

# Solidarity, Reciprocity, and Economy in times of downturn: Understanding and Articulating the logics of Old and New Values in Late Capitalism

EASA Network for the Anthropology of Economy  
By Hugo Valenzuela Garcia

4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> February 2014

UAB. Barcelona



# Launching Meeting

## © Welcoming

- © Thanks to Peter Simonic (Ljubljana), Marta Lobato (UAB) and the Department of Anthropology (UAB) for their support and help!

## © EASA Network for Anthropology of Economy

- © Creation and scope.
- © Enhancing the Network.

## © On “Solidarity, Reciprocity and Economy in times of downturn”.

# EASA Network for Anthropology of Economy

- © The Network was created in 2013 in order to interconnect European anthropologists working in similar topics, to provide information, to promote events and to foster research on Economic Anthropology.
  - © Open space where initiatives are very welcome.
  - © We are willing to make a very creative, democratic and dynamic space.
- © We are living a vigorous rebirth of Economic Anthropology.
  - © More students, subfields, journals and job opportunities.
- © Some reasons for the revival :
  - © Economic crisis and the pervasive presence of economic issues.
  - © Complex processes of globalization and localization (that legitimate anthropological enquiry).
  - © Decline of the postmodern critique within Anthropology.
  - © Economic Anthropology has its own theoretical corpus.

# Network's activities

© Please, join the listserve:

<http://lists.easaonline.org/listinfo.cgi/anthecon-easaonline.org>

© EASA Conference at Tallinn, 2014

© Panel P113: “Local entrepreneurial responses to global forces: new and alternative enterprise re-configurations in times of crisis and economic hardship (EASA Network for Economic Anthropology)”

