

Talking it Through in The Street

How Berlin residents organize social support during Covid19 restrictions

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March 24th, 2021

WZB Colloquium Series Soziologische Perspektiven auf die Corona-Krise

Georg Simmel Center for Metropolitan Research, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Sonderforschungsbereich 1265 “Re-Figuration von Räumen”



Theory Thoughts



- Social capital depends on organisational context (Small 2009) and spatiality (Blokland & Savage 2008)
- Whom we talk to is not necessary whom we *say we would* talk to (Small 2017)
- Social capital as access to resources by virtue of *networks* (Portes 1998) may not capture capabilities to organize life in casual sociability or the everydayness (habitual interactions, conviviality; Blokland et al. 2015;)



Questions for Today



- Where do residents of Berlin organize social support before and during the first COVID-19 restrictions?
- What happened when their usual habitual interactions became impossible? Who was affected, and how?



Research Project

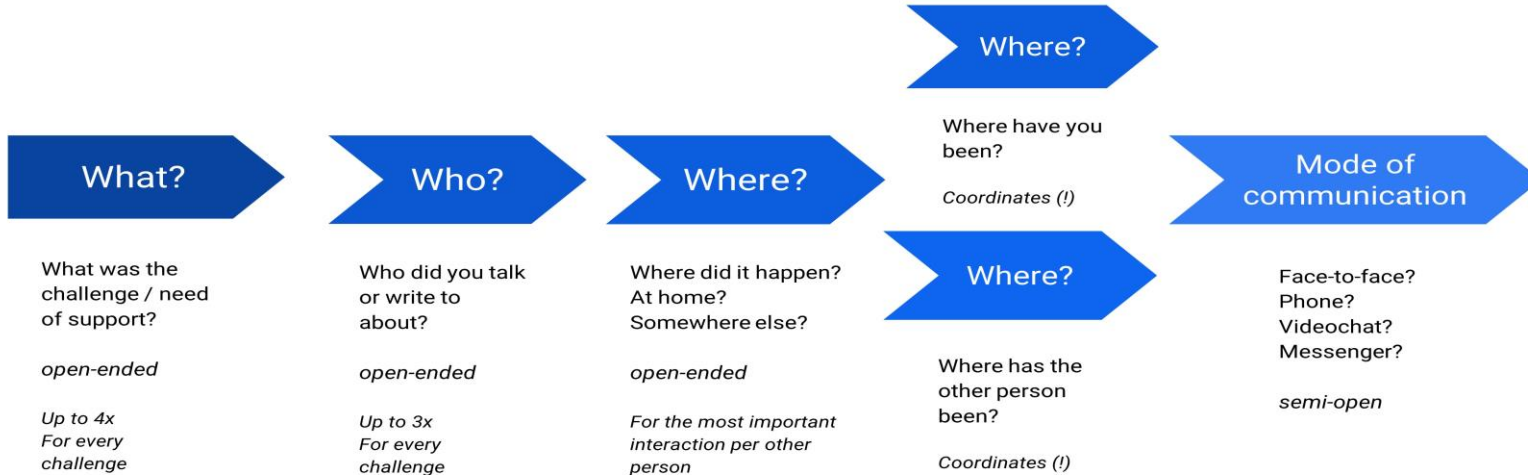


- SFB1265 ‚Refiguration of space‘ partial project: ‚The World in My Street‘: relevance of neighborhood in transnational world of support and belonging
- BUA-addition ‚Urban Life under COVID19‘
- 2 samples (2019 and 2020), 4 neighborhoods, most dissimilar cases, N in 2019= 574 and N in 2020= 740
- 194 ‘second round’ participants, rest added through random sample by personal invitations by ‘Anmelde-register’
- Not reported today: non-representative sample of close to 3000 Berliners

What did we ask? (1)

- Demographics etc, length of residence, living space, household composition ...
- What did people do in the city before restrictions? How strongly did they miss these activities?
- Were such sites also sites of interactions with people *not* part of their networks?
 - How often do you speak there with people whom you have never seen before?
 - How often do you speak there with people whom you meet there regularly?

