

Norvēģijas valdības divpusējā finanšu instrumenta grantu shēmas „Īstermiņa ekspertu fonds” īstenoto projektu rezultāti, izveidotā sadarbība un ietverto tēmu aktuāli jautājumi



EEZ finanšu instruments  
Norvēģijas finanšu instruments



**Tematisko semināru cikls**  
**„MAZS PROJEKTS LIELAI IDEJAI”**  
2010.gada oktobris – decembris

**3. Novembris, plkst. 13.00 – 17.00**

**„ILGSTPĒJĪGAS ATTĪSTĪBAS STRATĒGIJAS, TO  
NOVĒRTĒJUMS. LATVIJAS PIEMĒRA ANALĪZE”**

*GUIDO SECHI, BARI UNIVERSITĀTES DOKTORANTS  
(ITĀLIJA)*

# Sustainable development: the social dimension

General considerations and findings from Latvia

Guido Sechi

Technical University of Bari (Italy)

[guidosechi@inbox.lv](mailto:guidosechi@inbox.lv)

# Summary

- Sustainability and social development: an overview
- Social learning in the Latvian society: empirical findings and comments. Focus on cities / rural areas dichotomy

# Regional policy in the EU

- Traditional regional policy
  - Regionally balanced *economic growth*
  - Financial assistance and infrastructure empowerment
  - Re-direction of resources from prosperous to *lagging-behind* areas
- Recent shifts
  - From *growth* to *development*
  - From *economic* development to *sustainable* development

# Definitions of sustainable development

- “Meets the needs of the present generation, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Bruntland, 1987)
- Improves “the quality of life whilst living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems” (IUCN, UNEP and WWF; 1991);
- Provides with environmental, social and economic services all the members of a community, without menacing the effectiveness of natural, built and social environments, on which the provision of such services depends (ICLEI, 1994).

# Sustainability-related issues

- A concept of territorial wealth including, but not limited to, economic growth, which implies the necessity for regional policy to *control negative externalities of growth* (Pouyanne, 2004);
- An integrated concept of development based on the safeguarding of local resources (above all, commons) and human well-being, in a long-term perspective;
- Recognition and respect of different cultures, human relations and ways of living (Healey, 1997).

# Dimensions of sustainable development

- *Economic*: relates to the production of artificial or built capital (goods and services);
- *Social*: relates to the preservation of social and human capital, based on the principle of equity;
- *Environmental*: relates to the preservation of ecosystems (ecological capital);
- *Territorial (cohesion)*: relates to the harmonious development of targeted territories. Introduced as a priority by the European Commission in 2004 (CEC, 2004)

# Conceptual approaches to sustainable development policy (Davoudi, 2000)

- Modernization approach
  - based on a *gradualist* improvement of the status quo
  - aimed at making economic processes socially and environmentally benign
  - Based on regulatory frameworks and hierarchical governance (*top-down*)
- Risk society
  - based on a proactive defence of environment and on social transformation
  - Participative approach to planning (partially *bottom-up*)
- *Relevance of social learning processes*

# The social dimension of sustainability

## (1)

- Growth of relevance in the last two decades: social implications behind all development axes
  - Social identity as the basis of cohesion and virtuous development
  - Social impact of economic, environmental, cohesion policies
  - Relevant role of society in sustainability implementation
- Focus on social assets building in development agency international projects (e.g. World Bank)
- Growing use of the *social capital concept* in development studies
- Growth of participative planning practices
  - Social learning
  - Consensus building
  - Bottom-up emphasis
  - Inclusive approaches

# The social dimension of sustainability

## (2)

- Different views of social development
  - *Communitarian*: focus on voluntary associations
  - *Networks*: focus on entrepreneurs
  - *Institutional*: focus on political and legal institutions
  - *Synergy*: focus on different levels (community and state-society linkages)
- Social capital-based analysis of society
  - *Integration* (intra-community ties) and *linkage* (inter-community ties)
  - Negative phenomena: amoral individualism / familism; anomie

