

HANDBOOK ON POLITICAL TRUST

Handbook on Political Trust

Edited by

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Afrobarometer (1999–2009)

American National Election Studies (1958–2012)

AmericasBarometer (2008, 2010)

Arab Barometer (2006–2011)

Asian Barometer Survey (2001–2011)

Belgian Political Panel Survey (2006–2011)

Canadian Election Studies (1965–2011)

Candidate Country Eurobarometer (2001–2004)

Eurobarometer, Standard (2001–2013)

European Social Survey (2002–2012)

General Social Survey (1966–2014)

Global Barometer (2007)

Latinobarometer (1996–2011)

Life in Transition Survey 2 (2011)

National Annenberg Election Survey (2000)

National Survey of Americans' Views on Taxes (2003)

World Values Survey / European Values Study (1981–2014)

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Preface

The compilation of a handbook on political trust is seemingly a self-evident endeavour for numerous reasons. First, only few would seriously question its scholarly relevance since concerns with political trust have long been permeating political, public and scholarly debates alike. Second, the ongoing theoretical, methodological and empirical advances in political trust research created a need to structure, integrate and contextualize this increasing bulk of analyses. Third, democratic societies around the globe have recently experienced major economic, social and political challenges that are feared to ultimately threaten the sustainability of democratic achievements.

These reasons, and more, explain our eagerness to accept Edward Elgar Publishing's invitation to embark on such a far-ranging project. We strove for an easily accessible but equally profound work of reference for an international readership that integrates the many strands of research in this field and responds to pressing requirements of our time. Despite ongoing concerns with the design and implementation of policies to preserve democratic stability, no encompassing and in-depth handbook revolving around this subject matter had yet been published. Our *Handbook on Political Trust* thus responds to urgent academic and practitioner demands.

Yet, we are aware of the complexity, exigencies and potential pitfalls of this task. While editors of such works of reference commonly aim to provide cohesive, state-of-the-art overviews of their topics and to outline future strands of research, we were additionally confronted with two major caveats. First, an overt and mostly uncritical proclivity of our scholarly discipline and the general public exists to readily equate high levels of political trust with desirable political outcomes. Second, political trust research has for many years been particularly concerned with societies in established democratic regimes and post-communist countries. Partly, these analytical emphases can certainly be attributed to shortcomings in data availability, such as the lack of data on other regions in the world. Notwithstanding significant improvements during the past few years, political trust research still lacks comprehensive regional studies that systematically investigate levels and trends of political trust in Latin America, Africa, the Arab region and the vast, heterogeneous East Asian and Pacific regions. In light of these desiderata, we felt compelled to complement the widely shared narratives on political trust with more nuanced approaches and to fill the existing empirical knowledge gap by venturing into uncharted territories.

Accordingly, the *Handbook on Political Trust* combines the breadth of thematic overviews with original empirical analyses. It not only unites and structures the manifold strands of political trust research but also advances this scholarly realm in its own right. From a more general point of view, the handbook offers conceptual guidance and nuanced approaches to beneficial as well as detrimental implications of political trust in different political settings. It outlines the variety of methodological achievements in this field, takes stock of the multitude of micro- and macro-level studies that aim at revealing the causes, correlates and consequences of political trust, and concludes with a comprehensive account of the levels and trends of political trust worldwide. Moreover, as a corollary

of this handbook's broad scope, several contributions cut across disciplinary boundaries by drawing on theoretical, methodological or empirical insights from adjacent fields of research, such as economics, sociology, (social) psychology and communication sciences.

The realization of such an ambitious publication project stands and falls with the expertise, commitment and cooperation of its authors. In this regard we take special pride in having been able to solicit outstanding international scholarly experts whose contributions guarantee the handbook's high quality. Furthermore, the handbook's final set-up, scope, content and cohesion greatly benefited from intensive discussions held at the authors' workshop that we organized in May 2014 at the Goethe Universität Frankfurt am Main, Germany. Stimulating debates in an exceptional environment enriched with many joyful moments turned this workshop into a memorable event and helped to extend and solidify our scholarly networks.

Above all, though, we hope that our combined efforts, reflected in the handbook's final form, become a relevant work of reference for an international readership – both new and old – that captures and stimulates the enthusiasm about political trust research shared by the authors in this project.

Our sincere gratitude, therefore, goes out to our colleagues whose contributions, debates and cooperation turned this editorial challenge into a deeply rewarding experience. Moreover, we are indebted to Lisanne de Blok, who tackled her formatting tasks with superb and indispensable dedication. Likewise, we are grateful to Edward Elgar Publishing's professional team for their cooperation and advice throughout the entire publication process. Finally, we extend our thanks to our families – Mirjam, Julian, Merijn and Robin and Akim – whose inspiration, patience and support meant the world to us.

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1. The deeply rooted concern with political trust

Tom W.G. van der Meer and Sonja Zmerli

INTRODUCTION

Representative democracies all share a common concern: in order to maintain stability, viability and legitimacy, one pivotal source – political trust – may not run dry. There is widespread conviction that a reservoir of political trust helps preserve fundamental democratic achievements in times of economic, social and political crises. Similarly, a citizenry that puts trust in the competence and commitment of its elected representatives as well as in the effectiveness of political institutions facilitates the implementation of policies even when disagreeing with them. Political trust thus functions as the glue that keeps the system together and as the oil that lubricates the policy machine.

Mistrust, or rather political scepticism, plays an equally important role in representative democracy. Critical citizens are more likely to engage in political activities and to keep office-holders accountable. When mistrust turns into widespread distrust and cynicism, then the quality of democratic representation itself may change. Disenchanted citizens may decide to withdraw from politics altogether – resulting in even more disenchantment – or provide fertile ground for the emergence of anti-system political parties. Ultimately, politicians and scholars fear that the very survival of representative democracy and its institutions may be at stake when political trust turns into widespread distrust and cynicism.

These convictions are not unique to our times. As early as in 1975, after the so-called Trilateral Commission was formed to discuss common problems facing Japan, North America and Western Europe, one of the commission's first reports – *The Crisis of Democracy* by Michel Crozier, Samuel Huntington and Joji Watanuki – set off a debate on what the authors called 'the increasing delegitimation of authority' in liberal democracies. The authors warned about the consequences of the rise of 'anomie democracy':

Dissatisfaction with and lack of confidence in the functioning of the institutions of democratic government have thus now become widespread in Trilateral countries. Yet with all this dissatisfaction, no significant support has yet developed for any alternative image of how to organize the politics of a highly industrialized society. (Crozier et al., 1975, pp. 158–9)

Crozier, Huntington and Watanuki were not the only scholars in the mid-1970s to suggest the erosion of political trust. Nor were they the only ones to relate trends in political trust to a broader systemic crisis of representative democracy in the Western world. Similar concerns were raised by Offe (1972), and Miller (1974) who wrote that a 'democratic political system cannot survive for long without the support of a majority of its citizens' (Miller, 1974, p. 951). Since then these concerns have permeated the burgeoning scholarly literature, which considers political trust a necessary precondition for democratic rule and therefore low and declining levels of trust in core democratic institutions

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like government and parliament a risk to the quality of representative democracy (e.g., Offe, 1972; Crozier et al., 1975; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Kaase and Newton, 1995; Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mishler and Rose, 1997; Norris, 1999, 2011; Pharr et al., 2000; Dalton, 2004; Thomassen, 2015).

In his influential study, *Democratic Challenges, Democratic Choices: The Erosion of Political Support in Advanced Industrial Democracies*, Russell J. Dalton, for example, states that:

Contemporary democracies are facing a challenge today. . . The challenge comes from democracy's own citizens, who have grown distrustful of politicians, sceptical about democratic institutions, and disillusioned about how the democratic process functions.

There are legitimate reasons to worry that such trends may erode the vitality of democracy, or eventually may undermine the democratic process itself. Indeed, the history of democracies seems to be punctuated by political analysts raising such concerns, even before there were public opinion surveys to provide supporting evidence. (Dalton, 2004, pp. 1, 157)

Politicians and opinion leaders have been equally adamant that democracy is facing a crisis in political trust. As early as the 1970s, Crozier et al. (1975, p. 2) reported that German Chancellor Willy Brandt (1969–74) and Japanese Prime Minister Takeo Miki (1974–76) feared for the future of democracy. *The Economist* quoted Brandt in 1974: 'Western Europe has only twenty or thirty more years of democracy left in it; after that it will slide, engineless and rudderless, under the surrounding sea of dictatorship, and whether the dictation comes from a politburo or a junta will not make much difference'. Miki had warned that political trust had to be restored to prevent the collapse of Japanese democracy. Similar concerns are echoed today. In 2012, *The Economist* discussed a 'headline slump in trust. . . due, above all, to the public losing faith in political leaders'. In 2014, Jean-Claude Juncker, the president of the European Commission, considered the 'public negativity about politics and politicians, the resentment' to be the biggest problem facing the European Union. And in early 2016, in an interview with the Spanish newspaper *El País*, philosopher Zigmunt Bauman bemoaned that '[w]e could describe what is going on at the moment as a crisis of democracy, the collapse of trust: The belief that our leaders are not just corrupt or stupid, but inept. . . The current crisis of democracy is a crisis of democratic institutions'.

While the supposed causes are many – ranging from institutional overload, evolution of party systems, and economic recessions to scandals or corruption affairs – the diagnosis remains the same: we ought to be concerned about a political trust crisis.¹

And yet, while this realm of research has been vastly expanding, empirical studies covering different time spans and different regions in the world have fallen short of drawing a similarly disturbing general picture (cf. Dalton, 2004; Norris, 2011; Van Ham and Thomassen, 2014). Rather, these studies suggest that (1) a decline in political trust may affect some political entities more than others – that is, politicians and political parties more than parliaments, legal systems and regimes; (2) the pronounced erosion of political trust in one established democracy – as observed, for example, in the United States since the 1960s – may not be generalizable to other democratic societies; (3) analyses covering shorter time spans yield fundamentally different results to studies covering the last 50 years; and, finally, (4) sharp declines in political trust may be rapidly restored.

This enhanced knowledge about the complexity of political trust can be attributed to scientific progress in a wide range of subfields, comprising theoretical accounts about the

nature of political trust and its democratic relevance, descriptive research into its longitudinal trends and cross-national differences, and explanatory research on its micro- and macro-level causes. Concurrently, new, prominent subfields are emerging, while recently collected data and advanced research methods provide scholars and policy-makers alike with both broader and more detailed empirical insights.

THE AIM OF THE *HANDBOOK ON POLITICAL TRUST*

Despite the theoretical and empirical relevance of, and lively interest in, political trust, no encompassing volume has yet been made available to an international readership. The need for such a handbook has become increasingly relevant as research on political trust has simultaneously broadened and deepened. In response to this major lacuna, our Handbook addresses most subfields and integrates contributions from leading international scholars to provide access to newcomers, to structure the debate and to identify remaining lacunae and new puzzles.

First and foremost, our Handbook aims to provide an integrated overview of the state-of-the-art political trust research. After more than 50 years of scholarly research and debate, the field of political trust has progressed immensely. It encompasses an increasingly wide range of subfields, theoretical approaches, research designs and data sets. Political trust is now studied across all regions of the globe. Ongoing specialization, however, makes it increasingly difficult to see the wood for the trees. To counter this shortcoming, the Handbook breaks down the literature via pointed narratives in a range of chapters. These chapters do not merely analyse the progress in our understanding of political trust in all its facets, they also point out knowledge gaps, theoretical puzzles and methodological caveats. In short, the Handbook's authors take stock of past research and look ahead to encourage theoretical progress and to stimulate new research questions and methodological innovation.

The Handbook is constructed to be as encompassing as possible in various ways. First, it includes a wide range of themes and debates in the literature – from political theoretical accounts to questions of measurement, and from macro-level trends to macro- and micro-level correlates. Second, it covers manifold theoretical approaches to political trust, including biological, cognitive, emotional, socialization, heuristic and evaluative perspectives. Concurrently, despite analyses of survey data dominating the empirical literature on political trust, the chapters in this Handbook also draw on other research designs and diverse data sets, such as multilevel research, panel studies, case studies, interviews and experiments. Third, the Handbook is explicitly concerned with all regions of the globe. For decades our empirical understanding of political trust has been based on Western countries, and more recently on post-communist societies in Central and Eastern Europe. Other regions, by contrast, have not been studied systematically. Indeed, to some extent (mostly due to data limitations) the contributions in this Handbook reflect this bias in the literature. The Handbook, therefore, specifically addresses political trust in authoritarian settings from a normative perspective (see Chapter 4 by Rivetti and Cavatorta) and systematically inspects empirical levels, trends and correlates of political trust in previously neglected regions, including Latin America, Africa, the Arab region, Southeast Asia and the Pacific (see Chapters 23 to 28).

4 *Handbook on political trust*

Finally, the Handbook aims to appeal to a broad readership by offering easily accessible overviews to readers still new to this field and seminal empirical findings to established experts. Accordingly, scholars and policy-makers alike may consider this Handbook as a long-awaited guide through the expanding universe of political trust research.

THE UNDERLYING CONCEPT OF POLITICAL TRUST

While the *Handbook on Political Trust* primarily employs the term ‘political trust’, many alternative concepts have been used more or less equivalently in the literature. These alternatives include ‘confidence in political institutions’, and (most notably in American studies) ‘trust in government’. Although the English language distinguishes conceptually between the labels ‘trust’ and ‘confidence’,² and international surveys contain measures of ‘trust’ (e.g., European Social Survey) and ‘confidence’ (e.g., World Values Survey), empirically the two are hardly separable as indicated by strong correlates and the high similarities of trends.

Political trust is distinct from, and yet related to, the more general labels of political support and satisfaction (Van der Meer, 2016). Political trust is defined by a specific set of objects (political institutions and actors) and is both relational (having a subject and an object) and situational (characterized by a degree of uncertainty about the object’s future actions).

As a common denominator, all contributions in this Handbook follow the definition and conceptualization of political trust in accordance with the widely used approach presented by Pippa Norris (see Chapter 2). The Handbook limits political trust to a specific set of political objects. These objects comprise, on the one hand, the core institutions of liberal democracy – such as parliament, government and the justice system as well as the civil service, the police and the military – and on the other hand, incumbent political office-holders, such as party leaders, legislators and public officials.

Within the conceptual confines of political support, political trust is geared towards political actors and institutional performances, and is thus rather volatile. Concomitantly, this definition of political trust excludes more abstract objects such as the community or democratic principles, which are conventionally less contested and volatile. Conceptually, political trust is thus ‘a middle-range indicator of support’ (Zmerli et al., 2007, p. 41) concerned with the political institutions that link overarching democratic principles to everyday actors and policies. Ken Newton and Pippa Norris (2000, p. 53) argue that this understanding of political trust is ‘the central indicator of the underlying feeling of the general public about its polity’.

Political trust is fundamentally relational and situational. It is relational because it has a subject who trusts and an object that is trusted; we do not argue that person A trusts without reference to a trust object. Trust is situational since it is commonly given or withheld with reference to specific types of actions or environments. Trust is therefore expressed as ‘A trusts B to do X’ (Hardin, 2000, p. 26) or as ‘a state of mind for individuals, but . . . also a characteristic of a polity’ (Dalton, 2004, p. 162). Trust relationships are defined by the subject’s degree of uncertainty or vulnerability regarding the object’s future behaviour (Newton, 1999, p. 170; Van der Meer, 2016). This uncertainty, in particular, sets

it apart from more diffuse attitudes of political support that can be expressed when one is perfectly certain about outcomes.

Political trust may be contrasted to its counterparts. We may distinguish between political mistrust (i.e., the absence of trust), political distrust (i.e., the opposite of trust) and political scepticism (i.e., withholding one's judgement) (Cook and Gronke, 2005). Particularly the latter distinction is important to normative theories about political trust (e.g., Lenard, 2008; Rosanvallon, 2008; see also Chapter 3 by Warren). Sceptical, critical or vigilant citizens do not give political authorities the benefit of the doubt by trusting them unconditionally, and by so doing, they strengthen democracy rather than weaken it (Mishler and Rose, 1997; Norris, 2011). A characteristic of monitoring (Schudson, 1998) or critical (Norris, 1999, 2011) citizens, scepticism stimulates political engagement (cf. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). Although the rise of post-materialism eroded respect for authority, it raised support for democracy (Inglehart, 1997), suggesting that representative democracy had reached adulthood (Stolle and Hooghe, 2005, p. 163). 'Democracy requires trust but also presupposes an active and vigilant citizenry with a healthy scepticism of government and a willingness, should the need arise, to suspend trust and assert control over government – at a minimum by replacing the government of the day' (Mishler and Rose, 1997, p. 419). Unlike scepticism, however, attitudes of distrust may be off-putting as regards such engagement. In the worst case, distrust can turn into political cynicism – that is, the attitude that the political process and its actors are inherently corrupt, incompetent and self-serving (Van der Meer, 2016).

Despite these conceptual precisions, surveys conventionally measure only the *presence* of political trust, thereby distinguishing between trusting and non-trusting citizens but not between sceptical and actively distrusting ones (Cook and Gronke, 2005). This conflation is not the only mismatch between the refined conceptualization of political trust and the measurement instruments employed in survey research, from which most empirical knowledge is derived. In part, this mismatch reflects the vague and unspecified use of the term 'political trust' in daily life. One could even argue that survey measures of political trust may be *too* specific; many citizens do not draw clear lines between the aforementioned various objects of political trust (see Chapter 6 by Marien and Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). As a consequence, political trust may not be as object-specific as the evaluative approaches in the literature heuristically assume.

Similarly, political trust may be defined via related concepts like political efficacy (office-holders' responsiveness to citizens) and political cynicism (the negative evaluation of the inherent nature of politics). To the extent that political trust may be separated into various conceptual components – evaluations of the object's competence to act on the subject's behalf, care for the subject, accountability to the subject and predictability (e.g., Kasperson et al., 1992; Van der Meer, 2016) – efficacy and cynicism are related to some but not all of these components. Political efficacy primarily relates to the component of accountability – in other words, to the perception that citizens are able to influence government and hold office-holders accountable. Political cynicism, in turn, reflects a negative evaluation of the nature of the political process and its actors, who are considered to be inherently incompetent and to lack an intrinsic care for the public good.

ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENTS IN THIS FIELD OF RESEARCH

The origins of the scholarly interest in political trust can be traced back to the aftermath of World War II and the height of the Cold War, when the promise of communism was considered by many as a valuable alternative to capitalist democracies plagued by seemingly striking social and political shortcomings. Accordingly, political scientists started to investigate the structural conditions for regime stability. Whether the research focus was aimed at the specificities of a society's political culture (Almond and Verba, 1963) or at developing a more encompassing approach to political systems and their environments (Easton, 1965, 1975), strong consent evolved around the requirement of citizens' favourable values and attitudes to regime principles, institutions and actors, which can take on various forms in accordance with corresponding levels of abstraction or categories (see also Chapter 2 by Norris, Chapter 14 by Gabriel and Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). With these conceptual navigators at hand, scholars were then better equipped to address separately and in more detail the correlates, causes and consequences of regime-stabilizing ingredients. In the subsequent 50 years, the literature split into various lines of research:

Crisis of Political Trust: Structural or Cyclical?

A first strand of literature on political trust revolved around its trends and implications for the state of democracy. Since the 1970s, there has been extensive debate whether the trends in political trust ought to be understood as single, structural crises (Crozier et al., 1975; Kaase and Newton, 1995; Pharr et al., 2000; Huntington, 2001; Dalton, 2004; Torcal and Montero, 2006; Denters et al., 2007) or as a series of fluctuations of varying length and intensity, with declines from which democracies may recover (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Bovens and Wille, 2008; Norris, 2011; Van Ham and Thomassen, 2014), such as after the Great Recession hit Europe in 2008 (Armingeon and Guthmann, 2014; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016). The two interpretations need not be exclusive, depending on the time frame that is selected. The United States, in particular, witnessed a structural decline between 1960 and 1980, with trendless fluctuations ever since (see Chapter 23 by Dalton).

Historically, the understanding of these trends as structural or cyclical has been tied to the implications of these two interpretations. An initial approach, originating in the 1970s, argued that the very survival of democratic regimes is at stake if political trust is low (e.g., Offe, 1972; Miller, 1974; Crozier et al., 1975). This approach was formulated at a time when political scientists were mainly concerned with the stability of democratic regimes (cf. Almond and Verba, 1963; Easton, 1965, 1975). These days this notion is less explicit, but allusions to the risk that trust crises pose to the survival of representative democracies continue to be made in scholarly and public debates, most notably in the literature on democracies in transition (e.g., Linz and Stepan, 1996; Mishler and Rose, 1997). In these democracies, trust is required 'to bolster regimes through economic crisis or external shocks' (Norris, 1999, p. 2) in the face of ongoing public support for alternatives to representative democracy (Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995, p. 299).

Since the 1990s, however, scholars have found that 'strong support for democratic institutions coexists with strong dissatisfaction with their performance' (Teixeira et al.,

2014, p. 502). The crisis of democracy that had been predicted in the 1970s had not occurred. Rather than going into decline, it was argued that representative democracy can instead undergo ‘far reaching systemic change within the general category of representative democracies’ (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1995, p. 7). Examples of such changes are the transition from the Fourth Republic to the Fifth Republic in France during the 1950s, the breakdown and realignment of the Italian party system during the 1990s and the establishment of proportional electoral institutions in New Zealand in 1993 (cf. Kaase and Newton, 1995; Dalton, 2004).

A third, even more modest suggestion is that low levels of political trust do not *cause* but rather *reflect* democratic malaise (e.g., Pharr et al., 2000), like the canary in the coal mine that warns against gas leaks (Norris, 2011). ‘Growing dissatisfaction among citizens with the institutions of democracy and the major actors. . . might well lead to paralysis in the political decision-making processes without any structural change taking place, let alone the system collapsing’ (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1995, p. 7; see also Inglehart, 1997, p. 323; Hetherington, 1998, p. 804).

Causes and Correlates

Distinguishing between macro- and micro-level causes and correlates of political trust has proven to be useful in theoretical and empirical analyses, resulting in prolific subfields. One of the first, still prominent micro-level explanatory approaches to the decline of political trust – the so-called silent revolution – highlights generational value change and the relevance of circumstances of socialization (Inglehart, 1977; see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian). With the advent of major technological developments in the medical sciences in the past few years, new evidence about the biological, psychological and cognitive antecedents of political trust as well as their interdependencies with the environment is making its way into the literature (see Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache, and Chapter 10 by Theiss-Morse and Barton).

From a macro-level perspective, the impact of economic performance took early centre stage in political trust research (Citrin, 1974; see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). Other explanations have also been proposed. The permeation of Western societies by mass media (in particular, television), the scandalization of politics, and the reduction of politics to entertainment are among the main suspects of diminishing levels of trust (Mutz and Reeves, 2005; Mutz, 2015; see also Chapter 22 by Newton). Some scholars point to the *top-down* effect of institutional structures that warrant democratic representation or accountability, such as the electoral system and procedures of government formation (Marien, 2011; see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer); to procedural fairness of state bureaucrats with regard to citizens (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008; see also Chapter 16 by Grimes); to inclusive and non-discriminatory welfare arrangements (see Chapter 18 by Kumlin and Haugsgjerd); and most notably to corruption, which is consistently found to be detrimental to political trust (see Chapter 19 by Uslaner). By contrast, others underscore *bottom-up* processes. In particular, social capital – that is, virtues of trust, cooperation and a spirit for the common good that is associated with vibrant civil societies – has been argued to spill over into the political sphere, resulting in responsive, effective and accountable democratic institutions and, ultimately, trusting citizens (Putnam, 1993; see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). Finally, in recent years a major research focus has been

immigration's effect on trust in established democratic societies, among both native and migrant citizens (see Chapter 20 by McLaren).

Consequences

By contrast, systematic research on the consequences of political trust has remained remarkably scarce, as many scholars have acknowledged in recent years (Norris, 1999, p. 25; Dalton, 2004, p. 162; Torcal and Lago, 2006, p. 309; Marien and Hooghe, 2011, p. 268). This gap in our knowledge is especially surprising given the strong claims that have been made in this area since at least the 1970s. 'It is striking to observe that most of this debate is being conducted in the absence of reliable knowledge about the possible social and political consequences of lower levels of political trust' (Marien and Hooghe, 2011, p. 268). Scholars have suggested that at the macro level, low levels of trust would undermine the stability of the regime (e.g., Crozier et al., 1975) or, at best, signal structural challenges that require transformation of the regime's institutions (Fuchs and Klingemann, 1995; Kaase and Newton, 1995, pp. 30, 38). At the meso level, low political trust is related to changes in the structures of party competition (e.g., Dalton, 2004) – most notably, by providing fertile ground for the electoral success of new or populist parties (Arzheimer, 2009; see also Chapter 15 by Bélanger). And finally, at the micro level, low political trust would induce support for democratic reform (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002; Dalton, 2004) and erode citizens' compliance with the law (Marien and Hooghe, 2011). A contrary interpretation may also apply: when political reforms are unpopular but trust in political decision-makers is high, political trust functions as a heuristic to bolster support for these reforms (see also Chapter 12 by Rudolph). Nonetheless, systematic tests beyond cross-sectional, correlational analyses are scant (but for exceptions see, amongst others, Hetherington, 2005; Rudolph and Evans, 2005; see also Chapter 13 by Van Deth).

The empirical consequences of political trust are the biggest deficiency in the trust literature, and hence also in this Handbook. We simply lack systematic information on how much low and declining levels of political trust should be of concern to representative democracy. In part, this major gap in the literature reflects data limitations – that is, the lack of experimental, longitudinal and, in particular, panel data across a broad set of countries. Rather than testing the effects of increasing or declining levels of political trust, studies have predominantly assessed the correlates of high and low levels of trust at one point in time, and have thus been unable to separate cause from effect. With the increased application of experimental designs (see also Chapter 8 by Wilson and Eckel) and the increased availability of longitudinal survey data across the globe (see Chapters 23–28), this gap is likely to be filled over the next decades.

SET-UP AND STRUCTURE OF THE *HANDBOOK ON POLITICAL TRUST*

Set-up

The Handbook's set-up reflects the diversity of strands in the political trust literature. Its primary contributions are twofold: first, narrative overviews of the state-of-the-art, and

second, relevant new questions for future research. In addition, new empirical analyses are included in (1) three chapters that deal with the measurement of political trust via cross-national equivalence (see Chapter 6 by Marien), scaling (see Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton) and experimentation (see Chapter 8 by Wilson and Eckel); (2) those chapters where directed analyses help to fill gaps in the literature that are central to the chapters' narratives (see Chapters 5, 11, 13, 19, 20, 22); and (3) all regional chapters, which provide an empirical overview of cross-national differences and longitudinal trends in countries across the globe (see Chapters 23–28).

The contributions in the Handbook are written by a strong team of scholars, all experts in their fields. The chapters speak to each other, with many cross-references between them. Similar studies may be discussed from different perspectives in different chapters. But while the authors have engaged with each other's chapters, we purposely did not enforce any joint narrative, conclusion or policy suggestion across chapters. Rather, this Handbook discusses various points of debate, within as well as between chapters. We aimed for any diversity of interpretation to be explicit.

The authors share a common understanding of political trust as being directed to institutions – primarily government and parliament, but also the judiciary, parties or office-holders (see Chapter 2 by Norris). Due to the diversity of data sets and differences in measurement instruments, a common operationalization of this concept could not be realized. This has several important implications. Most notably, levels of political trust are *not* comparable across chapters – not even across the chapters in the section that describes political trust in regions across the globe.

Structure

The Handbook is divided into three main parts and a concluding chapter. The first part, encompassing seven chapters, presents a comprehensive overview of relevant concepts and methodology. The second and largest part (14 chapters) discusses the causes, consequences and correlates of political trust from a multitude of perspectives, and consists of two sections. The first section focuses on the foundations and consequences of political trust at the micro level, and the second, on the origins and implications at the macro level. The third part, by contrast, is concerned with the levels, trends and determinants of political trust in different regions worldwide. These aspects are discussed in six separate chapters. Although a straightforward comparison between levels of political trust across regions is not possible, the presentation of descriptive figures is uniform throughout all chapters; the subsequent analyses, however, differ, reflecting each chapter's unique narrative. The Handbook concludes with a wide-ranging discussion on the role of legitimacy for democratic societies and its complex relationship with political trust.

Part I: Theoretical and methodological approaches

The Handbook's first part starts out with Pippa Norris's conceptual considerations on political trust. Her contribution offers a better understanding of the specificities of political trust and how it is embedded in the encompassing but nuanced concept of political support. As such, Pippa Norris's chapter serves as the conceptual guiding line for the subsequent Handbook contributions.

Despite a broad acceptance of the idea that political trust functions as a stabilizer

of democratic regimes, few theoretical accounts elucidate its multifaceted relevance for democratic government. Mark E. Warren takes on this theoretical challenge in the following chapter and sketches the potential of political trust and the risks associated with it.

Subsequently, Paola Rivetti and Francesco Cavatorta scrutinize the various functions of political trust in authoritarian political regimes, putting scholars' commonly favourable approach to political trust into perspective. The authors present and discuss the ambivalent political and societal implications of political trust, from both theoretical and empirical angles.

Jordi Muñoz, in turn, discusses the dynamics of trust in multilevel government structures. Focusing on the relevance of political institutions' proximity and capacity, and on the relationship between trust in political objects at different governmental layers, his chapter offers insightful conceptual guidance and contributes original empirical evidence to a burgeoning realm of research.

The next three chapters address methodological issues. Sofie Marien discusses and analyses the measurement equivalence of instruments of political trust that figure prominently in comparative studies. More precisely, she first describes the equivalence of common measurement instruments and points to the pitfalls that result from cultural, institutional or language differences. She then complements and updates her previous empirical findings, drawing on data from the sixth wave of the European Social Survey (2012–13) to test the measurement equivalence of political trust.

Sonja Zmerli and Ken Newton's contribution focuses specifically on the methodological aspects of the interrelationship between various objects of social and political trust. Testing three theoretical models by means of detailed, comparative empirical investigations, the authors enhance the understanding of scales and hierarchies that underlie the various objects of social and political trust.

A discussion on the value of experimental designs to advance trust research lies at the core of Rick K. Wilson and Catherine C. Eckel's chapter. Drawing on three commonly used experimental designs, they inspect previous evidence about the causal underpinnings of political trust, provide new evidence about the same, outline noteworthy measurement issues, and suggest promising strands for future experimental research.

Part II: Causes, correlates, consequences

An innovative, analytical perspective on individual-level predecessors of political trust marks the outset of the second part of the book. Being concerned with biological and psychological influences, Jeffery J. Mondak, Matthew Hayes and Damarys Canache discuss whether relatively stable aspects of the individual shape political trust and which mediating micro- and macro-level factors may exist.

In a similar vein, Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and Dona-Gene Barton focus on yet another neglected individual-level factor. Contrary to the manifold studies on cognitive dispositions as precursors of political attitudes, scholarly interest in the role of emotions and the affect–cognition relationship has been marginal so far. The authors' in-depth discussion of the subject matter concludes with a plea to dispense with the false dichotomy between cognition and emotion to better grasp their interdependent impact on political trust.

By contrast, education and socialization as individual-level correlates of political trust have already figured on the research agenda for some time. Yet, as Quinton Mayne and Armen Hakhverdian point out in their chapter, systematic causal studies are still largely

missing. To some extent, this lacuna can be attributed to seemingly inconsistent effects. Taking the specificities of political conditions at the macro level into account offers, however, an analytical tool to predict more accurately the various consequences of education and socialization for political trust.

Next, Thomas J. Rudolph draws on psychological theories and comparative empirical evidence to outline the function of political trust as a heuristic or decision rule to support or oppose government action. With a particular focus on risk and sacrifice, he outlines the linkage between political trust and citizens' policy judgements, and describes trust's potential to bridge ideologically based differences in policy support.

An investigation into the causality between citizenship norms and political trust is at the heart of the ensuing contribution by Jan W. van Deth. He contends that citizens' law-abidingness and compliance with rules – essential ingredients to democratic regimes – derive, in part, from citizenship norms. Pioneering empirical analyses of panel data are presented and embedded within extensive theoretical reasoning, and suggest that causality runs from citizenship norms to political trust.

Oscar W. Gabriel addresses a similar issue of causality in the subsequent chapter. However, his concern revolves around the interrelationship between social and political trust and social and political participation. In accordance with the state-of-the-art, the author discusses two distinct approaches. Whereas the first approach considers trust and participation as closely interrelated parts of a syndrome of civic attitudes and behaviours, the second explores trust as a prerequisite of participation. In light of inconsistent and patchy empirical evidence, the author concludes with numerous suggestions for future lines of research.

This part's first section concludes with a chapter by Éric Bélanger, who elaborates on the consequences of political trust and distrust for one specific type of political participation – namely, voting behaviour. Starting with a general account of the relationship between political trust and voting, the author then discusses the specific implications of political distrust. As empirical evidence suggests, political distrust may result either in voting for populist parties or in abstention from voting. Little is known, however, about the underlying mechanisms, which are outlined as a promising avenue for future research.

Next, the Handbook scrutinizes correlates and causes located at the macro level – that is, the contexts in which citizens live. Marcia Grimes starts by assessing the multifaceted concept of procedural fairness and its linkage with political trust. Her contribution revolves around three major research questions that identify and address relevant procedures, their qualities and their accessibility. Finally, she points out a lacuna in our understanding: too little is known about the determinants of *perceived* procedural fairness, which is likely to be at least as consequential for political trust as objective procedural fairness.

Adopting a similar perspective, Tom W.G. van der Meer proposes several pathways of competing democratic input and institutional output to explain political trust. He begins with the assumption that political trust is evaluative in nature and then provides comprehensive theoretical and empirical evidence for the need to distinguish between objective input-oriented democratic procedures (i.e., representation and accountability through elections) and institutional output (i.e., macroeconomic performance), on the one hand, and citizens' perceptions of these procedures and performances, on the other.

A different take on institutional output and its consequences for political trust is put

forward in the subsequent chapter by Staffan Kumlin and Atle Haugsgjerd. More specifically, the authors discuss how welfare policies, policy change and policy evaluations affect political trust. For this purpose, they focus on four major threads of research: personal experiences and evaluations of welfare schemes and services; austerity policies implemented in the wake of economic crises; welfare state generosity; and income inequality.

Corruption is commonly found to be antithetical to political trust. Eric M. Uslaner addresses the repercussions of corruption and inequality on political trust, both theoretically and empirically, based on original analyses. In accordance with several previous chapters, Uslaner's account stresses the pivotal and universal role of individual *perceptions* of corruption and inequality, in particular.

In a similar vein, Lauren McLaren contends that individual perceptions of immigration and ethnic diversity are consequential for perceptions of political institutions and elites. She elaborates on three major lines of research. First, political trust may decline where ethnic diversity is perceived as a threat to a sense of community and identity. Second, different types of identity construction that are prevalent in different societies may moderate the impact of ethnic diversity. Third, migrants' perceptions and levels of political trust need to be considered. Original data analyses, presented in this chapter, give further empirical evidence.

Contrary to the more recent scholarly interest in the correlates of immigration, the investigation into the nature of the relationship between social capital, civic culture and political trust has a long tradition. Christopher Liu and Dietlind Stolle's comprehensive account of this relational complexity is structured along four lines of research. In addition to a historical overview of influential conceptualizations and empirical studies, this chapter addresses the strength of the relationship, the causal flow and the underlying mechanisms.

Finally, Part II's last chapter, by Ken Newton, focuses on the crucial role of the mass media (the news media, in particular) in explaining levels and fluctuations of political trust. The author deals with two major aspects – the factors in the mass media that are associated with trust and the consequences of the news media's presentation styles, particularly in Western societies, where the media are often argued to be increasingly sensational, superficial and negative.

Part III: Political trust across the globe

The core of the Handbook's third part consists of investigations into levels and trends of political trust in countries across the globe during the last 20 years and beyond. This volume covers new ground by presenting original analyses of all regions worldwide. While all chapters are organized along similar lines and systematically discuss levels and trends of political trust, each addresses the subject matter from its own region-specific perspective.

All contributions complement their overviews with original empirical analyses of significant determinants of political trust. The decreasing levels of political trust in North America and the many reasons for this decline are the prime interest of Russell J. Dalton. Matías Bargsted, Nicolás M. Somma and Juan Carlos Castillo assess the evolution of political trust in Latin American consolidating democracies and the consequences of a more recent phenomenon – the widespread swing towards the left among governments. Mariano Torcal's chapter on Western and Southern Europe, by contrast,

is particularly concerned with the implications evoked by the Great Recession. The challenges to political trust posed by the triple transition of post-communist European societies guide the contribution by Gergő Závecz, who retraces the pathways from communism to democracy, from planned to market economy, and from satellite states to full stateness. Marc L. Hutchison and Kristin Johnson examine political trust in regions overtly neglected by previous comparative studies on political trust. Focusing on Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region, the authors contend that institutional capacity and external security are especially important determinants of trust in these two regions. Part III concludes with Chong-Min Park's extensive empirical assessment of the Asia-Pacific region, which, by all standards, depicts the most heterogeneous political landscape worldwide.

Concluding chapter

Finally, the concluding chapter embarks on broadening the scope of the Handbook's subject matter. With a particular interest in the competing concepts of legitimacy and its associations with political trust, Jacques Thomassen, Rudy Andeweg and Carolien van Ham offer a differentiated view on established approaches, substantiated by empirical evidence and complemented with suggestions for policy designs aimed at solidifying legitimacy and trust.

In summary, the *Handbook on Political Trust* offers a wide array of theoretical and empirical appraisals. We hope that it will serve students and scholars of political trust as a stimulating starting point for future inquiries and that it will provide valuable and thought-provoking guidance to policy-makers.

NOTES

1. The political trust crisis would be a response to, among others, institutional overload, too much democracy, too little democracy, the evolution of the party system (such as the polarization in Congress in the United States or the rise of populism in Europe), economics (most notably the Great Recession and its aftermath in the European Union) or various scandals – including Watergate in the United States (1970s), a range of corruption affairs (e.g., Belgium during the 1990s) or the declaration scandals in the United Kingdom in the late 2000s.
2. The nuanced difference in the English language between trust (*Oxford Dictionary*: ‘Firm belief in the reliability, truth, or ability of someone or something’) and confidence (*Oxford Dictionary*: ‘the feeling or belief that one can have faith in or rely on someone or something’) seems to be based on the distinction between a belief in the object’s inherent qualities and a somewhat more conditional belief, respectively. Many other languages rely on a single word. Compare, for instance, the French *confiance*, the German *Vertrauen* and the Spanish *confianza*.

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PART I

THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

2. The conceptual framework of political support

Pippa Norris

INTRODUCTION

Ideas such as ‘political trust’, ‘democratic values’, ‘political disaffection’, and ‘systems support’ are far from simple. Their measurement is not straightforward. And the thoughtful interpretation of the underlying meaning of the evidence is even more complicated. This chapter serves as the conceptual guideline for this *Handbook on Political Trust*, similar to the first chapter in *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited* (Norris, 2011). It generally seeks to establish and clarify the conceptual framework of political support and, in particular, to specify the meaning of political trust with regard to its definition, function, and empirical operationalization. Drawing upon the seminal work of David Easton, this chapter identifies the idea of levels and components of systems support and provides guidance for comparative scholars interested in quantitative research based on population surveys.