<http://www.nomadit.co.uk/easa/easa2014/panels.php5?PanelID=301>

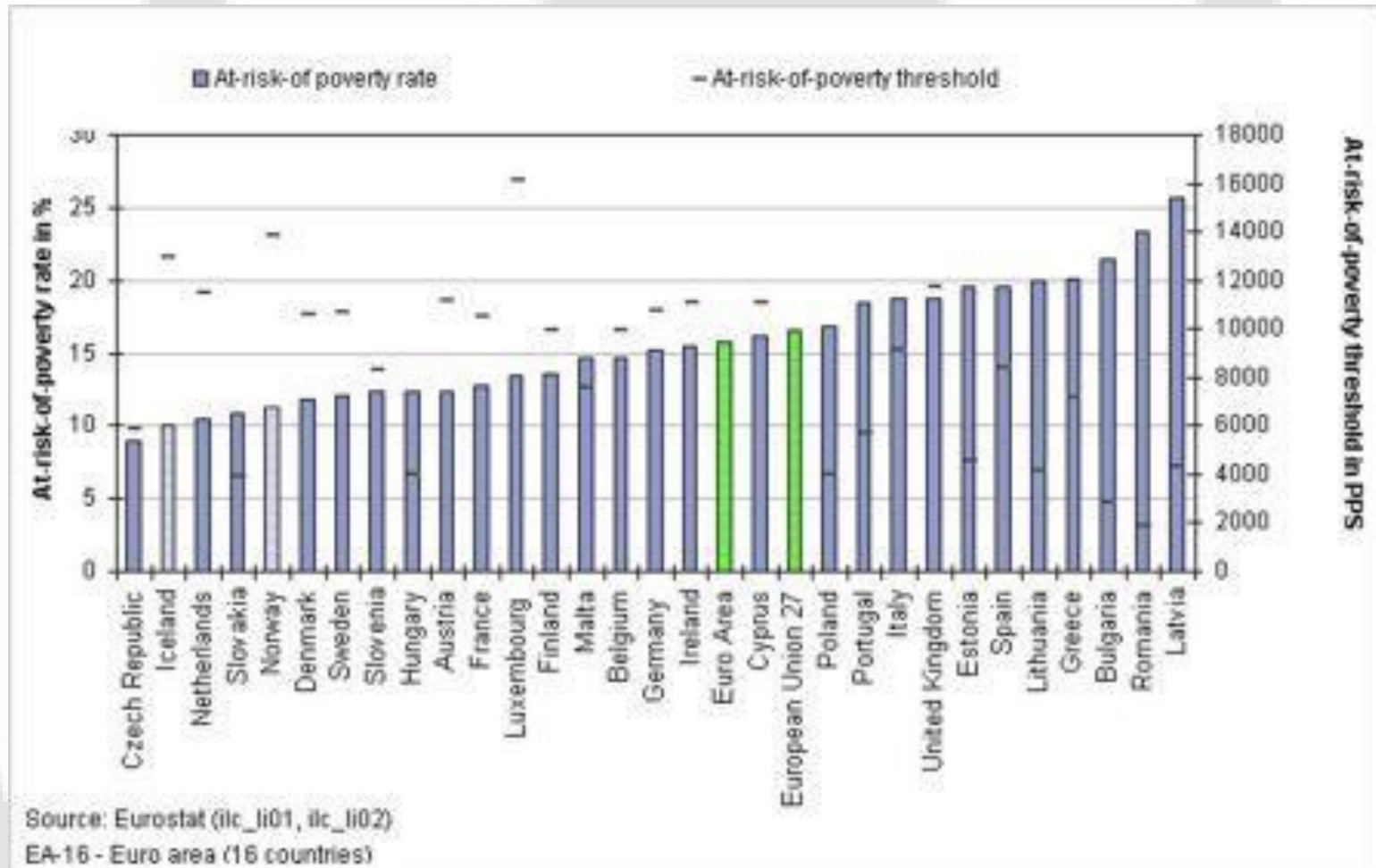


**Solidarity, Reciprocity,  
and Economy in times of  
downturn**

# Solidarity, Reciprocity...

- ④ We have proposed a trending topic for opening this network.
- ④ The impacts of the economic crisis in Europe.
  - ④ Devastating impact in the **European periphery** (South and Eastern