# Social assets and residence place features

- Urban communities
  - Distance between geographical and non-geographical communities
  - Lower trust
  - Prevalence of *bridging* links (*linkage*)
- Rural communities
  - Overlapped geographical and non-geographical communities
  - Cultural homogeneity
  - Prevalence of *bonding* links (*integration*)

# Benefits of social learning

- Relevant factor behind innovative capability of regions and cities (Lundvall)
  - Collective learning theory (Camagni)
  - Creativity theory (Florida)
- Access to relevant non-expert knowledge (Schon)
- Social capital as a relevant factor behind knowledge combination and hence intellectual capital growth (Ghoshal)

# Social learning in Latvia: empirical findings

# Social development in Latvia: main issues

- Source: Background Review for Latvian Development Strategy 2030 (Laboratory of Analytic and Strategic Studies, 2007)
- Features of society
  - Well-developed informal networks
  - Low levels of civic engagement
  - High ethnic fragmentation
  - High generational gap
- Problematic relationship between *integration* and *linkage*
  - Trust limited to family members and friends
  - Insufficient exploitation of potential civic linkages
- Development strategies focused on *economic growth*
  - Low attention to *multi-axis* development and *long-term* vision

# Empirical analysis: data, methodology, context

- Research issue: social learning patterns according to geographical, demographic, socio-economic factors
- Approach
  - *Micro* level
  - Social capital and knowledge as individual assets
- Statistical methodology and tools
  - Descriptive statistics
  - Structural analysis
  - Bayesian estimation (AMOS 7.0)
- Data
  - Surveys on creativity, quality of life, sustainability awareness in Latvia
  - Over 1500 individual observations

# Descriptive statistics: social capital and learning

- Role of educational, professional and informal channels in individual knowledge growth
  - Relevance of informal learning channels in rural areas
  - Relevance of professional training channels in Riga and other cities
- Obstacles to knowledge growth
  - Higher relevance of accessibility, lack of information and education in rural areas
  - Higher relevance of old age in cities
- Trust and communitarian sensitivity
  - High levels of trust towards family and friends
  - Low level of trust towards institutions
  - High sense of belonging to the neighborhood
  - Low sense of belonging to the city
  - Similar results for urban and rural areas

# First analysis

Impact of social capital dimensions  
on knowledge sharing and  
environmental learning