Ideas about support for the political system are too often muddled in the literature; for example, when distinguishing citizens’ orientations towards government and parliaments, common language often skims over, or fails to acknowledge, important distinctions such as those concerning ideas of institutional *confidence* (which can be understood to represent belief in the capacity of an agency to perform effectively), *trust* (reflecting a rational or affective belief in the benevolent motivation and performance capacity of another party), *skepticism* (or suspended judgment), and *cynicism* (meaning jaded negativity).

Additionally, the normative implications of each of these concepts remain ambiguous. For example, commentators often assumed, at least implicitly, that trust by citizens is a desirable quality, irrespective of the trustworthiness of the object (Hardin, 2004). If the reservoir of public trust in bodies such as the Norwegian Stortinget or the Swedish Riksdag has drained over time, then this should indeed be a matter of genuine concern. Yet if government ministers or legislators repeatedly prove venal, self-serving, and corrupt, then trust would be foolish and naive. Similarly, skepticism is usually regarded negatively; yet this could be the most appropriate stance, for example if policy-making processes are so complex in divided governments that citizens lack accurate information to evaluate institutional performance and to attribute praise and blame. In the first founding elections held after any transition from autocracy, many citizens may well know little about their elected representatives, as well as lacking information about how government decision-making processes work; in this context, agnostic skepticism may well be the most rational and suitable response.

Given the complexity of these ideas, we need to establish clarity about the core concept. David Easton (1965) established the traditional theoretical framework of systems support during the mid-1960s. The concept of ‘systems support’ (equated below with the term ‘political support’) is understood as a reflection of orientations towards the nation-state, its agencies, and actors. Where orientations are positive, citizens accept the legitimacy of

their state to govern within its territorial boundaries. They do not challenge the basic constitutional structure and rules of the game, or the authority of office-holders (Weatherford, 1992). Systems support is therefore understood as a psychological orientation.

Attitudes are commonly inferred from tacit actions, such as the voluntary acts of paying taxes, obeying the law, and casting a ballot. Hence numerous popular studies often regard eroding voting turnout or falling party membership as an expression of cynicism or disenchantment among the electorate (see, for instance, Stoker, 2006). But it is often deeply problematic, indeed foolhardy, to infer psychological orientations from behavior; citizens may be acting from many complex motives, such as voting out of fear of reprisal or legal sanctions, habit, or a sense of duty, without necessarily supporting the regime. For example, when nine out of ten registered voters (93 percent) cast a ballot in the 2006 presidential elections in Belarus, few commentators would regard this as a legitimate and reliable sign of public affection for the repressive Lukashenko regime. It is similarly misleading to infer that the fall in voter turnout in European Parliamentary elections – down overall from 62 percent in 1979 to 43 percent three decades later – necessarily or automatically represents public disenchantment with the European Union; this decline could simply reflect growing indifference or even satisfaction with the status quo, as well as the changing composition and membership of the European Union.¹ More reliable indicators of citizens' psychological orientations towards government are derived from public opinion surveys conducted according to rigorous scientific standards. Common indicators are exemplified by a sense of belonging to, and identification with, the national community; positive attitudes towards the state and the core institutions governing the territorial unit; and approval of the incumbent office-holders within the state.

Citizens' orientations towards the nation-state, its agencies, and actors (systems support) thus need disentangling. It is worth underlining that the idea of systems support is not strictly equivalent to the related idea of political trust or institutional confidence, although these concepts are frequently conflated in the popular literature.² The independence of these ideas is easily illustrated by a few simple examples. People can trust a particular party leader, for instance, without necessarily casting a ballot to actively support them (if they disagree with the leader's ideology or policy positions). Conversely, people can support a leader (because they like his or her character and personality) without necessarily trusting them or having any confidence in their performance (for example, if skeptical about the ability of all politicians to deliver on their promises). Political support can be regarded as a dichotomy (citizens either do or do not reject the authority of the nation-state) or more commonly as a continuum (with varied degrees and levels). Support for the nation-state is also rarely unconditional; instead it is usually directed towards particular components. For instance, Russians may approve of Vladimir Putin, but simultaneously disapprove of the actions and decisions of the Duma. Or Americans may be cynical and wary about the workings of Congress as an institution but still give high marks to their local senator. Or Mexicans may value the abstract principles of democracy, such as the importance of freedom of speech, tolerance, and respect for human rights, but still wish to ban certain specific publications or parties. Systems support has both affective and evaluative aspects. Citizens may accept the authority of the nation-state, its agencies, and actors out of a deep sense of blind loyalty and strong feeling of patriotism ('my country, right or wrong'). Or support may be more conditional, depending upon a more rational calculation of state performance.

LEVELS OF SYSTEMS SUPPORT

The Eastonian (1965) classification built upon the idea that the independent nation-state can be regarded as a political system. In this account, David Easton drew an important conceptual distinction between specific and diffuse levels of citizens' support.

Specific political support focuses upon elected and appointed office-holders responsible for making and implementing political decisions within the nation-state. Indicators of such support include the popularity of incumbent presidents, prime ministers, cabinet ministers, party leaders, and local representatives, as well as support for particular political parties (in government and opposition). It also covers attitudes towards leadership elites and authorities in other public sector agencies, such as confidence in high-ranked civil servants, judges, the military, and the police. Specific support for incumbent office-holders is expected to fluctuate over time when responding to short-term contextual factors, such as the performance of particular administrations, major shifts in public policy, or changes in party leadership. For elected officials, evaluations are also expected to be strongly filtered by partisan forces; the perception of government performance, for instance, is expected to vary sharply among winners and losers, defined by their party identification. Specific support is typically measured by regular opinion polls where approval of incumbents fluctuates over time as part of normal politics in democratic states. This suggests that specific support for office-holders should be explicable by short- and medium-term factors, such as the government's management of economic, social, and foreign policy; fluctuations in financial markets; the impact of global events and international affairs; and regular shifts in party fortunes during the normal electoral cycle. A persistent lack of specific support is widely believed to have consequences for governance in all countries, but it does not thereby undermine the legitimacy of the nation-state or erode the fundamental authority of its agencies and actors.

By contrast, for Easton, *diffuse* or *generalized* political support represents more abstract feelings towards the nation-state and its agencies. Political institutions persist even though incumbent leaders are removed from office. Generalized support towards the community and regime helps citizens accept the legitimacy of the state, its agencies, and office-holders, even when people are highly critical about particular political processes, incumbent party leaders, or specific public policies and outcomes. In this regard, evaluations about the performance of the government are predicted to fluctuate over time, but generalized attachments to the nation-state are expected to prove more stable and enduring, providing office-holders with the authority to act based on a long-term reservoir of favorable attitudes or affective goodwill (Easton, 1975). Diffuse support represents more lasting bonds to the nation-state, as exemplified by feelings of national pride and identity, as well as by adherence to core regime values and principles. Diffuse support is expected to be particularly important for stability in fragile states emerging from deep-rooted internal conflict, as well as for processes of regime transition, by strengthening popular acceptance of the legitimacy of new constitutional arrangements and the authority of office-holders.

The conceptual distinction between specific and generalized support seems plausible theoretically, and worth maintaining, especially if this is understood as a continuum rather than as a dichotomous typology. It implies, for instance, that particular scandals or a dramatic failure of public policy can bring down a president or prime minister, without damaging citizens' belief in the legitimacy of their basic constitutional arrangements or,

indeed, weakening deep feelings of patriotism about their country. In more fragile states, however, with shallower reservoirs of legitimacy, similar events could destabilize the government and trigger a regime crisis. In practice, however, it often remains difficult to match these concepts precisely to the available survey measures, for example satisfaction with democracy may reflect both approval of democracy as an abstract principle as well as positive evaluations of how democratic states perform in practice (Canache et al., 2001). Empirical research also finds that support for elected officials can carry over to shape support for state institutions (Muller and Jukam, 1977).

COMPONENTS OF POLITICAL SUPPORT

Equally importantly, the traditional conceptual framework developed by Easton (1965) further distinguished among three distinct components of the political system, namely the nation, the state, and the incumbent authorities. In this conception, the ‘nation-state’ represented the community to which people belonged. The ‘regime’ constituted the basic framework for governing the nation-state within its territorial boundaries. This includes the overarching constitutional arrangements and the core government institutions at national, regional, and local levels, reflecting the accepted formal and informal rules of the game. Regimes fall into distinct eras, for example with the breakdown of communist rule in the Soviet Union and the transition towards democracy. In some cases, such as Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia, the nation-state also dissolved, but in most countries the shift involved the adoption and revision of a new constitutional settlement within established territorial boundaries. Last, the ‘authorities’ represent the elected and appointed actors holding state office and the key decision-makers in the public sector. Of all these elements, the authorities change most frequently, in democratic states with the rotation of parties from government into opposition following electoral defeat. These elements can be understood to be related to each other, like Russian dolls, in an embedded model.

According to this conceptualization, people could not pick and choose between different state agencies, approving of some parts, while rejecting others. Yet in practice citizens do seem capable of making these distinctions. During the final years of the Bush administration, for example, Pew surveys report that Americans expressed deep dissatisfaction with the performance of the incumbent president, while views about the federal government and Congress deteriorated badly, and identification with the Republican Party ebbed away.³ Nonetheless, loss of faith in the Bush administration and the legislature did not spread to the judicial branch; the Supreme Court continued to be held in high regard. Discontent with the federal government also did not erode pride and patriotism in America, nor trigger any deep disaffection with the basic constitutional arrangements in American government, nor raise any serious doubts about basic democratic principles and ideals (see also Citrin and Luks, 2001). Discontent was highly partisan, centered upon polarizing leadership of President Bush and the Republican Party, and attitudes were transformed by the election of President Barack Obama. The Eastonian framework for understanding components of political support in a political system provides the standard conceptual foundation for analysis. Updating the language to reflect contemporary usage, and greater refinement of these categories, are both important, however, to make these ideas relevant to modern concerns.

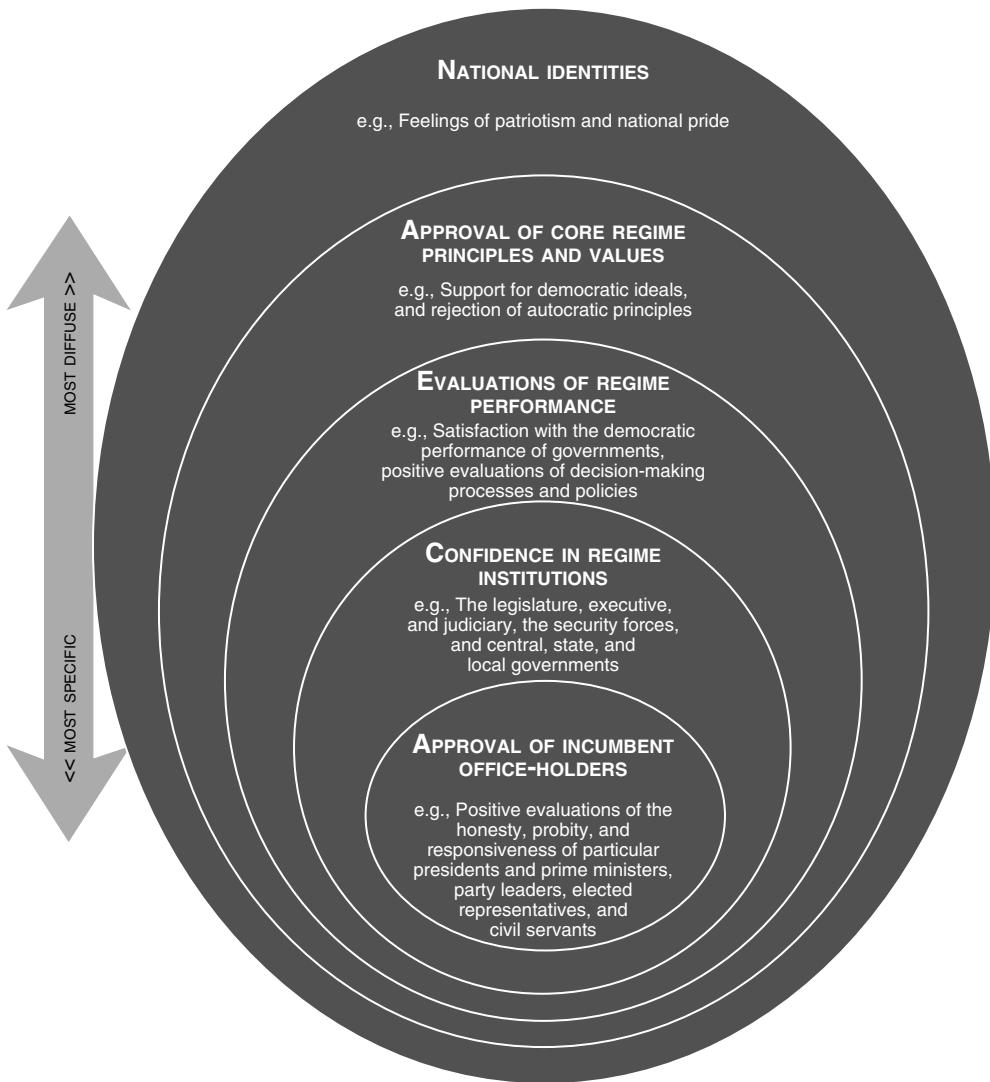


Figure 2.1 Indicators of systems support

Drawing upon these notions, the concept of 'political support' is understood broadly as a multidimensional phenomenon ranging on a continuum from the most diffuse to the most specific levels. Moreover, the middle category in the original framework is expanded conceptually to recognize five distinct components of support in a nested model, each with a series of operational empirical measures (Figure 2.1):

1. The most general and fundamental attitudes of citizens towards **belonging to the nation-state**, exemplified by feelings of national pride, patriotism, and identity.

2. **Agreement with core principles and normative values upon which the regime is based**, including approval of democratic values and ideals.
3. **Evaluations of the overall performance of the regime**, exemplified by satisfaction with democratic governance and also general assessments about the workings of democratic processes and practices.
4. **Confidence in regime institutions**, notably the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government, the security forces, as well as central, state, and local governments.
5. **Approval of incumbent office-holders**, including attitudes towards specific party leaders, legislators, and public officials, as well as support for particular parties and for leadership elites and authorities in public sector agencies.

These components are regarded as ranging in a continuum from the most generalized support for the nation down through successive levels to the most concrete and specific support for individual actors.

The notion of political trust, as it is reflected in the chapters of this Handbook, comprises the two most specific levels of political support, that is, confidence in regime institutions and approval of incumbent office-holders. This Handbook thus adopts political trust as the general belief in the performance capacity of political institutions and/or belief in the benevolent motivation and performance capacity of office-holders. Indeed, empirical studies suggest that citizens hardly distinguish between political institutions themselves and the political actors in these institutions (see also Chapter 6 by Marien; Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton).

1 National Identities

From this perspective, at the most diffuse level, support for the community represents general orientations towards belonging to a common nation, including enduring bonds typically expressed through feelings of patriotism, national pride, and a sense of national identity, as well as feelings towards people of other nations and towards multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations and European Union. The idea of ‘national identity’ is understood to mean the existence of communities with bonds of ‘blood and belonging’ arising from sharing a common homeland, cultural myths, symbols and historical memories, economic resources, and legal-political rights and duties.⁴ Nationalism can take ‘civic’ forms, meaning ties of soil based on citizenship within a shared territory and boundaries delineated by the nation-state, or it may take ‘ethnic’ forms, drawing on more diffuse ties based on religious, linguistic, or ethnic communities (Smith, 1991). In many countries, national identities are taken for granted, but they have particularly important consequences for social cohesion and state legitimacy in multicultural communities containing several distinct nationalities, especially in fragile states recently emerging from deep-rooted conflict (Collier and Sambanis, 2005; Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). In the modern world, national identities underpin the nation-state and its institutions exercising legitimate political authority within a given territory, although there are many multinational states such as the United Kingdom, Belgium, and Canada, as well as stateless national communities, exemplified by the Kurds and the Roma.

Although often assumed to reflect long-term, deep-rooted, and stable orientations, in fact national orientations vary systematically in predictable ways, for example sudden spikes in national pride are often documented around the outbreak of war or external threat, in a commonly observed ‘rally-around-the-flag’ effect (Groeling and Baum, 2008). National identities may also be gradually weakening as a result of processes of globalization, expanding networks of interdependence spanning national boundaries that follow the increasingly swift movement of ideas, money, goods, services, ecology, and people across territorial borders. By contrast to national identities, globalization is expected to strengthen cosmopolitan identities, understood as those outlooks, behaviors, and feelings that transcend local and national boundaries (for a discussion, see Hannerz, 1990; Beck, 2006; Beck and Sznajder, 2006). Typically, cosmopolitans are tolerant of diverse cultural outlooks and practices, valuing human differences rather than similarities, cultural pluralism rather than convergence, and de-emphasizing territorial ties and attachments (for a more detailed discussion, see Norris and Inglehart, 2009). Nationalism and cosmopolitanism are usually regarded theoretically as oppositional, although it remains to be seen empirically whether these feelings could potentially coexist without contradiction, for example if people have strong feelings of national pride but also favor multilateral solutions to world problems. Using the World Values Survey (WVS), nationalism and cosmopolitanism can be analyzed through examining attitudes towards the state and institutions of multilateral governance, feelings of belonging and attachment to different communities, as well as support for policies that facilitate protectionism or globalization, such as attitudes towards free trade or open labor markets (see Norris and Inglehart, 2009).

2 Approval of Regime Principles and Values

The second level represents adherence to the principles and normative values upon which the regime is founded, reflecting beliefs about the legitimacy of the constitutional arrangements and the formal and informal rules of the game. Democracy remains an essentially contested concept, open to multiple meanings for alternative, deliberative, representative, and pluralist conceptions, so there is no universal consensus about which values, procedures, and principles are most important. Schumpeterian (1952) notions emphasize a minimalist or ‘thin’ definition of representative democracy as an institutional arrangement for governing the state where all adults have opportunities to vote through free and fair competitive elections for their national legislature. From this viewpoint, representative democracies hold multiparty electoral contests at regular intervals, which meet the essential conditions of an inclusive suffrage giving voting rights to all adult citizens, unrestricted rights by all citizens and parties to compete for elected offices, and transparent and honest processes for translating votes into seats. This parsimonious approach to defining democracy remains popular in the research literature. For empiricists, it has the considerable advantage of reducing the number of elements required for the accurate measurement and classification of electoral democracies (Alvarez et al., 1996; Przeworski et al., 2000).⁵ The most commonly acknowledged danger of this conceptualization, however, is leaving out certain important dimensions of the richer concept of liberal democracy that are emphasized in more comprehensive measures. For example, minimalist definitions do not consider the quality of democratic performance, such as

how far states achieve socially inclusive representation, accountable leaders, freedom of expression, and equality of participation, in part because these factors are often difficult to gauge systematically with any degree of reliability and consistency.

By contrast, thicker or more maximalist understandings of the key structural framework of representative or liberal democracy have been strongly influenced by Robert Dahl's body of work, including *Politics, Economics, and Welfare* (with Charles Lindblom, 1953), *A Preface to Democratic Theory* (1956), and *Polyarchy* (1971). Dahl (1989) argued that liberal democracies are characterized procedurally by two main attributes – contestation and participation. In practice, Dahl suggested that democratic regimes or 'polyarchies' can be identified by the presence of certain key political institutions: (1) elected officials; (2) free and fair elections; (3) inclusive suffrage; (4) the right to run for office; (5) freedom of expression; (6) alternative information; and (7) associational autonomy. Dahl also emphasizes that competitive multiparty elections are used to fill offices for the national legislature and the chief executive. For electoral competition to be meaningful, however, he adds a broader set of essential conditions, as polyarchies need to allow freedom of expression, the availability of alternative sources of information (freedom of the media), and associational autonomy (freedom to organize parties, interest groups, and social movements). In short, in democratic states citizens must consent to their rulers, and public officials are accountable to those they govern. Democratic principles also involve support for the underlying values of freedom, opportunities for participation in decision-making, equality of rights and tolerance of minorities, respect for human rights, and the rule of law.

The Global Barometer surveys provide some of the most comprehensive evidence of attitudes towards each of these general democratic principles and values (see Fuchs et al., 1995). An extensive literature has analyzed the distribution of democratic values, especially in post-communist Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia, as well as the Middle East (see, for example, Thomassen, 1995; Lagos, 2003; Diamond and Plattner, 2008). Most commonly, surveys have tapped agreement with the idea of democracy as the most appropriate or ideal form of government for particular nations compared with alternative types of regime. Hence the Global Barometer surveys have asked respondents to choose among three alternative statements: 'Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government', 'Under some circumstances, an authoritarian government can be preferable to a democratic one', and 'For people like me, it does not matter whether we have a democratic or a non-democratic regime'.⁶ It is more difficult to find alternative items seeking to gauge support for autocratic principles, since these regimes are founded upon different forms of rule, such as the monarchies governing the emirates in Arab states, the military juntas controlling Thailand and Burma, the dynastic dictatorship in North Korea, one-party communist states such as China and Cuba, and strongman populism in Venezuela and Zimbabwe. The World Values Survey measures whether the public approves of regimes based on having military rule, non-elected strongman rule, or government by experts, as well as having a democratic political system. These items have been combined, with pro-democratic responses represented by disagreement with the first three types of regimes and agreement with the last, and used as a Democratic Regime Index (Dalton and Shin, 2006).

3 Evaluations of Regime Performance

The third level concerns generalized support for the state, meaning support for how democratic or autocratic regimes function in practice. This taps a ‘middle level’ of support that is often difficult to gauge. Many surveys, including the Eurobarometer and the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems, have regularly measured ‘satisfaction with the performance of democracy’ or ‘satisfaction with the way democracy works’. The standard question in the Eurobarometer and many other surveys seeks to tap these attitudes by asking: ‘On the whole, are you very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, or not at all satisfied with the way democracy works in your country?’ This item has been extensively analyzed in the research literature; nevertheless, responses are open to alternative interpretations (see, for example, Wagner et al., 2009). On the one hand, the item can be seen to tap approval of ‘democracy’ as a value or principle. On the other hand, Linde and Ekman (2003) argue that the phrasing of the question (by emphasizing how democracy is *performing*) makes it most suitable to test public evaluations of the workings of democratic regimes and assessments of democratic practices, not principles. Another related strategy compares evaluations of the performance of the current regime against that of the past regime, a particularly effective approach when used to analyze public opinion in countries with recent memories of regime transition, such as in Central and Eastern Europe. This process is believed to provide a common standard rooted in people’s concrete experience, rather than comparing the current regime against an idealized and therefore more abstract notion of representative democracy (Rose et al., 1998; Haerpfer, 2008).

In measuring how democratic regimes perform in practice, the third and fourth waves of the World Values Survey (WVS) asked the following questions:

I’m going to read off some things that people sometimes say about a democratic political system. Could you please tell me if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or disagree strongly, after I read each one of them?

In democracy, the economic system runs badly.

Democracies are indecisive and have too much quibbling.

Democracies aren’t good at maintaining order.

Democracy may have problems but it’s better than any other form of government.

This battery of items allows respondents to express doubts about the broad way that democratic states work in practice, without simultaneously rejecting democratic principles. Analysts have recoded these responses in a consistent direction and then combined them to create a Democratic Process Index (Dalton and Shin, 2006). Using an alternative phrasing, the fifth wave WVS asks the following question:

And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is ‘not at all democratic’ and 10 means that it is ‘completely democratic,’ what position would you choose?

The way that this question emphasizes evaluations of how democratically each country is being *governed* makes the scale even more suitable to test public satisfaction with the perceived performance of democratic governance in each nation (Linde and Ekman, 2003).

4 Confidence in Regime Institutions

The fourth level concerns trust and confidence in the core institutions of state, including the legislature, executive, and judicial branches of government, as well as other public sector agencies, such as the police, military, and civil service. Studies seek to measure generalized support for the institution – that is, approval of the powers of the presidency as chief executive rather than support for President Barack Obama – although in practice the precise dividing line between the office and the incumbent is often fuzzy. A conventional distinction is often made between ‘public’ and ‘private’ institutions, although this line varies depending upon the degree of state control in each country, for example whether a country has public service or commercial television broadcasters, and whether religious institutions are disestablished (see Lipset and Schneider, 1983; Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995). Since 1973, for example, the US General Social Survey conducted by NORC has monitored confidence in ‘the people running’ the executive branch of government, the US Supreme Court and Congress, and the military, as well as private sectors agencies, such as major companies, medicine, banks and financial institutions, the press, television, and labor unions.⁷ Much can be learnt by examining the dynamics of support for particular agencies because evidence suggests that the public distinguishes among them; hence Americans consistently express considerable confidence in the Supreme Court, for example, while simultaneously increasingly disapproving of Congress and the executive branch (see, for example, Richardson et al., 2001; Dalton, 2004). Institutions are large, impersonal, and broadly based, and the public’s estimation of them is less immediately affected by particular news items or specific events than support for specific actors. Thus, loss of confidence in institutions may well be a better indicator of public disaffection with the modern world because they are the basic pillars of society. If they begin to crumble, then there is, indeed, cause for concern (Newton and Norris, 2000).

Public approval of the general performance of the governing party, as well as evaluations of the government’s handling of major policy areas such as the economy, foreign policy, and social policy, are regularly monitored within particular nations in numerous election surveys and commercial public opinion polls. This facilitates longitudinal analysis within each country. Moreover, the ISSP Role of Government cross-national survey module (conducted in 1985, 1990, 1996, and 2006) allows analysts to compare more detailed judgments about the government’s past policy record, expectations about the appropriate scope of the government’s role and responsibility, as well as approval of levels of public spending, on a range of major public policy issues, such as the economy, employment, education, the environment, housing, and health care.

5 Approval of Incumbent Office-holders

Last, at the most specific level, orientations towards incumbent office-holders represent attitudes towards particular leaders in positions of authority. This is typified by levels of satisfaction with the performance of specific presidents or prime ministers, as well as support for particular parties, and confidence in leaders in other public sector agencies, such as the military or government bureaucracy. Loss of support for incumbent office-holders may have consequences, but no matter how grave or sudden any drop (such as the Watergate crisis), in most long-established regimes it is unlikely to pose a threat to the

functioning or stability of the nation-state. In more fragile states, however, a leadership crisis, such as the death or overthrow of a president, may trigger broader processes of regime change. As Easton (1975, p. 436) notes:

Typically, members of a political system may find themselves opposed to the political authorities, disquieted by their policies, dissatisfied with their conditions of life and, where they have the opportunity, prepared to throw the incumbents out of office. At times, such conditions can lead to fundamental political and social change. Yet at other times, in spite of widespread discontent, there appears to be little loss of confidence in the regime – the underlying order of political life – or of identification with the political community. Political discontent is not always, or even usually, the signal for basic political change.

To analyze support for incumbent office-holders, studies are heavily dependent upon national polls rather than cross-national surveys. We can examine longitudinal trends in popular approval of presidents or prime ministers in particular countries, using monthly polls to analyze whether satisfaction with leadership has declined since the post-war period (Clarke and Stewart, 1995). More often, analysis has focused on trust in incumbent politicians, using the items developed by the American National Election Studies (ANES) in 1958, and subsequently replicated in some other national election studies.⁸ The standard ANES items monitor how the public feels about the performance of public officials in terms of their ethical standards, efficiency, and integrity. The ANES asks Americans to assess whether the ‘government in Washington’ can be trusted to do what is right, an item that is understood here to tap the broader level of general confidence in the state, since the item refers to the federal agency collectively rather than the incumbent office-holders. In addition, the ANES survey asks whether ‘people running the government’ waste taxes, whether government is run for the benefit of a few big interests, or whether public officials are ‘crooked’.⁹ Separate items monitor a sense of how far people believe that the public sector is responsive to public opinion, representing the notion of ‘external efficacy’.

There are some important issues about interpreting all these measures, however, which need to be considered. Most importantly, they are not designed to tap into more generalized levels of support towards the community and regime. Thus the ANES does not regularly monitor public approval of the basic US constitutional principles, adherence to democratic values and principles, or indicators of American pride and patriotism. The NORC US General Social Survey has also only asked sporadically about these matters, making it difficult to analyze long-term trends. The ANES standard ‘trust in government’ items are regarded as the canonical measures for analyzing trends in American public opinion, and although there is some ambiguity about the specific branch of government, the referent of these items is clearly worded to be incumbent-oriented (‘the people in the government’, ‘the government in Washington’, ‘the people running the government’) (Abramson and Finifter, 1981). Moreover, as Levi and Stoker (2000) point out, although commonly assumed to reflect *trust* in government, in fact the measures tap other related dimensions, such as the ability and efficiency of public officials (to do ‘what is right’), as well as their ethical qualities (to be honest or crooked), and the responsiveness of government (towards special interests or the general good), all of which generate favorable or unfavorable evaluations. The concept of trust, Levi and Stoker note, never featured in the original design of these survey items by Donald Stokes. In addition, in the ANES questions it is unclear what American respondents understand when they are asked to evaluate

the performance of ‘the government’ or ‘the people running the government’, since US decision-making is divided horizontally among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as vertically among districts, states, and the federal levels.

CONCLUSION – THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

With these methodological caveats in mind, this chapter presented a conceptual framework that will enable the reader to navigate easily through the subsequent theoretical, methodological, and empirical expeditions in this Handbook. Drawing on the central claim of this contribution, political trust, as the most specific expression of political support, cannot be considered to be an isolated concept. Quite the contrary, understanding the dynamic interdependencies of political trust and more diffuse levels of political support is crucial to assess its theoretical and empirical relevance. In this vein, this Handbook may guide the interested reader to discover new and promising research avenues that are not restricted to political trust but reach out further beyond.

NOTES

1. For details, see <http://www.europarl.europa.eu/elections2014-results/en/turnout.html>, accessed 1 August 2016.
2. For a discussion of the meaning of political trust, see Levi and Stoker (2000).
3. See, for example, Pew Research Center on People & the Press (2008).
4. There is an extensive theoretical literature on the concepts of nationalism and national identity. See, for example, Ignatieff (1993), Anderson (1996), Billig (1995), and Gellner (1983).
5. For a defense of the minimalist approach, see Przeworski (1999).
6. For the analysis of this item, see Chu et al. (2008).
7. The NORC GSS questions remain somewhat ambiguous to interpret. The items ask about ‘the people running’ these agencies, but this does not refer to any individual incumbents by name or office (such as ‘your Congressional representative’, ‘the Chief Justice’, or ‘your bank manager’ or ‘your doctor’). Even the item concerning the executive branch is framed collectively, to include the White House, all departments, secretaries of state in cabinet, and federal bureaucrats, and it does not refer by name to individual presidents. As such, although the wording is imprecise, it seems most likely that people will usually respond with their general impressions of each institution, although these judgments may inevitably be colored by evaluations of specific incumbent office-holders.
8. For the comparison of these items used in other established democracies, see Dalton (2004, Table 2.2).
9. The four standard ANES questions are: RIGHT: ‘How much of the time do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right – just about always, most of the time or only some of the time?’; WASTE: ‘Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?’; INTERESTS: ‘Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?’; CROOKED: ‘Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are [1958–72: a little] crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked [1958–72: at all]?’ It should be noted that it is unclear who is the object of these questions as ‘the government’, when American decision-making is divided horizontally among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches, as well as vertically among districts, states, and the federal levels.

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3. What kinds of trust does a democracy need? Trust from the perspective of democratic theory *Mark E. Warren*

THE PARADOX OF TRUST AND DEMOCRACY

Trust and democracy have an essential but paradoxical relationship to one another. By ‘trust’ I mean a person’s judgement that another person has both the motivation and competence to act in his or her interests, and will do so without overseeing or monitoring (Baier, 1986, p. 235; Warren, 1999, p. 11; Norris, 2011, p. 19). When people trust, they relinquish some control over their self-determination to the will of others. In doing so, however, they can dramatically increase their collective capabilities, since trust enables cooperative divisions of labour, and does so without the burdens of coercion or other costly means of organization. By ‘democracy’ I mean the systems of institutions and associations that enable people to engage in collective self-government with respect to matters that affect their self-determination.

The paradox is this: humans can hardly be conceived as social beings without trust (Luhmann, 1982; Sztompka, 1999; see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). Nor, without trust, can we imagine collective actions that people experience as extensions of, rather than burdens upon, their existential securities and freedoms, while making the best uses of their intelligence, energy and goodwill. Surely democratic systems should, in some general sense, facilitate just these kinds of collective actions.

Yet the institutions we now count as essential to democracy were founded on *distrust*. Jeremy Bentham (1816 [1999]) pointedly asked: ‘Who[m] ought we to distrust, if not those to whom is committed great authority, with great temptations to abuse it?’ (p. 37). Benjamin Constant (1829 [1992]) noted: ‘[E]very [good] constitution is an act of distrust’ (p. 53, cited in Rosanvallon, 2008, p. 7). And, of course, James Madison et al. (1787–88 [2004], p. 257) famously wrote in *The Federalist*, that if:

[. . .] men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: You must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.

The constitutional arrangements we count as essential to democratic systems represent a huge leap forward from autocratic systems, which provide few assurances that the interests of power-holders align with those they govern. Competitive elections not only require political elites to attend to the interests of citizens, but also enable citizens to hold them accountable through the possibility of removal and replacement. Checks and balances among branches of government provide incentives for elites to oversee one another. Bills of rights limit abuses of power while providing freedoms to associate, speak, petition and

pressure. When they work together, these institutions should, ideally, ensure that political elites will not engage in self-dealing at the expense of those they represent.

Democracies, in other words, *institutionalize distrust*, and democracies work when vigilant citizens use these institutions to oversee and monitor those in positions of power (Braithwaite, 1998; Sztompka, 1999; Tilly, 2005; Rosanvallon, 2008). And yet the distrustful vigilance that citizens must hold over those in power for a democracy to work almost certainly depends upon trust of five distinct kinds. The first is a *generalized trust* among citizens that enables them to form associations with one another, and which produces a civil society rich in social capital (Putnam, 2000; Lin, 2002; see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). Trust among citizens enables them to act together, both to pursue common purposes through association, and to form their powers of representation and pressure that project their voices into the political system (Uslaner, 2002).

While generalized trust is ‘horizontal’ among individuals, other kinds are ‘vertical’ between individuals and those holding institutional positions (Cleary and Stokes, 2009; Zmerli and Newton, 2011; cf. Mackenzie and Warren, 2012). Vertical forms of trust are often impersonal: individuals place trust in office-holders, whom they are unlikely to know. But where an office is defined by roles and duties, individuals can infer the trustworthiness of the office-holder, at least in principle. This said, we should distinguish kinds of vertical trust by the different ways in which institutions underwrite trust judgements. For purposes here, the most important distinction is the degree to which an institution is ‘political’ – that is, operating within a context marked by conflicting interests. The more ‘political’ the institution, the greater the challenges individuals face in making good trust judgements.

The first of these vertical trust relationships is straightforward, comprising *trust in experts and professionals* who provide guidance in complex areas of policy and decision-making, such as scientists, medical professionals, or autonomous boards, panels and commissions, such as those convened by the National Academies of Science in the United States. Trust in these kinds of actors is borrowed from institutions that select, certify and regulate performance, as well as provide motivations for trustworthiness, such as overseeing conflicts of interest or professional negligence. Second, those who hold offices in a myriad of government agencies, ministries and judiciaries hold a *public trust*. These institutions provide, in impartial and non-arbitrary ways, security, education, health care, transportation, safety monitoring, due process and many other functions that underwrite the agent capacities of individuals, and the collective capacities of social organizations and associations. Third, with respect to ‘political’ domains characterized by partiality and conflicting interests – legislative politics, for example – even though citizens should not trust partisan political elites, as least as a general matter, they do need a second-order *trust in political institutions* that channels political conflict into the democratic media of public discourse and voting, and in doing so *institutionalizes distrust*. Citizens should be able to trust that contentious decisions are made in the open, through public talk and transparent voting, rather than through backroom deals they cannot possibly monitor (Warren, 2006). They need to know that, once public purposes are decided, officials will follow through without self-dealing or other kinds of corrupt acts. Finally, because modern democracies are primarily constituted through representative relationships that often defy close monitoring, citizens need trustworthy political representatives (Fisher et al., 2010, p. 178; Mansbridge, 2003, 2009; Warren and Gastil, 2015). I refer to this kind of trust as *selective*

trust in political representatives. Once we conceptualize these forms of trust, we can frame the empirical questions as to their existence and correlations with democratic systems, as well as identify deficits and potential responses and reforms.

If there are these several kinds of democracy-supporting trust, there are also several kinds of trust that undermine democracy. These should be conceptually specified as well, so we can identify the kinds of trust a democracy needs. As is often noted, it is not trust *in general* that is good for democracy. Trust can be deferential, naive or misplaced, as is often the case in traditional and authoritarian relationships. From a normative perspective, the kinds of trust that underwrite democracy must be *warranted*: based on good judgements by citizens that their trust will be reciprocated by trustworthiness, thus extending their self-determination. Nor should trust relationships generate negative externalities for those not part of the relationship, which violates the democratic principle that those affected by collective decisions and actions should have a say. Thus, although corrupt relationships, crime organizations and ethnic and religious factions all function on the basis of trust relationships, these forms of *particularized* trust generate negative externalities for those who are not part of the particular trust relationship. These kinds of trust fail democracy because they cannot be justified to those they affect (Uslaner, 2002; Warren, 2008).

Nor is distrust a generalizable good for democracy, despite the origins of democracy-supporting institutions in distrust of political elites. While a sceptical distrust is essential to democratic monitoring (Rosanvallon, 2008; Norris, 2011, p. 19), if it becomes disconnected and generalized it undermines rather than reinforces democracy (Hetherington, 1998; Cook and Gronke, 2005; Lenard, 2012). Distrust is part of democracy when it motivates attentive citizens, and moves them to use their powers to monitor and oversee those who hold power. But when it is generalized, citizens can withdraw into cynicism and alienated passivity, and the mechanisms of institutionalized distrust that motivate responsiveness from political elites fall into disuse.

The apparently paradoxical relationship between trust and democracy, I shall suggest, is mostly an artefact of underspecifying (or too abstractly conceptualizing) the concept of trust – as both the theoretical and empirical literature has increasingly shown. In this chapter, I hope to organize the conceptual relationship between trust and democracy by asking: What kinds of trust (and distrust) does a democracy need? How, conceptually speaking, can we tell the difference between democracy-supporting and democracy-undermining trust (and distrust)? What kinds of resources do citizens need to make the kinds of trust judgements that support democracy? And what kinds of institutional supports for these resources should we expect a democracy to provide?