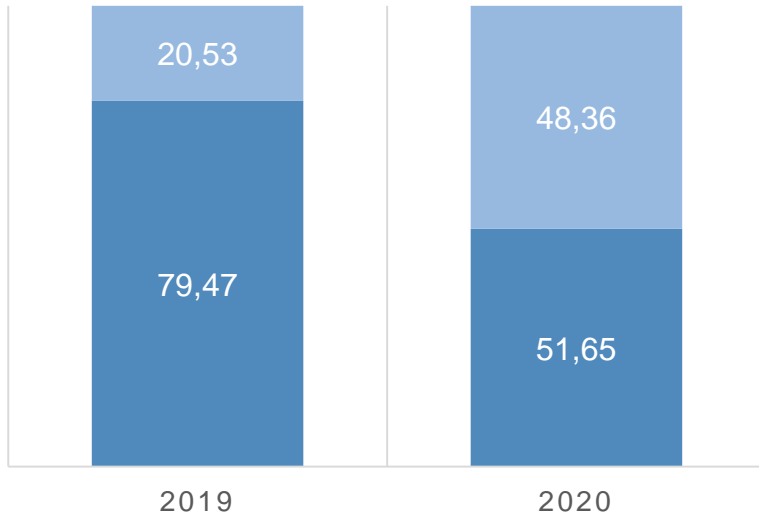
What did we ask? (2)



What happened to networks of support?

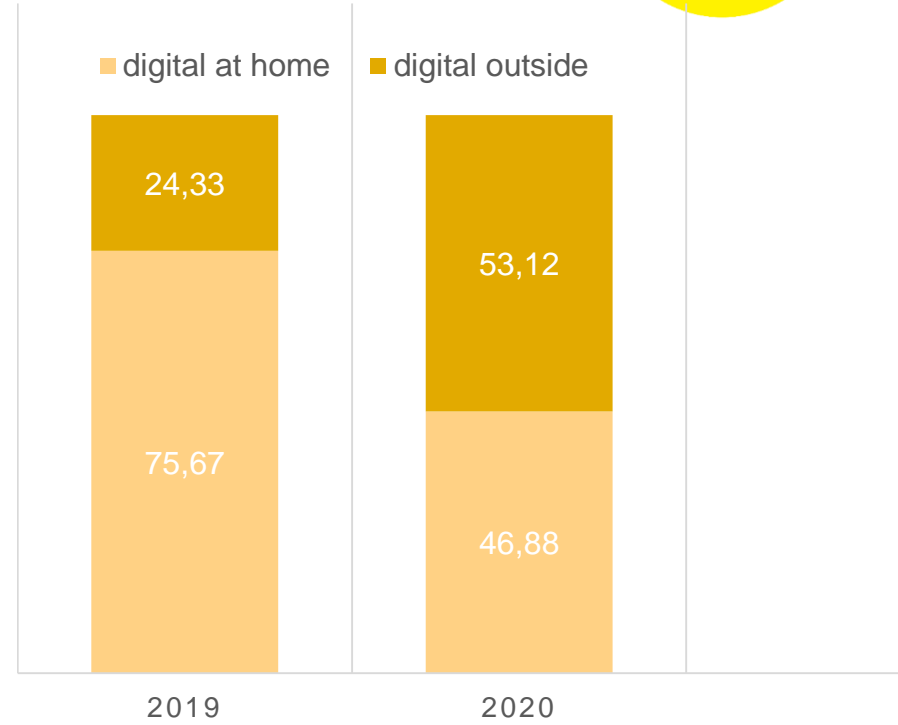
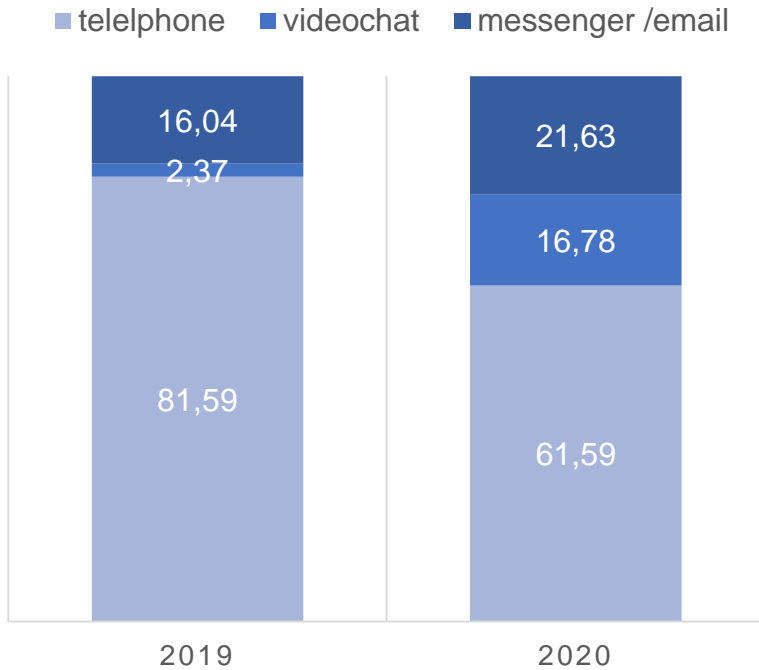
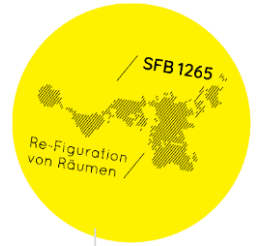
SHARE OF INTERACTIONS (%)