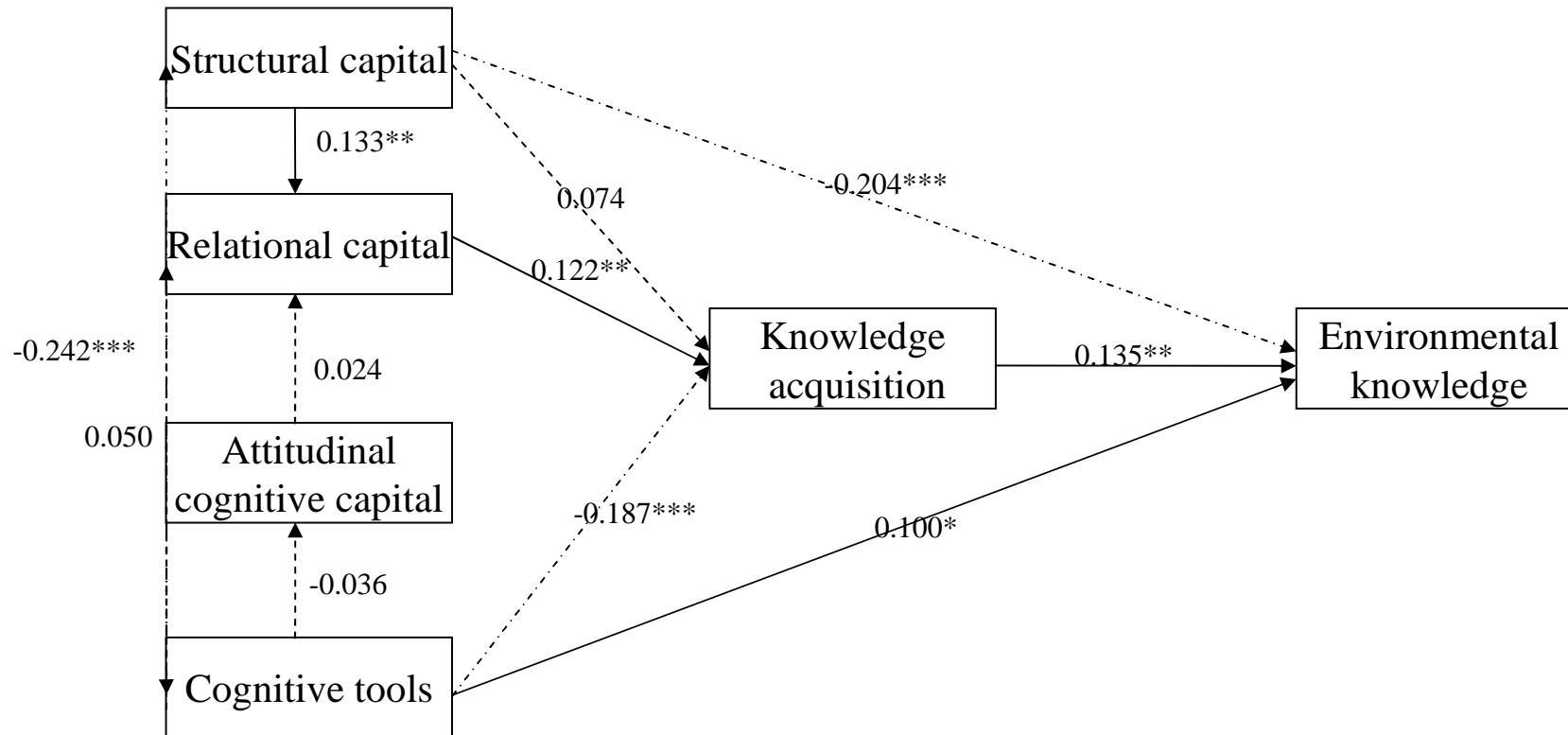
# Theoretical model dimensions

- Social capital dimensions
  - *Structural* - networks
  - *Relational* – positive attitudes towards the community
  - *Attitudinal cognitive* – openness towards ‘external’ forms and sources of knowledge
  - *Cognitive tools* – broadness of the knowledge base
- *Knowledge acquisition* – intensity of knowledge exchange
- *Environmental knowledge* – consciousness about environmental issues