I approach these questions as follows. In the next section, I consider the relationship between trust and democracy from the standpoint of citizens' political resources: given the scale and complexity of modern democracies, citizens need, functionally speaking, to divide their labours between participation and trust. The decisions about when and how to divide these labours can be made well or badly. Because they can be made well or badly, citizens' decisions to trust or distrust are just as important to a democracy as citizens' judgements about issues and interests.

How, then, should we think about the kinds and bases of good trust and distrust decisions? In the following section, I focus on the question of 'trust in government' – a question that is central to, but narrower than, the question of democracy-supporting kinds of trust. I suggest that we should want different kinds of trust decisions depending

upon the degree to which branches of government are ‘political’. Government agencies and judiciaries should hold a public trust for the execution of agreed public purposes, and serve these purposes impartially. Citizens should therefore be able to make *first-order* trust decisions, based on aligned interests. But in the more ‘political’ branches of government, interests conflict and agents act in partial ways. Thus, citizens should distrust political representatives as a general matter – in response, they should participate. But democratic participation requires a *second-order* trust decision in the institutions that channel conflict into the democratic media of talking and voting. That is, citizens should expect to combine confidence in political institutions, with engaged mistrust (or scepticism) of those partisan office-holders whose interests do not converge with their own.

Next, I expand the question of democracy-supporting kinds of trust by: (1) distinguishing the resources available to citizens – from interpersonal to institutional – to make trust judgements according to the warrants they provide for trust decisions; and (2) asking whether the warrants can be made *public* (Baier, 1986, pp. 259–60). If a warrant could not be made public owing, for example, to its negative externalities – corruption would be an example – then the trust relationship undermines democracy. I develop the questions of warrants and publicity into a typology of democracy-supporting and democracy-corroding kinds of trust, moving from first-order trust judgements to the more complex second-order judgements.

Finally, I conclude by noting that this kind of analysis highlights deficits in the kinds of warrants citizens need to make good trust decisions. Institutions that make warrants available for good trust decisions should be a key consideration in the design and reform of democratic institutions. Yet, looking forward, what stands out is that making good trust decisions is still cognitively taxing for citizens. If we look at ways in which these cognitive burdens are managed within democratic systems, we find that first-order trust decisions are relatively well supported. But second-order trust decisions are not, suggesting that democratic reforms and supplements should, among other things, make it easier for citizens to make good second-order trust decisions (Warren and Gastil, 2015).

DIVIDING CITIZEN LABOURS BETWEEN TRUST AND DISTRUST

Let us begin with some very general considerations about the ‘demand’ for trust in democratic political systems from the standpoint of individual citizens. It is an obvious but very important truth that no citizen can be effectively involved in all but a small fraction of the collective decisions that affect them, owing to scarcities of time, knowledge and attentiveness. To a large degree, these scarcities are managed by divisions of labour in politics, governing and governance: citizens elect representatives to make law and policy, and to oversee its implementation. They join advocacy groups to magnify their voices. Once decided, laws and policies are delegated to specialized administrative agencies and judicial systems. These divisions of labour enable governments to manage collective decisions and actions with complexities that far exceed the cognitive capacities of individual citizens, no matter how attentive and knowledgeable they might be.

Yet every delegation of political labour introduces principal–agent relationships, each

with their own costs. As principals, citizens must not only select agents, but they must also judge whether their interests are, in fact, being served by those to whom they delegate control. Many institutional devices in a democracy enable and empower these kinds of citizen judgements. If all is working well, transparency and press freedom help to provide the information and knowledge necessary for monitoring; elections provide opportunities for the selection and removal of representatives who make decisions on their constituents' behalf, while independent bodies scrutinize the civil service, providing rules, auditing and oversight.

But even when political labours are divided and supported, the demands on citizens are quite extensive, and resources are scarce, including not only cognitive resources, but also those institutional resources necessary to enforce principal–agent relations. For this reason, citizens can, and often do, rely on another division of labour: they focus their participatory resources on monitoring some agents, while simply trusting others, forego-ing the costs of both knowledge and monitoring. But decisions about when to monitor and when to trust require good judgements, since – like other decisions – trust decisions can be made well or badly (Mackenzie and Warren, 2012; Warren and Gastil, 2015). For example, citizens may misplace their trust in agents who fail to hold their interests in view or otherwise abuse the trust placed in them. Or, they may mistrust agents who in fact have their best interests in view, thus misdirecting or squandering their scarce participatory resources. Or, worse, they may generalize distrust to such a degree that they withdraw from politics into alienated cynicism, by concluding – as do significant proportions of citizens in most of the existing democracies – that all public officials and politicians are corrupt, and none are to be trusted.

The general point is that trust decisions are necessary in large-scale, complex democracies in order that citizens might direct their scarce participatory resources toward monitoring and overseeing those issues, areas and agents, where trust is not warranted; where participation is called for because interests or values between a citizen and principals and agents conflict or diverge; or, where *engaged distrust* (or scepticism: Norris, 2011, p. 19) is the appropriate disposition. It follows that decisions to trust or distrust are fully consistent with an active, critical citizenry, provided that decision is part of a strategy to maximize scarce participatory resources, and citizens are making trust decisions for good reasons (Mansbridge, 2009).

DEMOCRACIES INSTITUTIONALIZE DISTRUST

How can democracies avoid both uncritical trust and generalized distrust? How can democracies support trust and distrust decisions that are focused on the right agents and institutions, and made for good reasons? The general answer is that democracies focus distrust by channelling conflict into institutions designed for conflict, while channelling broadly settled purposes into trustworthy institutions – institutions in which office-holders assume a public trust for the purposes of their offices. Modern democracies insulate government from the corrosive effects of distrust by differentiating the political branches of government, such as elected legislatures, from those branches that should be objects of trust, such as the police, the judiciary and the agencies that provide health, education and welfare (see also Chapter 6 by Marien). As a general matter, it is not

government *as such* that should be distrusted (as suggested by Bentham, 1816 [1999]), but rather political officials within the political branches of government. This general idea is consistent with common findings that ‘trust in government’ varies by institution, with trust in the less political functions and branches (such as the police, public education and the judiciary) relatively high, and trust in the more political institutions – legislatures with their elected politicians in particular – relatively low (Van de Walle et al., 2008; Norris, 2011; see also Chapter 2 by Norris, Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton, and Chapters 23–28 in this Handbook; cf. Marien, 2011).

The point here is that overly general categories such as ‘political trust’ and ‘trust in government’ fail to identify institutional differences that are quite essential for a democracy to function. From a theoretical perspective, for explicitly political branches of government – such as legislatures or the offices of elected representatives – the conditions of trust cannot be taken for granted, precisely because these branches are ‘political’. Unconditional trust judgements are unwarranted, just because ‘politics’ is a domain in which interests conflict. Trust supports democratic responsiveness when a truster’s interests or values are encapsulated in, or convergent with, those of the trustee’s, such that the trustee is motivated to act in trustworthy ways – that is, in ways that further the interests or values of the truster (Hardin, 1999; Warren, 1999). But politics works at the frontiers of consensus, which means that citizens should oversee their representatives, monitoring their words and deeds (with the exception of selective trust of representatives, the conditions of which I discuss below). A key achievement of democratic institutions is that they provide citizens with the means of oversight and sanction. If these means are working, then over time the interests of citizens and elites should tend toward alignment, thus tending to produce the conditions of trust as issues are settled, but only because distrust is empowered and then channelled into the democratic media of public discourse and voting in ways that push toward interest and value alignment.

Theoretically, then, democracies work because they institutionalize distrust within those parts of the political system designed for conflict (Braithwaite, 1998; Sztompka, 1999; Tilly, 2005). Political institutions work democratically when they neither suppress conflicts nor deny the distrust that accompanies them. Rather, democracies empower partisans to pursue their interests and values through arguments and votes, while denying them non-democratic powers of violence or economic blackmail. Democracies affirm distrust by acknowledging conflicting interests and providing them spaces for expression. At the same time, democracies hedge the consequences of conflict – and thus of distrust – by limiting the powers that partisans can deploy to public persuasion and voting, in this way providing incentives for deliberations, bargains, compromises, and even transformations of interests and values. If trust is to be had, then, it should be an outcome of political processes that align interests and values rather than a precondition. So if democracies are associated with *more* trust within society – especially generalized trust – it is probably because they do the work of interest and value alignment better than other types of political systems (see Nannestad, 2008; Jamal and Nooruddin, 2010). There are some exceptions: the authoritarian governments of China and Singapore, for example, benefit from very high citizen trust, probably driven by performance rather than processes, which remain authoritarian. Interestingly, in China high trust in the central government co-exists with distrust of local institutions, where corruption is common and visible (see

Chapter 28 by Park; see also He and Warren, 2011). To date, however, these performance-based drivers of trust have not generalized beyond a few regimes in East and South Asia.

The common patterns in the developed democracies involve channeling and containing distrust. When we theorize the relationship between democracy and trust in this way, we can also see that institutionalizing distrust depends upon, and in fact presupposes, high trust in the institutions that enable politics to be channelled into voting and talking (Marien, 2011). In elections, citizens need to know that votes will be counted credibly; that campaign spending does not beholden politicians to deep-pocketed donors; that politicians reveal their interests and intentions so that voters might judge them. But in addition to these kinds of second-order trust in directly political institutions, democracies depend on trust in those institutions that we expect to be impartial and universal – and thus insulated from everyday politics (see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). These include independent judiciaries as well as the many agencies, departments and ministries that undertake most of the everyday functions of government, and which make it safe for citizens to generalize their trust judgements within society. And digging down into societies, it is likely that a variety of trust relationships enable the forms of agency that make democracy work – from interpersonal and associative forms to a variety of advocacy relationships that represent and amplify citizens' interests and voices. So thinking about the relationship between democracy and trust as a division of labour between participation and trust is still too abstract. We shall need to sort out the variety of trust relationships that are, very likely, involved in making democratic systems work.

DEMOCRACY-SUPPORTING TRUST: WARRANT AND PUBLICITY¹

My discussion in the previous sections raised some general considerations about the kinds of trust a political system should have to function *as* a democracy under conditions of large scale and complexity, and (for individual citizens) scarce participatory resources. We can now be less abstract by examining these functional considerations from the standpoint of what citizens would need to know to make trust decisions that are supportive of democracy.

All relationships of trust involve a simple three-part relationship: A trusts B with good *x*, in which A has an interest (e.g., Hardin, 1999, pp. 24–6). To say that A *trusts* B with good *x* is also to say that A allows B *discretion* over *x*. In a trust relationship, A does not monitor B's stewardship over *x*; A simply judges that B's stewardship will be consistent with her interest in *x*, and consents to B's discretion over *x*. Two dimensions of this relationship – warrant and publicity – are important for identifying and classifying democracy-supporting trust relationships, as well as to distinguish them from those kinds of trust that undermine democracy.

Warrant

First, trust relations vary depending upon the kind of warrant that underwrites the trust relationship. A trust relationship is based on congruence between the trustee's and the trustee's interests with regard to some good (in Russell Hardin's, 1999, pp. 4–6, formulation

– the truster’s interests are encapsulated by the trustee’s interests). The truster does not have to know *how* the trustee is exercising stewardship over the good, but only that in doing so he is acting in ways that further the truster’s interest. The element of discretion – the fact that the truster does not *have to* know because she *trusts* – is based on her judgement that the risk of *not knowing* about the details of stewardship is relatively low. What the truster does need, however, is some reason – what I am calling a ‘warrant’ – for thinking that her interests are convergent with the trustee’s interests. The most simple and direct kind of warrant is interpersonal: the truster knows the trustee, knows his interests and his character, and knows with reasonable certainty what kind of person the trustee is. For her part, the trustee should have a good idea of what the trustor’s interests are, and can signal this knowledge to the trustor in some way. Nonetheless, interpersonal relations are not the only kind of warrant available, especially in complex societies. Trust relations can spread, as it were, beyond interpersonal relations when there are other sources of knowledge about whether the trustor’s interests are convergent with the trustee’s interests. Hypothetically, the trust relationship can be warranted by other persons, shared norms and common cultures, knowledge provided by the media (mass or social), and institutions. I return to these distinctions below.

Publicity

The second dimension relevant to democracy has to do with knowledge of the externalities of trust relationships: could the trust relationship and its motivating reasons become public to all those affected? The point of this distinction, as many have pointed out, is that trust is not a moral or political good in itself (cf. Mansbridge, 1999). Particularized forms of trust provide the social glue for clans, ethnic and racial groups, and sectarian religious communities, in part by forging identities that include distrust of outsiders (see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). It is particularized trust that holds together criminal conspiracies and corrupt exchanges. Trust is involved in ‘bad social capital’: relationships of mutual social investment that have broader divisive or corrosive social functions (Warren, 2008; see also Fukuyama, 1995; Uslaner, 1999; Putnam, 2000, ch. 1).

In suggesting a publicity test as a way of judging whether trust relationships are democracy supporting, I am extending Annette Baier’s (1986) test for the morality of a trust relationship. Trust, Baier writes:

[. . .]is morally decent only if, in addition to whatever else is entrusted, knowledge of each party’s reasons for confident reliance on the other to continue the relationship could also be entrusted – since mutual knowledge of the conditions for mutual trust would be itself a good, not a threat to other goods. To the extent that mutual reliance can be accompanied by mutual knowledge of the conditions for that reliance, trust is above suspicion, and trustworthiness a nonsuspect virtue. (Baier, 1986, pp. 259–60)

While Baier conceives of this test as internal to trust relationships, if there are consequences that are external to the relationship, then those affected should also find the reasons for the trust relationship to be acceptable. Thus, a trust relationship is legitimate just to the extent that it could be justified to all those affected by its externalities. What this condition would mean in practice is that, as affectedness extends outward, the reasons for the relationship should be available and justifiable to those affected. So what

is wrong about the trust involved in parties to political corruption, for example, is that the relationship negatively impacts others, who, if they knew of the reasons supporting the trust relationship, would surely not approve. Indeed, the reasons for corruption almost always involve externalities such as channelling public goods toward private ends (Warren, 2004a; Uslaner, 2008). This is why the interests served by covert deals involving public money, vote-buying, crime rackets, race-based secret societies or religious cults *must* remain covert if the trust among the participants is to be maintained. So the kinds of trust that are consistent with democracy should be able to pass the test of publicity: the supporting reasons could be justified to the encompassing collectivities comprised of those affected (Warren, 2006).

I am not suggesting that there exist no legitimate private interests in trust relationships – for example, in intimate relationships. The publicity test is proportional to consequences for others: if there are no negative externalities that follow from a trust relationship (e.g., between friends, partners, parents and children), then publicity is not relevant. But should intimate trust relationships produce negative externalities the publicity test becomes important.

While the publicity test is primarily normative – enabling us to distinguish better and worse forms of trust from a democratic perspective – it does map roughly onto the distinction between generalized and particularized trust (Uslaner, 2002; see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). But it does so in a way that links the distinction directly to a normative marker with clear democratic consequences. Not *all* particularized trust relationships undermine democracy – some particularized trust relationships are, simply, socially specific without negative externalities, and thus quite consistent with generalized trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011). But those that could not be justified to the collectivities they affect are *prima facie* illegitimate from a democratic perspective.

DEMOCRACY-SUPPORTING AND DEMOCRACY-UNDERMINING KINDS OF TRUST

Combining these two dimensions identifies the kinds of trust that are good for democracy and those that are not. Table 3.1 represents the hypothetical possibilities.

Table 3.1 *Kinds of trust*

Publicity: Could the interests served by the trust relationship be justified to those affected?			
	Yes	No	
Means for warranting the trust relationship			
Interpersonal	Direct social trust	Direct protective trust	
	Associative trust	Mediated protective trust	
	Generalized cultural trust	Particularized cultural trust	
	Public confidence	Media clientelism	
	Institutional trust	Institutionalized corruption	

The forms of trust listed in the left-hand column (interests that could be justified to those affected) are supportive of democracy – but in different ways, depending upon the kind of warrant. Those forms of trust in the right-hand column (interests that would not bear public exposure) either do not enhance democracy, or are bad for democracy. (There are, of course, strategic situations in which progressive goals may require secrecy, particularly under authoritarian or police state conditions, or within non-democratic situations within otherwise democratic contexts, such as when workers seek to organize the labour force within a company. For purposes of this discussion, however, I set these contexts aside: where publicity is not strategically possible, the publicity test will remain hypothetical.) It is likely (although I will not make the argument here) that these two groupings of trust form complexes or syndromes – that is, each form of trust within the group reinforces other forms of trust within the same group (Johnston, 2005; Rothstein, 2005).

These types help to elaborate the important and widely used distinction between particularized and generalized trust. These terms refer to the social relationships that build around psychological dispositions. Particularized trusters extend trust based on some salient group characteristic – members of the same family, clan, religious congregation or ethnic group – and they distrust those who do not share this characteristic. Those who are willing to extend trust across group boundaries to strangers – at least as a first gesture – are generalized trusters. These *dispositional* distinctions (which I discuss at greater length below) correspond, roughly, to the normative publicity test: generalized trusters will, typically, be able to justify their trust to strangers; particularized trusters cannot or will not.

Trust Based on Interpersonal Warrants

Two kinds of trust that depend upon interpersonal warrants are relatively straightforward. *Direct social trust* is a basic, unproblematic building block of social life. To be sure, the forms of interpersonal assurance that take place within these relations may be quite complex, based on numerous thick social relations, cues, consistency between words and deeds, and the like. But from the point of view of democratic theory, as long as all parties affected by a trust relationship could know the goods and their associated interests, and as long as they could know the conditions for mutual reliance, the trust is not problematic. In contrast, what I am calling *direct protective trust* (a label I am using to suggest both clientelism and protection rackets) is inherently suspect. If the interests and their associated goods could not be justified – that is, if at least one party would view associated goods as endangered should others know about these goods and the conditions under which they are achieved – then the trust relationship is either exploitative (the relationship could not be justified in the absence of dependency of the truster on the trusted), or corrupt (if both parties gain at the expense of those not party to the relationship). Such trust relationships often have the features of patronage or protection rackets: in the case of dependency relationships such as clientelism, it is just *because* trusters do not have alternatives that they ‘trust’ their protector or patron. In the case of corrupt relationships, each party relies on the (protective) confidence of the other.

Trust Based on Warrants Provided by Other Persons

When the truster does not know the trustee, but the truster knows people who know the trustee, these others can vouch for a trustee's trustworthiness. Social mediation expands the reach of interpersonal warrants, enabling *associative trust*. This form of trust can generate the social capital that underwrites associative capacities for collective action (Warren, 2001; Lin, 2002). In a well-functioning democracy, the purposes of associations are relatively open and public, even if they are not widely shared. In contrast, *mediated protective trust* multiplies the pathologies of direct protective trust. What cannot be spoken or revealed beyond personal relationships can define a non-public subculture – a culture, with its own rules and assurances about who should and should not be trusted, according to their social connections. In politics, this kind of particularized trust can form the basis for covert influence over collective decisions in ways that could not be justified to broader publics. The post-war Italian political system was based on a refined version of mediated protective trust (Della Porta and Vanucci, 1999). Although the Italian case is extreme among the developed democracies, most include some subcultures built on mediated protective trust. Those who contribute large amounts of money to political campaigns may not ask for specific favours in return, but they do expect access in the future; they trust those they have helped to protect them from onerous political forces. And, most importantly, they expect their concerns and interests to be protected from public discussion and exposure (Thompson, 1993; Rose-Ackerman, 1999, pp. 133–5; Warren, 2004b).

Trust Based on Warrants Provided by Shared Norms

Warrants may be provided by shared norms. The truster does not know the trustee, or anyone who does know the trustee. But the truster knows that the trustee belongs to a particular kind of group or community defined by a shared normative identity: a church, an ethnic group, a social movement or a nationality. Norms can be exclusive, as in sectarian religions, or relatively universal, such as a parent's duty to care for their children. On the basis of their mutual allegiance to shared norms, the truster concludes that the trustee can be trusted – for example, 'as a Baptist' or 'as a mother'.

Whether trust mediated by shared norms is good or bad for democracy depends on the kinds of norms that are shared: Are they encompassing and generalizable? Or are they particular, defined by the codes of a group that defines itself in opposition to other groups? *Generalized cultural trust* describes the situation in which people hold norms that motivate them to be generous toward strangers, and perhaps even to be spontaneously altruistic. Thus, if my reference group and socialization are defined by an inclusive ethos, it may not even matter that you do not belong to the group. My normative stance is generous and inclusive, so that I define you as part of a universal community of which I am a part. Indeed, at the limit I may even give up on the warrant. I may have no reason at all to trust you, but I believe I should set a good example by risking trust (Mansbridge, 1999; Uslaner, 2002). Generalized trustees will assume, all other things being equal, that their interests are congruent with others, and even that most interests are plus-sum: If we trust one another, we can cooperate in ways that will benefit both of us. Generalized trustees have little to hide: they could, if necessary, make the basis of their trust relations public on the assumption that reasons for the relationship could be generalized.

It is now commonplace to think that generalized trust mediated by shared norms is good for a democracy (Warren, 1999; Putnam, 2000; Uslaner, 2002). In a society in which most people are generalized trustees, people will find it easier to associate for common purposes. Moreover, in political relationships – relations in which there is overt conflict – an initial act of generosity can generate the trust necessary to further discussions, negotiations, identifications of congruent interests and bargains. Resolutions of political conflicts depend, in part, on trust that the other party will follow through on a compromise or bargain (Warren and Mansbridge, 2013).

People who generalize trust will, of course, have particularized trust relationships with family, friends, associates and members of their community. But when people trust *only* in particularized ways, it is difficult for generative and creative dynamics of democracy to take hold. If I distrust you because of your family, ethnicity, race, gender or other attributes that I infer from the characteristics associated with you, then I will spontaneously distrust you. Since I assume that my interests *cannot* be congruent with yours, I will tend to hold my interests closely, keep them within the group, and share with those I trust. Those whose trust is only particular will assume, all other things being equal, that they should not, or could not, justify the interests embedded in their particular trust relations to a broader public. It may be that these interests are simply too particular – such as those related to ethnic or religious identity. Or it may be that these interests are zero-sum: whatever we gain for ourselves through our trust relationship is your loss. In such cases, particularized trust provides fertile grounds for ethnic, racial, and religious factionalism, clientelistic protection, and corruption. Such trust relationships often generate negative externalities, and so cannot withstand public justification. Clearly, trust built in this way is bad for democracy: at best, it leads to a rigid *modus vivendi* in social life, within which democracy will be unable to do its creative work. At worst, it can reinforce downward levelling norms and vicious cycles of the kind famously described by Edward Banfield in *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (1958). Banfield tells the story of Montegrano, a fictitious composite of ethnographies of several real towns in Southern Italy that is comprised of self-interested, familial attachments. Inhabitants of Montegrano regard those outside their families with distrust, envy and suspicion – so much so that they are unable to organize even the most basic collective actions for common benefit, leaving them locked into poverty and social isolation.

Trust Based on Warrants Provided by the Media

How can warrants for trust judgements scale beyond socially mediated relationships? One obvious answer is through the media, which can and often does function to provide warrant for trust, especially of public figures (see also Chapter 22 by Newton). The truster may not know the trusted, nor know anyone who knows. But within the intensely competitive media environment of today, the truster can have some confidence that much is known about public officials. In principle, media scrutiny of the trustee's finances and sources of income, the relationship between words, issue positions and deeds, and other such information can be revealing of the trustee's interests, and in this way provide warrant for trust (or distrust). In principle, the media can also provide incentives for public officials to behave in trustworthy ways: reputation provides officials with symbolic power, which can be destroyed by scandal (Thompson, 2000,

pp. 245–51). In this way, the media can underwrite (or undermine) *public confidence* in officials.

This said, as Newton (Chapter 22) argues, trust in the media is declining, driven by distrust of media elites, judgements that media outlets are partial or partisan, and the media's own discourse of distrust (see also Arceneaux and Johnson, 2013; Levendusky, 2013). Trusters may use media selectively, trusting only those media sources that confirm their opinions, which will reinforce partisan hostilities much like other particularized trust relationships. There is an additional effect of visual media that may interact with particularized trust: trusters often treat images in the same ways they would treat interpersonal cues, focusing on a trustee's demeanour, dress, eye contact with cameras, appearance with family or at church, or other common social cues. There are strong incentives to do so, not the least of which is the cognitive costliness of understanding the interests of trustees, and then relating these interests to their words and deeds. While image-based warrants are not necessarily bad for democracy, they probably often substitute for the kinds of warrant that would more reliably indicate that interests are encapsulated or convergent. George W. Bush's rhetoric in the 2000 presidential campaign exemplified the dangers: 'The difference between me and my opponent', he said repeatedly, 'is that he trusts the government while I trust you'. Bush promised to provide, with the full force of his character, protection against a corrupt federal government. In doing so, he cued a long history of distrustful populism: he sought to replace trust in institutions with a mediated personal trust, encouraging particularized trusters to read visually mediated cues as if they were interpersonal. The result was something like a *mediated clientelism*, in which a strong public figure promises 'personal' protection against an untrustworthy and exploitative government.

Trust Based on Warrants Provided by Institutions

We now arrive back at a key question in this chapter: can institutions provide warrant for trust? From the perspective of democratic theory, institutional warrants are among the most important kinds, because they can occur between strangers, across zones of conflict, and their reach is extensive in time and space, and over masses of people.

But the idea of 'trusting an institution' is less straightforward than other kinds of trust. The idea of trusting an institution makes most sense if we understand it as shorthand for trusting a person who holds an office defined by the rules that constitute the institution (Offe, 1999, pp. 65–76). The person is, however, an anonymous other, and may be replaced at any time by another anonymous person. So the truster knows nothing about the trustee, except that the trustee holds an office within an institution. If the truster trusts the trustee, it is because three elements of the institution interact to enable a trust relationship even when interpersonal, social and media-based warrants are not available. The first of these is normative. Institutions define offices normatively. Some norms attach explicitly to the office; others are embedded in the norms of the profession. Truster and trustee can both know these norms. This knowledge enables a truster to know about the trustee's duties with respect to the truster's interests. The second element necessary to infer trustworthiness is knowledge about the motivations of the trustee. The norms may themselves motivate: a trustee will act according to the norms because they define his identity: 'That's my job. That's what a person in my position *should* do'. But, third, because the truster usually

does not have any direct knowledge of the trustee's normative attachment to his office, it is essential that the institutions have sanctions that are knowable to the truster: in one way or another, officials must be held accountable for their performances. So even if the trustee has not internalized the norms, he nonetheless has incentives to behave consistently with them. *Institutional trust* depends on an effective element of risk reduction: trusters must be able to resort to effective monitoring, or know that there are others who monitor, even if they do not do so themselves. The basis of trust in institutions is normative, but the risks of relying on norms in the absence of knowledge of persons are hedged by sanctions. Thus, institutional trust depends on a congruence of three elements: (1) knowledge of institutional norms shared between truster and trustee; (2) the truster's knowledge of the trustee's motivations; which can be inferred from (3) sanctions that render office-holders accountable to the norms of office.

Trust in institutions should normally be democracy supporting, largely because the mechanisms that enable individuals to generalize from normatively defined offices and their sanctions to office-holders can be known by those affected, just because they are public (Van Ryzin, 2011; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012). Theoretically, however, we can identify *non-public* institutional trust, in which norms of office are institutionalized, but known primarily to insiders, and so fail to be justifiable to those affected – a pattern sometimes termed *institutionalized corruption* (Thompson, 1995; Lessig, 2011). One example, mentioned earlier, was the Italian political system in the post-war period until the mid-1990s, in which corruption was systematic and regularized, with virtually every politician, party operative and government contractor following a highly institutionalized system of kick-backs from contractors to parties (Della Porta and Vanucci, 1999). Another example is the legal institutional corruption ingrained in the US system of campaign finance (Thompson, 1995; Lessig, 2011). In both examples, the systems of exchanges are based on particularized trust, but institutionalized in ways that norms are regularized and knowable by insiders, but not publicly justifiable to those they affect.

DOMAINS OF DEMOCRACY-SUPPORTING TRUST

Where does this analysis leave us? Democracies, I have been suggesting, build on good divisions of labour between participation and trust. Trust covers the many areas of collective attachment where interests converge, enabling citizens to direct their scarce participatory resources toward political arenas in which interests conflict. This kind of division of labour requires good trust judgements, and it requires institutions that support good trust judgements. It also requires of citizens that they function as 'critical citizens' – to borrow Norris's (2011) term – in the sense that they know when and where to place their trust, and when and where they should distrust.

The analysis I have offered so far enables us to refine these expectations so we might identify different kinds of trust expectations by domain, which in turn should enable us to identify the kinds of trust deficits in the developed democracies that should concern us. In particular, we should: (1) expect forms of trust that are domain appropriate; (2) ask whether the domains support the kinds of warrants citizens need to make good trust decisions; and (3) ask whether the resulting forms of trust are consistent with publicity. In

this section, I bring these pieces of the theoretical picture together to offer some speculative suggestions about deficits in democracy-supporting trust.

As I suggested in the introduction, we can generally think about five kinds of democracy-supporting trust, each of which has differing kinds of warrants (following the analysis above), and is thus subject to distinct kinds of trust deficits:

- generalized trust in society;
- trust in professionals and experts;
- trust in offices that hold a public trust;
- second-order trust in political processes;
- selective trust in representatives.

Generalized Trust in Society

We know that horizontal generalized trust is associated with high-functioning democracies, owing to its intrinsic connections to social capital. The institutions of democratic systems can probably support generalized trust only *indirectly* by supporting the spread of interpersonal and social warrants beyond families, clans and other sites of particularized trust. The important institution-based strategies probably have to do with: (1) reducing the risks of trust through security and rule of law; (2) reducing particularistic dependencies through universal welfare supports; and (3) increasing the likelihood that interpersonal and socially mediated warrants can spread through institutions, such as public schools and universities that cut across particularistic ties. The more these conditions obtain, the more likely these trust relationships will pass the tests of publicity. In contrast, low levels of generalized trust undermine democracy by providing opportunities for political entrepreneurs to organize politics of resentment, religious division, nativism and racism that feed distrust of any collective provision. These kinds of politics make it less likely that institutions can channel conflict into the democratic media of public discourse and voting.

Trust in Professionals and Experts

One of four vertical kinds of trust, trust in professionals and experts, is essential for any society that divides cognitive labours and enables specialization. In the developed democracies, this kind of trust is relatively well supported by institutions that educate, certify, oversee and sanction professions, from medical professionals to taxi drivers. Of course, renegade professionals can also damage this kind of trust. And, of course, no kind of trust is without some risks, which can sometimes be magnified to the point that individuals are unable to make good trust decisions, as recent distrust of medical vaccinations in the United States has shown. Finally, over the last few decades, scientific expertise has become highly politicized, most notably in the area of climate change science. The United States National Academies of Science, Engineering and Medicine have developed one kind of institutional response. For each science policy issue it assesses, a scientific panel is carefully insulated from vested interests, but also hears from every relevant advocacy and interest group. The panel then deliberates and issues lengthy reports that not only take into account the most recent science, but also respond to a broad range of public opinion,

advocacy and interests. In this way, National Academies reports avoid conflicts of interest that would undermine trust, while responding to conflicting interests and opinions with transparent and deliberative justifications of its assessments and recommendations. Attentive publics would, on average, be warranted in placing their trust in these scientific panels of professionals, simply based on their institutional design.

Trust in Offices that Hold a Public Trust

As I have suggested, it is important to distinguish the less political from the more political domains of government. Of course, in many ways all domains of government are ‘political’. In the higher-functioning democracies, however, governments insulate most of their functions – those carried out by executive agencies and judiciaries – from electoral politics and interest group pressures (Rosanvallon, 2011, Part II). Citizens need to be able to place trust in these institutions: each person should be able to trust that they will be treated impartially and fairly, just like any other citizen. Public trust is the *sine qua non* of a democracy’s capacities to get things done: to provide collective goods for the people it comprises. The warrants for public trust are primarily institutional in nature: the norms of public office need to be knowable to publics, and holders of public offices must be subject to sanctions when they break from these norms. Because these kinds of trust judgements operate at a distance from most citizens, most of the time, publicity in the sense of transparency is essential. It is also essential to have knowable and transparent systems of oversight. Deficits in public trust are common and easily identified. What patronage, clientelism, corruption, captured agencies and iron triangles have in common is that particularistic forms of trust inhabit each kind of syndrome, while public trust is missing. Where publicly knowable warrants are missing, citizens *should* distrust. But when distrust is generalized beyond missing warrants – a strategy of the populist Right in the United States when it ‘runs against Washington’ – then collective capacities are undermined, and a people will be unable to provide collective goods for itself.

Second-order Trust in Political Processes

The ‘political’ branches of government – especially legislatures, but also political processes that accompany ‘governance’ outside of electoral politics – present a different kind of trust problem. As I have argued, there are no good theoretical reasons to expect first-order trust in political institutions: their functions are *defined* by conflicts of interest, and they are inhabited by partisans. Rather than trust, citizens *should* distrust, precisely because interests are unsettled, and warrants for any general trust will be unavailable. And, indeed, very few people in the developed democracies trust politicians as compared, for example, to school teachers or physicians. But for democracies to work, people do need to place a second-order trust in the institutions that channel conflict into democratic media of talking and voting. Warrants for this kind of trust will be institutional and indirect, primarily focused on limiting the extent to which the *partial* (and hence untrustworthy) motivations of office-holders are able to pursue their agendas outside of the media of talking and voting. In practice, most of the warrants are preventative, aimed at keeping conflict from being dealt with out of the public eye, and in response to (say) money or sectarian agendas. Hence the importance of campaign financing regulations and rules

concerning conflicts of interest (Thompson, 1993; Stark, 2000; Warren, 2006). Yet, at least in the United States, deficits in second-order trust are pronounced and increasing, no doubt driven by the flood of money from special interests into political campaigns, unleashed in part by the 2010 *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission* Supreme Court decision. The few institutional norms aimed at public confidence – ethics committees in the United States House and Senate – are notable mostly because they are weak and lack visibility (Thompson, 1995). No doubt owing to the weakness of institutional warrants, publicity (or transparency) has become all the more important – with Sunshine laws that dictate that public business be conducted in public becoming almost universal among the developed democracies. But transparency is now made to carry the weight of institutional norms, the cost of which is that political representatives can only talk and vote strategically, with an eye to electoral politics. The cost of low public confidence is that it is increasingly difficult for political actors, at least in the United States Congress, to talk and vote as a body – making it ever more difficult to get anything done (Warren and Mansbridge, 2013). Clearly, in the United States at least, there is a deficit of second-order trust in political institutions, with recent public confidence in Congress falling to historic lows.

Selective Trust in Representatives

It is a different question, of course, as to whether citizens trust individual representatives and advocacy groups to argue and act on their interests. Although citizens do not trust ‘politicians’ as a group, they often have much higher opinions of their own representative or party – not surprisingly, as elections increase the chances of interest convergence (Keele, 2005). So we should expect most trust relationships within political institutions to be between citizens and their representatives, constituted by campaigning and voting, where the campaign conveys the values and interests of the trustee. The truster seeks to select the trustee based by using this information to infer trustworthiness (Mansbridge, 2009; see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). For informal representatives – advocacy groups such as Greenpeace or Human Rights Watch, for example – the conditions of trust are even easier to fulfil: the alignment of the public reputation of an advocate and their interest is immediate, since citizens can select and deselect advocates at will, usually through membership. For elected representatives, warrants for trust combine media-based reputations with institutional sanctions – elections – that align the interests of office with the interests of constituents. Where these conditions hold, citizens can economize on their participatory resources by using these kinds of information to select a trustee, and then forego monitoring.

Generally speaking, selective trust deficits will mostly attach to elected representatives. Relative to informal representatives who are easily chosen through joining and exiting, elections provide relatively fewer choices. Deficits are likely to be driven by two kinds of factors. First, because information about candidates is (almost always) media based, it often comes to citizens packaged in focus group-tested sound bites, from which citizens must infer interest alignment. This kind of information probably biases citizens toward distrust, given that candidates typically focus on channelling distrust of their opponents. Independent voter pamphlets, candidate debates, extended interviews, mini-public vetting – indeed, any device that adds information – would help

to counterbalance. Second, even in high information environments, the conditions of trust will only hold for those citizens who understand a candidate's positions, find their interests reflected in them, and side with a winner. So it is likely that selective trust deficits will be higher in two-party single member plurality (SMP) systems than in multi-party proportional representation (PR) systems: SMP systems limit choice and so reduce the chances of interest and value convergence between voter and candidate, while PR systems enable greater voter choice, and hence a greater likelihood of matches. This said, many PR systems empower political entrepreneurs who organize particularized trust (Israel is an extreme case), as there are fewer incentives for coalition building prior to the formation of a government. We should prefer those kinds of PR, such as the single transferable vote, that incentivize coalition building during campaigns (James, 2015).

CONCLUSION: ADDRESSING TRUST DEFICITS

The relationship between democracy and trust is complex. But the complexity is tractable if we disaggregate the meanings of trust and then relate them to the several different kinds of domains and institutions that comprise democracies. From an empirical standpoint, this sort of theoretical analysis is based on empirical guesses. Because it is a *theoretical* analysis, however, it is not empirical by definition. At best, this analysis should help to produce more hypotheses that are empirically testable.

What this sort of theoretical analysis can provide, however, are ways of framing the questions of political trust so they are normatively significant for democratic governance. In large-scale complex societies, trust relationships should carry much of the burden of connecting individuals' interests and values to the collectivities within which they are embedded. Democracies should enable citizens to divide their political labours between participation and trust, focusing distrust into 'political' arenas of conflicting interests, while supporting trust decisions where they are warranted. Analysing these individual cognitive divisions of labour should enable us to identify trust deficits relative to domain-specific democratic functions, by focusing on missing kinds of warrants for trust. When we do so, several kinds of trust deficits stand out. First, with respect to generalized social trust, we should worry about social distrust fed by social cleavages, especially when they are structural or geographic. Second, we should continue to worry about impartial and efficient public services and judiciaries – confidence in which is essential both to citizens' capacities and to collective action – especially in countries with histories of public service corruption, such as Italy, Greece or Spain. Third, virtually all democracies have deficits in second-order trust in political institutions – that is, in the rules and procedures that channel politics into the democratic media of public discourse and voting. Finally, we should be able to imagine institutions that make specific trust judgements – trust in representatives – easier for citizens by incentivizing high-information environments to counter the framing and priming effects of soundbite campaigning, and by preferring, where possible, institutions (such as PR electoral systems) that provide more opportunities for interest alignment, and providing better opportunities for citizens to vet candidates.

There is, however, one general danger that we should keep at the forefront of our atten-

tion. When good trust decisions are poorly supported by institutions, citizens with fewer participatory resources are likely to be more prone to generalized distrust. Generalized distrust in turn defocuses participation, and translates into either alienated passivity or generalized anger of the kind that can be opportunistically mobilized by faux populists. For this reason alone, we should focus on institutional reforms that make it easier for citizens to make good trust decisions.