■ face to face ■ digital



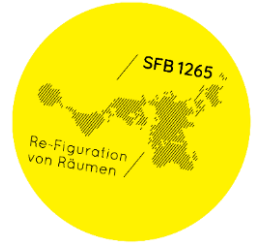
- 2019: 7% no support, 2020: 16%
- Average # of supportive ties dropped: 2.48 to 2.29
- Face-to-face became only a little more likely at home (49% in 2019, 51% in 2020)

Digital Support

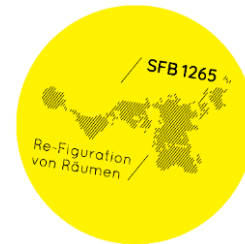




Talking it through in the street

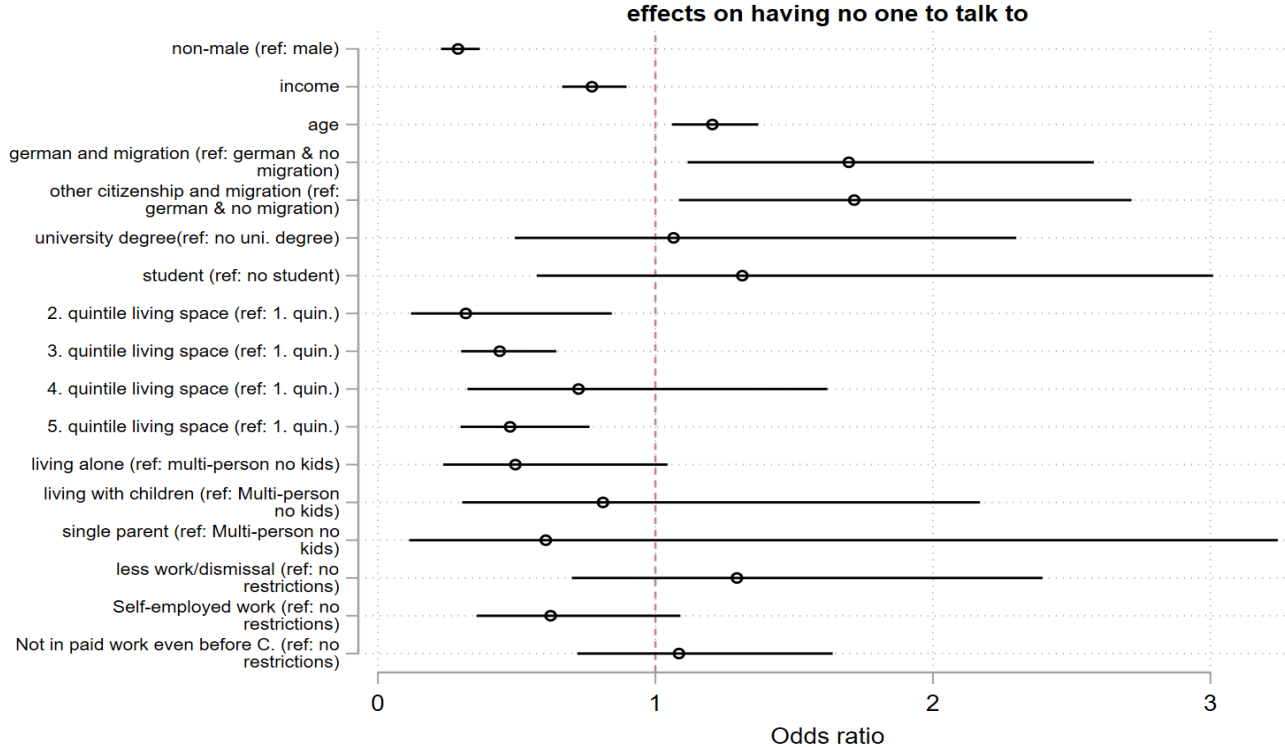


- A practice that appears to replace meeting with others outside of the home before COVID19 in bars, cafes and other spaces where people known to each other could have gathered
- People are still leaving the house: ‚talk while walk‘
- People strong in support before and after COVID seem to have ties that may *come from* context but can be *lifted out* of context
- Digital support outside less helpful than at home, and less than in 2019



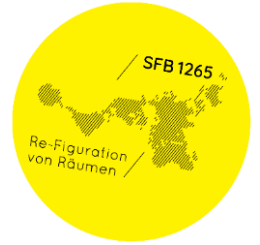
16%

Lacking support: For whom did it matter?





Lacking support



- Gender
- Age
- Migration history or non-German citizenship
- Income
- Living in smallest 20% of residential spaces



Who uses the urban infrastructure? Shortcut