Europe), but also noticeable **within richer countries (class gap)**.
  - ④ It affects not only the poorest social strata, but also to a large **middle class**.
- ④ Socioeconomic consequences:
  - ④ **Poverty, labour casualization, unemployment, fall in consumption, riots, forced labour migration, evictions for unpaid mortgages.**

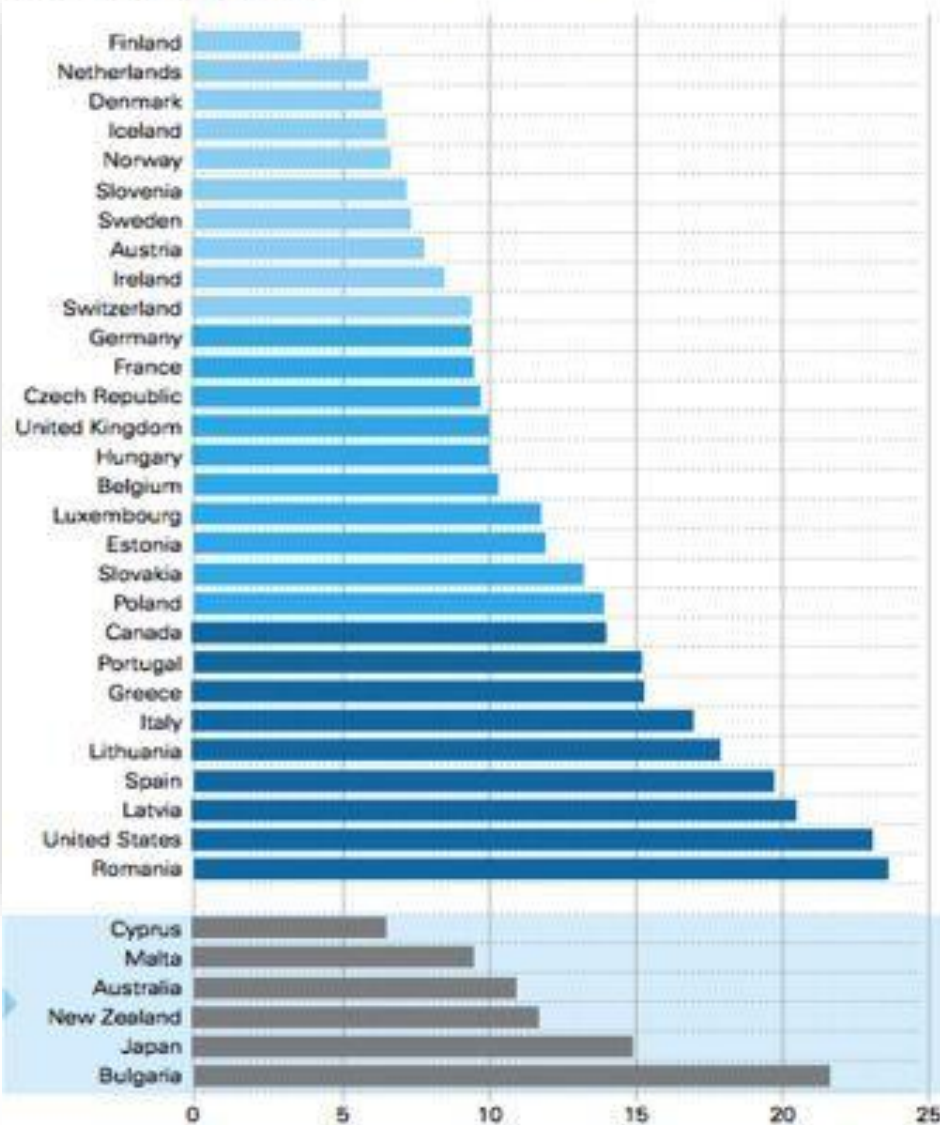
# Poverty . . .