NOTE

1. Much of this section and the next is based on writing that originally appeared in Warren (2004b).

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4. Functions of political trust in authoritarian settings

Paola Rivetti and Francesco Cavatorta

INTRODUCTION

The literature on political trust has long emphasized its relevance for democracy and democratic consolidation. All types of trust indeed have been considered as indispensable to the sustainability of a democratic system, given that it supplies democratic or democratizing polities with the necessary social and political capital to either remain stable or consolidate democracy. This chapter moves on from these assumptions to review the extant literature on political trust in authoritarian settings, a relatively understudied field. It is contended here that the main contribution of this literature to broader studies of political trust has been the questioning of the inherent connection between political trust and democracy, which implies that political trust cannot exist or is in very low supply in authoritarian settings. In fact, examinations of authoritarianism have demonstrated that the larger political context, regardless of its nature, can generate a specific type of political trust.

The literature on political trust is mostly concerned with two sets of questions. First, what are the causes or origins of political trust, and second what are its consequences? These two broad questions have been applied to the study of democratic settings, but they are important for authoritarian countries as well, where a different kind of political trust might develop and whose function is to strengthen authoritarianism. In this respect we advance the idea that, much like the concept of civil society (Berman, 2003; Encarnación, 2006), political trust should be stripped of its implicit normative character. This normativity is the product of the near absence of studies engaging with political trust as a neutral concept in so far as it is often limited to discussions as to how authoritarian settings could transit towards liberal democracy through the production of trust (Almond and Verba, 1963; Epstein, 1984; Putnam, 1993, 2000; Diamond, 1999; Edwards and Foley, 2001). The contention here is that the implied normativity of the concept of trust obscures the potential similarities between established democracies and authoritarian settings in the production of political trust. While the latter is believed to be desirable *per se*, an aspect that emerges from the studies of trust and social capital in authoritarian contexts is the double-edged sword that political trust can be. Thus, just as it can serve the purpose of democratization or strengthening democracy, it can also be employed and become functional to the survival of authoritarian rule.

The chapter begins with a discussion on the roots of political trust in authoritarian settings as framed in the debate between culturalism and institutionalism. We then look at the consequences of political trust in authoritarian settings. In the second part of the chapter we highlight the contributions and significance of this field of study to the wider literature on political trust, highlighting in particular the apparent paradox of authoritarian

systems displaying quite high levels of political trust. The concluding part of the chapter presents findings from three case studies – China, Iran and Morocco – where we tease out some of the definitional and theoretical complexity through an analysis of how in practice political trust works in authoritarian systems.

ROOTS OF POLITICAL TRUST IN AUTHORITARIAN SETTINGS: CULTURALISM AND INSTITUTIONALISM

The first question as to what is the origin of political trust in established democracies is built around the ‘culturalist’ versus the ‘institutionalist’ debate (Mishler and Rose, 2001) and finds a parallel when it comes to analyzing authoritarian settings. In this respect there are works attempting to explain the absence of political trust through cultural variables and offering a ‘cultural’ revolution as the solution to generate it, implying therefore that this constitutes the basis for democratization. Thus, we have, for example, links to a specific and often partisan interpretation of religious precepts as an obstacle to the creation of genuine political trust. This is the case in studies looking at the role of Islam in both society and politics, which make the argument that democracy and Islam are incompatible and that therefore ‘trust’ is not an element that is required to govern, in part because the legitimization to rule does not derive from the people (Pipes, 2003; Voll, 2007). It would, however, be a mistake to focus simply on Islam, as other religions have served as the variable explaining the absence of political trust and, by implication, democracy. Confucianism, for instance, has been employed to explain the high level of confidence in state institutions in the case of Southeast Asia, irrespective of the authoritarian nature of regimes, because Confucian tradition is seemingly supportive of the values of hierarchy and deference to authority (Fukuyama, 1995). In a similar vein, Catholicism and its authoritarian hierarchical nature were put forth as explanations for the prevalence of authoritarian regimes in Southern Europe first and Latin America later in the 1970s and 1980s (Wiarda, 1981). Other culturalist factors beyond religion that have been employed to explain the absence of political trust in authoritarian countries are tribalism and clanism. These factors are said to characterize Arab countries, but they are also popular when accounting for the absence of democracy and/or political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa (Hodgekin, 1956; Coleman, 1958; Coleman and Sklar, 1994), post-communist Central Asia or specific territories of Western Europe, like in the case of Banfield’s ‘amoral familism’ argument applied to Southern Italy (1967). Kinship, clanism and tribalism are often connected to the persistence of a premodern era, where unmodern cultural values dominate, and are often referred to as an obstacle to the formation of modern-minded social capital and trust that would lead to cultural modernity and democracy (Rudolph and Rudolph, 1967; O’Donnell, 1996; Lauth, 2000).

These culturalist explanations are challenged by institutionalism, which examines the potential for both democratization and growth of political trust in authoritarian societies. In a sense, culturalist explanations find it difficult to come to terms with political change and have a difficult time accounting for it when this occurs, because culturalism is by its very nature unchangeable. Thus, institutionalists argue that once the institutions – political, economic or social – of a specific setting are modified, attitudes of ordinary citizens will change as well, leading to profound transformations. In this respect political

trust not only can be created, but also sustained, particularly if one takes into account the positive spin-offs that transitions to democracy usually generate. This is, for instance, what Weatherford (1992) contends, as he sees support for institutions as deriving from institutional features such as accountability, efficiency, and procedural and distributive fairness, which can be adopted by newly democratic institutions (see also Chapter 16 by Grimes). Democratic institutions such as elections and checks and balances together with social protection and the pre-eminence of individual freedoms are believed to be the critical factors generating trust of citizens (Levi, 1996; Buchanan, 2002; Dahl, 2006; Goodwin-Gill, 2006). The example of the former communist states or Latin American countries suggests that political trust is not therefore culture driven, but is the product of wider political processes that affect the institutional set-up of a country. In particular, Mishler and Rose (2001), as well as Van der Meer in this volume (Chapter 17), argue that trust in institutions is dependent on institutions' performance – whether they are able to satisfy people's expectations or not, thus engendering or weakening political trust. Performance-based theorists, however, disagree over how citizens assess performance, with scholars of newly established democracies emphasizing that the political character of institutions matters as much as their ability to deliver satisfactory policy results. In this context formal procedures and their fairness are seen as the most relevant factors in generating trust, irrespective of the type of decisions taken or policies implemented. In former communist countries, for example, people might trust institutions based on the rule of law because the rule of law had been suppressed in the past, regardless of the goal-oriented performance of those institutions (Diamond, 1999). This observation seems to suggest that assessment of performance, and in particular of economic performance, might be more significant to citizens living in established democracies, where it is more relevant to the people than the values sustaining institutions (Przeworski et al., 1996; Mishler and Rose, 2001; Rothstein, 2009).

CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL TRUST IN AUTHORITARIAN SETTINGS: SOCIAL CAPITAL AND CONSOLIDATION

The second question on what the consequences of the level of political trust are in any setting has also generated a burgeoning literature that examines two specific outcomes. First is the issue of political trust having an impact on social capital and vice versa (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). Here it seems that the trends affecting established democracies and authoritarian or transition countries are divergent. Some scholars indeed hold that, under authoritarian constraints, people lack confidence in each other because distrust is inherent to authoritarian settings as a consequence of the arbitrary nature of the exercise of power or because it is learned through childhood socialization. The lack of trust is likely to invalidate or damage the production of social capital, which stems from interpersonal trust and is considered crucial to the strengthening of democratic rule (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Park, 2012). To a large extent this assumption is borne out in practice in the Middle East where the levels of interpersonal trust are very low (Jamal, 2007a) even after the Arab uprisings of 2011, as the early findings from the EU-funded Arab Trans project¹ suggest. On the contrary, in democratic settings where interpersonal and political trust is present and quite high, social capital is likely to be conducive to a

path-dependent process, which transmits predispositions toward representative institutions and democratic governance (Paxton, 2002).

The literature also investigated the opposite relation, namely the impact of social capital and civic engagement on political trust. Again, this dynamic is expected to be very different in democratic and authoritarian settings. In fact, while increased civic engagement brings enhanced social and political trust in the democracy-dominated industrialized world, the expectation is to find a negative relationship between civic engagement and political trust in the developing authoritarianism-prone world. However, as we will develop later, this expectation is not necessarily met in reality. In short, the traditional literature assumes that where civil society activism is strong and diverse, the social capital that is produced has a positive effect on political trust whereas in societies with little civil society activism and therefore low social capital, political trust is either absent or very low. This is in accordance with the normative liberal, neo-Tocquevillian definition of civil society activism and with the correlation between higher levels of political trust and democracy. Some of the findings advanced in the literature subscribing to this trend also resonate with modernization theory, which positively correlates variables such as education with social capital and, therefore, democracy (Rahman, 2002; Ciftci and Bernick, 2014).

However, these relations between social capital and political trust need to be problematized because more recent empirical findings from a number of authoritarian or semi-authoritarian settings tell different stories that might be diverging not only from the mainstream analysis, but also diverging from one another. Thus, for example, in their study of the Dominican Republic, Espinal et al. (2006) demonstrate that increased civic engagement decreases political trust since it exposes citizens to the illegitimate and corrupt practices of government institutions. Other findings generated in authoritarian or semi-authoritarian settings and poorly consolidated democracies, such as the ones in the Arab world (Rahman, 2002; Liverani, 2008; Cavatorta and Durac, 2010), seem to suggest that social capital is reasonably high and that ‘trust’ in institutions is also high, although it takes on a rather different meaning from the one generally employed. These findings also resonate with studies on South Asia, where examinations of whether civil society associations contribute to democratic citizenship show that association membership is only weakly related to generalized trust and toleration of social diversity, suggesting that the relationship between civic society activism and political trust across East Asia is more complicated than mainstream assumptions would hold (Park, 2012). In fact, it is quite possible that high civil society activism may be an outcome of low political trust.

The second important and interesting outcome of the consequences of political trust has to do with the relationship between political trust and democratic consolidation. In a number of recently democratized polities, whether in Latin America or the Arab world, the expected surge of enthusiasm for the democratic process has not occurred. Quite the opposite in fact, as disenchantment with it is one of the most significant traits in such societies. In addition, individuals display very low levels of both interpersonal trust and trust in the new democratic institutions. The latter have not been able to make a dent in the absence of trust that citizens have in the institutions supposedly representing them (Marzouki, 2015). As Espinal et al. (2006) state in citing Payne et al.’s work (2002, p. 37):

[O]ne review of the data for Latin America concluded that disenchantment with democracy and lack of confidence in key political institutions is more than just a reflection of poor economic

conditions or dissatisfaction with policy outputs; rather, it appears ‘rooted in a more basic disappointment’ in how fundamental processes, actors, and organizations of democratic systems in the region operate.

Although the state of political trust might no longer be as problematic in 2015 in some countries of the region, similar surveys taken in Eastern Europe suggest that the phenomenon might not be weakening. The main point here again is that there seems to be a normative assumption that democracy is good for political trust and that high levels of social capital are good for trust. In this chapter, rather than attempting to look at authoritarian settings as the negative mirror image of the mainstream discourse about trust and civic engagement in democracies, we problematize definitions and linkages, outlining some interesting empirical connections and offering a more in-depth analysis of three case studies from the Middle East and Central and Southeast Asia.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FIELD OF STUDY

In light of the previous discussion it is worth re-emphasizing that when it comes to the role of political trust and social capital in authoritarian settings, many studies have shed light on the surprising findings that emerge. There is a recurring perception that political trust is an inherently democratic trait in so far as open and pluralistic political systems engender the trust of citizens in institutions because there is a widespread belief that such institutions are easily accessed through fair competition within a framework of rule of law. In addition, democratic oversight ensures that all state and public institutions, not only the elected ones, are both accountable and accessible, therefore increasing the political trust of ordinary citizens. This belief has remained resilient despite the fact that, since the 1990s, scholars have increasingly paid attention to the declining level of political trust in advanced democracies, as a side-effect of the rise of ‘critical citizens’ (Crozier et al., 1975; Easton, 1975; Norris, 1999; Dalton, 2000; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Pharr et al., 2000; Hetherington, 2006), and despite the fact that at the same time high levels of citizens’ confidence in state institutions was being detected in authoritarian contexts (Wang, 2005a, 2005b; Wang et al., 2006), particularly the ones associated with economic success (Teorell, 2010). Notwithstanding this growing scholarship, the connection between political trust and democratic rule has survived as a theoretical assumption and a ‘policy belief’. What is believed to motivate trust in democracies, namely openness, access and accountability, does not exist in authoritarian settings where arbitrary rule, patronage and absence of pluralism are the dominant traits. In short, distrust is inherent in authoritarian countries and scholars expected authoritarian institutions to be negatively related to trust (Mishler and Rose, 2001). However, a closer look at what occurs in many authoritarian settings challenges these assumptions.

MEASURING TRUST IN AUTHORITARIAN SOCIETIES AND THE PERFORMANCE PARADOX

The main contribution of the scholarship on the role of trust in authoritarian settings has been to problematize the notion that such settings prevent political trust from being

created. The empirical reality of at least some authoritarian countries suggests the opposite. For instance, empirical evidence shows that citizens of a number of Asian countries have highly different levels of trust in the political and governmental institutions in their respective societies and where one would expect low levels of trust, namely in rigidly authoritarian countries, these are not found (Shi, 2001; Yang and Holzer, 2006; Zhao, 2009). The case of China is rather illuminating in this respect because ordinary citizens seem to have a very high level of trust in the government and public officials at the central level. Nathan (2003) reports the findings of a survey conducted in 1993 on a national representative sample of China. Ninety-four per cent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that, 'We should trust and obey the government, for in the last analysis it serves our interest'. Li (2004) reports that in a recent survey, conducted in rural China between 1999 and 2001, 81 per cent of the respondents expressed 'relatively high' or 'very high' levels of trust in the central government. Those expressing 'relatively low' or 'very low' opinions account for less than 4 per cent (*ibid.*). In a similar vein, Wang (2005b) observes that the 2001 World Values Survey found that close to 90 per cent of Chinese citizens express trust in their national government, while only 30–40 per cent of US citizens do so. Therefore, studies of political trust in authoritarian settings not only suggest that it does exist but also indicate that non-democratic institutions or lack of democracy may not be a consequence of low political trust. In fact, low or declining levels of trust are more easily found in democracies than authoritarian regimes, as demonstrated by a number of scholars subscribing to the 'crisis of democracy' argument since the 1990s, or in newly established democracies, as findings suggest that democratization does not necessarily breed political trust (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Della Porta, 2013).

Explaining the causes of high public support for government in China or in similarly authoritarian societies is usually dismissed as unnecessary because what is measured does not correspond to the reality (Wang, 2005b). First it is held that citizens are intimidated by the state and therefore there is very little to no chance of measuring properly what their views might be. Second, there are the effects of the indoctrination theory, which sees the citizens as immersed in the information the state generates, manages and distributes. Both points have a degree of validity, but at the same time some studies have pointed out that such results are present even when one takes them into account (Chen and Shi, 2001), as the differentiation that Chinese citizens make between local political authorities (trust in them is low) and the national ones (trust in them is high) indicates. Measuring the degree of intimidation of citizens is particularly difficult and one could, for instance, assume that such intimidation might not extend to participating in surveys. This might contribute to explaining events that seem paradoxical, such as the undeterred support of a reasonably large chunk of the Syrian population for the brutal dictatorship of Bashar al-Assad. Intimidation might be one factor to explain subordination, but it might not be the only one. In terms of the argument about management and distribution of information, it is increasingly difficult to make a convincing case given the proliferation of new technologies, as the Arab Awakening has in part demonstrated. Thus, an equally reasonable explanation for seemingly puzzling results is that citizens are indeed satisfied with the performance of the government and, in the case of China or Russia or the Arab Gulf states, this might be true considering the remarkably high rates of economic growth and development.

The point about economic success is relevant, as scholars looking at high levels of trust in authoritarian regimes have pointed to it in order to highlight that satisfaction

with economic governance and policies plays a role in strengthening trust and vice versa (Kim, 2010). While it is true that some scholars of advanced democracies have found that low levels of public trust are not caused by the worsening of government performance as measured by inflation and unemployment rates (McAllister, 1999), such a finding does not necessarily refute the linkage between good performance and high political trust in authoritarian settings, where much of the legitimacy of the regime rests on positive economic performance. In addition, one could argue that the satisfaction of primary economic needs is much more relevant in developing authoritarian countries than in post-materialist established democracies. Finally, more recent literature on established democracies suggests that earlier findings about trust not being affected by economic performance should be revisited because the latter might actually matter in explaining decreasing trust in institutions (Rothstein, 2011).

There are, however, two caveats to this general finding and they need to be taken into account. First, some of the studies are outdated and the so-called ‘paradox of good performance’ might be beginning to work, whereby better standards of living and a wealthier middle class could lead to an increasing questioning of the trust the government actually inspires (Goldman and MacFarquhar, 1999). The second caveat is about generational attitudes, as younger generations are often much more critical towards political institutions that they are likely to distrust than their parents (see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian). This is true in China (Wang, 2005b), but it is also true across other authoritarian settings such as the Dominican Republic (Espinal et al., 2006) and the Arab world, as the youth-driven Arab Awakening suggests (Hoffman and Jamal, 2012). In fact, the socio-demographic variables generate some interesting results. In the case of the Dominican Republic, for instance, Espinal et al. (2006) found out that there is a U-shaped relationship between socioeconomic status and political trust. In fact, the poorest and wealthiest trust governments and institutions more than middle-income social sectors. Also, they found a positive impact of age on trust levels. As age increases, trust also increases, with older people trusting institutions more than the youth. This might be due not only to life-cycle effects, but also to cohort effects. The younger generation, socialized in a more globalized, sceptical era with access to diverse information and media outlets, may never be as trusting as the older generation, who grew up in more isolated and ‘state-controlled’ conditions. Because both life-cycle and cohort effects operate, there is the need for longer-term survey data in order to differentiate between these two variables precisely. In any case, the age effect on the level of political trust indicates that we can reject the culturalist argument that low levels of trust are influenced by early-life socialization, confirming what Mishler and Rose (2001) found for post-communist societies and Espinal et al. (2006) in the case of the Dominican Republic. Scholars of area studies have thus contributed to the study of political trust, demonstrating its existence in authoritarian countries and highlighting its dynamic relationship with institutions’ performance and citizens’ cohorts.

TRUST OR PREDICTABILITY?

A second interesting and oft-neglected aspect of the relationship between political trust and state institutions in authoritarian settings has to do with the notion of trust itself,

which can be read ‘negatively’ as well as ‘positively’. In a sense, citizens of authoritarian countries, while generally displaying low levels of interpersonal trust, ‘trust’ the government to take a specific course of action when faced with a particular problem. This does not mean that the action of the government will be ethical or legal or just; it simply means that citizens are conscious of and confident that specific institutions of the state will take a routinized decision, and that therefore the state can be relied on to act in a very specific and, crucially, expected manner. In short, actions of the institutions of the state become entirely predictable and therefore trustworthy because one knows exactly what will occur in a given scenario. There is the routinization in some ways of the arbitrary nature of the exercise of power; people operate under the assumption that power is arbitrary, which, paradoxically, provides a degree of certainty in what state institutions will do. The predictability of state actions and responses allows individuals, but also social groups, to know in advance what to expect. An interesting, and probably unusual, example is the 2013 Egyptian–American documentary film *The Square* about the uprisings in Egypt, where one of the young protagonists of the revolt against Mubarak first and against the Muslim Brotherhood later, spoke of the certainty of the events that would follow each action on the part of the protestors. Ominously, this young protagonist ‘trusted’ that, faced with the chaos of the political situation under the elected president Mohamed Morsi, the army would carry out a military coup. Conversely, the Muslim Brother in the documentary ‘trusted’ that the army would open fire on protestors when carrying out the coup. This example is only anecdotal, but it testifies to an element that is often overlooked; you can trust the institutions of the state to follow a set of practices in any given scenario. In authoritarian systems, this routinization of behaviour is what allows actors to make choices in relative security in relation to their consequences (Levi and Stoker, 2000; Lust-Okar, 2005). Thus, whereas positive political trust can be defined as trust in ethical, legal or just actions undertaken by the ruling authority, negative trust can be defined as trust in the fact that the authority will act predictably. In both cases trust is political though. Students of the Middle East and North Africa have contributed to exposing this distinction by examining case studies from the region (Jamal, 2007b) and unveiling the negative side of political trust, whereby high levels of trust in the predictable behaviour of authoritarian institutions may be conducive to self-discipline and self-censorship (Wiktorowicz, 2000; DeFilippis, 2001; Rivetti and Cavatorta, 2013).

CIVIL SOCIETY AND TRUST RECONSIDERED

A third interesting aspect that emerges from the literature on civic engagement is that trust in state institutions is also dependent on the specific patterns that civil society activism creates in authoritarian contexts. For instance, Finkel et al. (2000) argue that in the Dominican Republic engaging in civil society organizations determines lower levels of trust in the government, because civic participation exposes the citizens to the disjunction between the democratic ideal and the reality, particularly in those cases where civil society organizations are critical of institutions that are perceived as corrupt and illegitimate. Although this holds true for a number of authoritarian settings, we have different stories from the Arab world. Here, the ways in which modern authoritarian states have ‘sponsored’ the growth of civil society activism have led to significant increases in social

capital because groups and associations that work directly or indirectly with the regime without challenging it, are allowed to generate significant benefits for their members (Heydemann, 2007; Jamal, 2007b). In turn this increases social capital because groups and associations deliver on what they should be doing. Ultimately, this strengthens the authoritarian regime, giving rise to a form of political trust in how authoritarian institutions reward allegiance and absence of contestation. Of course, the relationships of trust that develop in such contexts between activists and state representatives is of a clientelistic and paternalistic nature with significant kin-related undertones, but this should not detract from the fact that goods are nevertheless provided to compliant associations and that the delivery of such goods binds activists to a method of governing that permits the resilience of authoritarian practices. In part this might explain the significant gap between low interpersonal trust in authoritarian settings and the high social capital, however distorted, that authoritarianism produces within civil society. In any case, what clearly emerges from Jamal's study (2007b) and from similar works is that the notion that civil activism would necessarily lead to democratization through the generation of 'positive' normative social capital via the acquisition of greater trust does not necessarily hold. All of this is quite problematic for democracy and democratization because it indicates that authoritarian regimes can deliver widespread benefits and suggests that a number of key social groups trust the system to do so. The positive notion of social capital then gets turned on its head, revealing that it might have a much greater multifaceted nature than usually believed. This has proven to be the case across different societies, highlighting that cultural specificity might not play a crucial role in this (Cavatorta, 2012; Park, 2012). In the words of Espinal et al. (2006), this finding provides support for the view that a country like the Dominican Republic possesses both trusting and sceptical democrats, and trusting and sceptical authoritarians. In order to tease out some of these paradoxes and trends and how they work in the daily reality of authoritarian countries we examine three different countries. We first deal with China, a country scholars have paid particular attention to because of the puzzling combination of high levels of trust in the central government, high economic growth and authoritarian rule. Second, we look at Iran because it displays a rather peculiar political system combining genuinely democratic institutions and politics with a clear authoritarian 'superstructure' that constrains the democratic game. Finally, we examine Morocco where the popular legitimacy and liberal policies of the monarchy stand in sharp contrast with the authoritarian nature of its rule.

POLITICAL TRUST IN THREE AUTHORITARIAN COUNTRIES

Social Capital and Political Trust in China

The case of China is an illustration of the complexity of the dynamics surrounding the linkage between political trust, civil society activism and regime type since, contrary to expectations, civil society is strong and lively in the country. More specifically, it is very active when it comes, for instance, to environmental protection, whereby the 'greening' of the Chinese state has let environmental NGOs and activism surface (Ho, 2001; Ho and Edmonds, 2007). Chinese environmentalism has developed gradually, and over the years the country has seen the emergence of a broad range of organizations, albeit fragmented

and region based (Ho, 2001; Hess, 2013). However, the burgeoning civil activism around environmentalism resulted in the state's growing awareness of the need to control civil society through co-optation and taming. Legal expedients were put in place in order to do this, as reported by Ho (2001, p. 903):

[W]hat these rules mean in practice is illustrated by the words of a person who attempted to set up an NGO: 'Only if you can find a sponsoring institution willing to be your "mother-in-law" (*popo*) can you register with the Ministry of Civil Affairs. This means that the sponsoring institution has to be responsible for your organization's actions. Nobody dares to be your mother-in-law, as they fear that you will make trouble or arouse the people'.

By allowing only some civil society actors to become active, the Chinese state also strengthened linkages of trust among those included and, therefore, strengthened its own rule. There are reasons to suggest that what has been done with environmental civil society can be replicated across a broad range of other issues that are affecting China's economic and political development. The creation and inclusion of civil society organizations within the broader framework of state policies pre-empt challenges and, more importantly, can contribute to the growth of political trust because state institutions are perceived to be responding to the needs and issues citizens care about, although within rather strict boundaries. The case of environmental organizations in China is interesting because it seems to suggest that as long as the state is responsive to what can be termed 'a-political' issues then issues that citizens care about can be tackled. In this respect, trust can thus develop. It should be noted, however, that such political trust in institutions seems to be confined to the central government rather than to the local authorities, which are generally thought of as corrupt or incompetent or both (Wang, 2013). The explanation for this might be in part due to the overall economic success China has enjoyed over the last two decades. Such success is believed to be the outcome of highly centralized decision-making and therefore it is plausible to think that ordinary citizens have trust in the leadership. This brings us back to the notion that economic success might be more important in authoritarian states than in established democracies.

Student Activism, Trust and Social Capital in Iran

The Iranian student movement is a good example of how social capital and civic engagement are factors strengthening political trust, and also authoritarian rule. The presence of a lively student movement is usually equated with a lively society and social capital (Gouldner, 1985; Wickham-Crowley, 1992). This positive role has been highlighted in the scholarship in the case of the so-called 'developing world' too. In these countries, student movements are seen as forces of modernization and thus democratization (Altbach, 1981; Zhao, 2004), at the forefront of pro-democracy demonstrations against authoritarian regimes. This is the case for the anti-communist protesters in Tiananmen Square in China or the Chilean and Argentinean student unions challenging military rule.

In the case of Iran, the student movement has been widely celebrated as an anti-authoritarian force, as students have often protested against the authoritarian rule in the Islamic Republic (Mashayekhi, 2001; Yaghmaian, 2002). Despite the fact that universities have been and still are the 'hotbed' of activism and civic engagement, the influence and the workings of authoritarian governance have deeply impacted how such activism effectively

operates. Indeed, universities and student unions are often co-opted institutions, where loyalties and political affiliations – which may have future implications beyond the campus – are established and reinforced. In particular, the connection between Iranian institutional politics and the university campus, which thus becomes a site for factional recruitment, is particularly strong. In line with Amaney Jamal's (2007b) findings, the case study of the Iranian student movement shows that political trust and the production of social capital in authoritarian settings can have negative consequences when it comes to the implications for democratization.

The political elite of the Islamic Republic is organized in a highly divided factional system, with factions and groups in flux, whose boundaries and political identity have significantly shifted over the years (Moslem, 2002). Often, the origins of political factions and personal connections among politicians and elite members can be traced back to university campuses. A case in point is the historical interconnectedness of universities, student unions (by means of, on the one hand, the Sazman-e Basij-e Daneshju, a student organization linked to the revolutionary guards and the conservatives, and on the other hand, the Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat, traditionally linked to the reformists) and political factions. It is in the ranks of student organizations that many present-day politicians began their careers.

Many among the collaborators of the former president Ahmadinejad have a past in the ranks of the Basij serving on university campuses. Alireza Zakani, a parliamentary deputy close to the former president, is the former head of the Student Basij Organization, the coordinating authority of all the student Basij units in Iran. Mehrdad Bazrpash, head of the National Youth Organization, a governmental organization, until October 2010, is the former head of the Basij unit at Sharif University of Technology in Tehran. Mojtaba Samareh Hashemi was considered to be one of Ahmadinejad's closest collaborators and friends. He managed Ahmadinejad's 2009 electoral campaign, was appointed as Deputy Interior Minister in 2007 (a key position for the supervision of electoral procedures) and some of his relatives were appointed in governmental posts too. Like Ahmadinejad, Samareh studied at Tehran's University of Science and Technology, where they met. In the first post-revolutionary student national election in 1979, Samareh was elected as the representative from Tehran's University of Science and Technology, and Ahmadinejad was his deputy. Among the same university's alumni, many ministers of the presidential cabinet during Ahmadinejad's second mandate (2009–13) can be found (Rivetti, 2012).

The strength of the link between institutional politics and student activism within leftist-reformist elite circles is also demonstrated by the close relationship existing between the latter and the Daftar-e Tahkim-e Vahdat (the most prominent Islamic leftist, pro-democracy student organization, DTV, very active until the late 2000s). When Mohammad Khatami launched his presidential campaign in 1996 referring to 'democracy', 'civil society' and 'rule of law', students were called to become active through DTV. During Khatami's first mandate as president and on the occasion of the 2000 parliamentary elections, higher education institutions became a stronghold of the reformist coalition Dovvom-e Khordad, which included the DTV. After the coalition won the majority of the seats in the parliament (2000–04), a 'student faction' was established. It was headed by Ali-Akbar Mousavi Khoeini, a former leader of DTV, and several of its members were former DTV prominent members. According to a former member, DTV's enthusiastic embrace of the reformist rhetoric of democracy, civil society and rule of law

was in retrospect seen as an alignment with the dominant discourse of the reformist elite (Rivetti and Cavatorta, 2013). The DTV was then dependent on the reformist elite in terms of visibility, leadership and intellectual elaboration.

The interconnectedness of student groups and factional politics shows that social capital and civic engagement may have very different outcomes depending on the characteristics of the context in which they are merged. In authoritarian settings as the Islamic Republic of Iran, the political and intellectual forces student activism produces have ended up feeding the existing status quo, namely authoritarian rule.

Social Capital and Democratization in Morocco

Despite the changes introduced with the constitutional reforms of 2011, Morocco remains an absolutist monarchy with the king retaining wide-ranging executive powers and very little to fear in terms of political opposition to its institutions, as parliament and elected officials are beholden to him (Benchemsi, 2012). If executive political powers were not sufficient to make the monarch the real decision-maker, he also retains the legitimating religious title of Commander of the Faithful. Despite the rather clear authoritarian nature of the political system, the monarchy has been able to project a different image internationally where the country is perceived to be gradually democratizing and modernizing. Central to this image is the activism of Moroccan civil society. The country is home to thousands of civil society organizations dealing with all sorts of different issues and ranging from the protection of the environment to the rights of Sub-Saharan migrants and from anti-corruption campaigns to the defence of human rights. In addition, it should be underscored that high levels of activism can be seen in what can be loosely termed the Islamist and secular camps.

However, as Sater (2007, pp. 164–5) argues, ‘apart from a few exceptions [civil society groups] are by no means in opposition to the state. In fact. . .most of them. . .display self-limiting features’. This quote highlights once more the complex nature of the relationship between civil society activists, state institutions and trust. The vast majority of organizations in the country that wish to achieve their goals and generate benefits, both material and moral, for their members have to contend with the authoritarian setting within which they operate, eventually coming to terms with and employing the authoritarian and corrupt practices that the regime has put into place. This should not suggest that all civil society actors are inevitably co-opted. There are organizations that refuse to play within the authoritarian structures and attempt in fact to challenge them through their activism. However, they pay a significant price for this because they do not receive benefits, as they are excluded from the network of privileges guaranteed to more supine associations. In turn this has a negative effect on membership and the generation of social capital, confirming Jamal’s findings (2007b). Who would want to be a member of an organization that is not only unable to attain any of the objectives it has set for itself, but that is also the victim of harassment and threats from the state agencies?

Within this environment, one would expect political, social and economic reforms to be strictly top-down. Civil society associations would bandwagon on whatever is decided at the top of the system and simply attempt to carve out a space to satisfy their members. The reality is, paradoxically, rather different. Civil society autonomously generates, discusses and strives for reforms and the most significant one that has transformed the legal, if not

yet the social landscape of the country is the reform of the *Moudawana* – personal status legislation, or ‘family code’. The reform of the extremely conservative legal code had been a priority for women’s rights activists since the early 1990s. In order to achieve more egalitarian personal status laws, women’s rights organizations campaigned extensively, employing all sorts of tactics, including demonstrations, petitions and lobbying. Despite all these efforts, a comprehensive reform was never seriously discussed at the highest levels because it was believed it would alienate powerful conservative constituencies that supported the monarchy. In addition, widespread opposition to the reform came from the very active and powerful Islamist camp of civil society. It is only in the period between 2003 and 2004 that the reform of the family code resurfaced as an important issue, as the new monarch attempted to secure the support of new domestic constituencies and project a liberalizing image abroad to strengthen his grip on power. Women’s rights associations saw an opportunity to place the reform of the family code on the political table and the way in which they went about promoting the reform highlights how political trust can operate under authoritarianism. The liberal content of the reform is a positive development for women and from a normative perspective it is a welcome step. This is beyond questioning in so far as it provides a significant degree of legal equality in all matters pertaining to their personal status. However, the reform was obtained only when the women’s movement decided to bypass elected institutions, appealing directly to the executive powers of the king to push through the reform. The monarch was more than happy to do so in order to achieve the two objectives mentioned earlier, having in addition identified the conservative Islamists as the greatest threat to his reign. By becoming *le roi des femmes* he tied the women’s movement to himself, ensuring its allegiance against the rising tide of conservatism and traditionalism. The problem with the process is that it actually highlighted how marginal elected institutions actually are because the reform, no matter how one might be favourable to it, would have never been passed into law because it did not have the backing of the majority of deputies nor the one of the majority of society.

It is interesting to note that trust in the monarch increased considerably within the secular and liberal sector of the population, with positive spin-offs as well for those within the women’s movement because they were able to achieve what they had set out to do and thereby increase social capital. Such social capital, however, is not turned towards the achievement of democracy – quite the contrary. In addition, the manner in which the reform was carried out has taught others what the channels and the manners are through which they can operate, further strengthening authoritarian practices.

CONCLUSION

The literature on political trust, social capital and civil society activism in authoritarian settings has made a fundamental contribution to our general knowledge of how these concepts function and operate when stripped of their normative understanding. The normative underpinnings of the inevitability of the relationship between these concepts and democracy have characterized the literature for a long time. Findings from authoritarian countries demonstrate that high political trust in state institutions and social capital in wider society can exist and even thrive where there is no political accountability, no rule of law and arbitrary exercise of state power. This demonstrates, for instance, that notions

of trust or social capital or civil society need to be rid of their in-built normativity in order to become useful concepts that can travel across different political systems. In a number of authoritarian settings, as the three case studies presented here suggest, there are significant levels of political trust in institutions even though interpersonal trust might be low and social capital dependent on paternalistic and clientelistic networks. This trust might be ‘negative’ in the sense that citizens trust the authorities to take specific courses of actions that are arbitrary and outside the bounds of the rule of law, but that is in fact the point. Routinizing certainty of responses, even when these are unethical, a-moral and arbitrary, contributes to increasing trust. In addition, it appears that two further elements emerge from studying political trust in authoritarian settings. First is the importance of the delivery of material goods. Unlike in established democracies, as some of the literature argues, there is a good case to be made about the tight relationship between trust and economic success. Second is the significance of legitimacy of rulers. In part, of course, such legitimacy is once again the product of the delivery of material benefits, but it can also rest on traditions, as in the case of the Moroccan monarchy. All this, in part, might explain why, far from witnessing the end of history, we might actually be experiencing the resilience of authoritarian forms of governance.

NOTE

1. See <http://www.arabtrans.eu/>; accessed 16 August 2016.

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5. Political trust and multilevel government

Jordi Muñoz

INTRODUCTION

If we take a random citizen living in a democratic country, chances are she has to deal with several layers of government simultaneously. At the very least, local and national institutions will be responsible for different policy areas that are important for her life, but most probably there will also be regional authorities dealing with important matters and, in some cases (most notably in the European Union), supranational political institutions that decide relevant issues in many different ways.

Indeed, local and regional authorities often manage policy areas that have a great impact on citizens' daily lives, from education to health care or security. In the last decades their powers have been expanded in most democracies. The process of decentralization, in the USA known as 'devolution revolution' (Cole et al., 1999), has affected both regional governments and local administrations. These entities have progressively become more relevant (John, 2001; Denters and Rose, 2004), gaining autonomy, powers over different policy domains, and political saliency.

Moreover, in some world regions the development of processes of regional integration has led supranational institutions to become key actors in the definition and implementation of highly relevant policies. The clearest example of this trend is the European Union, set up as a supranational political system able to define, constrain, and, to a lower extent, implement policies that citizens directly experience.

However, despite the fact that non-national institutions have increasingly gained importance, this multilayered configuration of the democratic political system is often ignored by the literature on political trust. Of course, there are some relevant exceptions (mostly linked to the study of European Union politics), but we can safely state that while scholars dealing with institutions, governance structures, and public policies have systematically adapted their conceptual toolboxes to these complex multilevel governance structures (Hooghe and Marks, 2001, 2003; Marks et al., 2008), research on citizens' attitudes towards democratic governance is overwhelmingly restricted to the analysis of attitudes towards the nation-state political institutions, ignoring the multilayered government structure found in most democratic countries.

Those scarce works that deal with political trust in subnational or supranational institutions often limit themselves to replicating the conceptual framework and empirical models that have been conceived for the analysis of citizens' relations to nation-state institutions, simply switching the dependent variable to trust in other institutions (Rahn and Rudolph, 2001; Rahn, 2005; Montalvo, 2010). This approach provides useful information on the determinants of political trust at various levels, but is nonetheless unsatisfactory. Analyzing each level in isolation omits the key theoretical and empirical questions posed by the multilevel government structures for several reasons.

First, because not all institutions are equal. The relative position of each institutional

layer within a multilevel political system determines some of its key characteristics: size, visibility, or capacity. Second, because citizens do not deal with a mere juxtaposition of institutions, but with complex and entrenched governance structures in which the various institutional layers relate to each other in various ways. They might share powers, or even be represented in one another. And political leaders often develop their careers by moving from one level to another (Stolz, 2003; Borchert, 2011).

In this chapter I review and systematize the existing research in an integrated framework, thereby providing some additional empirical evidence linked to the claims that the literature has made. First, I address the question on the effect of the position of an institution within a multilevel government structure on the trust that citizens place in it. I review the theoretical debate on the relationship between size and political trust. Then, I provide some descriptive, comparative evidence on trust at different levels using data from the Eurobarometer and the AmericasBarometer.

The next section is concerned with the interrelationship between citizens' trust in various levels of government. Are these attitudes independent from each other, and based on autonomous evaluations of each institution's performance? If not, how are they related? Is trust in non-national institutions dependent and subordinated to trust in national institutions, or do they just cluster together thanks to an underlying general trust orientation?