- A very quick view at bars and pubs and public sport facilities: gender, age, migration history, small living space
- Bivariat preliminary analyses: places where people talk to strangers & meet others are significantly more likely to be missed
- How is this connected to ‚lacking support‘?



Losing urbanity: To whom does it matter?



Almost always talk w strangers in..	No support	Support +
Bars & Pubs	20%	21%
Sport grounds	25%	20%



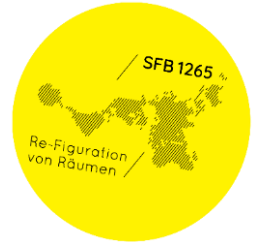
Losing urbanity: To whom does it matter?



Meet (often) same people only there..	No support	Support +
Bars & Pubs	82%	77%
Sports grounds	86%	77%



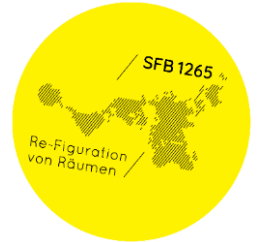
Conclusion



1. COVID19 restrictions curbed support, esp. for men, elderly, people w migration history and w lower income
2. For those continue to find support: still leaving the house, talking it through in the street
3. Examples of bars & sportsgrounds: use is not the same for all
4. Habitual encounters may matter more for some
5. Casual sociability cannot be replaced by digital communication



References



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Thank You!



Further Information:
www.corona.hu-berlin.de

www.sfb1265.de