# Child poverty...

**Figure 1.1a Relative child poverty rates**

% of children aged 0-17 living in households with equivalent incomes below 50% of national median

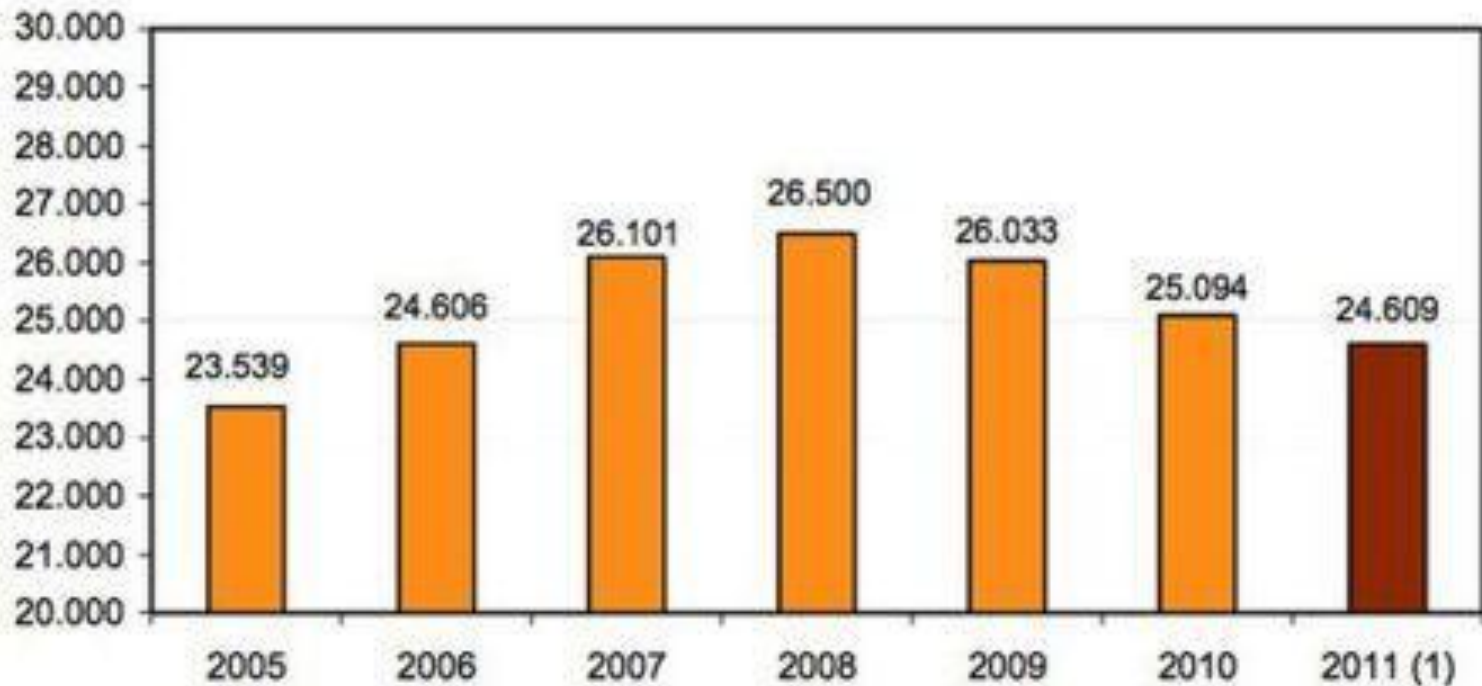


- © 2.826.549 children un risk of poverty in Spain (33,8%)
- © 1.807.700 households with all their members unemployed.
- © 3 million people in risk of severe poverty
- © Major gap ever between poor and affluent people.