DOES FAMILIARITY BREED CONTEMPT, OR VICE VERSA? POSITION WITHIN THE MULTILEVEL SYSTEM AND TRUST

There are several explanations for why citizens place more or less trust in an institution. They either refer to the characteristics of citizens (Catterberg, 2006) or to institutional features, such as performance and/or responsiveness (Norris, 1999; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Van der Meer, 2010). Within a multilevel framework we have to address the question of whether the position of an institution within the overall structure has, *ceteris paribus*, any effect on citizens' trust. In other words: do citizens, on average, trust more (less) those institutions placed at lower (higher) levels?

The level at which an institution operates defines many of its key features, most notably the size of the political space over which it exerts its jurisdiction. The debate on the relationship between the size of the polity and the quality of government and democracy is old. The classical view is rooted in ancient Greece's democratic model and tends to argue that small political units are more responsive and open to participation than larger ones (Oliver, 2000). This is still the dominant view, and it has even survived the rise of nationalism and representative democracy that questioned the ideal of small political units (Dahl and Tufte, 1973, p. 9).

However, there are also theoretical reasons to expect the inverse relationship. Since Aristotle, and all the way to Dahl and Tufte's classic work *Size and Democracy* (1973), scholars have theorized a trade-off between democratic quality and state capacity: small political units might not be able to deliver as larger polities do. Moreover, even if smaller units should be, *ceteris paribus*, more responsive towards their citizens, in larger political units one can expect more impersonal management that might lead to more integrity, less nepotism, and more competent politicians (Dahl and Tufte, 1973).

As long as there is a balance in the trade-off between proximity and capacity, and if the literature is correct in pointing both responsiveness and government performance as the key institutional drivers of political trust (see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer), size might have an ambivalent effect on trust: negative regarding procedural considerations, and positive regarding performance (Denters, 2002).

But there are at least two counterarguments to this trade-off and its applicability to multilevel government. First, some recent influential works question the negative relation between size and capacity, since the economies of scale that benefit the provision of public goods in large polities are counterbalanced by an increased heterogeneity of preferences in these large polities (Alesina and Spolaore, 1997; Alesina, 2005). Second, it is to be expected that in a well-designed multilevel political system, each unit takes on the policy areas that it can handle better (Dafflon, 1992). Small administrations would not be in charge of those policies in which size is really an asset for performance, and instead manage those issues in which proximity is more beneficial for the ability to deliver in order to maximize performance of the overall system. Under these circumstances, *ceteris paribus*, institutions at lower levels shall gather more trust than those at higher governmental layers, which operate at a larger scale.

What happens in reality according to previous empirical research? Although a comprehensive analysis is lacking, in the literature we find scattered evidence covering different institutions and geographical areas. In short, the most common finding is that citizens tend to trust more those institutions that are smaller and closer to them.

The seminal work by Jennings (1998) convincingly shows that while the US national government was the most trusted institution in the late 1960s, its trust levels sharply declined during the following decades. Local and state governments did not experience such a decline so they became the most trusted institutions in the USA. Denters (2002) analyzes trust in local and national authorities in Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway, and the UK to conclude that size has a modest negative effect on trust: on one hand, trust in local authorities is higher than trust in national government; on the other hand, trust tends to be higher in smaller municipalities, mostly due to more political satisfaction. However, Larsen (2002) fails to find such a pattern among Danish municipalities: size seems not to matter within the same institutional level. Cole and Kincaid (2000), working in the USA, find not only that local and state governments enjoy more trust than the federal government, but that this is the case for virtually all subgroups of citizens. The same pattern is found in Australia (Goot, 2002), Japan (Pharr et al., 1997), and Taiwan (Chang and Chu, 2008).¹

The reasons for this trust gap between local and national institutions have often been linked to the higher democratic responsiveness of lower-level institutions. However, there are at least three alternative explanations that ought to be considered: ideology, direct contact, and politicization.

In the USA, the trust gap between local/state and federal institutions is more pronounced among Republican identifiers, moved by a strong ideological critique of the *Washington* government (Cole and Kincaid, 2000; Uslaner, 2001). However, the gap also exists among the rest of the population. It is unclear whether or not this partisan or ideological divide is present in other contexts beyond the USA.

Regarding direct contact, evidence tends to conform to the so-called paradox of distance (Frederickson and Frederickson, 1995), according to which people tend to trust those public officials who are close to them while distrusting those who are far away.

Direct contact with institutions, or ‘bureaucratic encounters’ (Katz et al., 1975; Van De Walle et al., 2005), have been proposed as a key trust-fostering mechanism (Kumlin, 2004).

Finally, the local–national trust gap might be related to perceptions of politicization: local governments are perceived in many countries as being less politicized than national institutions. Therefore, they might carry less of the burden related with low trust in politicians or political parties that are consistently found to be the two least trusted political ‘objects’.²

Regardless of the explanatory mechanisms, evidence is rather consistent in the case of local vs national institutions. But the same is not true in the case of supranational institutions, where evidence is at best mixed. In some countries the EU is less trusted than national institutions, but in other cases, trust in the EU is higher than political trust at the national level (Torcal et al., 2011; Harteveld et al., 2013). Evaluations of performance or competence of the EU and national institutions (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2000; Kritzinger, 2003; Muñoz et al., 2011) seem to be important in determining the trust in the EU with regard to national institutions.

Comparative Empirical Analysis: Position and Trust

The main expectation is that smaller and lower-level institutions will, everything else being equal, elicit more trust from their citizens. This is a proposition that is difficult to test empirically, since the mere comparison of trust levels across institutions within each country can be potentially misleading. There are many unobserved differences between local, regional, national, and supranational institutions other than size or position.

In any case, I will descriptively assess the pattern of trust in local with regard to national institutions in a large sample of democratic countries. To do so in this chapter I will rely on two large-scale comparative surveys that cover a wide range of democracies: the Eurobarometer 78.1 (2012) and the 2008 edition of the AmericasBarometer. There are some differences among them. The Eurobarometer measures trust in institutions through a dichotomous indicator, taking a value of 1 if the respondent ‘tends to trust’ the institution and a value of 0 otherwise. In contrast, in the AmericasBarometer trust is measured on a seven-point scale, which for this project I have rescaled to range between 0 and 1.

Figures 5.1 and 5.2 represent country-level average trust in national parliament and local authorities across a range of countries in Europe and the Americas. With few exceptions, in almost every country citizens tend to place more trust in the local and/or regional authorities than in the national parliament. The only exceptions to this pattern in Europe are Sweden, Turkey, and Montenegro. In some countries trust in the local/regional authorities more than doubles trust in the national parliament.

In the Americas the same pattern emerges. Although the differences are, for the most part, smaller than in Europe, in a majority of the countries in the sample citizens also trust their local administrations more than the national parliament. The only exceptions here are small countries such as Uruguay, Guyana, and Belize. Overall, in both cases these are two closely related attitudes: at the country level, in Europe the bivariate correlation is 0.76 and in the Americas 0.48.

While comparing country-level averages is highly informative, the aggregate analysis can be complemented with an individual-level analysis of the relationship between the two variables (Table 5.1). If we look at the European data (specifically Eurobarometer 78.1), in

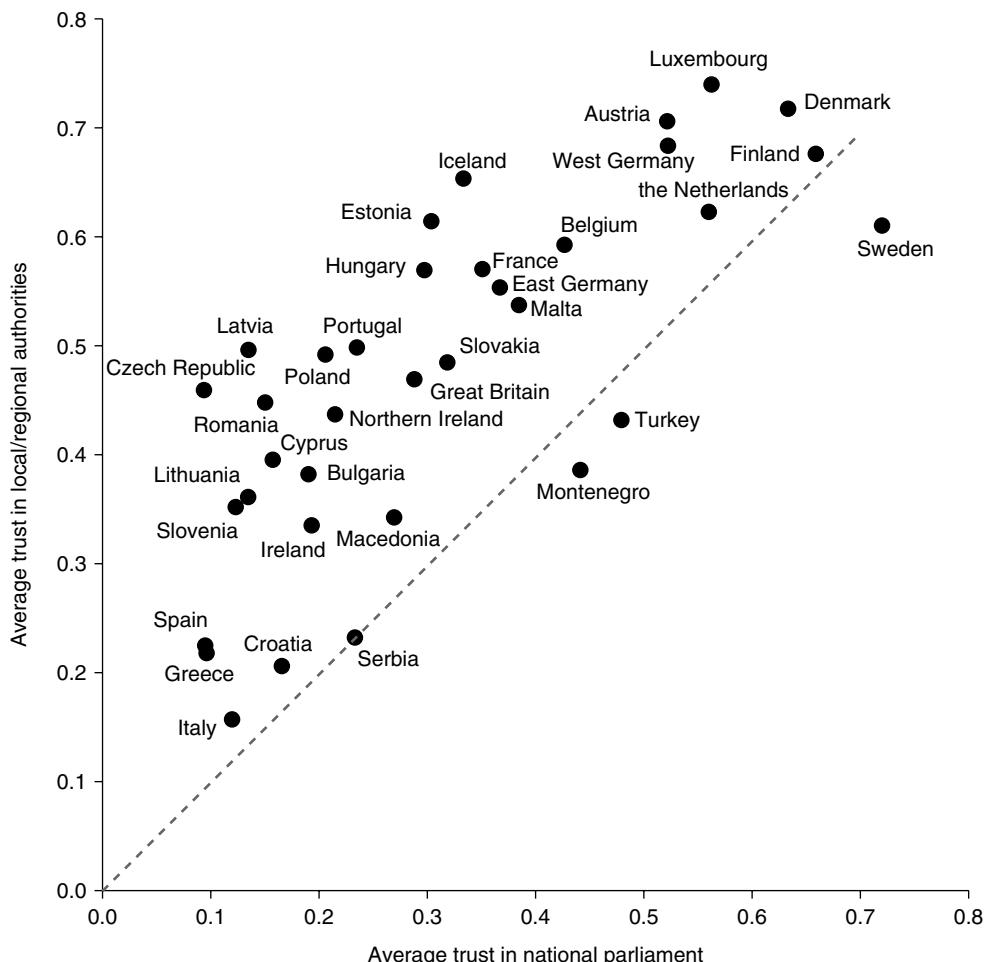


Figure 5.1 Average trust in national parliament and regional/local authorities, Europe

which trust in institutions is asked as a dichotomous variable, we find that approximately 47 percent of the respondents do not trust either institution, 25 percent trust both, and, interestingly, 21.4 percent trust local/regional authorities but not the national parliament. Only a scarce 6.5 percent of the respondents trust their national parliament but not their municipality/region.

In the Americas one finds about 29 percent of the sample that trusts the national parliament more than the municipality, 29 percent with the same amount of trust, and 42 percent with more trust in the local government than in the national parliament. Therefore, if there is a pattern at all, it runs in favor of local institutions that seem to be preferred by citizens in almost every context. This is congruent with the findings of previous research comparing local and national institutions: local governments tend to be more trusted than national institutions. The individual level correlations are, as expected,

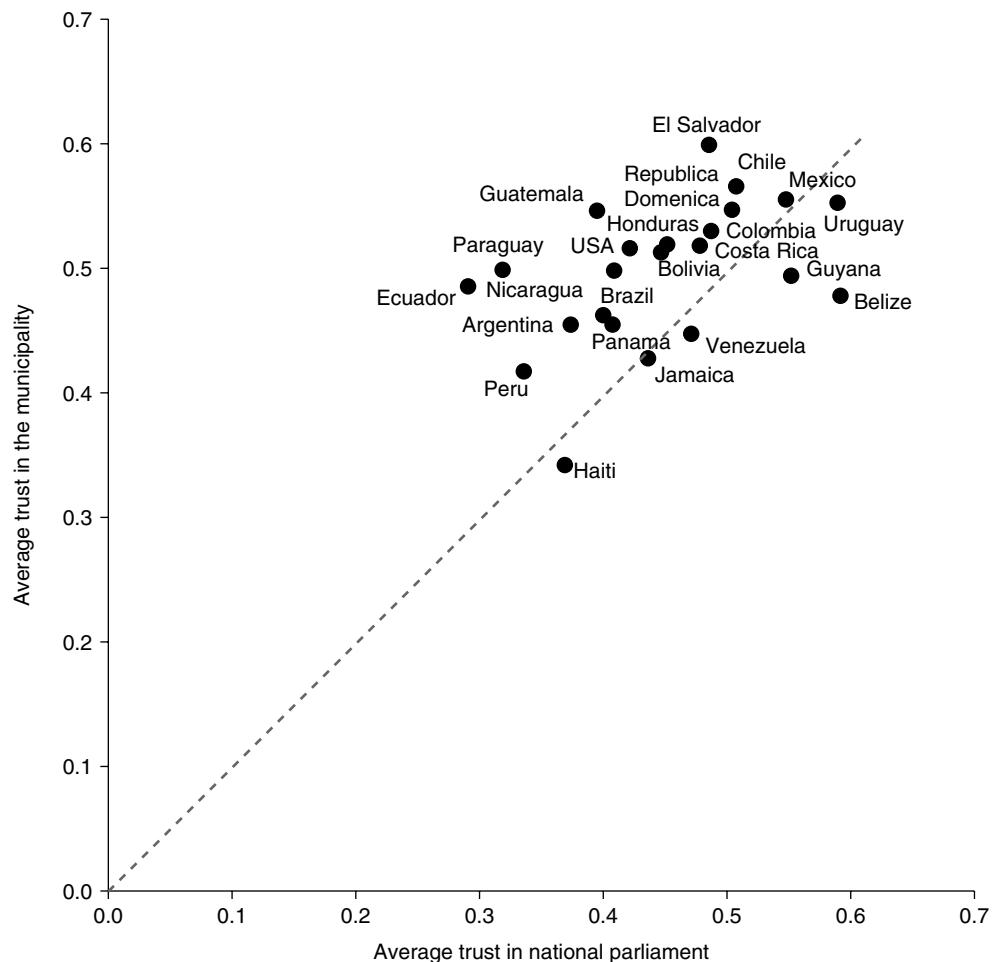


Figure 5.2 *Average trust in national parliament and the municipality, Americas*

Table 5.1 *Trust in national and local/regional authorities (%), Europe*

Local/Regional Authorities	National Parliament			Total
			Tend not to trust	
	Tend not to trust	Tend to trust		
Tend not to trust	47.1	6.5	53.6	
Tend to trust	21.4	24.9	46.4	
Total	68.6	31.4	100.0	

Source: Eurobarometer 78.1.

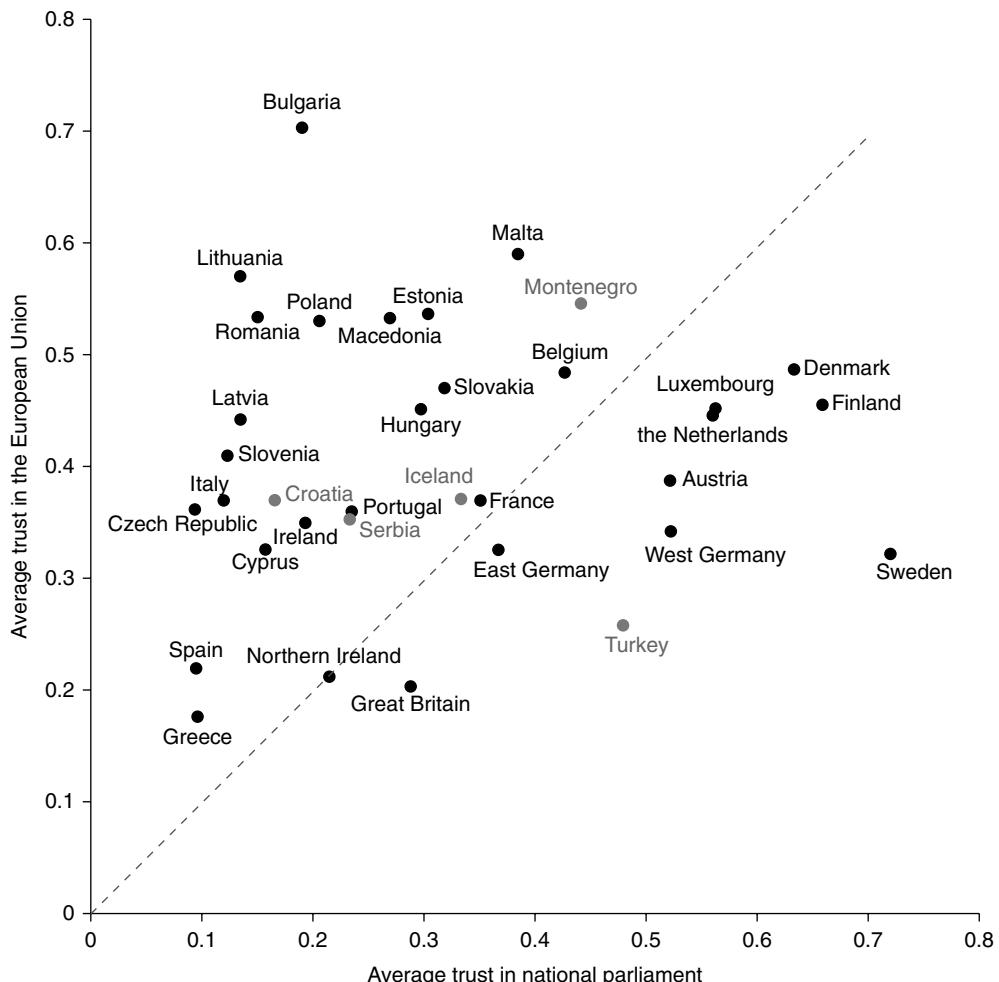


Figure 5.3 Average trust in national parliament and the EU

weaker than at the country level, but nonetheless quite strong: about 0.45 in Europe and 0.40 in the Americas.

Regarding the comparison between national and supranational institutions, data from the Eurobarometer show a more mixed pattern (Figure 5.3). We can see how in some countries citizens tend to trust their own national institutions more and in other countries the situation is the reverse. Those countries with more trusted national institutions, such as Sweden, Finland, Denmark, or the Netherlands, apart from the UK, form the first group.

The countries in which citizens trust the EU more than their national parliament include those with less trusted and low-performing institutions, as suggested by the literature (see Chapter 26 by Závecz). Indeed, if we look at Figure 5.4 the pattern emerges quite clearly: those countries with higher levels of transparency are also those where their

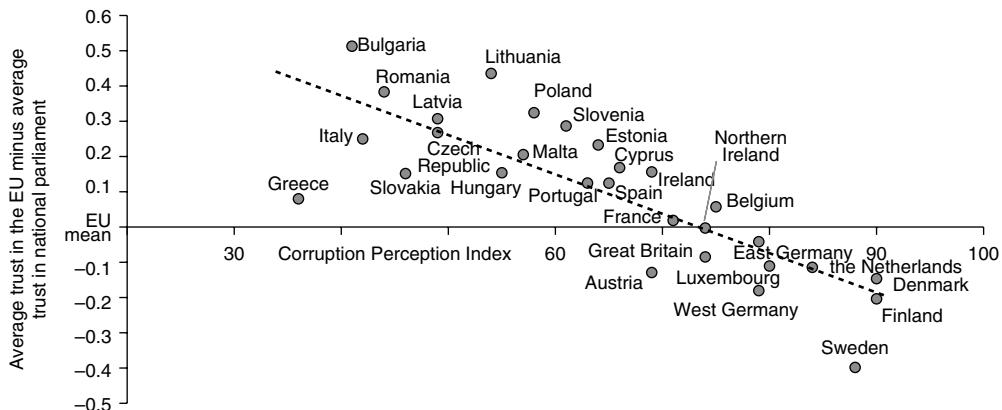


Figure 5.4 *Difference in trust in the EU vs national parliament, by corruption level*

citizens tend to trust the national institutions more, with regard to the EU, while those where corruption is more widespread tend to place more trust into the EU than in their national parliaments ($r = -0.80$) (Harteveld et al., 2013).

The inconsistencies in the comparison between local, national, and European institutions point to a more complex relationship between size and trust. We cannot generalize the idea that the closer an institution is to the citizens, the more trust it will get. In some cases, citizens trust the distant supranational governance bodies more than the closer national institutions. The positive effect of proximity for trust may be conditional on performance or institutional quality: only as long as ‘closer institutions’ are perceived to perform appropriately will they gather more trust than the more distant institutions. The findings with regard to the local level remain solid, but perhaps express a specific feature of local administrations rather than a generalizable effect of size.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POLITICAL TRUST AT DIFFERENT LEVELS

However, the central question to be addressed with regards to political trust in multilevel government systems has to do with the extent to which citizens’ attitudes towards each institution are independent from one another, or, in contrast, trust and distrust tend to spill over across levels of government.

The remaining discussion and analysis relies on an assumption that shall be made explicit: the main spillover effect is from the ‘first-order’ national institutions towards the rest of the multilevel structure. The justification for such an assumption, common to most of the literature on the support for the European Union since the influential work by Chris Anderson (1998), has to do with information. As long as citizens are better informed about their national institutions, the direction of the effect will go from this level to the other ones. Of course, this does not completely preclude the possibility of a bottom-up spillover of trust (see Weitz-Shapiro, 2007).

The literature offers different arguments that support both the expectation of auton-

omy and the dependence of trust at different levels, and the empirical evidence supports a mixed answer: we find strong dependencies across levels that coexist with a certain degree of autonomy under certain conditions of information availability.

Independent Judgments: Rationality and Identity

The case for independence of trust across levels can be made based on two different mechanisms: rational evaluations and identity-driven considerations. From a rational point of view we should expect citizens to evaluate each political object independently, and, therefore, decide whether to place more or less trust on it depending on how trustworthy they perceive each institution (Harteveld et al., 2013), independently from what they think about the rest of the multilevel government structure (Desmet et al., 2012). These rational evaluations could be based on performance in terms of policy outcomes of the institutions, or on procedural considerations related to the perceived accountability or responsiveness of each level (Jennings, 1998; Norris, 1999).³

The relevant discussion is on the extent to which the record of each institution is influential in determining the levels of trust citizens place in it, as well as the extent to which considerations regarding performance of one institutional level impact the rest of the multilevel structure.

Of course, the rational approach of autonomous evaluations is the most demanding for citizens: it requires that they are highly informed about the areas of competence and performance of each institutional level. This might well not be the case, especially in the case of subnational and supranational institutions, which tend to be considered ‘secondary’ institutions and receive less media attention than national institutions.

Multilevel government systems, moreover, tend to blur the clarity of responsibility and make it difficult for citizens to really know which institution they should hold responsible for specific relevant policy outcomes. León (2011) argues that this is especially so at intermediate levels of decentralization, when the distribution of powers is more intertwined. Indeed, the literature has shown how citizens tend to have a hard time attributing responsibility of policy outcomes across levels. And, more importantly, that political sophistication is the key factor that determines a proper attribution of blame (Arceneaux and Stein, 2006; Gomez and Wilson, 2008; Malhotra, 2008; Malhotra and Kuo, 2008).

Even if it is demanding in terms of information, there are at least two plausible reasons to think that citizens might form their own independent attitudes towards each government level. First, because they very often directly experience the outcomes of policy decisions taken by an array of government bodies. And second, and perhaps more importantly, because most subnational and even some supranational institutions are directly elected. These elections constitute important sources of information, even if they often receive less attention than the national elections and are subordinated to national political dynamics.

Even when citizens lack a detailed and fine-grained knowledge of how a complex political system operates and performs, they can have independent attitudes towards institutions at different levels. These attitudes can rely on some general orientations such as identity considerations (Berg and Hjerm, 2010). A citizen with a strong sense of belonging to his or her region of residence should, *ceteris paribus*, have more trust in the regional institutions than someone who feels no special linkage with the region. Similarly, national

pride, or Europeanism, can act as catalyzers of trust in national or EU institutions. In Easton's terms (1975), these attitudes constitute identification with the political community, which is one of the constitutive elements of diffuse political support (Kornberg, 1992). Even if this is a theoretically sound idea, previous research has tended to point to a limited effect of feeling of identity on political trust (Harteveld et al., 2013).

First- and Second-order Trust? A Hierarchical Approach to the Dependencies of Trust

The rational approach puts high demands on citizens in terms of information acquisition and processing. In the literature we find several scholars claiming that, indeed, citizens do not perform separate evaluations, and their levels of trust on one institutional level are related, if not determined, by their attitudes towards other levels.

There are two main arguments for the claim of dependence between political trust at different levels. First I discuss the hierarchical approaches that imply political trust is formed with regards to one specific institutional level and then extended to the other levels. In the following subsection I discuss the non-hierarchical approach, which suggests that trust in institutions at different levels is an expression of a single, underlying political orientation or 'trust syndrome'.

Scholars who propose a hierarchical pattern of relationship between trust at different levels rely on two different mechanisms, each of them leading to distinct predictions. The first is asymmetrical information, which predicts a positive correlation between trust at different levels (Denters, 2002). Ordinary citizens tend to have limited amounts of political information (Zaller, 1992; Sniderman et al., 1993) and very often it is hard for them to know which institution is responsible for each policy area, especially in the context of multilevel government structures. Moreover, often the local, regional, or supranational institutions receive less media attention and citizens are less aware of them.⁴ In this context, it might be difficult for them to form independent judgments about their trustworthiness.

The limited information mechanism has received quite consistent empirical support. Several works have shown how political sophistication interacts with independent evaluations of different institutions, with the more knowledgeable being more able to judge the different institutional levels independently (Karp et al., 2003; Hobolt and Wittrock, 2011; Armingeon and Ceka, 2013; Harteveld et al., 2013). This robust finding shall be taken as solid evidence that dependence between trust at different levels is in part related to a lack of information or awareness with regards to less salient institutions.

However, even under the assumption of fully informed citizens there are reasons to expect dependencies across trust at different levels. One mechanism is the so-called compensation, or comparative evaluations argument: citizens might use one level as the benchmark against which to evaluate the other levels. The same institution might be judged very differently depending on the point of reference one takes when performing the evaluation. Citizens that are familiar with underperforming and corrupt institutions might judge any given institution more positively than those used to dealing with transparent and well-performing institutions (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2000; Kritzinger, 2003; Muñoz et al., 2011; Desmet et al., 2012; Harteveld et al., 2013). We have seen how corruption at the national level is closely related to citizens' trust in the EU with regard to trust in national institutions. Countering this mechanism, however, is an interesting experiment by Staffan Kumlin (2011) on multilevel blame attribution. It showed that citizens who

were faced with rather negative frames on the EU became more critical of domestic institutions' performance and vice versa.

Finally, the identity mechanism discussed above can also explain (negative) dependencies among trust at different levels. Sub-state nationalist movements, highly salient in some European countries, can turn regional and nation-state identities into competitors. And the nationalist reaction against the EU integration can also foster the perception of these multiple identities as not being complementary (Medrano and Gutiérrez, 2001) but instead competing (Carey, 2002; Hooghe, 2005). If this is the case, then a strong identity at one level might be detrimental to identification with another level. This should make trust across levels be negatively correlated.

A Trust Syndrome? A Non-hierarchical Approach to Dependencies of Trust

An empirical correlation between trust at different levels does not necessarily mean that attitudes towards institutions at one level influence what citizens think about other levels. It might well be that it expresses an underlying generalized 'trust syndrome' (as discussed in Newton, 2001) or 'moral value' (Uslaner, 2002), determined by certain personality traits or perhaps a less specific individual predisposition towards trusting other people in general (see Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache). There is a great deal of debate on the topic (see Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton), but if there is some sort of general individual disposition towards trust in general, or towards trust in institutions in particular, we should observe trust in different objects to be positively correlated without any sort of hierarchical pattern of influence.

MULTILEVEL TRUST IN EUROPE AND THE AMERICAS

The previous section laid down the major theoretical debate in the literature on trust in multilevel settings. In this section I present evidence on the patterns of relation of trust in different governmental levels that shall be useful to inform on the relative merits of the theoretical approximations discussed so far. The empirical analysis is based on the same datasets as in the previous section (Eurobarometer 73.1 and 2008 AmericasBarometer). I model trust in the EU and local/regional authorities as a function of trust in the national parliament⁵ with other variables that intend to capture the alternative explanations and mechanisms discussed above: asymmetrical information, independent rational evaluations, comparative assessments, and trust syndrome.

The first model takes trust in the EU as a dependent variable. In order to examine dependencies, I include trust in national parliament as a predictor. If the hierarchical theoretical model is right, based on the lack of information at the EU level, we should observe trust in national parliament to matter more among those citizens that are less aware of EU politics. This is why I also introduce an index of factual knowledge about EU politics ranging between 0 and 3,⁶ as well as the interaction between knowledge and trust in the national parliament in a second model. In order to assess to what extent evaluations on which trust are founded are independent across arenas, the model also includes a measure of external political efficacy at the national and EU levels, and the assessment of the economic situation at both levels as well. An *objective* indicator of country-level

performance of the political system, the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), built by Transparency International, is also included. If evaluations are independent, attitudes or performance of the national political system should not matter. If evaluations are not independent, they could either run in the same direction as the evaluations of the EU performance or, through a mechanism of compensation, in the opposite direction.

Unfortunately, the Eurobarometer does not include a measure of national/European identity, and is limited in the availability of indicators for capturing the ‘trust syndrome’. A useful proxy can be the level of trust in objects unrelated to both arenas: the model uses trust in media (press, radio, television, and Internet) for this purpose. Age, gender, and education are included as controls. Given the dichotomous measure of trust used by the Eurobarometer, the clustering in countries of respondents, and the presence of a country-level independent variable (CPI), the effects are estimated using a multilevel logistic regression model (Table 5.2).

In short, results of the models provide support for the hierarchical trust model. The strongest predictor of trust in the EU turns out to be trust in the national parliament. Interestingly enough, the effect of trust in national parliament decreases with increased political knowledge about the EU, as shown in the second model. Those citizens who are more knowledgeable about EU politics tend to rely less on their national-level trust in order to form their attitudes towards the European institutions.

However, our results provide some support for the rational model of independent evaluations as well. Negative evaluations of the EU economic situation depress trust in the EU, and external political efficacy at the EU level fosters trust in the EU. Therefore, beyond the effect of trust in national institutions, the evaluation of the EU performance and inclusiveness of its political system have an independent effect on trust in the EU.

Perhaps more interestingly, the effect of perceived performance and responsiveness at the national level runs in the opposite direction. *Ceteris paribus*, negative evaluations of the economic situation of one’s country and of the responsiveness of the national political system tend to favor trust in the EU. This points to a mechanism of compensation, according to which a bad perception of the performance of the national political system leads, everything else being equal, to place more trust in the EU institutions as a sort of lifebuoy (cf. Harteved et al., 2013). The same mechanism seems to operate with regard to corruption: country-level transparency (as measured by the CPI) has a negative net effect on citizens’ trust in the EU (see also Muñoz et al., 2011; Harteved et al., 2013).

Finally, the proxy I used for capturing a general orientation towards trust – trust in media – also has a positive and significant effect on trust in the EU. I shall be cautious in the interpretation of these positive and close relations between trust items, since they share question wording and are placed, as in most surveys, in the same batteries of questions. Therefore, there might be a question wording effect that artificially inflates the correlations among trust in different objects. This is a point that further research should address.

The Eurobarometer dataset offers the possibility of testing the determinants of trust in local/regional authorities, and how these relate to trust in national institutions. Unfortunately, the same model cannot be replicated since we do not have measures of specific local/regional evaluations of the economy or the political system, so our ability to test the rational, independent evaluations argument is more limited in this case. In addition, we do not have information on factual knowledge of local/regional politics, but we can use

Table 5.2 Trust in the EU, multilevel logistic model

	Model 1		Model 2	
	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual-level variables</i>				
Trust in national parliament	1.95	0.04***	2.20	0.15***
Knowledge EU politics				
1 correct answer	0.18	0.08**	0.21	0.09**
2 correct answers	0.28	0.07***	0.36	0.09***
3 correct answers	0.39	0.07***	0.49	0.09***
Trust nat. parl.*EU knowledge				
Trust*1 correct			-0.14	0.17
Trust*2 correct			-0.26	0.16
Trust*3 correct			-0.33	0.16**
My voice counts in the EU	0.64	0.02***	0.64	0.02***
My voice counts in country	-0.05	0.02**	-0.05	0.02**
Perception EU economy	0.73	0.03***	0.73	0.03***
Perception national economy	-0.17	0.03***	-0.18	0.03***
Trust in media	0.42	0.01***	0.42	0.01***
Age	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***
Female	-0.02	0.03	-0.02	0.03
Age left education (ref. < 15)				
16–19	-0.08	0.05	-0.08	0.05
20+	0.21	0.06***	0.21	0.06***
Still studying	0.50	0.08***	0.49	0.08***
No full-time education	-0.06	0.20	-0.06	0.20
<i>Country-level variables</i>				
Transparency (CPI)	-0.03	0.01***	-0.03	0.01***
Constant	0.14	0.38	0.05	0.39
<i>Country-level variance</i>	0.26	0.07	0.26	0.07

*Notes:** $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 25 208.

N (level 2): 33.

For the questions on which the variables are based, please see Electronic Appendix Table A5.1.

Source: Eurobarometer 78.1.

frequency of political discussion of local matters as a proxy to estimate the moderating effect of political awareness on the relation between trust in national and local institutions.

Aggregate-level data suggested that, while the national and the EU institutional arenas seemed to be relatively independent from each other, trust in local and national institutions was much more interrelated. If this is also the case at the individual level, we should see a strong effect of trust in national institutions, together with a clear spillover of national-level evaluations to the local/regional institutions.

Table 5.3 Trust in the local/regional authorities, Europe, multilevel model

	Local		Regional	
	b	SE	b	SE
Trust in national parliament	0.23	0.01***	0.28	0.01***
Discussion local politics (ref. frequently)				
Occasionally	-0.02	0.01***	0.00	0.01
Never	-0.07	0.01***	-0.04	0.01***
Trust nat. parl.*discussion (ref. freq)				
Trust*occasionally	0.06	0.01***		
Trust*never	0.09	0.02***		
Perception national economy	-0.04	0.00***	-0.04	0.00***
My voice counts in country	0.06	0.00***	0.06	0.00***
Satisfaction with democracy	0.05	0.00***	0.05	0.00***
Trust in media	0.07	0.00***	0.07	0.00***
Age	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***
Female	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
Age when left education (ref. < 15)				
16–19	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.01
20 +	-0.01	0.01	-0.01	0.01
Still studying	0.06	0.02***	0.06	0.02***
No full-time education	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.04
Constant	0.13	0.03***	0.11	0.03***
<i>Country-level variance</i>	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.00

*Notes:** $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 22 866.

N (level 2): 27.

For the questions on which the variables are based, please see Electronic Appendix Table A5.2.

Source: Eurobarometer 78.1.

The model run on the Eurobarometer data, shown in Table 5.3, confirms some of the findings of the previous analysis. Trust in national institutions is also a powerful determinant of trust in regional/local authorities in Europe. Regarding the asymmetric information mechanism, we observe a similar pattern as in the case of the EU: those citizens that discuss local politics more frequently rely less on the national-level heuristic to confirm their trust in local authorities.

In this case, unlike the previous analyses of EU trust, negative evaluations of the national economic performance tend to depress trust in local/regional authorities, although the perception that one's voice counts in the national arena does strengthen it. The same happens for transparency: the more transparent a country is, the more their citizens trust local and regional authorities. Similarly, satisfaction with the working of democracy at the country level has a positive effect on local/regional trust. This might be interpreted as being congruent with the strong country-level bivariate correlations between trust at the national and local/regional levels. Unlike the EU, the local and regional institutions might

Table 5.4 Trust in the municipality, Latin America

	b	SE
Trust in national parliament	0.05	0.00***
Political knowledge		
1 correct answer	0.02	0.02
2 correct answers	0.02	0.02
3 correct answers	0.02	0.02
Satisfaction with municipality	0.01	0.00***
Satisfaction with democracy	0.01	0.00***
Country's economic situation	0.01	0.00***
Social trust	0.03	0.01***
Trust in media	0.03	0.00***
External efficacy	0.01	0.00***
Education	0.00	0.00***
Female	0.00	0.00
Age	0.00	0.00***
Constant	-0.05	0.03
Country-level variance	0.002	0.001

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 14619.

N (level 2): 17.

For the questions on which the variables are based, please see Electronic Appendix Table A5.3.

Source: AmericasBarometer (2008).

be perceived as part of the same political system as the national institutions and therefore evaluated accordingly.

However, these effects cannot be directly compared to those shown in Table 5.2 for the EU level that ran in the opposite direction, because in this case I am not controlling for evaluations of performance and responsiveness of the local political system. Indeed, had I introduced national-level evaluations alone in the EU model I would have obtained the same results as in the local/regional analysis. The negative effect of country-level evaluations emerges only after controlling for evaluations of performance and responsiveness at the EU level (Sánchez-Cuenca, 2000). In order to rule out that the compensation mechanism also operates at the local/national levels we would need to incorporate into the analysis subjective and objective indicators of local-level performance. These large-scale surveys based on nationally representative samples are ill-equipped to perform these tests (for a more appropriate design, for this purpose, see Rahn, 2005).

Using data from the 2008 AmericasBarometer, I can elaborate a similar analysis with trust in the municipality as the dependent variable (Table 5.4). There are several differences between the models other than geographical area: first, the dependent variable is more precise and refers to trust in the municipality rather than the more vague Eurobarometer formula of 'regional and local authorities'. Second, trust is measured on a seven-point scale instead of a dichotomy. There are some differences in terms of available variables as

well. We have a battery of satisfaction with one's municipality, which measures satisfaction with a set of services/urban issues⁷ so I can directly test the independent evaluations model. I also have a better measure of general trust orientation, as I have an indicator of generalized social trust. Political knowledge is measured with items that belong either to international or national politics;⁸ unfortunately, I do not have a measure of local-level political awareness.

The model confirms some of the findings of the previous analyses. First, again, trust in the national parliament emerges as the strongest predictor of trust in the municipality, pointing to a strong dependency of political trust between levels. The independent evaluations model also gathers some support in this case, since satisfaction with one's municipality fosters trust in local institutions, everything else being equal.

Evaluations of performance and responsiveness of the national political system are positively related to trust in local institutions, confirming our previous findings: local and national institutions seem to be evaluated as belonging to the same political system. Even after controlling for satisfaction with performance of local administrations, the compensation mechanism we have identified for the EU-national institution's comparison does not emerge in this case. Probably national and local institutions are regarded as parts of the same conglomerate, and most citizens probably do not see them as alternative but rather complementary institutional levels. This of course merits more research, since it might suggest that the compensation mechanism is specific to the particular reality of the European Union with regard to its nation states.

Finally, social trust and trust in media, which were meant to capture the effect of a generalized trust orientation, have a positive effect on trust in the municipality, thus also providing some support to the trust syndrome model as well.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed a largely neglected issue in the study of political trust: the dynamics of trust in multilevel government structures. The fact that most democratic political systems are composed of a complex set of entrenched institutional layers that deal with policy areas relevant for citizens' lives poses two main questions to research on political trust.