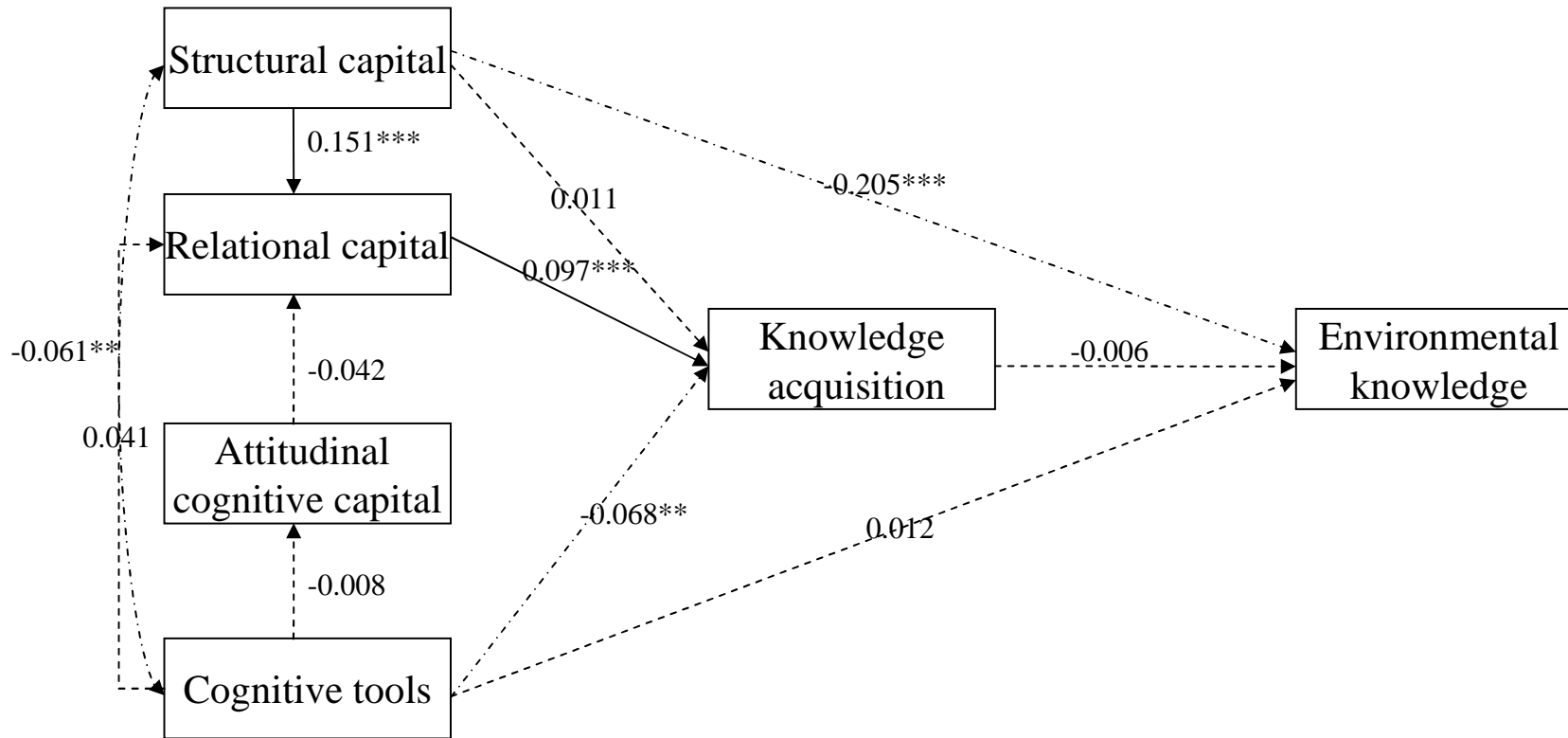
# Variables

- *Ordinal, mostly psychometric*
  - Community involvement (*structural capital*)
  - Sense of territorial belonging (*relational capital*)
  - Tolerance towards ethnic minorities (*attitudinal cognitive capital*)
  - Education degree (*cognitive tools*)
  - Satisfaction with personal knowledge enrichment (*knowledge acquisition*)
  - Consciousness about pollution-related issues (*environmental knowledge*)

# Urban areas



# Rural areas



# Second analysis

Impact of different dimensions of  
social capital on different dimensions  
of knowledge

