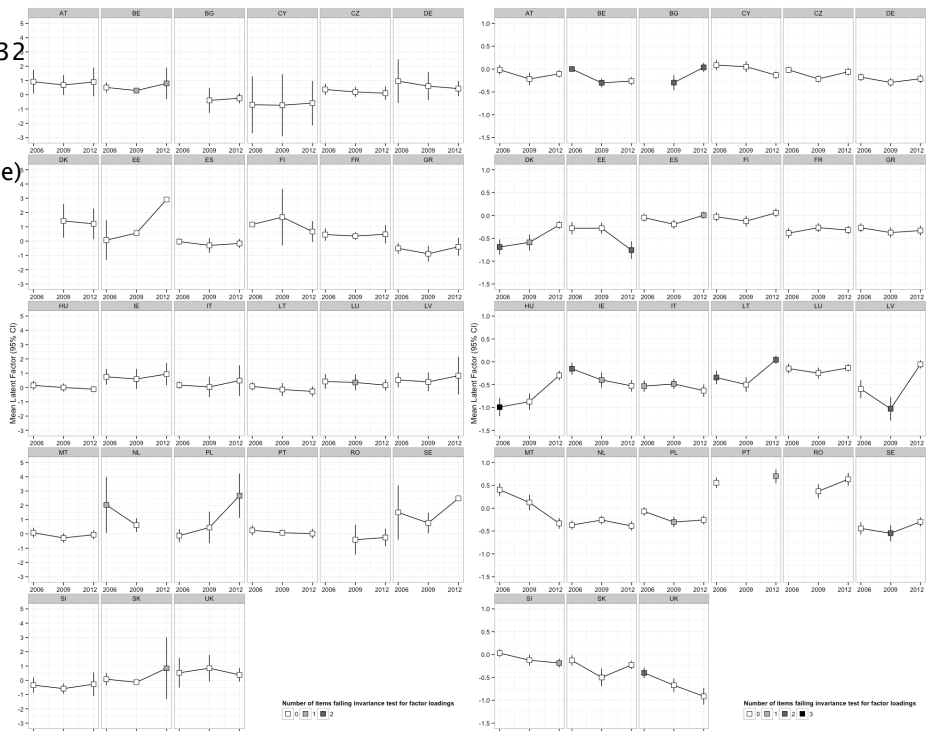
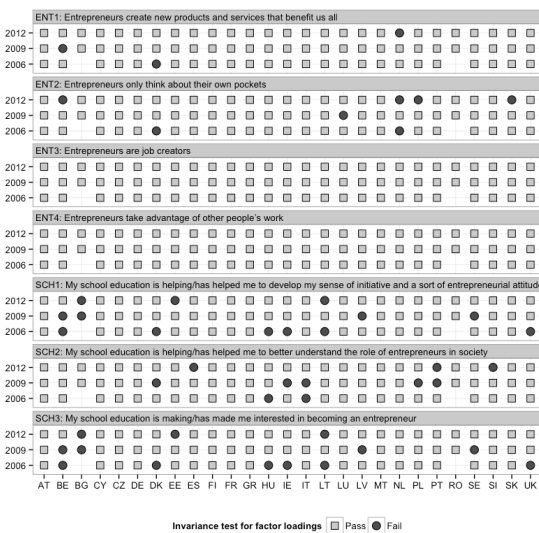


Levente Littvay (CEU)
Federico Vegetti (CEU)

The economic crisis has had a strong and potentially durable impact on Europe's economies. Policymakers view increased entrepreneurial activity (especially in the small business realm) as a potential way out of economic hardship. However, the economic crisis may also have had an impact on how such activities are perceived. Negative attitudes fuelled by anticapitalistic movements, together with the increased risks associated with starting a new business, may have led the public to develop negative attitudes towards entrepreneurship as both a general economic activity and a potential career path. The Eurobarometer has been tracking attitudes towards entrepreneurs and also education's perceived impact on one's own personal entrepreneurial opportunities since before the crisis began. But no study, to date, tested the cross-country and over time comparability of these measures. This study utilizes Asparouhov and Muthen's new IRT alignment method to test measurement invariance for the two batteries. Once adjusted for measurement invariance failures, we discuss cross-country and longitudinal variation in these attitudes. Findings contribute to a general discussion on the impact of the economic crisis on citizen's attitudes.

Data

- Flash Eurobarometer on Entrepreneurship
- 2006, 2009 & 2012, Medians n=511,502,932
- Perception of Entrepreneurship Scale
 - 2006 Dichotomous
 - Rest 4pt so we Dichotomized
- Impact of Schools Scale (4pt Agree-Disagree)



Findings

- Figures: missing confidence intervals are too wide to fit
- We had low expectations of scale performance
 - Contrary to expectation they worked OK
- WARNING: Invariant items seem to produce outliers
- Potential case studies may not be so interesting
- Little variance both within and across countries
 - few exceptions
- Perception of Entrepreneurship Scale - Better invariance
 - but less variance over time and across countries
- Impact of Schools Scale - Lot of noninvariance
 - Interesting Case Studies: Malta (deterioration)
 - Hungary & Latvia (improvement)
 - UK (low levels) also Sweden, Hungary & Netherlands
 - Portugal and Romania (high levels)
- Interpretation? (We are not there. Seeking comments.)

This project has received funding from the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme for research, technological development and demonstration under grant agreement no 613257