The first is whether or not those institutions placed at lower levels of the multilevel structure are able to generate, everything else being equal, more trust from citizens. Departing from the classical responsiveness–performance trade-off, I have argued that in a reasonably conceived multilevel government structure we should find a positive effect of proximity on trust, since we can expect each institution to be in charge of those issues that can be best handled at its level. Such a distribution of responsibilities would offset the performance advantage of larger units and, under such conditions, responsiveness should tip the balance in favor of lower government levels.

While a credible test of this hypothesis is certainly challenging, descriptive evidence presented here appears to support this idea, at least for the comparison between local and national institutions. In almost every country, and for a great share of the population, local institutions are more trusted than national institutions. However, the same pattern was not found for the EU: in some countries the supranational institutional layer is more

trusted than national institutions. Indeed, the differential trust in the EU institutions with respect to the national is closely correlated with the performance of national institutions, as measured by a corruption index.

The second question has to do with the patterns of relationship of trust across levels. Are citizens able to form independent attitudes towards the different institutional levels, or does the lack of information and the complexity of multilevel systems make them judge *secondary* institutions based on their attitudes towards the *main* ones? Overall, the analyses presented here tend to support the finding that political trust in a multilevel system is closely connected across levels. In every model, trust in national institutions has been shown to be the strongest predictor of trust in subnational and supranational institutions. Citizens, and especially those with lower levels of political awareness, use their orientations towards the institutions they are more familiar with in order to form their attitudes towards less well-known institutions.

However, it would be misleading to consider that there is no autonomy in the formation of institutional trust at the various levels of government. We have seen how, as the rational model would predict, perceptions of performance and responsiveness of specific institutions do matter for the level of trust that citizens place in them. Citizens not only take cues from the institutions they know better, they also take into account the actual and perceived workings of each institution in order to evaluate them. There is even evidence that in the case of the EU citizens use a logic of compensation, so worse performance and/or evaluations of national institutions lead to more trust in the European institutions. This pattern of compensation does not seem to appear when we analyze local and national institutions. Finally, evidence also speaks in favor of the idea of political trust as an underlying general orientation, since trust in seemingly unrelated political objects tends to be positively correlated.

Of course, an overview of a broad topic such as the one addressed in this chapter is also helpful for identifying open questions that the literature has not sufficiently addressed. I can name a few. The first, already mentioned, has to do with the direction of the influence. Do attitudes towards national institutions really shape how citizens think of subnational and supranational institutions, or is it the other way round? As I have discussed, most of the literature so far has favored the top-down approach according to which the 'first-order' arena would drive citizens' attitudes towards the rest of the multilevel political system. However, some works (Weitz-Shapiro, 2007) convincingly point in the opposite direction, or both (Kumlin, 2011).

The second question has to do with the effect of performance of subnational institutions. Exploiting variation on outcomes (Rahn and Rudolph, 2001; Rahn, 2005), corruption (Sole-Olle and Sorribas-Navarro, 2014), direct democratic institutions (Dorn et al., 2007), or election and management procedures across localities or, more generally, subnational units, is a promising setting to investigate how trust is formed in institutions within a multilevel system.

More generally, the role of institutional variables, such as the degree of decentralization or the relative politicization of local administrations in favoring either independent evaluations or contamination across levels, remains largely unexplored. There is ample variation across countries in the nature and strength of local and, especially, regional or state-level institutions. Using it might provide additional leverage to understand the institutional constraints on multilevel trust.

Last but not least, there is also room for improvement in the survey instruments on which all this work relies. Randomly altering the wording and/or ordering within the questionnaire of the trust questions is needed to parse out the correlations between trust in different institutions and objects, and understand to what extent they are driven by our measurement instruments.

NOTES

1. An exception to this consistent pattern seems to be China, where trust in central authorities is far larger than trust in local governments. However, according to Lianjiang Li (2012), this may be related to the authoritarian context. China might be hiding greater distrust in central authorities that would be severely underreported.
2. In the sixth round of the European Social Survey (2012), politicians and parties are the two lowest-scoring political objects in a battery of trust in every single country.
3. This opens the room for a parallel discussion: if trust in different institutions is formed independently, it might rely on different sources. Jennings (1998) showed that in the USA, citizens mentioned representation considerations as the main reason for trusting local governments, to a lesser extent for state governments, and even less frequently for the federal government. Outcome considerations followed the opposite pattern, being more important for determining trust in the federal government and less so for the state and local administrations. According to Jennings's analysis, therefore, citizens are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of each institutional level, and judge them accordingly.
4. However, at the local level citizens have greater opportunities for direct contact, so information would not come just from the often limited media attention but from 'rumors, accusations, and personal experiences with city government officials' as well (Weitz-Shapiro, 2007, p. 291).
5. In the model specification there is, of course, a key decision of using trust in sub- and supranational institutions as a dependent variable, and trust in the national parliament as the predictor, which might be controversial. As I have discussed above, this is based on an assumption linked to the idea of information, quite common to the previous research. However, the extent to which the influence runs in this specific direction or the reverse remains an open question.
6. The index is built by counting the number of correct answers to three questions: the number of EU member states, the procedure for electing MEPs, and whether or not Switzerland is a member state.
7. The battery includes satisfaction with the public transportation system, streets and interstates, educational system and schools, quality of the air and water, availability of health services and health care, availability of good housing at affordable prices, attractiveness of the area, traffic, sidewalks or pedestrian areas, availability of parks, plazas, and green areas, and the availability of recreational facilities.
8. Items included: the name of the US president, the number of provinces in the country, and the duration of presidential terms.

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For the electronic appendix, see www.e-elgar.com/handbook-on-political-trust-companion-site.

6. The measurement equivalence of political trust

Sofie Marien

INTRODUCTION

In recent decades a wide variety of high-quality datasets became available enabling scholars to advance political trust research by testing the validity of theoretical frameworks in different contexts. In effect, a crucial step to determining the generalizability of political trust theories includes investigating the geographical scope of theories by examining the applicability of a theory developed in one context to other contexts. In addition, comparative datasets enable investigating the effect of macro-level characteristics on political trust as well as possible interactions between the macro and micro level. Yet cross-national studies entail additional methodological challenges than single country studies (Davidov et al., 2014). Individuals are nested within countries, which violates the assumption of independent observations (Hox, 2002), therefore multilevel modelling strategies have been used increasingly.

However, fewer researchers have paid attention to the possibility that this hierarchical nature of the data can affect measurement instruments as well, leading to biased estimates (Van Deth, 2013). In effect, differences in political trust levels between respondents could be the result of country-specific systematic measurement errors rather than real differences in political trust levels between respondents (Stegmueller, 2011). Cultural differences in the interpretations of questions or words can occur. In particular, political trust is likely to have a different meaning in autocracies and democracies. Even within democracies, language, culture and institutions can exert an influence on the interpretation of the measurements that can potentially invalidate research results.

Within this chapter I present a brief overview of the most often used instruments to measure political trust and pay particular attention to the measurement equivalence of these instruments across different contexts. I describe the results of equivalence tests that were performed on these scales and present new results based on Round 6 of the European Social Survey (2012).

MEASURING POLITICAL TRUST

The measurement process is of crucial importance as it links the theory and the data used to test it (Vandenberg and Lance, 2000). The bulk of political trust research uses survey methodology to assess political trust by questioning respondents about different opinions towards the political system, its institutions and authorities. In general, different indicators are used to tap into the latent concept of political trust. However, trust is also measured within experimental research. Especially regarding interpersonal trust, there is a long tradition in observing the behaviour of subjects playing trust games in the laboratory (Berg et al., 1995; Camerer, 2003). While most experimental

research focuses on interpersonal trust, scholars also tried to measure political trust by observing and questioning subjects in lab and field experiments (see also Chapter 8 by Wilson and Eckel).

Yet the majority of trust research uses survey questions to measure political trust. One of the most frequently used measurement instruments is the American National Election Studies ‘trust-in-government’ questions. This instrument was developed by Donald Stokes in the 1960s and was originally designed to measure whether respondents evaluated the government favourably. These basic evaluative orientations towards the national government were measured using criteria such as honesty, ability and efficiency of authorities (Stokes, 1962). While Stokes did not use the concept of political trust, later on scholars started to use this scale in political trust research (e.g., Aberbach, 1969; Miller, 1974a; Gay, 2002). These trust-in-government questions are included in the American National Election Studies from the 1960s to the present day. The questions are paraphrased: ‘Do you think you can trust the government in Washington to do what is right?'; ‘Does the government waste a lot of money?'; ‘Is the government run by a few big interests looking out for themselves?'; ‘Are most politicians crooked?'; ‘Do politicians know what they are doing?' Despite that these questions are commonly used in political trust research, already in 1974 their validity was strongly criticized. Citrin wrote a reply in the *American Political Science Review* to refute the conclusions of Miller based on these questions published in this journal. While Miller argued that trust in the political system had decreased sharply during the past years, Citrin argued that the measurement instrument Miller had used tapped into trust in the current incumbents. Hence, Citrin argued that conclusions should be drawn about trust in the current incumbents rather than trust in the political system (Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1974a, 1974b). Several studies indeed show that the results of the trust-in-government questions have a strong partisan and incumbent bias (Citrin, 1974; Abramson and Finifter, 1981; Hetherington, 1998). At present, there is still substantial debate on the trends in political trust, its causes and consequences due to disagreement about the nature of the measurement of political trust.

Scholars have also tried to measure political trust by including a survey question on satisfaction ‘with the way democracy is working in [their country]’. This question is included in major international datasets including the Barometer surveys, the European Values Study and the European Social Survey and several empirical studies rely on this measurement of political trust (e.g., Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Kumlin, 2011). However, similar to the trust-in-government questions, evaluations of the current office-holders and a more generalized trust judgement (of democratic principles) are conflated within this measurement instrument. Its cross-national comparability was also challenged given that the content of the item varies across countries and given its sensitivity to the institutional context (Canache et al., 2001; Linde and Ekman, 2003).

A third often used measurement instrument of political trust questions respondents about their trust in different political institutions. For instance, within the European Social Survey (ESS) the following question is used: ‘Please tell me on a score of 0–10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust’. The institutions include: country’s parliament, the legal system, the police, politicians, political parties (from Round 2 ESS [2004] onwards). In line with the other chapters in the Handbook we label this scale the ‘political trust scale’. Although these questions were developed to tap into a general-

ized form of political trust, this measurement also cannot rule out that respondents think about the officials running these institutions when answering this question.

However, we can question whether it is possible to fully disentangle trust in the current authorities and trust in the political system and its institutions using survey questions. Some scholars state that a ‘referent’ is needed to obtain a valid measurement (Aberbach, 1969). It is argued that citizens cannot assess the trustworthiness of political institutions without thinking about its current incumbents. Moreover, both forms of trust are related. Citizens that have no trust in the political system are also more likely to be critical towards the current incumbents, and strong distrust in the politicians in office can spill over to trust evaluations of the institutions and the political system (Fuchs et al., 1995). In contrast to the trust-in-government questions, which ask respondents to evaluate the government based on different criteria, this third approach leaves trustworthiness undefined. No assumptions are made about the kind of criteria citizens use to judge the trustworthiness of institutions. Yet, as trust is left undefined, the question of equivalence becomes all the more salient: do respondents in different countries define trust in similar ways?

While a large number of other survey questions have been developed and used to measure political trust in national studies, these three measurement instruments are the most prominent within political trust research, especially within comparative studies. In addition to these instruments, a number of other measurements are used in cross-national research that are not labelled political trust but that nevertheless are an important part of the political trust literature. Building on the classical work of Easton (1965) political trust scholars distinguish between different objects of political trust including political authorities, the regime and the political community. The political regime includes the general principles, procedures, norms and authority structures of a political system. Next to the three measurement instruments described above, survey questions that try to assess support for the political regime have been developed and implemented in cross-national surveys. For instance, survey questions have been developed and included in the World Values Survey, which investigates support for democratic principles.

MEASUREMENT EQUIVALENCE

An important assumption within cross-national research is that the answers from respondents in different countries are comparable if the same questions are asked in all countries. In particular, scholars assume that the meaning of trust and the scales that respondents use to assess trust are similar across countries. Yet respondents use different languages and are socialized in varying cultural and economic contexts; therefore, this assumption might not hold and respondents in different countries might not understand abstract concepts, such as democracy or trust, in a similar way (Davidov et al., 2014). If due to, for instance, cultural or language differences individuals’ response patterns differ between countries, the political trust measurement scale cannot be meaningfully compared across these countries.

In order to conduct comparative trust research, it is important that the measurement instrument of political trust is characterized by measurement equivalence or invariance. The latter is generally understood as follows: ‘Under different conditions of observing and studying phenomena, measurement operations yield measures of the same attribute’ (Horn and McArdle, 1992, p. 117). Hence, respondents from different countries that have

the same level of political trust should provide similar responses to the political trust questions (Davidov et al., 2014). To ensure this cross-national comparability, the quality of the data collection phase is crucial. For instance, different data collection methods or sampling designs across countries can lead to unintended overrepresentation of country differences. A solid procedure to translate the survey questions in all languages is also vital to ensure the equivalence of measurement instruments (Harkness et al., 2010).

Sources of Bias

Three main sources of bias that lead to unintended increases or decreases in group differences can be identified (Van de Vijver, 2003; Davidov et al., 2014). First, the theoretical concept of political trust might have a different meaning across countries. This bias is labelled ‘construct bias’. As a result, the measurement instrument taps into different concepts in different countries, making it impossible to meaningfully compare the scores on the measurement instrument across countries. Next to construct bias, ‘method bias’ resulting from the use of different methods across countries has been identified as an important source of bias. Thus observed cross-national differences are not a reflection of true differences between populations but a result of the method used. Finally, ‘bias at the item level’, due to, for instance, translation errors or different interpretations of words, can hamper equivalence (Van de Vijver, 2003). It is crucial to be aware of potential biases and prevent these but even in the most carefully designed cross-national project, unintended variations between countries can occur that lead to the overrepresentation or underrepresentation of group differences. Hence testing the assumption of the equivalence of the measurement instrument across countries is crucial in cross-national research.

Methods to Test Measurement Equivalence

In their review article of measurement equivalence in cross-national research Davidov et al. (2014) present an overview of the techniques that have been used to investigate measurement equivalence. Multiple group confirmatory factor analysis (MGCFA), multilevel mixture item response theory (IRT) and simultaneous latent class analysis (LCA) across groups are considered the most commonly used techniques to investigate measurement equivalence across countries (*ibid.*, p. 62). The first two of these methods have been used within political trust research to investigate the cross-cultural equivalence of commonly used political trust measurement instruments. The core of these methods includes the idea that political trust cannot be observed directly but has to be measured using different observable indicators. As described above, political trust is, for instance, frequently measured by questioning respondents on their trust in different political institutions.

Equivalent measurement instruments are characterized by similar relations between the latent concept (e.g., political trust) and its indicators (e.g., trust in parliament, trust in the legal system etc.) across countries. The relations between the latent concept and its indicators can be considered as a ‘reasonable empirical map of the underlying conceptual or cognitive frame of reference used to make item responses’ (Vandenberg and Lance, 2000, p. 37). Hence the comparability of these relations indicates that respondents have the same underlying frame of reference that is a crucial prerequisite to conduct comparative research.

Scholars conducting measurement equivalence tests generally investigate different levels of equivalence. At the lowest level, it is investigated whether the relations between the latent concept and the indicators are similar across countries: does the same pattern of strong and weak relations occur in every country? This level of equivalence is labelled ‘configural equivalence’. The assumption is empirically tested that the same conceptual frame of reference is induced by the different indicators in all countries. When configural equivalence is reached, the concept of political trust can be meaningfully discussed in the different countries under study (Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998; Vandenberg and Lance, 2000). Yet comparisons between groups can still be problematical as the scale intervals of the political trust scale can be different. Therefore, it is important after testing for configural equivalence to investigate metric equivalence. This test examines whether a one-unit increase in political trust has the same meaning in all countries. If the relations between the latent concept political trust and its indicators are not equal across countries ‘inferences in regard to the latent concept are compromised because the measures are calibrated to the latent concept differently’ (Vandenberg and Lance, 2000, p. 9). As a result, a score of, for example, ‘6’ on the 0–10 political trust scale may mean something different in country A than in country B.

Finally, scholars have also tested scalar equivalence to assess whether the origin of the political trust scale is the same across countries. The latter is required to compare the mean levels of political trust between countries (Meredith, 1993; Vandenberg and Lance, 2000). While there are additional, more stringent, levels of equivalence, most often trust scholars conduct tests of configural, metric and scalar equivalence to investigate whether political trust can be meaningfully discussed in all countries, whether the political trust scale has the same metric (and as a result a one-unit increase in the political trust scale has the same meaning in all countries) and whether the scale has the same origin (and as a result mean levels of political trust can be compared across countries).

Within trust research, scholars have especially used MGCFA to assess measurement equivalence but also multilevel mixture IRT has been used. Before elaborating on the results of these studies, I will expand on the basic ideas underlying equivalence tests using MGCFA and multilevel mixture IRT.¹

The most frequently employed method to test measurement equivalence (and most versatile cf. Steenkamp and Baumgartner, 1998, p. 78) is MGCFA. By means of factor analysis, it can be tested whether the underlying construct ‘political trust’ exists. This underlying construct cannot be observed directly (as with all latent variables) but its existence is inferred from the way it influences indicators that can be observed (Brown, 2006). Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) explores the variation and co-variation among the indicators (e.g., trust judgements of different political institutions) and identifies the number and nature of latent variable(s) that account for this variation (*ibid.*). This results in the following linear regression formula for the observed score of every indicator (x_i^g) with i respondents and g countries:

$$x_i^g = \tau_i^g + \lambda_i^g \eta^g + \delta_i^g$$

In this formula, the magnitude of the relations between the indicators x_i^g and the latent factor score η^g is represented by the factor loadings λ_i^g . A factor loading of ‘1’ indicates

a perfect relationship, while a value of ‘0’ depicts that there is no relationship between the indicator and the latent concept. The origin of the scale is represented by the intercepts τ_i^g and indicates the value of the indicator when the latent factor ‘political trust’ is zero. δ_i^g represents the error term. After specifying the measurement model, the model has to be estimated and evaluated. To evaluate the fitted CFA solution, one has to study the overall goodness of fit, analyse specific points of fit and look into the direction, magnitude and significance of the parameters. Several tests have been developed to evaluate whether the model provides a good description of the data (e.g., χ^2 , RMSEA, CFI) (Brown, 2006). Using MGCFA it is investigated whether the general model that was developed holds true in all countries under study. Equivalence is reached when the factor loadings and intercepts are equal across countries (*ibid.*).

Measurement equivalence can also be investigated using multilevel mixture item response theory (IRT). While MGCFA can also be used with categorical and ordered indicators (Millsap and Yun-Tein, 2004; Poznyak et al., 2014), IRT (as well as LCA) is specifically designed to deal with this type of indicators and is as such often used when indicators are not continuous (Davidov et al., 2014; Jilke et al., 2015). Multilevel mixture IRT model is an extension of IRT that is particularly useful to investigate equivalence of a measurement instrument within the IRT framework (Stegmueller, 2011). Within IRT, thresholds are modelled that represent the item difficulty, which reflects the difficulty from moving from one category to another. The likelihood to choose a particular category is estimated for every individual for each item using the cumulative probability for every item of a respondent living in a particular country. Choosing a particular category is modelled as the outcome of one’s trust level as well as the item difficulty.

Equivalence is reached when crossing the threshold is as difficult in all countries. If the difficulty to move from one category to the other is more difficult in one country than the other, this reflects item bias and is a reason for concern. Differences in item difficulty between countries might reflect that differences between countries are an artefact from the measurement rather than real differences between the countries. Moreover, multilevel mixture IRT models allow correcting for invariance by including this invariance within the model by identifying classes of countries with a similar item bias and allowing item bias to vary between countries (*ibid.*).

MEASUREMENT EQUIVALENCE OF POLITICAL TRUST SCALES

While to date the challenge of cross-cultural equivalence of political trust measurements is often neglected, a number of studies stand out that meticulously investigated whether political trust can be meaningfully compared between countries. The results of these studies are described below.

Support for Political Regimes

The cross-national comparability of support for political regimes, for example, the democratic system, was investigated using MGCFA equivalence tests of the ‘democracy–autocracy preference’ scale (Ariely and Davidov, 2011). This scale consists of different

indicators that measure respondents' preferences for a number of different political systems types in their country. The questions are phrased as follows:

I am going to describe various types of political systems and ask what you think about each as a way of governing this country. For each, would you say it is a very good, fairly good, fairly bad, or a very bad way of governing this country?

- (a) Having a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections.
- (b) Having experts, not governments, make decisions according to what they think is best for the country.
- (c) Having the army rule.
- (d) Having a democratic political system.

These survey items were included in the World Values Surveys in 1995, 2000, 2005 and 2010 and have been used extensively in empirical research (e.g., Klingemann, 1999; Haerpfer, 2008). The equivalence tests reveal that the relation between the latent concept and the indicator that includes the term 'democratic' is weaker than the relation between the latent concept and the indicators that do not use this term. The authors recommend using only the three items that do not mention the term 'democratic' to investigate democratic preferences because they believe respondents provide socially desired answers: respondents pay lip service to democracy but they do not have strong democratic beliefs (Ariely and Davidov, 2011). Yet even when excluding the 'democracy item', in nine out of 36 countries it was not possible to estimate a well-fitting measurement model. As a result, the latent concept 'democratic preference' could not be measured in these nine countries using these three items. Subsequent analysis showed that in the overall majority of the countries (that is, 27 countries) included in the World Values Surveys, democracy-autocracy preferences can be discussed meaningfully. In these countries this concept has the same meaning and is measured on the same scale (configural and metric equivalence). Yet as the origin of this scale is not the same in all these countries, the comparisons of means might be biased (no scalar equivalence). The authors indicate that comparing means might still be possible among smaller subsets of countries that demonstrate similarities (e.g., post-communist countries etc.), yet it is not possible to compare the mean levels of democratic preferences among all countries included in the World Values Surveys (*ibid.*).

A second latent concept often used within the political trust literature is the evaluation of democratic performance in different spheres, for example, economy (Inglehart and Welzel, 2005; Ariely and Davidov, 2011). The survey questions that are often used to tap into this latent concept are phrased as follows:

I'm going to read off some things that people sometimes say about a democratic political system. Could you please tell me if you agree strongly, agree, disagree or disagree strongly, after I read each one of them?

- (a) In democracy, the economic system runs badly.
- (b) Democracies are indecisive and have too much quibbling.
- (c) Democracies aren't good at maintaining order.
- (d) Democracy may have problems but it's better than any other form of government.

Equivalence tests show that the last item (d) is not a good indicator of the latent concept in a large number of countries (Ariely and Davidov, 2011). Therefore, Ariely and Davidov (2011) recommend not including this item in the scale. The remaining three

items performed well on the subsequent more strict equivalence tests. The evaluation of democratic performance can be meaningfully discussed and compared between 35 countries in an analysis of the World Values Surveys.

Political Trust

A third often-used political trust scale questions respondents about their trust in different political institutions. This scale has also been assessed for its cross-national comparability characteristics. The measurement equivalence of this scale has been assessed using different datasets, response categories and methods. Jilke et al. (2015) investigate the comparability of this political trust scale using four indicators: trust in the police, trust in the justice system, trust in government and trust in the civil services. Respondents could answer on a four-point scale (a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all). The sample included 14 EU and/or OECD countries that were selected from the World Values Survey dataset (2005). The equivalence tests reveal systematic country differences in response probability. For instance, the difficulty to move from one response category to another response category is lower in Switzerland, which leads to an overestimation of the level of political trust in Switzerland. In the Western part of Germany the difficulty to move from one response category to another response category is higher. As a result, the country ordering regarding levels of political trust changes when shifting from standardly used factor scores to the results of the IRT model (*ibid.*).

The equivalence analyses on the political trust scale used in the European Social Survey provide more optimistic results on the cross-national comparability of political trust (Marien, 2011). This scale includes an 11-point answering scale and five indicators (that is, national parliament, legal system, police, political parties, politicians). The equivalence analyses of this scale show that political trust has the same meaning and is measured on the same scale in all democratic countries included in the European Social Survey. Four rounds of the European Social Survey were investigated and the conclusion holds true for all rounds (2002–08). The analyses did reveal some interesting differences between countries but these differences did not hamper equivalence. In particular, the factor loadings of implementing institutions (e.g., police) were found to be weaker than the factor loadings of representative institutions (e.g., parliament) in more established democracies than in newer democracies. Political trust influences trust in representative as well as implementing institutions, yet its influence on implementing institutions is smaller in established democracies. In new democracies, on the other hand, political trust influences representative and implementing institutions to the same extent. Put another way, in newer democracies citizens are distrustful of all institutions and hardly differentiate between (impartial) implementing and (partisan) representative institutions. Most likely, all institutions are perceived as political or even as corrupt (Marien, 2011).

New Empirical Evidence

Within this section an update is provided of the cross-national comparability of this 11-point political trust scale by presenting the results of new equivalence tests on Round 6 of the European Social Survey (2012). In line with Marien (2011) political trust is measured using five indicators (trust in the national parliament, political parties, the police,

the legal system and politicians). The analyses are limited to free democratic countries. The Freedom House Index (FHI) is a widely used indicator to assess whether a country is democratic by looking at the amount of political and civil liberties in the country. Several political and civil rights are lacking in some of the countries included in the European Social Survey. As a result, Russia, Albania, Kosovo and Ukraine were not included in the analysis. The study is also limited to European countries, leading to the exclusion of Israel from the dataset.

A one-dimensional measurement model of political trust is estimated in the remaining 24 countries.² In line with previous measurement models of political trust, the errors of the two indicators related to trust in implementing institutions (police and legal system) are allowed to correlate (Marien, 2011). There is some covariance between these institutions due to sources other than this general attitude of political trust. The police and the legal system are primarily responsible for the maintenance of order, and we can assume, in line with Inglehart's postmodernization theory (1999), that citizens have a different opinion towards these order institutions than towards representational institutions. Likewise, citizens hold different expectations towards implementing and representational institutions. While political parties, the parliament and politicians are expected to be partisan, implementing institutions are expected to be impartial (Rothstein and Stolle, 2008). Given these theoretical arguments and the covariance between these two measures, it can be useful, depending on the research question, to make a distinction between implementing institutions and institutions on the representational side of the political system. Furthermore, and also in line with previous research, trust in politicians and trust in political parties also share variance that cannot be explained by the latent concept. The assessment of trust in politicians and political parties might be influenced more strongly by the performance of the current incumbents than respondents' trust in parliament, the legal system or the police. In addition, politicians are routinely members of a political party. The mean value of, and the variance in, trust in political parties and trust in politicians are indeed very similar, which could indicate that citizens do not make a distinction between political parties and politicians.

The results in Table 6.1 show that in the overall majority of countries this measurement model provides a good approximation to reality. The χ^2 of the model is reported as this is a classic goodness-of-fit measure; however, given the large sample that is used in the analyses, χ^2 is a poor measure as it generally rejects solutions based on a large N (Brown, 2006; Reeskens and Hooghe, 2008, p. 523). A better and widely used measure is the root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) as 'it assesses the extent to which a model fits reasonably well in the population (as opposed to testing whether the model holds exactly in the population; cf. χ^2)' (Brown, 2006, p. 83). A reasonably good fit is operationalized as an RMSEA close to 0.06 or below (Hu and Bentler, 1999). Finally, the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) is used to evaluate the fitted CFA solution. The CFI ranges between 0 and 1 whereas a reasonably good fit is operationalized by values that are close to 0.95 or greater. Brown (2006) reports these cut-off criteria based on several simulation studies of Hu and Bentler (1999).

In all countries, the CFI of the measurement model is indeed greater than 0.95 and the RMSEA is below or close to 0.06. The global model fit of the measurement model in Norway is rather far above the generally used cut-off point of the RMSEA but has a good score on the CFI and all indicators have significant and salient factor loadings. All

Table 6.1 Political trust measurement scales across countries

Country	Standardized Factor Loadings					Fit Indices		
	Party	Politicians	Parliament	Legal	Police	χ^2	RMSEA	CFI
Belgium	0.795	0.815	0.863	0.710	0.573	23.320	0.060	0.996
Bulgaria	0.781	0.849	0.859	0.725	0.602	23.860	0.056	0.997
Cyprus	0.753	0.809	0.867	0.646	0.557	1.340	0.000	1.000
Czech Republic	0.856	0.876	0.959	0.769	0.635	16.372	0.047	0.999
Denmark	0.755	0.800	0.902	0.619	0.436	11.561	0.042	0.998
Estonia	0.745	0.786	0.907	0.754	0.571	0.782	0.000	1.000
Finland	0.755	0.799	0.905	0.651	0.433	4.016	0.012	1.000
France	0.735	0.798	0.787	0.642	0.467	10.191	0.035	0.998
Germany	0.735	0.773	0.888	0.609	0.446	14.014	0.035	0.998
Hungary	0.813	0.849	0.924	0.776	0.573	8.839	0.031	0.999
Ireland	0.793	0.809	0.902	0.544	0.358	12.505	0.035	0.999
Iceland	0.801	0.837	0.898	0.593	0.280	9.261	0.053	0.997
Italy	0.723	0.760	0.935	0.644	0.467	11.887	0.056	0.997
Latvia	0.767	0.827	0.873	0.643	0.521	23.206	0.057	0.997
Netherlands	0.832	0.860	0.887	0.662	0.517	15.223	0.047	0.998
Norway	0.701	0.764	0.879	0.646	0.477	37.408	0.084	0.992
Poland	0.711	0.766	0.863	0.718	0.475	17.698	0.051	0.997
Portugal	0.733	0.759	0.890	0.604	0.363	6.350	0.023	0.999
Slovenia	0.787	0.819	0.871	0.779	0.565	5.040	0.023	1.000
Slovakia	0.856	0.891	0.906	0.783	0.669	11.563	0.039	0.999
Spain	0.671	0.728	0.859	0.682	0.474	5.182	0.020	1.000
Switzerland	0.670	0.732	0.867	0.684	0.529	2.729	0.000	1.000
Sweden	0.777	0.813	0.863	0.712	0.555	24.123	0.062	0.996
United Kingdom	0.832	0.847	0.877	0.637	0.478	13.461	0.039	0.998

Notes:

Twenty-four countries; N = 44 644.

Confirmatory factor analyses; χ^2 with three degrees of freedom, RMSEA and CFI.*Source:* European Social Survey (2012).

factor loadings except one are above 0.30, that is, the value that is used to define a ‘salient’ factor loading (Brown, 2006, p. 130). In Iceland, the factor loading of trust in the police shows that trust in the police is not a good indicator of the political trust latent concept. Therefore, Iceland is excluded from the analysis. The presented analyses include Norway, but additional analyses excluding Norway led to similar results. In summary, the measurement models indicate that all observed measures are intercorrelated because they are influenced by the same underlying construct, that is, ‘political trust’. For instance, trust in the police is related to trust in parliament because they are both influenced by respondents’ general political trust attitude.

In a next step a MGCFA is conducted without equality constraints. As the results in Table 6.1 already indicated, the same patterns of salient and non-salient factor loadings emerge across countries. Consequently, the results of the MGCFA in Table 6.2 show that this model

Table 6.2 Cross-national comparability of political trust (ESS, 2012)

Model Specifications	χ^2	df	RMSEA	CFI
Configural equivalence	300.668	69	0.042 (0.037–0.047)	0.998
Metric equivalence	1243.983	157	0.060 (0.057–0.063)	0.992
<i>Partial metric equivalence</i>	864.557	135	0.053 (0.050–0.057)	0.995
Scalar equivalence	7631.760	233	0.132 (0.129–0.134)	0.944
<i>Partial scalar equivalence</i>	1199.394	157	0.059 (0.056–0.062)	0.992

Notes:

Twenty-three countries; N = 44 027.

Confirmatory factor analyses; χ^2 with three degrees of freedom, RMSEA and CFI.

Source: European Social Survey (2012).

fits the data well (RMSEA = 0.042; CFI = 0.998). In all countries the contribution of trust in the police to the measurement of political trust is smaller. The factor loadings of the indicators of trust in implementing institutions are generally lower than the factor loadings of trust in the institutions on the representational side of the political system. Hence, political trust can be meaningfully discussed in all 23 European countries under study.

In order to assess whether the metrics of the political trust scale are the same across these countries, the factor loadings are constrained to be equal across countries and the model fit of this constrained model is examined. While the global fit of this model is acceptable, there are specific points of ill-fit. Therefore, some of the equality constraints have to be released to obtain a better-fitting model. This does not hamper the cross-national comparability of the scale as long as a minimum of two indicators are invariant across countries (Byrne et al., 1989). Inspection of the modification indices and expected parameter changes reveal that the constraint that in all countries the factor loadings of trust in the police have to be equal decreases the fit of the model substantially. Therefore, the equality constraint for the factor loading of trust in the police is removed, that is, this factor loading can now be freely estimated in every country. This is in line with the results of the equivalence tests on previous rounds of the European Social Survey. In particular, some specific misfits stand out: the equality constraint on the factor loading of trust in the police results in a factor loading that is too high in Finland and too low in Bulgaria and Slovenia. In Round 6 (2012) of the European Social Survey too, the same pattern emerges with stronger factor loadings of implementing institutions in new democracies and weaker factor loadings of implementing institutions in established democracies. As a result, full metric equivalence cannot be obtained but partial metric equivalence is reached which makes it possible to compare the political trust scale across countries.

In a final step, it is investigated whether the origin of the political trust scale is the same across countries (scalar equivalence). This test proves to be more difficult. Constraining the intercepts of all indicators to be the same across countries leads to a bad-fitting model (Table 6.2). Inspection of the modification indices and expected parameter changes reveal that especially the intercepts of the implementing institutions are not equal across countries. In line with the factor loadings, also the intercepts of trust in the police and the legal system differ substantially in Finland (that is, higher), Bulgaria (that is, lower) and

Slovenia (that is, lower) from the average factor loading. Also in Ireland the intercept of trust in the police and the legal system is higher than the value it is constrained to, while in Belgium the intercept of trust in the legal system is lower. Even when removing these two constraints, the model does not fit the data well ($\text{RMSEA} = 0.086$; $\text{CFI} = 0.981$). The intercepts of trust in parliament also differ substantially between the countries. Especially in Spain the intercept is substantially higher, while it is lower in the Netherlands and Denmark. Removing the equality constraint on the intercept of trust in parliament leads to a good-fitting model. Given that the indicators trust in political parties and trust in politicians are still constrained to be equal across countries, partial scalar equivalence can be obtained which allows comparing the means of the political trust scale across countries.

In sum, equivalence tests reveal that there are systematic country differences in the four-point political trust scale that are caused by country-specific systematic measurement error. The 11-point political trust scale seems to be more suited to conduct cross-national research on political trust. Yet we should note that these studies remain limited to the European context. It remains to be investigated whether this political trust scale is characterized by measurement equivalence beyond the European context.

Trust in Government

Finally, the results from equivalence tests on the American National Election Studies ‘trust-in-government’ questions are described. While this measurement scale is one of the most frequently used political trust scales, it has been used less in large-scale cross-national survey projects. Therefore, to my knowledge, the cross-national equivalence of this scale has not been investigated. Yet these survey questions provide a unique opportunity for longitudinal research and have been used extensively to this end. While the same survey questions were asked from 1964 to 2008, the meaning assigned to them might have changed. Therefore, Poznyak et al. (2014) investigated whether the meaning of trust is comparable over time using this ‘trust-in-government’ scale. The reported MGCFCA equivalence tests reveal that the meaning and interpretation of the item ‘Do you think that people in the government waste a lot of money we pay in taxes, waste some of it, or don’t waste very much of it?’ is not invariant over time. The authors argue that this item might be tapping into attitudes towards taxation and redistribution more than towards trust in government and therefore behaves differently over time than the other items of the ‘trust-in-government’ scale. Given that the other items do comply with the equality constraints, partial measurement equivalence is reached, which allows valid longitudinal comparisons of trust (*ibid.*).

CONCLUSION

Within this chapter, the most frequently used measurement scales within political trust research were described and its cross-national comparability was evaluated. Within comparative research, political trust is studied extensively, yet few researchers investigate whether the meaning of political trust is the same across countries and therefore, whether it *can* be compared. In effect, observed cross-national differences might not be a reflection of true differences between populations but a result of country-specific systematic

measurement error due to, for instance, the different meaning of particular words or the use of different data collection methods across countries (Davidov et al., 2014).

Recently, a number of studies were conducted to test the cross-national comparability of the most frequently used trust scales. In this regard, the cross-national comparability of generalized trust (Reeskens and Hooghe, 2008; Freitag and Bauer, 2013) but also political trust scales were examined. Most studies focused on the comparability of these scales across countries but it should be noted that measurement errors could also occur comparing groups or samples over time (Poznyak et al., 2014). For instance, while political trust was found to be comparable across minority and majority groups in the Netherlands, generalized trust is likely to have a different meaning among these groups (De Vroome et al., 2013).

The performed tests of measurement equivalence across countries revealed that not all indicators are invariant across countries. For instance, indicators including the term ‘democracy’ behave differently across countries than indicators describing democratic procedures without using the term ‘democracy’. Ariely and Davidov (2011) argue that respondents provide socially desirable answers. Questions that did not mention the term ‘democracy’ but describe democratic processes instead indicate that democratic preferences are lower than one would conclude based on questions that directly asked respondents about their support for ‘democratic’ procedures.

Next to the lack of invariance of some indicators, measurement invariance could not be established in all countries. The World Values Surveys provide a unique and rich database yet the diversity of countries included also provides substantial challenges. Respondents are socialized in very distinct cultural and economic contexts; therefore, the assumption that respondents understand abstract concepts, such as democracy or trust, in a similar way does not hold in all countries. To advance the field of political trust research, it is important that scholars test the geographical scope of theories by examining the applicability of a theory developed in one context to other contexts. Yet it is crucial that they use comparable measurement instruments that do not lead to the overrepresentation or underrepresentation of group differences due to artefacts of the measurement instrument. When measurement invariance is not reached, cross-national research could still be possible but on smaller subsets of countries that demonstrate similarities (e.g., post-communist countries) (Davidov et al., 2014). Hence, equivalence tests can be used to assess the geographical scope of political trust theories. Based on these equivalence tests as well as qualitative ‘cognitive interview techniques’ that question respondents about the meaning of survey items (*ibid.*), biases in the current scales can be documented and information can be gathered that could enable scholars to develop comparable political trust scales that can be used in worldwide political trust studies.

NOTES

1. To my knowledge, latent class analysis (LCA) has not been used to examine the equivalence of political trust measurement instruments to date. LCA is a probabilistic form of cluster analysis that can be used to investigate the existence of distinct types of attitudes or behaviour based on categorical data (Magidson and Vermunt, 2004; cf. Oser et al., 2013 for a recent application of this technique within political participation research). Comparable to factor analysis, LCA identifies latent variables based on multiple indicators yet the grouping of data is based on the similarity between response patterns of respondents instead of

- on similarity between indicators (Oser et al., 2013). To test measurement equivalence, the researcher examines whether the identified latent classes (i.e., groups that share a distinct response pattern) have the same meaning in all countries. In particular, it is investigated whether the class-specific conditional response probabilities are equal across countries by imposing equality restrictions on these conditional probabilities (Kankaraš and Vermunt, 2014).
2. The countries include: Belgium, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and United Kingdom.