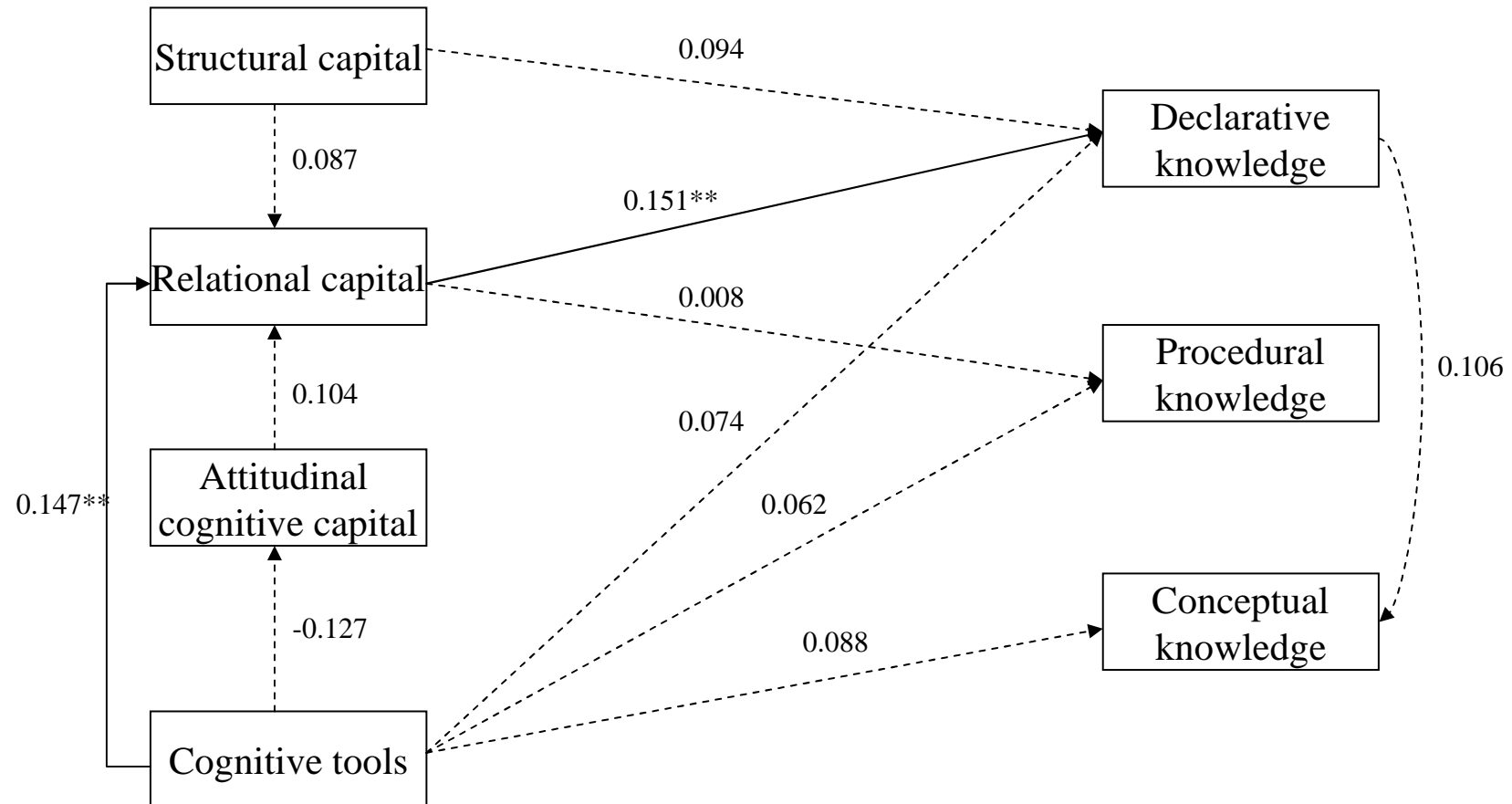
# Theoretical model dimensions

- Dimensions of social capital
  - Structural
  - Relational
  - Attitudinal cognitive
  - Cognitive tools
- Dimensions of shareable knowledge
  - Declarative
  - Procedural
  - Conceptual