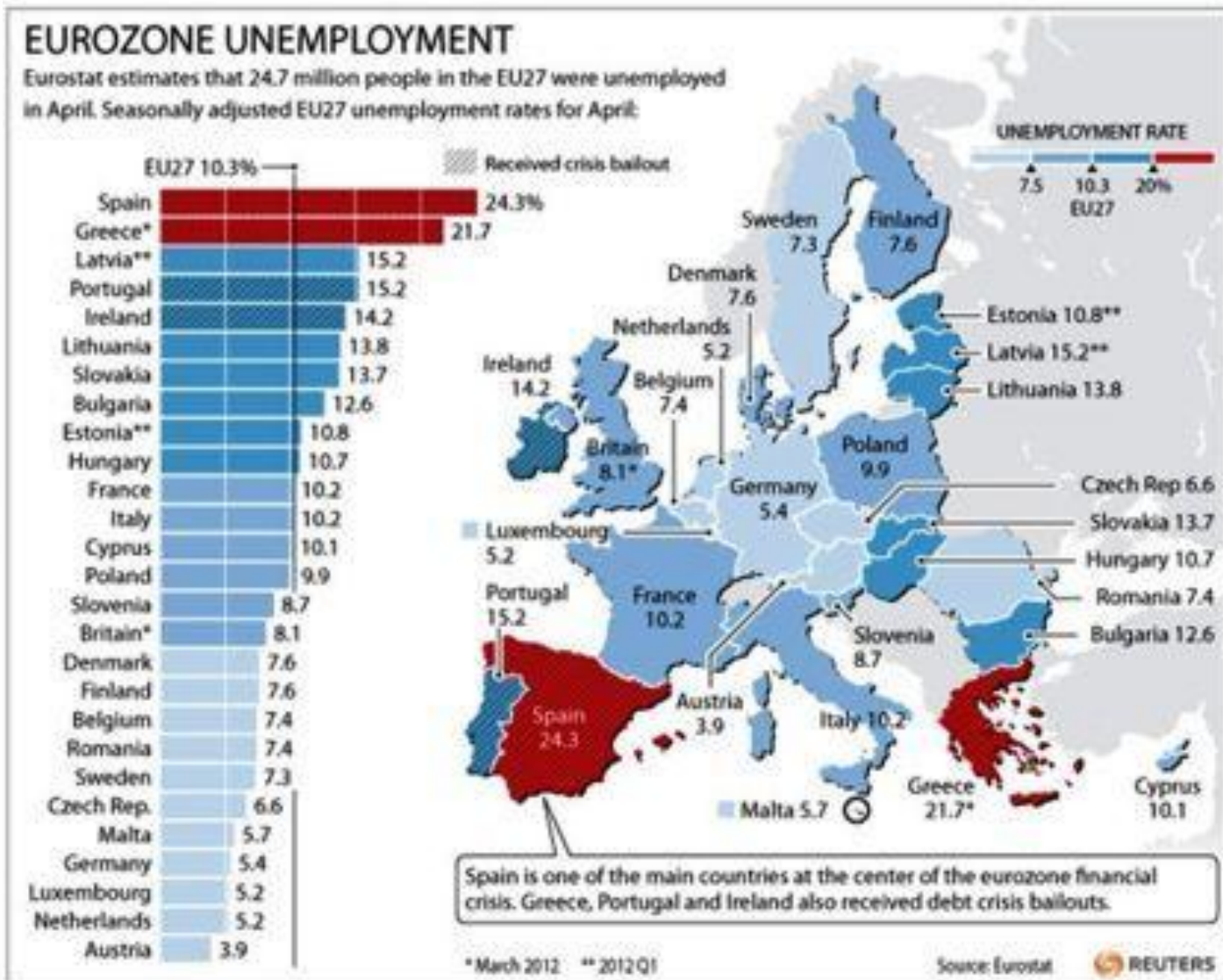
# Household income and consumption...