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7. Objects of political and social trust: scales and hierarchies

Sonja Zmerli and Ken Newton

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, *empirical* trust research has made significant progress. Whereas theoretical concepts and empirical evidence about causes and consequences of political and social trust in democratic societies once hardly fitted together, better measures of trust in comparative datasets now allow for refined studies that have disentangled at least some of the associations and hierarchies of the objects of different types of trust. In particular, three major questions that had dominated scholarly work now seem settled. The first concerned the relationship between political and social trust and found little evidence to confirm the idea that they were positively correlated and mutually reinforcing. The second revolved around the relationship between general and particular social trust, particularly whether they were associated or mutually incompatible. The third question focused on the role of trust as cause and effect of good government, especially the role of trustworthy impartial institutions as a necessary, though not sufficient, foundation of political trust. As a consequence of the clarification of at least some of these matters, the *hierarchy* of a wide range of objects of trust emerged as a subject of research.

This chapter seeks to contribute to research by, first, providing an overview of past empirical investigations that resulted in theoretical controversies. Second, it discusses three theoretical approaches that underlie the scales and hierarchies of political and social trust. And, third, it tests these theoretical propositions against the most recent World Values Survey (2010–14 – sixth wave). In doing so, this chapter builds on previous empirical research conducted by the two authors (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). The new work covers a different and wider array of countries and covers the period of the financial crisis starting in 2008. It also confirms the conclusions of the previous research.

The theory that democratic stability rests on a foundation of both social and political trust was called into question by the failure of empirical research to find a positive correlation between the two at the individual level (Kaase, 1999, p. 13; Rothstein, 2002, pp. 320–21; Delhey and Newton, 2003; Mishler and Rose, 2005), although it had been found at the aggregate level in cross-national comparative studies (Newton and Norris, 2000). Moreover, despite the popular distinction between particular social trust and general social trust, little to nothing was known about the associations between the two or about the conditions in which they flourished. General trust seemed to be of crucial importance in large scale, economically developed societies (Granovetter, 1973, 1983) and it was widely assumed that particular trust was a characteristic of small, isolated, face-to-face communities and of rural societies. Consequently, particular trust was thought to be of less importance in the developed world and therefore there was little research interest in it and even less empirical data about it.

However, subsequent research found robust evidence that social and political trust are indeed associated at the individual level – as social capital theory predicts – when the two are measured carefully with batteries of questions and 7- or 11-point rating scales (Freitag, 2003a, 2003b; Jagodzinski and Manabe, 2004, pp. 85–7; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Zmerli and Newton, 2008; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). Moreover, for the first time in any large-scale comparative questionnaire the World Values Survey (WVS) of 2005–09 asked batteries of questions about particular social, general social and political trust, and found that all three are positively correlated with each other. Furthermore, there is strong evidence that particular trust is not only compatible with general social trust, but also forms a platform on which the latter can be developed (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). Accordingly, the work of the last decade or so has injected fresh life into the subject of both political and social trust and the importance of both for politics, democratic stability and social cohesion.

In the following theoretical section, we sketch the nature and potential hierarchy of particular, general and political trust objects and propose three models of the relationship between them. The next empirical section inspects the dimensionality and hierarchy of the measures of trust included in our analyses. The final section of the chapter draws out some of the broader implications of the findings for the study of political trust and its important associations with social trust.

THE NATURE OF TRUST

Particular and General Social Trust

For some, particular trust is based on knowledge of and close contact with others. Hence Hardin states: ‘For me to trust you, I have to know a fair amount about you’ (Hardin, 2000, p. 34), suggesting that it should generally refer to a fairly small circle of family, friends, neighbours and work colleagues (see also Luhmann, 1979, p. 43; Yamagishi and Yamagishi, 1994). Others disagree, arguing that trust of any kind may be vested in unknown others who are like us in some way – language, ethnicity, class, appearance, sex or status, for example.

In this chapter we try to avoid empirical speculation by defining particular trust in a neutral way. Following the standard *Oxford English Dictionary* definitions of ‘particular’ and ‘trust’ we use the term ‘particular trust’ to refer to trust in specific people or groups of people, whether they are known personally or are of our ‘own kind’. Defined in this way, the circle of particular trust has a comparatively small radius in the sense that its objects are specific others and not a larger group of general others (Delhey et al., 2011).

General trust is not restricted in this way and has a broad radius. It extends to people as a whole in an unselective manner. It is more inclusive than exclusive in the sense that it is less dependent upon distinctions between in-groups and out-groups. It involves the feeling that most people can be trusted, even if they are not known personally and even if they are not similar socially. However, particular and general social trust are not either/or categories. They range along a continuum from the personal and particular to the abstract and general (Misztal, 1996, p. 72).

Political Trust

Political trust, as already outlined in Chapter 1 by Van der Meer and Zmerli and in Chapter 2 by Norris, is embedded in the concept of political support and is probably the best single indicator of it. However, there are a multitude of objects of political trust and each elicits a different level of public trust that may also be more or less volatile. Trust in presidents or prime ministers can fluctuate quickly while trust in parliaments is usually more stable, and trust in democracy as a system of government may fluctuate by no more than a few percentage points over long periods of time. There may also be a virtuous circle in which the more trust there is in government, the more effective and efficient it is, and the more citizens trust their government. The same sort of logic may also apply to impartial institutions such as the police, courts and civil service.

This distinction between political and impartial institutions has been hotly debated (Marien, 2011; Braun, 2013), and, once again, the empirical evidence is mixed. On the one hand, while a *theoretical* distinction may be useful in some cases, only one latent dimension appears to underlie them as objects of trust (see Chapter 6 by Marien; Zmerli et al., 2007; Marien, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). On the other hand, some studies point to the importance of trustworthy and impartial institutions that operate on universal principles (Rothstein, 2011). In fact, it might be argued that impartial and trustworthy public institutions of the state may be one of the foundations upon which trust in political institutions can be built. In this case political trust may best be conceived as a set of hierarchically ordered objects of trust with trustworthy police, courts, civil service and public service agencies as a foundation on which trust in political institutions can be built.

In the following section we discuss the relationships of the three types of trust in more detail and propose three models of trust based on previous theoretical and empirical evidence.

RELATIONSHIPS OF TRUST

Studies of social and political trust are abundant but have failed to produce consistent results so far (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). For some years, empirical research failed to find convincing evidence that social and political trust are associated at the individual level (Kaase, 1999; Newton, 1999, pp. 180–85, 2001, 2006, pp. 84–5; Torcal and Montero, 1999; Newton and Norris, 2000, pp. 62–6; Uslaner, 2000–01, p. 586, 2002, 2008, p. 111; Delhey and Newton, 2003), but were found to be significantly and positively associated at the aggregate level (Newton and Norris, 2000, pp. 52–73; Newton, 2001; Delhey and Newton, 2005).

More recent studies, however, have found substantive and consistently significant associations between social and political trust at the individual level. Country studies in the USA, Switzerland, Germany, Sweden and Japan find a close tie between general social and political trust when they are measured more precisely with batteries of questions and 7- or 11-point rating scales (Freitag, 2003a, 2003b; Rothstein and Stolle, 2003; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Mishler and Rose, 2005; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Bäck and Kestilä, 2009; Schiffman et al., 2010; Suh et al., 2012; Sonderskov and Dinesen, 2014; Tao et al., 2014). Cross-national studies have produced similar evidence (Jagodzinski and Manabe,

2004, pp. 85–97; Zmerli et al., 2007; Zmerli and Newton, 2008; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; Tan and Tambyah, 2011). The conclusion that social and political trust are, indeed, associated at both individual and cross-national aggregate levels revives a range of research questions concerning the importance of social trust for democracy.

Moreover, the associations between social and political trust at the aggregate level appear to be complex and asymmetrical and not entirely supportive of the theory that declines of social trust are a cause of the erosion of political trust. Some Western countries (Finland, Sweden, New Zealand and Japan), for example, that suffered profoundly from political crises and showed steep falls in political trust in the 1980s and 1990s showed little or no sign of declining social trust, civic engagement or membership of voluntary associations. On the contrary, measures of trust, civic engagement and voluntary membership remained among the highest in the world in spite of political crises (Newton, 2006). Similar findings also pertain to several mostly Southern European countries. Those that have been particularly affected by the ongoing financial and economic crisis concomitantly experience a stark decline in political trust. By contrast, levels of social trust have, by and large, remained stable even during the financial crisis that broke in 2008 (Zmerli, 2016).

Although bits of the trust picture have been filled in, crucial gaps remain and there is no general agreement about the associations, not least the hierarchies, between different kinds of social trust and between them and political trust. Earlier we defined three main models, based on a reading of the large and growing literature (Newton and Zmerli, 2011). One claims that different kinds fit together in a mutually reinforcing pattern. Another argues the opposite, seeing particular and general social trust as mutually exclusive and political trust as incompatible with particular trust. A third school of thought suggests a more complicated pattern in which some but not all forms of trust go together depending on conditions. We refer to these as the compatible, the incompatible and the conditional models.

The Compatible Model

The simplest model presents all three types of trust as a single unified combination in which those who are trusting in one realm of life are usually trusting in the others. Two main schools of thought support this view. The first is the macro approach to social capital, arguing that social and political structures and institutions are major influences on individual levels of trust. Societies with dense networks of social relations and voluntary associations, and with institutions that enforce or encourage trustworthy social behaviour (police, courts, civil service, welfare institutions), will develop high levels of social trust. On the political side of the coin, democratic systems will generate high levels of political trust that, in turn, make it easier to create effective and efficient political institutions operating for the public good. These two processes will, in turn, feed back into the system, reinforcing the institutions and norms of civil society and so create a virtuous spiral of social and political trust (Putnam, 1993, 2000; Rothstein, 1998; Tyler, 1998; Rahn et al., 1999; Knack, 2000; Levi and Stoker, 2000; Newton and Norris, 2000; Paxton, 2002; Delhey and Newton, 2005).

This is a top-down view of trust that emphasizes the importance of institutions and shared cultures. It is supported by the evidence that social trust in individuals is strongly

associated with trust in the social and political institutions whose function is to reinforce trustworthy behaviour among citizens – the courts, police, civil service. It is also consistent with the theory of the rainmaker effect, which argues that a culture of trust will have an impact on all individuals whatever their individual inclinations towards trust or distrust may be. Trust, like the gentle rain from heaven, falls upon the just and the unjust alike and so creates social climates of trust that affect the whole society.

There is also a bottom-up approach that argues for the compatible model. Glanville and Paxton (2007) call this ‘the psychological propensity model’. It argues that trust is a core personality characteristic, learned mainly in childhood in a safe and secure family environment, and intimately linked with other personality characteristics, especially a sense of control over life, a belief in interpersonal cooperation and a sunny and optimistic disposition (Erikson, 1950; Rosenberg, 1956; Allport, 1961; Uslaner, 1999, p. 238; 2002, pp. 79–86; see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache). Trusting personalities with this syndrome of dispositions are likely to express relatively high levels of trust of different kinds, because it is in their nature and by the same token the misanthropic personality is likely to express distrust across the board.

The proposition to be drawn from the compatible model, therefore, is that the three forms of trust will be positively correlated because their causes lie either in individual personality development or social and political institutions or both.

The Incompatible Model

The second theoretically conceived model is almost, but not quite, the reverse of the compatible model. In his influential study of a fictitious town in Southern Italy he called Montegrano, Banfield (1958) argued that the local culture of amoral familism entailed trust in the family and automatic distrust of all others, including politicians who are presumed to be corrupt and self-interested. Similarly, there is a strong school of sociological and anthropological thought treating particular trust, also known as thick trust, as a characteristic of primary and face-to-face relations between people who know each other well and interact on a regular basis (Gambetta, 1988). It is most likely to be found in small, rural and isolated communities of which Banfield’s Montegrano was a prime example.

Despite the lack of substantiated empirical evidence, the incompatible model has a *prima facie* plausibility. The authors of *The Authoritarian Personality* (Adorno et al., 1950) found that those with strong in-group identities were distrusting of out-group members; nationalism is often (not always) associated with chauvinism; tribal and ethnic conflict is common; the code of honour known as *omertà* is based on deep-rooted in-group trust and out-group distrust, and, paradoxically, there is often more distrust between political factions and religious sects that are most like each other than between those that are most unlike. This is anecdotal evidence but there is little theory or evidence to tell us how particular trust is extended or converted to a general form, which leaves a hole in the theory claiming that these two are closely connected and mutually reinforcing.

The empirical implications of the incompatible model are that there will be a negative correlation between particular and general social trust because they are mutually exclusive and because anthropology, psychology and anecdotal evidence suggest that particular trust is often combined with general social *distrust*. The model also proposes that particular social trust will tend to be high and general trust low in small, isolated and rural

areas, compared with large and developed societies, where particular trust will be low but general trust high. And insofar as particular trust is thought to be part and parcel of a misanthropic, uncooperative and pessimistic outlook, it will go hand in hand with political *distrust*. Hence those with strong particular trust will be short on general social trust and political trust.

The Conditional Model

The third model of trust suggests that there is no necessary compatibility or incompatibility between particular and general social trust, and that the two may be positively associated with each other and political trust in some cases but not in others. In other words, the associations between different kinds of trust or distrust are conditioned by circumstances in which they are found. There are three reasons for advancing this possibility, one logical and two empirical. The logical argument is simple: there is no necessary incompatibility between particular and general trust because those who trust generally must necessarily trust particular others as well. The reverse is not true, however: to trust particular others does not automatically entail trusting or distrusting people in general. Therefore, those with general trust must also have particular trust, but those with particular trust do not necessarily have general trust.

The second argument for the conditional model is drawn from social psychology. For some time it has been assumed, at least implicitly, that in-group identity is necessarily associated with out-group hostility (cf. Brewer, 1999, p. 430), which supports the incompatible model, but recent work shows that in-group attachment may also be independent of attitudes towards out-groups and does not, therefore, preclude or exclude general trust in out-groups (Yamagishi et al., 1998; Brewer, 1999, 2007; Voci, 2006).

A third argument concerns the wider cultural and institutional context in which trust and distrust are expressed. It argues that trust is not a unitary or general phenomenon that is automatically bestowed on different people or in different circumstances. It depends upon the specific others and particular circumstances (Cohen, 1999, p. 221). The evidence suggests that general social trust and political trust tend to be higher in established democracies with low levels of corruption and inequality, Protestant traditions, a strong rule of law and universal social services (Freitag, 2003a; Rothstein and Stolle, 2003; Delhey and Newton, 2005; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; Newton and Zmerli, 2011). Non-democratic countries, on the other hand, usually have low levels of political and general social trust and are dependent on high levels of very particular social trust. As Rose (1994, p. 29) puts it, East Europeans under communist rule 'know who they can trust and trust who they know'. We expect political trust to be low in authoritarian and totalitarian societies, and are not surprised to find that it is high in democratic ones (see also Chapter 26 by Závecz on post-communist countries and Chapter 28 by Park on Asian societies). And we expect general social trust to be low in political systems where spies, informers, corruption and arbitrary power is the norm, and are not surprised to find that it is generally high in democratic societies run according to the rule of law and impartial policing, legal and bureaucratic systems.

According to the conditional model, therefore, we should expect all individuals with general trust to express particular trust, but the reverse is not necessarily true. At the societal level the model suggests that citizens in open, democratic and egalitarian societies

with impartial institutions operating within the rule of law, will combine all three forms of trust, while in non-democratic societies low political and general social trust will not necessarily preclude high levels of restricted particular social trust that are necessary to get by in everyday life. According to this model there is no reason to believe that particular social trust will be low in developed societies and democracies and no reason to believe that general trust will be high in small, rural and isolated societies.

In the same vein, we can also make assumptions about the expected trust hierarchies. We believe that general social trust rests on the existence of solid particular trust relationships. By the same token, trust in impartial institutions, such as the legal system, police or the civil service, lays the foundation for trust in representative political institutions such as parliament, government or political parties.

Empirical analysis of the WVS 2005–09 data supports these expectations. First, the results suggest that the conditional model is the most suitable one and second, they show that both social and political trust are, indeed, hierarchically structured (Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Zmerli and Newton, 2011). The following analysis in this chapter replicates these findings with the latest WVS 2010–14 data and inspects the distribution, dimensionality and hierarchy of political and social trust. Given a different set of countries and a different set of economic and political circumstances we may uncover different results but, in addition, the present analysis explores the data in two further ways. It examines differences in trust levels among different groups and strata within countries and it takes a closer look at countries that deviate from the general cross-national pattern.

DATA, CASES AND METHODS

Data

The WVS of 2010–14 repeated a set of six questions about social trust and six questions about political trust that had previously been asked in the WVS 2005–09 wave. The most recent wave provides the data for the subsequent analyses.

The corresponding social trust question wordings are as follows:

I'd like to ask you how much you trust people from various groups. Could you tell me for each whether you trust people from this group completely (4), somewhat (3), not very much (2) or not at all (1)?¹
 Your family
 Your neighbourhood
 People you know personally
 People you meet for the first time
 People of another religion
 People of another nationality.

The first three items deal with forms of particular trust involving known others with whom respondents have close ties (family and those they know personally) or who live in their neighbourhood. The last three questions cover general trust in people who are either unknown personally or not members of the same social group.

These six forms can be distributed along a single radius of trust from the most

particular to the most general. Trust in the family is the narrowest and most particular, followed by people known personally, and then by others in the neighbourhood. People of other religions and nationalities are more general, although the assumption is that something (perhaps quite a lot) may be known or believed about them. People met for the first time, about whom nothing may be known, lie at the most general point on the radius and entail the highest degree of risk. We also explore whether the different types of trust form a hierarchy, in the sense that one is founded upon another in the same way that each stone in a pyramid rests upon the stones below it.

The WVS 2010–14 asks the same question about political trust in a set of six political and governmental institutions as follows:

I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: Is it a great deal of confidence (4), quite a lot of confidence (3), not very much confidence (2) or none at all (1)?²

The police
 The courts
 The government (in your nation's capital)
 Political parties
 Parliament
 The civil service.

As confirmed by Marien in Chapter 6 (see also Marien, 2011), these questionnaire items usually load on *one* latent dimension. Therefore, while it may be theoretically useful to distinguish between impartial public institutions, such as police and the justice system, and political institutions such as parliament, political parties and governments, these are strongly linked in the minds of citizens (for a theoretical discussion of the usefulness of conceptual distinctions see also Chapter 3 by Warren). Nevertheless, this says nothing about possible *hierarchical* patterns of political trust.

Case Selection

Since this chapter is concerned with both political and social trust, it selects from the WVS 2010–14 a set of countries with the highest democratic scores in the Polity IV Project: Political Regime Characteristics and Transitions, 1800–2013. Problems of validity and reliability arising from measuring political trust in authoritarian regimes are outlined elsewhere in this Handbook (see Chapter 4 by Rivetti and Cavatorta, Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson, and Chapter 28 by Park). We therefore refrain from analysing survey responses to questions about political trust in non-democratic countries, where, apart from anything else, the absence of freedom of speech makes it difficult to give honest answers, perhaps even to make informed judgements about the state of democracy in their country.

Combining the highest Polity IV democracy scores of 8, 9 and 10 and the WVS 2010–14 data on trust produces a list of 23 democratic countries distributed across Europe, Asia, Africa, Oceania, and North and South America (see note 3 and Electronic Appendix Table A7.1).³ The 23 selected democracies comprise 35 042 respondents aged 18 or older. Since the purpose of the present study is to generalize as broadly as possible about the populations of modern democratic states, we pool the individual data in order to examine

patterns in all modern democracies. Subsequently, we carry out similar analyses by countries and on subgroups of populations (for further details on analyses by countries see Table 7.4 below and on analyses by subgroups see Electronic Appendix Tables A7.9 to A7.28).⁴

Hierarchical Latent Dimensions: Mokken Scale Analysis

The task of the next section of this chapter is to establish the distribution of the three kinds of trust in the 23 democracies before going on to test the three theoretical models. Is there an underlying latent pattern to responses to the six social and the six political trust questions or are these distinct forms of trust? In other words, do different forms of social and political trust lie on the same radius from particular to general, or are they distinctive and unrelated? And are the trust items ordered in an invariantly hierarchical manner?

Mokken scale analysis shows whether a set of measures loads on a single, latent dimension. It also orders the measures in terms of their positions in a hierarchy so that more difficult items will include easier ones in such a way as to form a set of nested variables. This is particularly useful for present purposes because it ranks items from the most to the least common and thereby allows us to explore which variables may be causally prior to others. It is similar to Guttman scaling, but whereas Guttman scales are deterministic, Mokken scales have a probabilistic basis, that is, for random errors. The robustness of the hierarchical item scaling is examined by testing the monotonicity as well as the non-intersectionality of these items, as addressed below.

In Mokken scale analysis, reproducibility is measured by Loevinger's coefficient H_i for each item i , and H for the entire scale. The calculation of H_i and H compares the probability of errors in ranking with the probability of such a ranking occurring among unrelated items. H_i and H values range from 0 to 1. H scores of 0.30 to 0.39 indicate weak scales, 0.40 to 0.49 are of medium strength, and 0.50 and more are strong (Van Schuur, 2003).

The items of each resulting scale are then tested for monotonicity, that is, the necessary precondition that 'the probability of answering positively to an item step is a non-decreasing function of the latent trait value' (Molenaar et al., 2000, p. 66). In practical terms, the likelihood to dominate each particular item (i.e., to trust each particular object) should never decrease with higher values on the underlying trust dimension. The corresponding Mokken test procedure calculates a diagnostic *Crit value* for each item based on the combined results on its H_i , its frequency, as well as the size and significance of its violation of monotonicity. For our analysis, a *Crit value* exceeding 80 indicates a serious violation (*ibid.*).

Testing for non-intersectionality of item step response functions (ISRFs) investigates whether the hierarchy of the 12 trust items (i.e., the ranking of the trust items by the share of respondents that trust each of the 12 objects) is more or less the same at all positions of the underlying trust dimension (i.e., similar for high and low trusters). This is called an invariant item ordering (*ibid.*, p. 7). In a doubly monotone item set, the monotonically non-decreasing ISRF, or trace lines, do not intersect (*ibid.*, p. 18).⁵ However, violations of non-intersectionality, that is, intersecting trace lines, do *not* constitute a violation of Mokken scaling's core assumptions. Several test procedures have been developed which yield *Crit values* similar to the monotonicity diagnostic value where values exceeding 80 indicate serious violations. Besides, one common pro-

cedure inspects the items' P^{++} matrix (or $P^{- -}$ matrix for that matter), which will also be considered subsequently.⁶

THE DISTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL TRUST AMONG DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES

Table 7.1 shows how the 12 forms of social and political trust are distributed in society. Those who claim that everyone must trust someone are correct. The figures show that for most people this is trust in the family, which is virtually universal among the 35 042 individuals in the 23 democratic nations (97 per cent).⁷ This means that the most particular form of social trust is also the most widespread. Other forms of social trust are then less widespread as they move out on the trust radius from people known personally and neighbours to people of different religions and nationality, and finally to those met for the first time. The more specific the form of social trust, the more widespread it is likely to be, and vice versa.⁸

The logic of political trust is not the same but there is a pronounced difference between the comparatively impartial public institutions of police and the justice system (which are trusted the most) and political institutions of government, parliament and political parties (which are trusted less). It is noticeable, however, that the civil service, which is supposed to be an impartial institution, is deemed trustworthy only by a minority of people. The figures in Table 7.1 also show that particular trust is widespread in the 23 advanced democracies. Even the least widespread form, trust in neighbours, is expressed by 67 per cent of the populations.

With a few exceptions (e.g., particular trust in India), we find similar patterns of trust

Table 7.1 Distribution of social and political trust (%)

	%	N
Family members	96.6	34 291
People known personally	77.5	34 014
Neighbours	67.3	33 829
Other religion	46.9	31 487
Other nationality	43.9	31 527
People met for the first time	25.2	33 390
Police	58.1	33 902
Courts	50.1	33 368
Civil service	41.4	32 990
Government	38.2	33 627
Parliament	32.1	33 248
Political parties	22.3	33 368

Notes:

All descriptive tables in this chapter are based on equilibrated data in which N = 1500.

The percentages depicted here are based on respondents who score 3 or 4 on the trust rating scale.

Source: World Values Survey (2010–14).

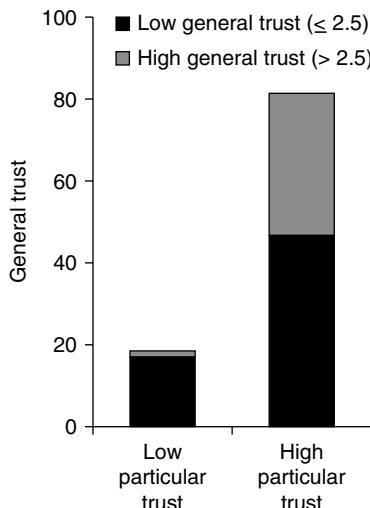


Figure 7.1 Distribution of particular and general social trust (bars add up to 100%)

item *rankings* in all 23 democratic countries. Notwithstanding, the distributions of the different types of trust can vary substantially between countries. For example, nearly 60 per cent of Swedes are trusting of unknown others while less than 10 per cent express a similar trusting attitude in Cyprus, Peru, Romania or Slovenia (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.3). Similarly, the police are trusted by more than 84 per cent of Australians but only a quarter of Argentinians (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.4).

To uncover the nature of the relationship between the two forms of social trust and between social and political trust we turn to the next stage of the analysis – simple cross-tabulations between the three types of trust shown in Figure 7.1 and Table 7.2. For this purpose, we construct three trust indices that comprise trust in people known personally and trust in neighbours into an index of particular trust, trust in people of a different religion or of a different nationality and in people who are unknown into an index of general trust and the six political trust items into an index of political trust. These show the following main findings:

- High particular trust is very widespread (82 per cent) in stable democracies, but different combinations of high and low particular and general social trust are not uncommon either.⁹ Nearly half the population expresses high particular trust but low general trust (47 per cent) and 35 per cent combine high particular and general trust, while 17 per cent are not particularly trusting in either category (Figure 7.1).
- Almost all (92 per cent) of those with low particular trust also have low general trust but almost half (43 per cent) of those with high particular trust also have high general trust.
- Virtually all of those with high general trust also have high particular trust (96 per cent) but only 27 per cent of those with low general trust also have low particular trust.

Table 7.2 Cross-tabulations of particular social trust, general social trust and political trust (%)

		Particular Trust		General Trust		Political Trust	
		Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
Particular Trust	Low			26.7	4.2	24.1	10.5
	High			73.3	95.8	75.9	89.5
General Trust	Low	91.7	57.4			70.7	53.9
	High	8.3	42.6			29.3	46.1
Political Trust	Low	75.4	52.8	64.0	45.2		
	High	24.6	47.2	36.0	54.8		
N		6410/ 6429	27722/ 28091	21507/ 21374	12625/ 12569	19674/ 19362	14846/ 14581

Notes:

Low trust = 2.5 and less on the index score.

High trust = 2.6 or more on the index score.

Source: World Values Survey (2010–14).

The same asymmetrical relations appear when social and political trust are cross-tabulated:

- Because particular trust is almost universal in democratic societies it makes very little difference to the distribution of political trust in the cross-tabulations, with 90 per cent of politically trusting people also expressing particular social trust (Table 7.2). In contrast, 25 per cent of people with low particular trust express politically trusting attitudes.
- More than two-thirds of those with low political trust also have low general social trust (71 per cent) and nearly half (46 per cent) of those with high political trust also express high general trust. It seems that general social trust is an important concomitant of political trust. Even so, it should be noted that 54 per cent of the politically trusting do *not* express general social trust.
- Amongst the generally socially trusting, however, 55 per cent also indicate some extent of political trust. One cautious causal interpretation of these distributions suggests that political trust may be more important to build general trust than vice versa.

In sum, these figures suggest that trust is not a general personality trait, as the compatible model suggests, and nor are different types of social trust mutually exclusive, as the incompatible model claims. Individuals mix different combinations of high and low social and political trust, choosing between objects of trust and making distinctions between them according to social and political criteria (but see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache). This is consistent with the conditional model of trust as a case of X trusting Y to do Z. But whereas this model could imply that everyone is different with unique combinations of Xs, Ys and Zs, the evidence about the 35 000 citizens of established democracies

suggests that there are clear social patterns involving graded differences between objects of trust and distrust. The figures also demonstrate the asymmetrical nature of the three forms of trust – if X then Y, but if Y then not necessarily X. It seems that particular social trust is a necessary condition for general and political trust. Similarly, political trust may be a facilitator of general trust but in this case the reverse may also hold true.

Although the cross-tabulations demonstrate an asymmetrical overlap between the three forms of trust, they do not demonstrate a *hierarchical* relationship between them. To gain more insight, we now turn to Mokken scale analysis of the WVS 2010–14 survey data for the 35 000 individuals in the selected 23 developed democracies.

MOKKEN SCALE ANALYSIS

Mokken Scale Analysis Based on Pooled Data

First, we test empirically the existence of a *single* trust scale for all 12 trust items, theoretically derived from the compatible model. We do so by carrying out a confirmatory Mokken scale analysis, fixing it on one scale (for further details see Electronic Appendix Table A7.5).¹⁰

Although the empirical evidence reveals *one* latent scale for all 12 trust items, the scale's H value is weak (0.35). Likewise, only one out of 12 trust items scores above 0.40, which is the threshold value for medium strong scales (i.e., trust in parliament, $H_i = 0.41$). Inspecting the H values by item pairs (H_{ij}) confirms this empirical evidence and strongly suggests that the compatible model should be rejected (see Electronic Appendix Table A7.6). A similarly weak H scale value (0.37) is attained when we drop the 'trust in family members' item as the single item with an H_i value below 0.30 ($H_i = 0.14$).

We now proceed in an *exploratory* manner. By choosing the Mokken 'Search' procedure, we do not impose any previously fixed number of scales but let the Mokken scale analysis identify the methodologically most appropriate number of hierarchical scales.

Table 7.3 shows that the 12 trust items derived from the WVS 2010–14 data produce *two* strong trust scales, one for political trust and the other for social trust, with H scores of 0.57 and 0.52 respectively (based on the pooled data). This is strong support for the conclusion that political and social trust can methodologically most appropriately be interpreted as two distinct dimensions of trust, albeit overlapping ones, as the cross-tabulations have already suggested (Table 7.2). However, there is one major exception to this general rule. Family trust does not reach the $H_i = 0.30$ level of relevance necessary for Mokken scaling (trust in family members, $H_i = 0.19$). This is because family trust is virtually universal (97 per cent, see Table 7.1), deviations of family trust tend to be idiosyncratic, and the measure, therefore, does not contribute to the latent hierarchical scale.

The other five social trust measures are organized in hierarchical order from particular to general with trust in known others at the core. Trust in neighbours, in people of another religion, of another nationality and in people one meets for the first time are progressively less pronounced in the general population and hence come lower down the hierarchical ordering. In more figurative terms, the hierarchy of social trust variables can be seen as a set of nested variables or Chinese boxes, one inside the other. Trust in the family is the

Table 7.3 Mokken scale analysis, 12 trust items, pooled data (H_i and H scale coefficients and means), 'Search' procedure (exploratory)

	Political Trust Scale		Social Trust Scale	
	H_i (Z scores)	Mean (Rank)	H_i (Z scores)	Mean (Rank)
Police	0.51 (168.76)	2.59 (1)		
Courts	0.57 (191.54)	2.52 (2)		
Civil service	0.55 (185.62)	2.33 (3)		
Government	0.59 (200.53)	2.28 (4)		
Parliament	0.62 (207.93)	2.16 (5)		
Political parties	0.59 (190.02)	1.99 (6)		
Family members			0.19 (50.89)*	3.74 (1)
People known			0.47 (136.06)	2.93 (2)
Neighbours			0.45 (129.40)	2.75 (3)
Other religion			0.56 (163.48)	2.38 (4)
Other nationality			0.57 (167.58)	2.31 (5)
Unknown people			0.54 (156.08)	2.02 (6)
<i>H</i> scale	0.57 (330.13)		0.52 (238.33)	

Notes:

N = 28930.

* H_i for 'trust in family members' is too low and therefore excluded from the social trust scale in subsequent analyses.

Source: World Values Survey (2010–14).

largest box and includes the largest section of the population. Inside that box are known others, then neighbours and so on. This suggests that almost all those who trust known others also trust their family, but not vice versa, and so on until the smallest box in the middle that contains trust in unknown others.

The tests for monotonicity and non-intersectionality of the social trust scale yield some ambiguous results though. While no *Crit values* of 80 or more can be found running the monotonicity check, the non-intersectionality tests suggest that trust in unknown people and trust in neighbours critically violate the corresponding underlying assumption (see also Electronic Appendix Table A7.8 for the check of the P^{++} matrix).

By the same token, all six political trust items clearly meet Mokken scaling requirements, with trust in the police and courts as the most widespread, followed, in order, by trust in the civil service, government, national parliament and political parties. This suggests that trust in impartial institutions such as the police and the justice system, which are mainly responsible for ensuring trustworthy behaviour on the part of citizens and politicians, are a necessary, albeit not sufficient, foundation on which trust in the institutions of representative democracy can be built.

Yet, as with social trust, testing the underlying model assumptions yields somewhat ambiguous findings. The monotonicity requirement is met by all items of political trust. The two procedures selected for testing the non-intersectionality assumption, however, support slightly deviating interpretations. While the check of the P^{++} matrix

(see Electronic Appendix Table A7.7) points to noteworthy violations of the ‘trust in the police’ item, the rest-score test procedure does not support a similar conclusion.

At this point, the results of the cross-tabulations and the Mokken scales can be combined. The cross-tabulations show that political and social trust are different but asymmetrically overlapping variables. The Mokken scales show that political and social trust are best understood as related but distinct scales and that each is hierarchically ordered. Consequently, particular social trust seems to be the basis on which general social trust can be built, but the particular form is a necessary, not sufficient, foundation of the general form. Similarly, trust in impartial public institutions is a necessary, not sufficient, foundation for trust in the political institutions of representative democracy. Moreover, political trust may facilitate the development of general social trust rather than vice versa.

In sum, this is not consistent with either the compatible or incompatible model. The compatible model predicts a large overlap of all forms of trust and thus a common trust factor rather than a hierarchical order, while the incompatible model predicts no such overlap between particular social trust and either general social trust or political trust, and separate latent dimensions of particular and general social trust. The conditional model alone suggests an asymmetrical overlap and different hierarchical scales for political and social trust.

These conclusions are based on pooled data of 35 000 individuals in 23 established democracies. To be sure that this does not produce false or misleading results and false patterns, the same Mokken scaling procedures were carried out on each country separately and also on subsamples of the 23-nation pooled data according to a set of objective and subjective independent variables that have often been found to be statistically associated with individual levels of trust. The main aim is to inspect whether all categories of the selected independent variables depict trust dimensions and hierarchies similar to the ones identified for the pooled data. The objective measures are age, education, gender, income, social class, employment status and membership of voluntary associations. The subjective measures are happiness in life, political interest, and materialist vs postmaterialist values.

Mokken Scale Analyses by Countries

For all subsequent Mokken scale analyses the strong two-scale solution of social and political trust was tested. Therefore, the confirmatory ‘Test’ procedure with two fixed scales was applied.

As detailed in Table 7.4, similar Mokken scaling results, including the tests for monotonicity and non-intersectionality, can be replicated for country levels of social and political trust. However, some countries deviate from the general pattern of pooled data for all countries. One notable exception is India where neither the confirmatory nor the exploratory Mokken analysis detects a social trust scale. Instead, the Indian findings reveal an unusual distribution of the three items of particular social trust. By international standards a larger proportion of the Indian population expresses distrust in their family (more than 10 per cent), while around 75 per cent trust their neighbours but only 60 per cent put trust in people they know personally (see Electronic Appendix Table 7.3).

The item hierarchy of the political trust scales, on the other hand, shows a larger degree of variation among all the countries. Although in many cases, trust in impartial institutions precedes trust in government, parliament and political parties, there are nevertheless noteworthy exceptions, as for example in Argentina, Mexico or Uruguay

Table 7.4 Mokken scale analysis, 12 trust items, by country (*Rankings and H scale coefficients*), 'Test' procedure (confirmatory)

	Friends	Neigh-bours	Religion	Nation-ality	First Time	H Scale	N	Police	Courts	Civil Service	Parlia-ment	Government	Political Parties	H Scale	N
Argentina	1	2	3	4	5	0.47	904	3	4	5	2	1	6	0.51	953
Australia	1	2	4	3	5	0.57	1367	**	1	2	3	4	5	0.58	1408
Brazil	1	3	2	4	5	0.42	1382	3	1	2	5	4	6	0.50	1429
Chile	1	2	3	4	5	0.59	829	1	4	2	5	3	6	0.55	938
Taiwan	1	2	3	4	5	0.47	1112	1	3	2	5	4	6	0.60	1095
Cyprus	1	**	3	2	4	0.39	917	2	1	3	4	5	6	0.57	958
Estonia	1	2	4	3	5	0.49	1300	1	3	2	5	4	6	0.58	1411
Germany	1	2	4	3	5	0.48	1803	1	2	3	5	4	6	0.55	1882
India*	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	**	**	3	**	0.32	1574
Japan	1	2	5	3	4	0.54	1254	2	1	3	5	4	6	0.65	1922
South Korea	1	2	3	4	5	0.48	1186	2	1	3	5	4	6	0.65	1190
Mexico	1	2	3	4	5	0.46	1980	3	2	6	4	1	5	0.55	1947
Netherlands	1	2	3	4	5	0.54	1523	2	1	3	4	5	6	0.65	1701
Peru	1	2	3	4	5	0.47	1103	1	3	4	5	2	6	0.59	1157
Philippines	1	2	3	4	5	0.38	1193	2	1	3	4	5	6	0.52	1194
Poland	1	2	3	4	5	0.55	698	1	2	3	5	4	6	0.61	800
Romania	1	2	3	4	5	0.49	1301	1	2	3	5	4	6	0.59	1349
Slovenia	1	2	4	3	5	0.44	978	1	2	3	5	4	6	0.62	990
South Africa	2	1	3	4	5	0.52	3251	3	1	5	4	2	6	0.61	3235
Spain	1	2	4	3	5	0.50	1020	1	2	3	4	5	6	0.48	1083
Sweden	1	2	4	3	5	0.56	1078	2	1	5	3	5	6	0.58	958
United States	1	2	3	4	5	0.59	2155	1	2	3	5	4	6	0.58	2214
Uruguay	2	1	4	3	5	0.62	800	2	3	6	4	1	5	0.50	827
<i>Pooled</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>0.52</i>	<i>28930</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>0.57</i>	<i>28930</i>

Note: * In India, no social trust scale emerged; ** dropped due to low H_i .