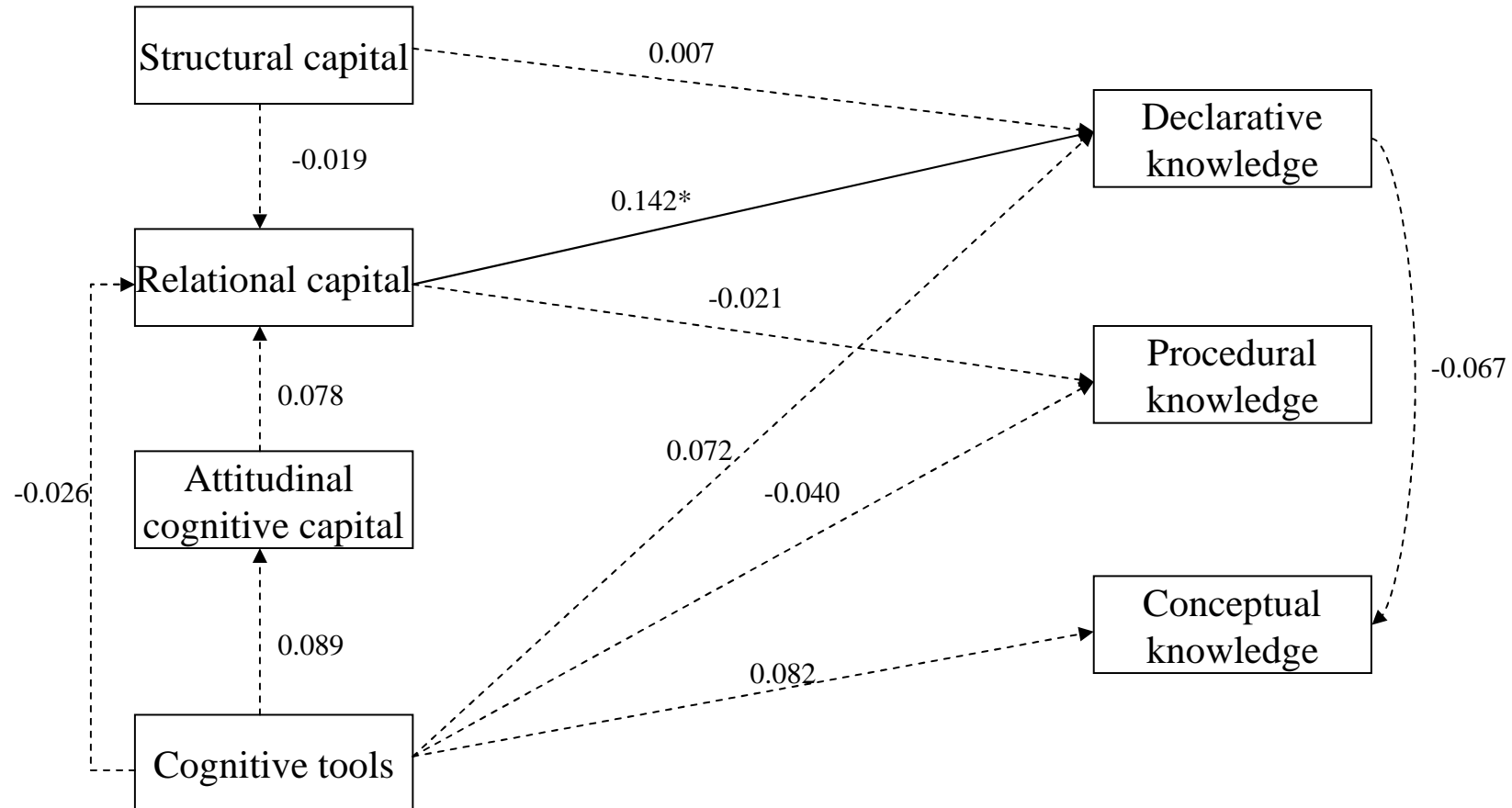
# Variables

- NGO involvement (Structural capital)
- Trust towards neighbours (Relational capital)
- Openness towards others' ideas (Attitudinal cognitive capital)
- Education degree (Cognitive tools)
- Info exchange (Declarative knowledge)
- Practical skills (Procedural knowledge)
- Long-term oriented attitude (Conceptual knowledge)