**Evolución de los ingresos medios por hogar**  
Euros



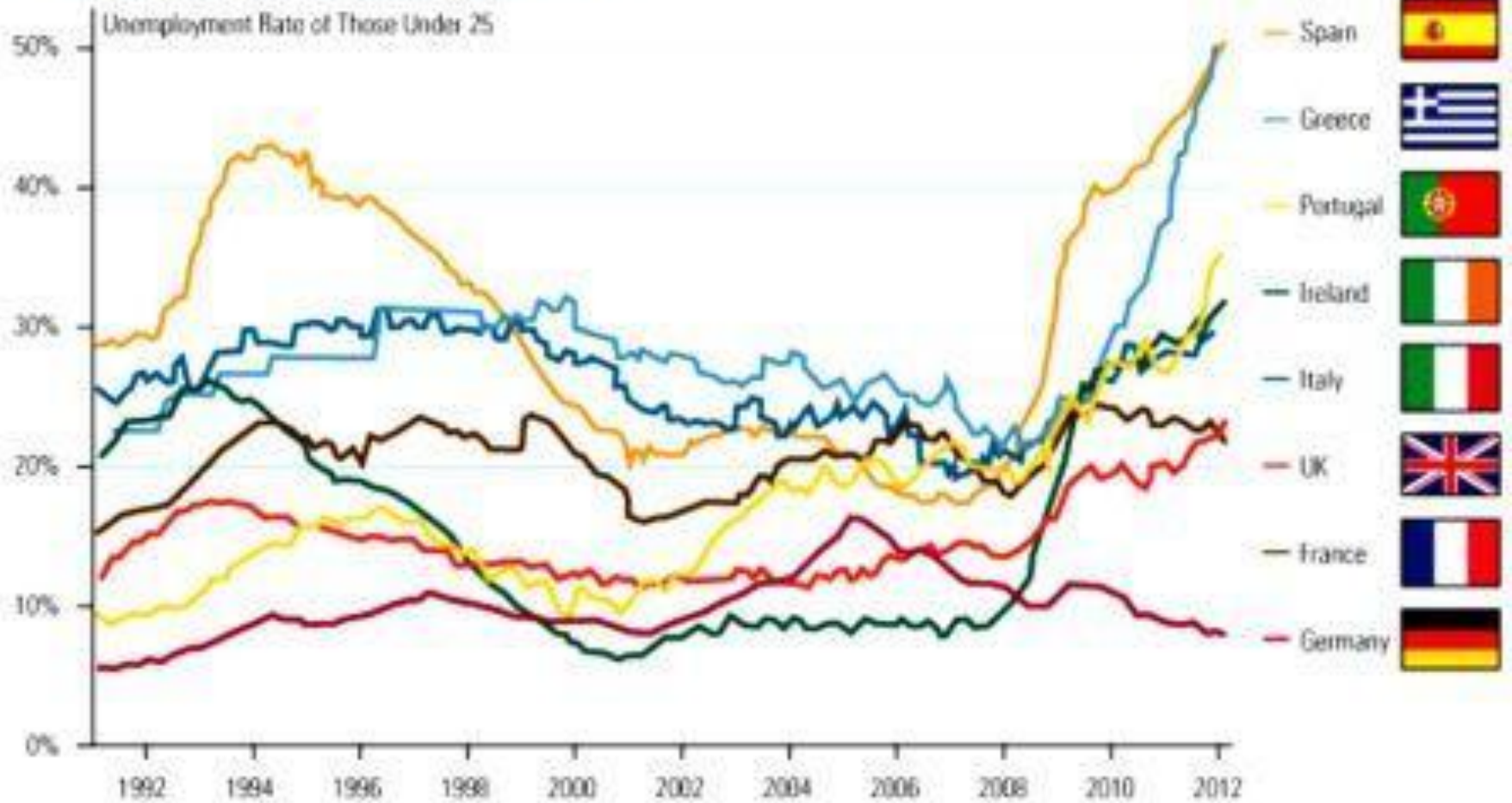
(1) Datos provisionales

# Unemployment . . .



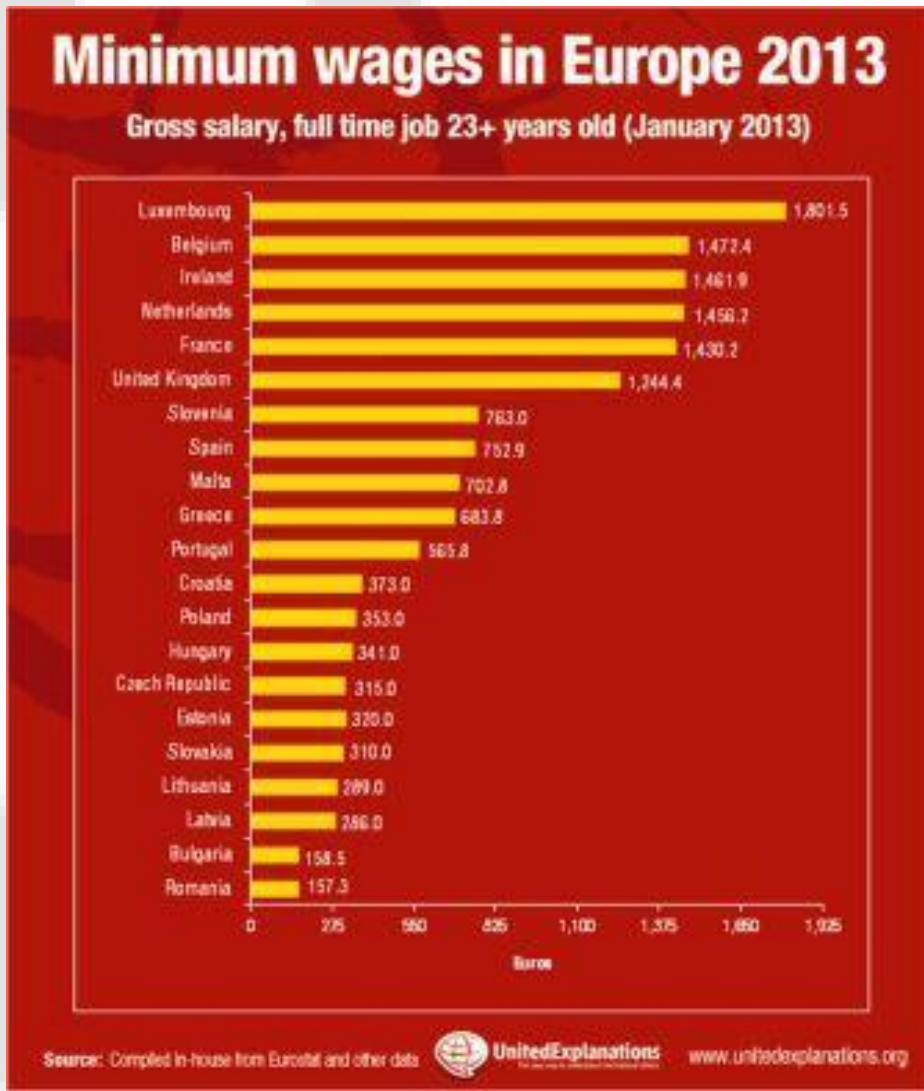
# Youth unemployment...

## European Youth Unemployment Skyrockets



Source: Thomson Reuters Datastream, Eurostat  
Reuters graphic/Scott Barber 4/2/2012

# Minimum wages in Europe...



- ⊙ Job destruction and labor causalization.
- ⊙ Mini-jobs, low-paid jobs, jobs in practice, etc.
- ⊙ Lost of labor rights and benefits.