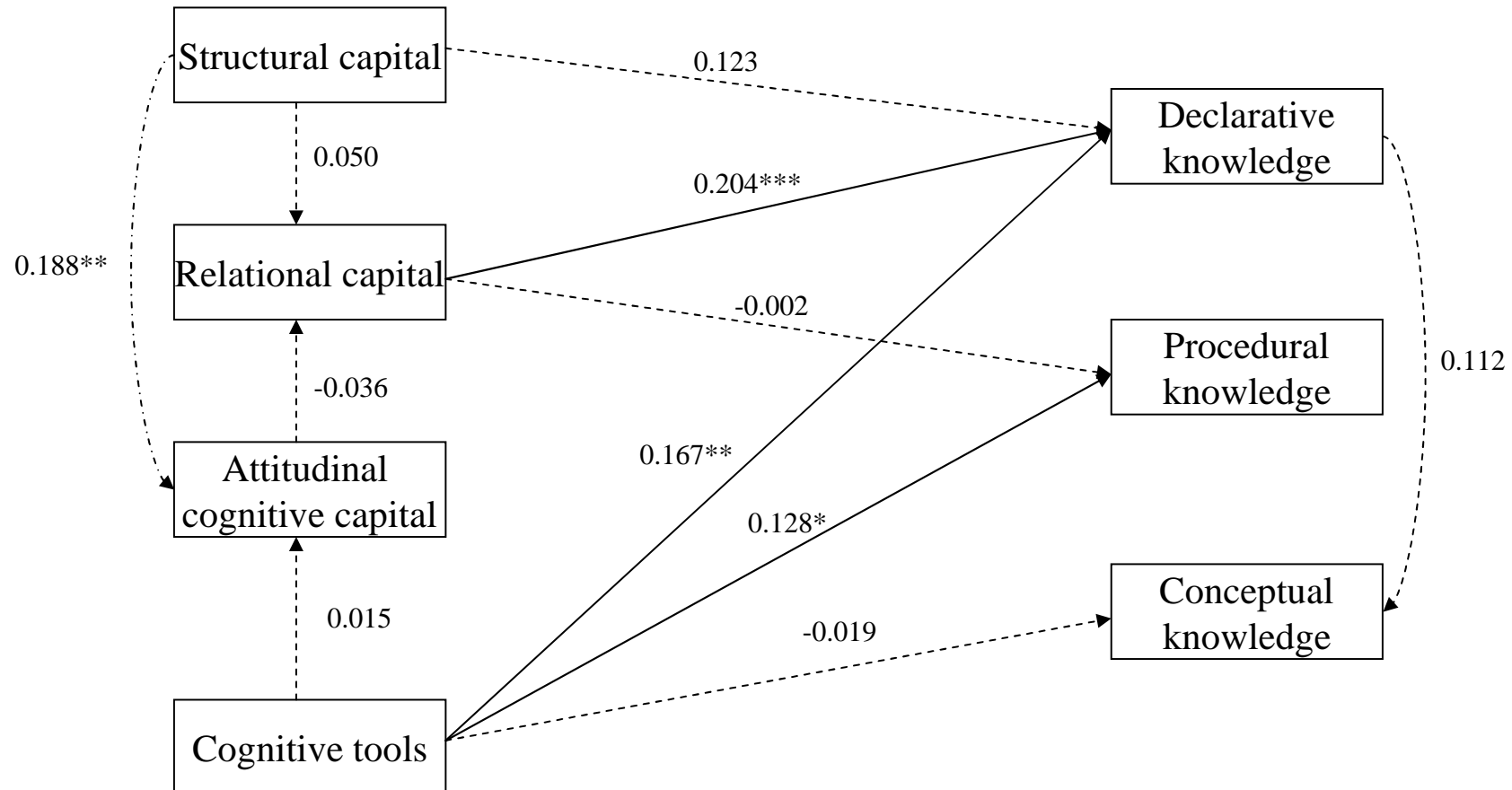
# Riga



# Other cities



# Rural areas



# Comments to structural analysis

- Social learning patterns are particularly sensitive to ethnic and age differences
  - Relevance of *non-geographical* communities
- Richer social learning patterns in rural areas
  - Important role of social patterns in smaller and more compact communities
  - Higher relevance of informal patterns outside main cities

# Possible policy guidelines

- Community differences: both a problem and an opportunity
- Address (taking into account) social (ethnic and age-based) fragmentation
- Address low participation in city life, exclusion, fostering sense of belonging
- Foster access to information and education in rural areas

Thank you