# Mortgages and evictions...

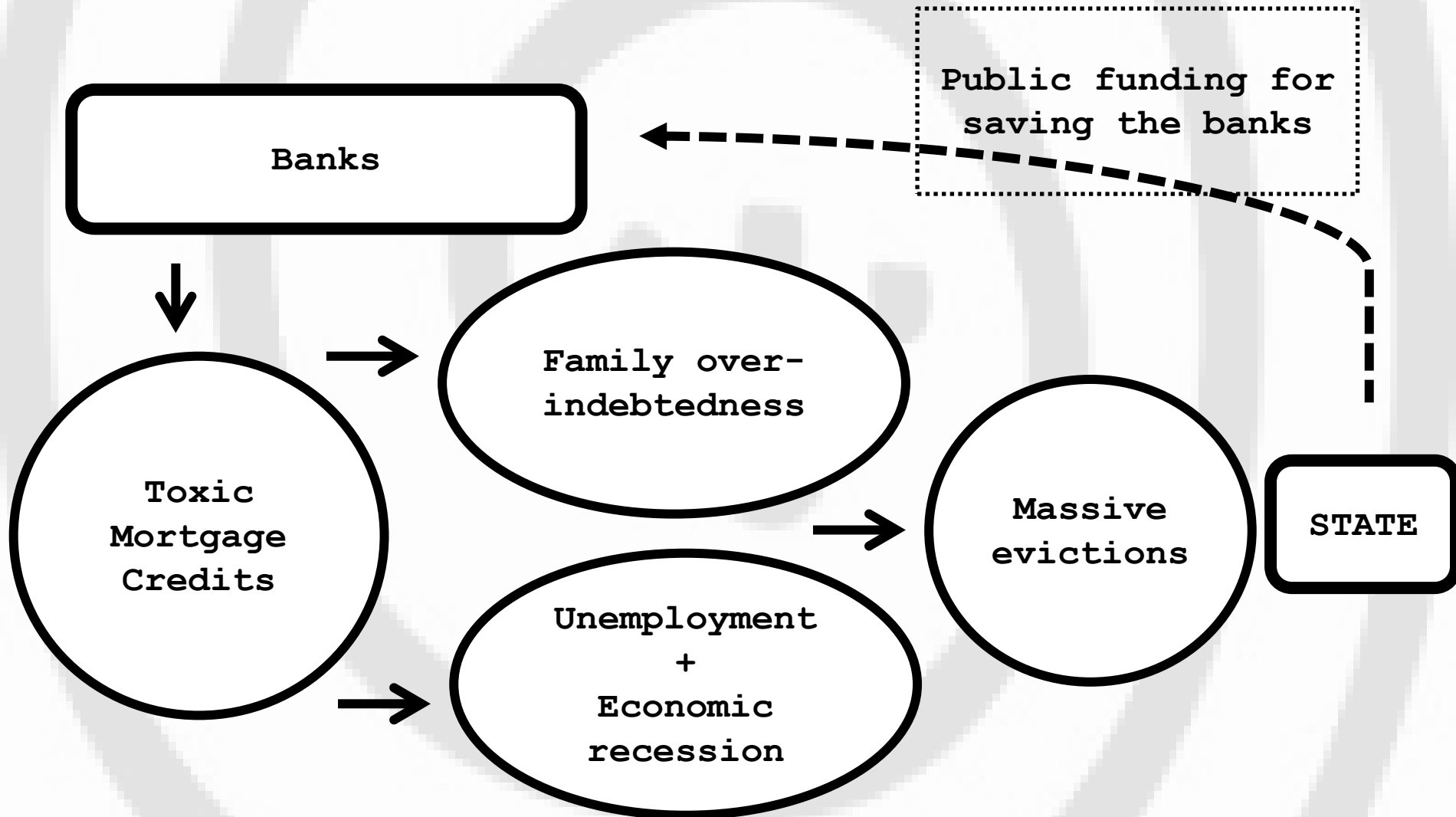


First semester 2012: 46.559 forced evictions (517 per day!)

First trimester 2013: 19.468 evictions

Suicides.

# Paradoxes and Civil Indignation



# The collapse of the Welfare State

- Ⓢ Right-wings and neoliberal policies.
- Ⓢ Privatization
  - Ⓢ Health
  - Ⓢ Education
  - Ⓢ Social services
  - Ⓢ ...
- Ⓢ Public promotion of entrepreneurship



**STARTUP**  
**SPAIN**



**Civil Responses to  
Economic and Political  
Pressures**



# Civil reactions and political turmoil...

- ④ Ideological resistance and economic needs.
  - ④ Peaceful demonstrations.
  - ④ Riots.
  - ④ Boycotts and vandalism.
  - ④ Black economy (25% GDP)

# Civil reactions and economic alternatives...



# Civil reactions and economic alternatives...

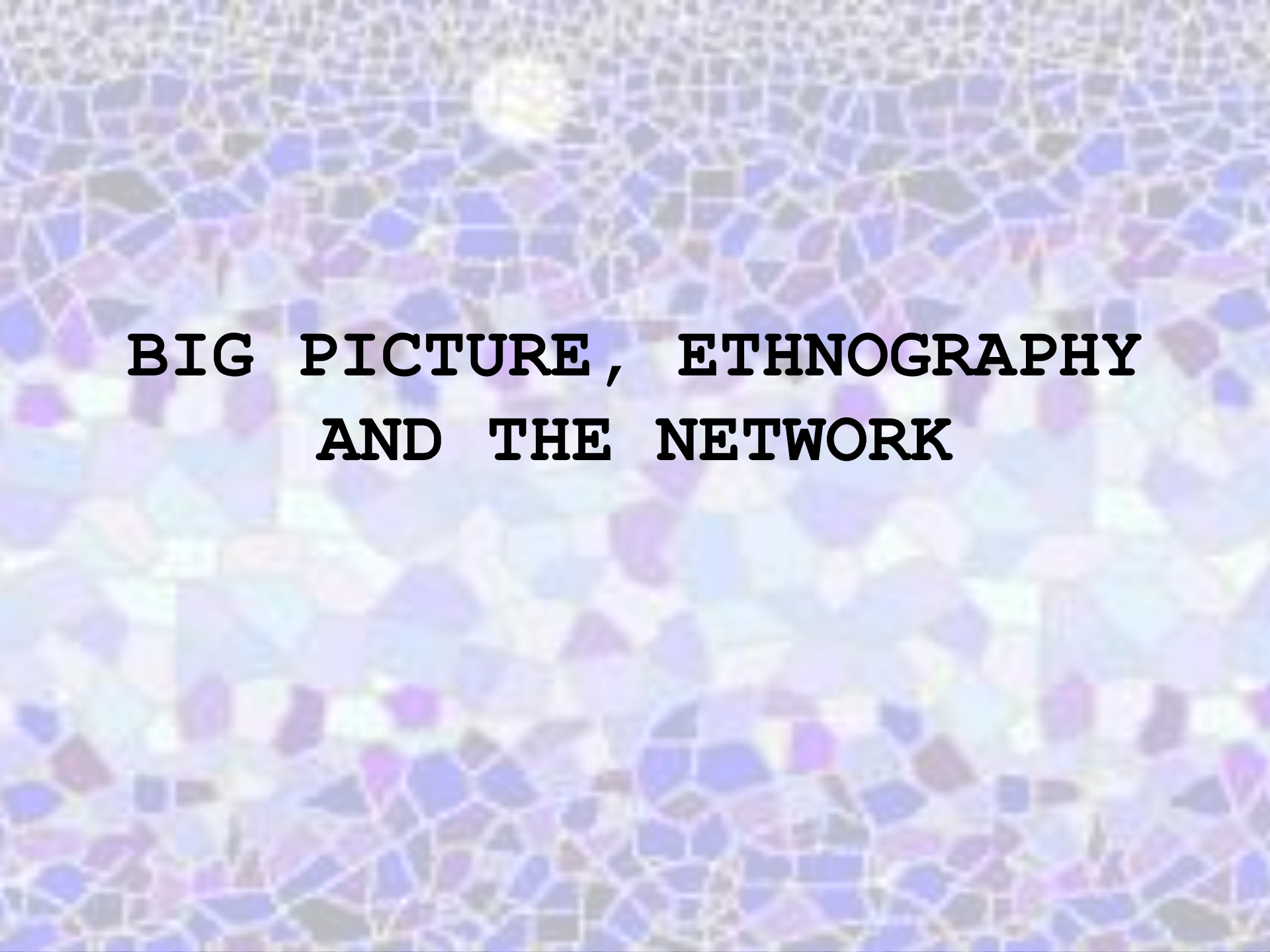


# Civil reactions and economic alternatives...



# Civil reactions and economic alternatives...

- ④ “New” forms of consumption, distribution and production to overcome crisis.
  - ④ Slow food.
  - ④ Cooperative consumption.
  - ④ Low cost consumption.
  - ④ Barter networks.
  - ④ Ecological cooperatives.
  - ④ Social currencies and LETS (Local Exchange Trading Systems)
  - ④ Time Banks
  - ④ Post-executive enterprises (democratic, horizontal management)
  - ④ ...



**BIG PICTURE, ETHNOGRAPHY  
AND THE NETWORK**

# The big picture and research questions

- ④ Local reactions to Crisis and Neoliberal expansion.
- ④ New emergent phenomena.
  - ④ Production, consumption and distribution.
- ④ Theoretical sounding concepts: “social and human economy”, “moral economy”, “plural capitalism” ...
  - ④ Are these new economic alternatives of old (community) strategies?
  - ④ What’s the role of the State?
  - ④ How do civilians face these difficulties?
  - ④ Are we experiencing a new European reality in the making...

# The power of the network

## **BIG PICTURE**

**Disconnected, local, ethnographies.**

**Shared theoretical agendas and established research teams**

**A need to generate comparative and multi-sited fieldwork and ethnography**

## **A REAL RESEARCH NETWORK**



# Thanks for coming!

- ③ Name and Institution
- ③ Research interests
- ③ Details, comments, etc.