Source: World Values Survey (2010–14).

(Table 7.4). The subsequent tests reveal indeed that the problem of non-intersectionality is mostly violated by the ‘trust in the police’ item. Furthermore, the Indian data produce once again no meaningful results based on the confirmatory scale analysis. Only an exploratory approach yields a one-scale solution comprising trust in courts, the police and government.

Mokken Scale Analyses by Population Subgroups

We now test whether the trust scales can be replicated amongst different groups according to age, education, income, social class, employment status, amongst men and women, and members and non-members of voluntary associations. In addition, we inspect different groups of subjective measures, such as happiness, political interest, and materialists vs postmaterialists.

The tables for all these confirmatory analyses (using the Mokken ‘Test’ procedure on the two-scale solution) are not reproduced here partly because each one conforms in almost all respects to the patterns of the pooled data as shown in Table 7.3 and partly because there is a huge volume of tables (but see Electronic Appendix Tables A7.9 to A7.28 for detailed information). The only noteworthy difference from the pooled data results is the test of non-intersectionality for the social trust items which often come close to the diagnostic *Crit value* of 80.¹¹

Three main conclusions emerge from the evidence. First, the subset analysis produces two distinct scales in every case, one for social and the other for political trust. Second, in all cases the political trust hierarchies order in the same way as in Table 7.3, with the most widely distributed (trust in the police and the legal system) to the least (trust in parliament and political parties). And third, in all cases the hierarchy of social trust variables is ranked in the same way as in Table 7.3, from the most specific (people known personally) to the most general (people met for the first time).

CONCLUSION

Some conclusions emerge with ever more clarity from this analysis of the World Values Survey data on trust among 35 000 respondents in 23 democratically developed countries. Contrary to the theories arguing that particular trust is a strong feature of small, face-to-face and isolated communities and of rural and developing societies, different forms of this kind of trust are widely found in all countries. Nor is particular trust incompatible with general social trust. This strongly suggests that the particular is a necessary but not sufficient cause of the general.

Political trust does not seem to follow the same strict logic, but it seems that trust in the police and the legal system – institutions that are supposed to maintain the trustworthiness of politicians and citizens alike – may be a foundation on which the less widespread trust in the institution of government and politics are built. These findings lend strong support for the major importance of the rule of law as a necessary condition for the viability of democratic societies.

Furthermore, the analyses reveal the asymmetrical nature of the relationships between political trust and general social trust. More than two-thirds of those with low political

trust also have low general trust, but nearly half of those with high political trust also have high general trust. This suggests that while general social trust is not a necessary condition for political trust it may be something that helps. Similar if not even more intriguing evidence, however, is also found for political trust as a facilitator of general social trust.

Mokken scale analysis provided evidence that social and political trust are best conceptualized as constituting *two* separate scales with a robust hierarchical ordering of items. A one-scale solution for all 12 trust items could also be detected but was statistically weaker than the two-scales solution. By the same token, the Mokken scale analyses of subgroups in the populations of advanced democracies also display clear patterns of trust. In almost all cases, Mokken scaling of these subgroups reveals two strong scales – social and political – and in almost all cases it shows the same hierarchies, starting with confidence in the police and the legal system and narrowing down to parliament and political parties on the political trust scale, and starting with trust in known others and narrowing down to trust in unknown others in the case of social trust. Considering that these findings are based upon 35 000 individuals in 23 countries, the uniformity of the results across countries and across subgroups of their populations is remarkable and lends strong support to the previous research findings by the two authors.

Thus, the combined evidence of cross-tabulations and Mokken scale analyses suggests that the conditional model of trust best fits the evidence we have. Unlike the compatible model, trust is not a core personality syndrome and individuals high on one measure cannot be expected to be high on others. People combine different forms of trust in different ways although particular social trust seems to be a necessary precondition for general social trust and political trust while the causal relationship between general and political trust is less clear and could go either or both ways. Nor does the data fit the incompatible model. On the contrary, most of those with high general trust also have high particular trust, though the reverse is not true. Similarly, many of those with high political trust also have high general trust, though the reverse is also true. As the conditional model predicts, high levels of particular social trust are also found in developed democracies.

In a nutshell, in developed democracies, the institutions that enforce trustworthy behaviour, encompassing the rule of law, democratic government and egalitarian social policies, combine to create conditions that favour political trust and particular and general social trust. This suggests an important top-down role for institutions and systems of government, but it does not deny individual variations driven by personality factors and life experiences.

We should end with some comments about what this analysis has not and cannot tell us about trust. Because of our interest in political trust we have selected the most advanced democracies in the world according to Polity IV scores, which means that we have not conducted a global comparative study and can say nothing about the non-democratic and developing world. Mokken scale analysis shows a hierarchy of variables that, in turn, suggests a set of necessary causes as one moves up the scale, but it says nothing about the causes themselves or why some, but not all, with particular social trust express general social trust or why some, but not all, with general social trust also express political trust. Previous analyses based on WVS 2005–09 data suggest, however, that material as well as non-material resources may be associated with the development of general social and political trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2011). Moreover, this analysis tells us nothing

about how societies move from low to higher levels of trust and which countries find this bootstraps operation easier than others.

There are still many unanswered questions and many trust puzzles. But whereas trust research seemed to be heading down a blind alley 10 or 15 years ago, it now seems that fresh life has been breathed into it by uncovering associations between and hierarchies among objects of political and social trust.

NOTES

1. Original coding of answers was reversed.
2. Original coding was reversed.
3. The selected countries are Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, India, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Taiwan, United States and Uruguay.
4. For the operationalization of subgroups see Electronic Appendix Table A7.2.
5. A doubly monotone item set satisfies the assumptions of unidimensional measurement, local independence, monotonicity, and non-intersection (Molenaar et al., 2000, p. 8).
6. If the model of double monotonicity holds, rows and columns should be non-decreasing for $P(+,+)$ and non-increasing for $P(-,-)$ (Molenaar et al., 2000, p. 84).
7. The case number is based on weighted data that show no missing data on the 12 trust items. See also notes to Table 7.1.
8. It is important to note that since trust in the family is almost universal (96.6 per cent) it must be literally useless as a discriminator when run against other variables. This assumption is also confirmed by the subsequent Mokken scale analyses. Therefore, trust in family members has been excluded from all the cross-tabulations that follow, which use only trust in people known personally and in neighbours to measure particular trust.
9. If trust in family members is also included in the index of particular trust this figure would amount to 90 per cent.
10. Confirmatory Mokken scale analyses are carried out by applying the ‘Test’ procedure in MSPWin 5.
11. As mentioned before, however, violations of non-intersectionality, that is, intersecting trace lines, do *not* constitute a violation of Mokken scaling’s core assumptions.

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For the electronic appendix, see www.e-elgar.com/handbook-on-political-trust-companion-site.

8. Political trust in experimental designs

Rick K. Wilson and Catherine C. Eckel

INTRODUCTION

In her 1997 Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association, Elinor Ostrom pointed to the importance of trust for solving collective action problems and she called for laboratory experiments to tease out why trust could act as a mechanism for facilitating such solutions (1998). Around the same time the Russell Sage Foundation developed an initiative to study trust, focusing on its role in enabling and supporting a wide variety of relationships, from personal interactions to those involving economic exchange and business dealings. Several important publications came out of this initiative. Levi and Stoker (2000) reviewed the literature on trust and trustworthiness up to that point and called on the community to utilize experimental methods to address the strategic aspects of trust. Hardin (2002) elaborated on many of the issues of trust that had been ignored by the formal theory community. Finally the workshop and resulting volume edited by Ostrom and Walker (2003) brought together an array of scholars from many different disciplines to address different aspects of trust. These included not only social science theorists and experimentalists, but also evolutionary psychologists and animal behavior experts. While these efforts helped push the use of experiments to study trust, as Nannestad (2008) argued in part, the lessons learned were unclear. Our goal here is to illustrate how experiments are informing unresolved questions about political trust.

As every chapter in this Handbook notes, trust and trustworthiness are critical for understanding social behavior. Many see political trust as a necessary foundation for stable political institutions and for the formation of social capital and civic engagement (Putnam, 1993, 2000; Stolle, 1998). Others focus on the extent to which particular aspects of political institutions – such as transparency, appropriate levels of monitoring, and credible threats of sanctions – can foster political trust and cooperation (Arrow, 1974; Fenno, 1978; Bianco, 1994; Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Sztompka, 1999; Knight, 2001; Ostrom, 2003). Finally trust is seen as a social lubricant that reduces the cost of exchange, whether in reaching political compromise (Fenno, 1978; Bianco, 1994) or in daily market and non-market exchange interactions (Arrow, 1974). While political trust both affects and is affected by political institutions, the causal relationships between levels of trust and effectiveness of institutions have been difficult to disentangle from observational data. Increasingly, experiments, both in the lab and in the field, focus on the causal underpinnings of political trust.

Political scientists have long been concerned with the concept of political trust and its relation to political institutions. This tradition extends back to Almond and Verba (1963), who find a strong correlation between citizen trust levels and the existence of democratic institutions. Subsequent work has examined the nature and causal direction of this relationship using non-experimental data. One difficulty in assessing research in this area is that the concept of trust is not clear-cut, with different researchers addressing

or utilizing very different measures of trust. Like others in the Handbook we begin with Pippa Norris's (see also Chapter 2) nested dimensions of political support to provide focus for the concept of political trust. In particular, we show how experiments lead to greater understanding of public confidence in institutional principles, political institutions, and office-holders. Each is addressed through the discussion of three different experimental designs: a survey experiment, a public goods experiment, and a trust experiment. We then turn to measurement issues that arise when focusing on behavior. Finally, we conclude with open questions about political trust that experiments can address.

THE ROLE OF EXPERIMENTS IN THE STUDY OF TRUST

Research using experimental methods is not a panacea for addressing all aspects of trust and trustworthiness: an experiment is merely one of the many methodological tools available to a researcher. An experiment involves two features: control by the experimenter and random assignment over the treatments. By necessity, to gain control over naturally occurring variation, the experimenter abstracts the setting in which the subject acts. The aim is to focus on a particular (predicted) relationship. The experimenter then randomly assigns subjects to a treatment in order to see if the predicted effect occurs in the presence of the treatment and disappears when the treatment is removed.

Experiments are especially valuable for addressing questions of causality and this is where they shine. Likewise, experiments are useful for exploring and pinpointing mechanisms that researchers think are critical for understanding complex social phenomena. In a different vein, sometimes multiple theories can be used to explain a given phenomenon. Experiments can be valuable in distinguishing between competing theories, allowing researchers to focus on those that are the most promising. Experiments need not always test theories – sometimes they can produce new facts that are valuable for theory building. Observing an unexpected relationship in the laboratory is eye-opening and often leads to new theoretical insights as well as additional experiments designed to test the new theory (and to confirm that the observation is not simply anomalous). Finally, the incentivized tasks developed for experiments are often then used as measures, and as we will demonstrate, canonical experiments can be valuable measurement tools.

Careful control, a focus on mechanism, and randomization allow experimenters to make specific causal claims. But, this 'internal validity' is achieved at a price. McDermott (2011) elaborates on the trade-offs between internal and external validity. When used in conjunction with other methods, social scientists can make clear causal claims that can be generalized to settings outside the lab, or outside a specific field context. Given the complex claims made about political trust, experiments have an important role to play in understanding the concept and its impact in a variety of specific settings.

THREE CANONICAL EXPERIMENTAL DESIGNS

In their survey of the literature Levi and Stoker (2000) lamented the fact that there were few laboratory experiments focused on political trust. A huge body of experimental work on trust has appeared since then. However, that research focuses on social trust

in dyads rather than trust by citizens toward political institutions (see the survey by Wilson and Eckel, 2011). With respect to political trust, little experimental work has surfaced. Sigelman et al. (1992) is an early example that uses an experiment to causally sort between trust in political institutions and partisanship. Substantial research, particularly in political psychology, focuses on the antecedents to political trust. This includes procedural fairness, competency, and performance. Grimes (see also Chapter 16) summarizes the empirical and experimental literature in this arena. Other exceptions include the laboratory experiments by Mutz and Reeves (2005), Ahn et al. (2008), Dal Bo et al. (2010), Boudreau (2012), and Grimmelikhuijsen (2012). What surprises us is the limited experimental work explicitly addressing the concept of political trust.

We focus on three types of experimental designs that have been used by trust researchers. These designs are not exhaustive, but each is chosen because it tackles a specific dimension of the trust relationship as elaborated by Norris (see also Chapter 2). We find these designs to be promising for future work and we focus on specific studies to highlight the promise of experiments for the study of political trust.

Design One: Survey Experiments

Increasingly, political scientists rely on survey experiments to test for attitude change, the effects of framing, or to use priming to clarify cognitive differences among subjects. As with all experiments, survey experiments involve the researcher designing treatments and randomly assigning respondents to the treatments. Typically, a survey experiment can involve larger samples of the population than are feasible with other types of experiments, and can be designed to allow for planned subgroup analysis. Also by using a large sample, many treatments can be simultaneously carried out. Mutz (2011) provides a very good overview of the advantages (and cautions) associated with survey experiments.

This type of experiment is likely to be most familiar to scholars studying attitudes about political trust, and therefore we take this as a natural starting point. A good deal of research has been devoted to understanding the correlation between citizen trust and political institutions. In this vein Hetherington and Kam (2013) provide a useful example of a survey experiment. Starting from a concern for the extent and impact of climate change, Hetherington and Kam ask whether cues from highly trusted governmental institutions can be used to change public opinion in the direction of greater support for climate change policy. In framing the question in this manner they engage Norris's (see also Chapter 2) fourth dimension of political trust: public confidence in political institutions. They propose a causal mechanism between trust in a government institution and attitudes held by citizens and then use an experiment to test for that mechanism.

Hetherington and Kam (2013) draw on a rich literature on public opinion change in political science, and argue that effective cue-givers are 'trusted, credible and liked.' Equally important they draw on the finding that people attend more carefully to 'counter-stereotypical' information (Rahn, 1993) – that is, information that contradicts their stereotype about the institution. Their key question is whether a 'trusted' source providing 'counter-stereotypical' information leads to a change in policy attitudes.

Measuring attitudinal change is difficult. The typical approach is to use a cross-section of the population, measure attitudes, collect covariates, and then estimate the effect of beliefs about organizations on attitudes, controlling for the covariates. A more rigorous

design, but one that is difficult to execute, is to use panel data employing repeated measures of key attitudes. Problematic, however, is that panel data are often collected far apart in time, and many factors may vary in that interval. Drawing an inference about any change in attitudes then relies on an assumption that intervening events have had no systematic, confounding effects. This is where an experiment shines. The researchers can manipulate both the source and type of information that respondents receive. With random assignment to treatments, differences in attitudes between the different treatments can be ascribed with confidence to the treatments.

Hetherington and Kam (2013) begin with data from the General Social Survey (GSS) indicating that the US military is the most liked and trusted American political institution. At the same time, it is not viewed as holding liberal views about the environment. Accordingly, they ask whether a strong environmental message originating from the US military can change public opinion about climate change. The military should be a useful cue-giver because it is trusted. Moreover, if the cues that it gives are counter-stereotypical, in that they contradict the belief that the military is not environmentally concerned, then it should be more effective in changing public opinion.

In their experiment Hetherington and Kam (2013) vary two factors. First is the source of information, which comes either from the federal government or from the military. The information statement common to both states that the organization (federal government or military) is turning to alternative (non-fossil) fuel sources for strategic and long-term cost reasons. Following the statement respondents are asked their views about whether global warming is an important problem.

The second factor in the experiment varies the information about the target of an appropriation to increase energy efficiency. The statement says that a \$2 billion appropriation will be given to the military or the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to increase energy efficiency. Respondents are then asked whether they agree or disagree with giving the appropriation to that entity. This generates a 2×2 factorial design in which the source of message (federal government or military) is manipulated and in which the target (military or EPA) is also manipulated. They find that counter-stereotypical endorsements have a very strong effect. Those who trust the military, but would not expect the military to be a strong supporter of environmental innovation, are the most persuaded to re-evaluate their views about climate change and appropriations. Not surprisingly the effects are largest for Republicans – a group that has high trust in the military, but is suspicious of environmental spending. Using a survey experiment, Hetherington and Kam have sufficient numbers of respondents to include these subgroup effects.¹

Survey experiments are increasingly used in order to isolate causal effects. Surprisingly only a handful of such experiments have been used to investigate trust in government (see, for example, Brooks and Geer, 2007; Jacobs and Matthews, 2012; Craig and Rippere, 2013). When using a survey experiment in the field, researchers are able to draw a causal inference with some external validity. For example, survey experiments are easy to carry out on a representative population sample. The major disadvantage with survey experiments in the field is that one loses the tight control that is afforded by the laboratory. Unlike in the laboratory some respondents may elect not to respond, leaving missing data that might be systematically tied to the treatment. This introduces potential selection bias into the inference. In addition, some respondents may not have been attentive to the treatment, thereby biasing downward the treatment effect. Despite potential pitfalls,

survey experiments are useful for testing conjectures about the trust relationship. One particularly thorny problem for observational studies has been to disentangle the causal effect of trust in political institutions. A survey experiment helps clarify the relationship.

Design Two: Public Goods Games

A second type of design typically takes place in the laboratory and relies on the canonical public goods game. In essence the game is an N-person prisoner's dilemma (PD) game, and is typically implemented in the laboratory using a voluntary contribution mechanism (VCM), where subjects voluntarily contribute to the provision of a public good. In its simplest form, each member of a group of N players must choose to allocate a fixed initial endowment either to a group account (a public good) or to a private fund (that is, 'defect' in PD language). Each unit invested in the public good produces a certain amount of the public good, and each person in the group receives the same return from this public good, which is called the marginal per capita return (MPCR). For concreteness, suppose that a unit allocated to the group account produces 0.5 units of the public good. Then each person in the group, whether she contributed or not, receives earnings of 0.5 units. The dominant strategy is to keep one's contribution while sharing in the contributions by others: this is equivalent to free riding.

In a one-shot version of the game, theory predicts that everyone will keep their endowment and no public good will be provided. In the repeated version of the game, where the same group interacts over several rounds, the incentives remain the same. This version of the VCM has the same set of subjects play ten or more rounds with feedback about group contributions in each round. No one is expected to contribute and everyone is expected to free ride. Scores of experiments show that between 40 and 60 percent of subjects contribute in the one-shot game (Dawes, 1980; Dawes et al., 1988). In the repeated version of the experiment contributions begin around the same rate in the first period and then decline toward zero as the experiment continues (Ledyard, 1995).

How does the structure of this game relate to trust? Orbell et al. (1984; Orbell and Dawes, 1993) conjectured that the choice of contributing was tied to beliefs about others in the group. These beliefs included the possibility of being taken for a sucker and the possibility that one could trust others to contribute. These latter beliefs are most closely related to *generalized* trust – whether those in the group can be trusted to contribute to the public good.²

Beginning with the idea that cooperation is a measure of who can be trusted, Strimling et al. (2013) tackle one of the quintessential questions in the trust literature: can institutions alter levels of trust? In framing the question in this manner they engage Norris's (see also Chapter 2) second dimension of political trust – whether there is support for the core institutional principles. Strimling et al. (2013) assert a causal direction: weak institutions will lower levels of generalized trust.

In their design, subjects first are randomly assigned to groups of four or five. Each is given an endowment of 10 in each of 20 periods, and they can choose to divide the amount between their private account and the group account in any way. Whatever is placed in the group account is multiplied by 1.6 (for groups of four) or 2.0 (for groups of five), and then divided evenly among all players in the group (thus the MPCR is 0.4). This standard VCM is played for six periods. Subjects are then sorted into two groups: those who contribute

more and those who contribute less than the median. As other research has shown, this effectively sorts individuals into two types – those who tend to be cooperative and those who tend to be uncooperative (Gunnthorsdottir et al., 2007). Blocking by type, subjects are then randomly assigned into one of two different institutions to again play the VCM.

In both institutions a smallest acceptable level of contribution to the common pool is exogenously imposed. At a personal cost, a subject can choose to monitor the contributions of another group member. Doing so means that another member of the group is randomly chosen and audited to see if that person complied with the minimum contribution rule. If a non-complier is found, then the monitor receives a reward, which exceeds her cost of monitoring, and that money is withdrawn from the common pool. The non-complier is assessed a fine. Two types of institutions are used: the ‘weak institution’ (their term) has a low acceptable level of contribution (1 unit) and a low fine (2 units). By comparison the ‘strong institution’ (their term) has a high acceptable level of contribution (8 units) and a high fine (9 units). Every third round the group can vote whether to alter the institution. They can vote to decrease by 1 unit the minimum acceptable level of contribution or fine; do nothing; or increase by 1 unit the minimum acceptable level of contribution or fine. Although the acceptable level of contribution is bounded by 0 and 9 (the latter to allow some monitoring), the level of the fine is unbounded at the upper end.

The key results are easy to see. First, those in the strong institution tend to retain that institution, even though they could have voted to make it less onerous. Second, there are differences between cooperative and uncooperative types. Among the former, most groups stay with the high acceptable level of contribution. Among the latter, a majority of the groups quickly moved to undermine the acceptable level of contribution, but then moved back to increasing the acceptable level. Third, those in a weak institution react differently. Cooperative types step up the acceptable level of contribution until the weak institution is now a strong institution. This is not the case for non-cooperative types. The weak institution does not give them insight into the gains that can be had from full cooperation and those groups do the worst in terms of payoffs.

With respect to fines, there are similar differences. In the strong institution, non-cooperative types decrease fines at first, and then raise them back to levels that are slightly higher than where they started. Cooperative types steadily increase the fines over the course of 20 rounds such that they go from 9 units to almost 12.5 units on average. In the weak institution, cooperative types steadily increase fines such that they are almost 8 units by period 20. This is not the case for the non-cooperative types in the weak institution. Again, these individuals simply cannot get the group to a socially efficient point.

Strimling et al. (2013) conclude that low-trust groups (non-cooperators) struggle in weak institutions. However, strong institutions can build trust for non-cooperators. This lends credence to claims made by others that political institutions can build trust in society. At the same time, it is clear that high-trust groups (cooperators) can cope with a variety of institutions. Those individuals are less vulnerable to weak institutions.

Here is an instance in which the careful design of an experiment allows researchers to investigate the causal direction between trust and institutions. It may be that contributions to the public goods game are weak proxies for generalized trust. Nonetheless the findings are intriguing for understanding the role that institutions play for increasing cooperation. Because the researchers manipulated the type of institution and the subjects were randomly assigned to the type of institution, the results are clear. Of course this is not

the last word on the effect of institutions on trust. For example, Bohnet et al. (2001) find that institutions designed to promote dyadic trust appear to ‘crowd out’ trust. It may be that the coercive elements of ‘strong institutions’ means that trust is unnecessary. If the institution perfectly monitors all citizens and perfectly enforces compliance, then what role does trust play? The effect of institutions on political trust remains an open, but important, research question.

Design Three: The Investment Game

The third experimental design is the trust game, also known as the investment game. This design is most closely aligned to the *particularistic* (dyadic) trust relationship (Hardin, 2002). Developed by Berg et al. (1995), the experiment involves a pair of individuals playing a sequential game in which both players receive an initial endowment. The first player, the trustor, can take any part of her endowment and send it to the second player, the trustee. Whatever is sent is tripled by the experimenter and given to the second player. The second player then decides how much, if anything, to return to the first player. Here the trustor has made herself vulnerable to the second player, trusting that the trustee will return something. What the first player sends is considered to be a measure of *trust*. What is returned is considered to be a measure of *trustworthiness*. A large number of studies have been carried out using this design; see the review by Wilson and Eckel (2011). The usual finding is that a substantial proportion of the population is willing to put their trust in others. As well, the level of trustworthiness is usually sufficiently high that it pays, on average, to trust the second mover.

We report on results from one of our own experiments. In doing so we engage Norris’s (see also Chapter 2) fifth dimension of political trust – confidence in office-holders. Rather than using the investment game as an experiment to test a specific treatment, we use it to *measure* the level of trust in government: we assess trust in public officials by citizens. Note that this is different from asking subjects about their attitudes toward public officials; instead we have a direct behavioral measure of political trust in which subjects risk a non-trivial amount of money by trusting a public official. We study two small towns in Texas that are matched on size, similarities in their economy, and similarities in their political structure, but varying in their risk from natural disasters. As part of the study we measure the levels of trust between citizens and public officials.³

Two prior studies have used public officials in experimental settings. This, of course, is difficult to do in the laboratory since public officials have constraints on their time. Enemark et al. (2013) use a group of local politicians in Zambia and Butler and Kousser (2015) use a sample of US state legislators. Both find that public officials are willing to trust one another (and in the latter case do so at higher rates than a comparable student sample). While these findings are interesting, they do not address the question of whether citizens trust public officials. In our study we play the dyadic trust game between citizens and public officials. In each community, a sample of individual citizens and a sample of local officials are recruited.⁴ The study is an example of a laboratory experiment in the field. It has characteristics of the laboratory (control by the experimenter), but targets non-students as subjects, and is carried out in settings that are convenient for the subjects.

Two variations of the trust game are discussed here.⁵ In the first game both first and second movers are citizens. In the second game the first mover is a citizen and the second

mover is a public official.⁶ Both players start with a \$30 endowment. The first mover chooses how much of his \$30 he would like to send to the other player. Unlike the standard trust game, subjects are told they can only send amounts in \$10 increments (\$0, \$10, \$20, \$30). Whatever is sent is tripled, and the second mover then decides how much, out of the tripled money plus her own original \$30, to return to the first player. For the second mover, any amount (including zero or her full budget) can be sent back to the first mover.

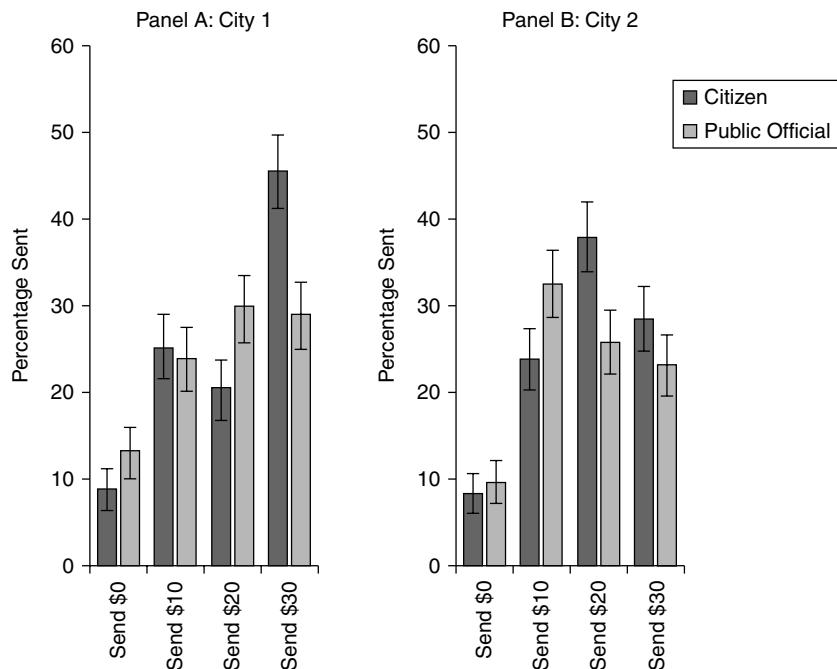
Prior to making a choice, subjects are told that they would be randomly assigned to be either a first mover or a second mover and that they will be randomly paired with another person in the room. Because no one knows the role they will play, they need to make a choice in both roles. If the game is selected for payment, subjects are randomly assigned to a role and randomly paired.

Subjects are then asked to make a decision as the first mover. We also asked subjects how much they expect to be returned from the second mover. Immediately following that decision, subjects are asked to make decisions as second movers. In this part of the experiment we use the ‘strategy method’, so for any combination of money that was sent (and tripled) subjects are asked how much they intend to return, thereby specifying their full strategy as a second mover. This meant that subjects had four boxes with \$30, \$60, \$90, and \$120 and they are asked, for whatever amount is sent and tripled, what they will return. Subjects are also asked how much they expect to be sent. Subjects receive no feedback about their counterpart’s choice until the end of the experiment.

The second game is almost identical to the first. The primary difference involves the roles of players. Citizens are told they will be first movers in this game and they need to decide how much of their \$30 endowment they wish to send to second movers. Public officials are assigned as second movers and both citizens and public officials are reminded that they will be matched with one another if the game is drawn. Otherwise all aspects of the second game are the same as the first.

Do citizens trust fellow citizens more than their public officials? The answer is yes. We use what was sent in the investment game to be a measure of trust. In game one the target of trust is another citizen while in the second game the target is a public official. Figure 8.1 plots the percentages sent for each of the possible categories. Because of differences between the two cities, Panels A and B separately represent the cities. Pooling all of the data, we note that the distributions are different – subjects tend to send less to the public officials (Wilcoxon signed-rank test, $z = 3.28, p < 0.001$). Both panels make this point. The percentage sending money to public officials shifts toward zero, indicating that fellow citizens are more trusted. A striking point about the figure is how few subjects sent nothing and how many subjects sent \$20 or \$30. In fact, in City 1, just over 45 percent sent their entire endowment to fellow citizens.

It may be that citizens had accurate expectations about their local public officials. We asked citizens, in their role as first mover, how much they expect to be reciprocated conditional on what they sent. They did this for both games. At the same time, we collected information about what subjects said they would return for each amount that could be sent to them (if they were assigned to be a second mover). We took the average expected by a citizen given what they sent and subtracted that from what individuals said they would return, on average, for that amount. So, in City 1, people who sent nothing (failed to trust) expected that the other player would return \$7.50. On average, citizens indicated that they would send back \$4.33. What is interesting is that these citizens are dipping into their own endowment to send something to their counterpart. Taking the same example, citizens



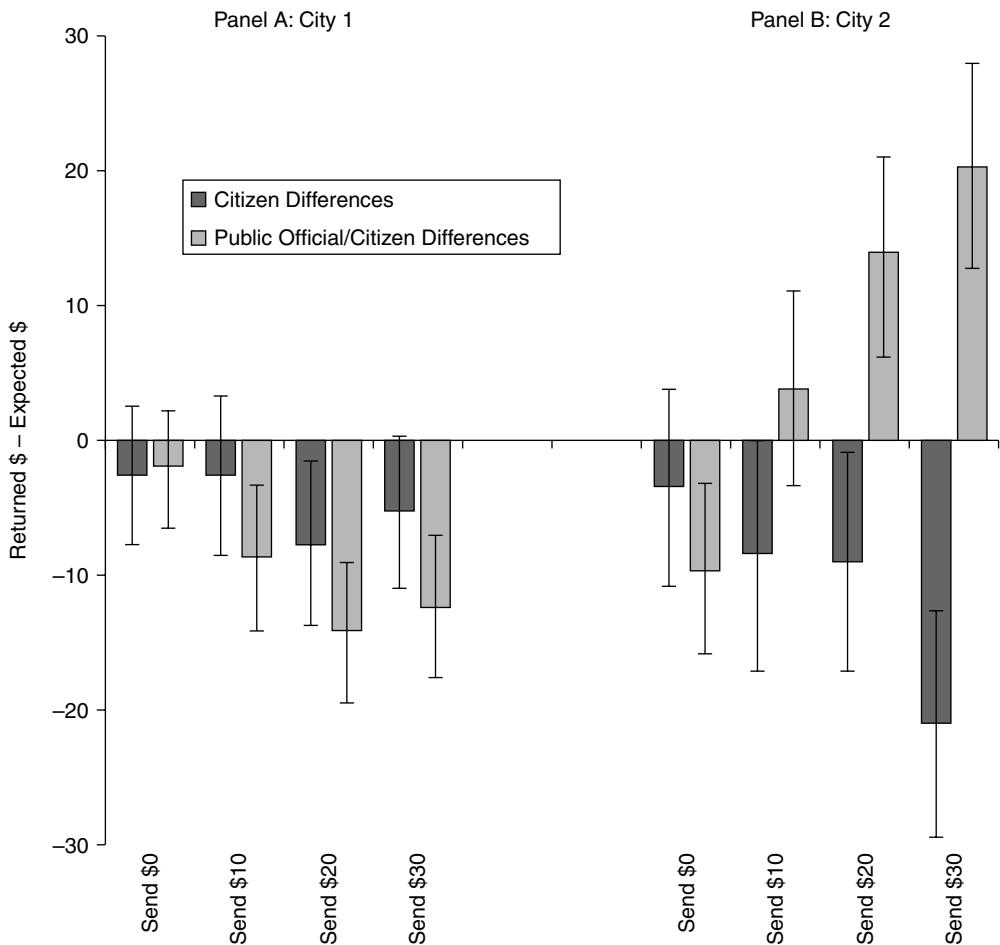
Note: Standard errors are plotted on the figure.

Figure 8.1 Percentage of citizens sending \$0, \$10, \$20, or \$30 to their counterpart (citizen, public official)

sending nothing expected less returned from their public officials (\$2.78) and on average public officials indicated they would send back \$0.96. Across the board subjects expected less from their public officials than their fellow citizens (a within-subjects pairwise test: $t = 2.78$, $df = 133$, $p < 0.01$).

Figure 8.2 gives a sense of whether subjects' expectations were correct. Again we find differences between the two cities. In City 1, expectations are always higher than what either citizens or public officials will return. For City 2, however, public officials are likely to return more than expected by subjects. Subjects have low expectations for the public officials (lower than their fellow citizens), yet except for the case when nothing is sent, the public officials always indicate they will send more.

We have managed to do something unusual – pairing citizens and public officials in the trust game. The only difference between the two games is the identity of the counterpart. We have three findings. First, citizens are willing to trust their public officials. Second, citizens' willingness to trust is driven by expectations. Third, those expectations and their accuracy vary by context. Unfortunately, we have only two different cities (contexts). While both are similar along many dimensions, we cannot pinpoint why citizens have such low expectations in City 2. It may be that the public officials feel citizen pressure or it may be that public officials in this disaster-prone city feel compelled to be more trustworthy. We cannot isolate these effects with this limited sample.

*Notes:*

The difference is the average of expectations conditional on what a first mover sent minus the average that could have been returned for the amount sent.

Standard errors are plotted on the figure.

Figure 8.2 Difference in expected and actual returns by counterpart (citizens or public officials)

In our study we primarily use the investment game as a measurement tool. As such we want to know whether it is correlated with subjects' willingness to comply with post-disaster instructions from local officials. At the same time, we want to know whether this costly measure of behavior can be proxied with standard attitudinal trust questions. Table 8.1 provides the bivariate correlations with a number of attitudinal items that we collected as part of the study. The first column correlates the amount sent in the investment game to fellow citizens. The second column does the same for what is sent to public officials. The first item is one of our key variables of interest – whether subjects will comply with local

Table 8.1 Bivariate correlations with amount sent to citizens and public officials

	Trust in Citizens	Trust in Public Officials
When a disaster happens how likely are you to follow directions given by the local police and fire officials? (5-point scale)	0.075	0.078
How much do you trust your neighbors? (4-point scale)	0.108 †	-0.015
How much do you trust city government? (4-point scale)	-0.001	0.036
Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people? (11-point scale)	-0.131*	0.071

Notes:

All questionnaire items are set in the same direction with higher values indicating greater trust.

† $0.5 < p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$.

officials. The correlation between the behavioral measure and the attitude is positive but weak. Using a variety of attitudinal trust measures we find there are equally weak correlations with the behavioral measures. The standard GSS question about trust is positively correlated with trust in citizens and is significant. However, the relationship is quite weak. This leaves us with a conundrum: what does the investment game measure? In the next section we point out that the measurement issues we find are widespread.

MEASUREMENT CONCERNS

A key concern for those carrying out studies of any kind is to measure accurately. An experiment allows control over the environment and the subjects have an incentive to behave according to their true preferences. Both factors should lead to precision in measurement as compared with survey questions. However, as we show above, there is little correlation between attitudes measured with survey items and incentivized choices. What does the literature have to say about why this might occur?

The comparisons between attitudinal and behavioral measures almost exclusively focus on generalized trust. Yet the same comparisons should be undertaken with respect to political trust. An early study on generalized trust by Glaeser et al. (2000) used a variety of survey and behavioral measures in a laboratory setting. Subjects filled out an attitudinal survey, engaged in hypothetical choices and played the incentivized ‘investment game’. As with our study, the standard GSS attitudinal item was included (‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people’) as well as a number of other items commonly used to measure attitudes toward trust. They also collected information about trusting behavior, such as whether someone locks their door or lends money to friends. They found (like us) that the attitudinal survey items were uncorrelated with the experimental measure of trust, but that the self-reported behavior is correlated with behavior in the

experiment. At best the GSS items may capture ‘trustworthiness’. But behavior in the game was a pretty good predictor of self-reported trusting behavior. That attitudes and behavior can be uncorrelated is not surprising – this has been a long-standing conclusion reached by psychologists (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1977; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993). This study has led those carrying out experiments to focus more on behavior rather than attitudes.

Others have expressed concern about what the standard GSS item measures. For example, Miller and Mitamura (2003) contend that the standard GSS item taps ‘caution’ rather than trust. The standard wording they argue has two parts and each part is conceptually distinct. ‘Obviously it is possible for a risk-averse person to feel that people in general are trustworthy, but still to be inclined to be careful in dealing with others’ (Miller and Mitamura, 2003, pp. 63–4). Reeskens and Hooghe (2008) ask whether the standard GSS item can be cross-culturally compared. Like Miller and Mitamura (2003) they demonstrate that the structure of the item is problematic. For example, the item shows high variability even among the same respondents (measurement error), the wording is problematic, and it is not clear to the respondent who the appropriate target (‘other people’) might be. In the end they conclude that there is considerable instability in the measure.

Mixed results concerning what is meant by the behavioral and attitudinal measures of generalized trust have caught the eye of experimentalists. In a thorough study of the tie between attitudinal and behavioral measures of trust, Capra et al. (2008) find that there is considerable variability in which attitudinal measures are correlated with which behavioral measures. Their results are consistent with those noted above. The usual GSS item predicts both trustworthiness and trust in the investment game, if one controls for other-regarding preferences. The attitudinal statement that ‘I am trustworthy’ is *negatively* correlated with reciprocity in the trust game, confirming the old adage of never trusting someone who says ‘trust me’. Similar findings are also reported by Fehr (2009). There is little consensus about how these attitudinal and behavioral measures fit together.

In the end, measurement problems abound for the study of generalized trust. We have every reason to believe that the same may be true for political trust. The concept is complicated and unlikely to be captured by any single measure. Different methods can be used to chip away at the concept and different methods will focus on unique dimensions of political trust. Laboratory experiments have promise as a useful tool for establishing the reliability and validity of measures of key dimensions of political trust.

UNRESOLVED QUESTIONS

We have provided three examples of canonical experiments used to study aspects of political trust. Each touches on a different dimension of Norris’s (see also Chapter 2) concept of political trust. We argue that trust experiments are particularly useful for isolating mechanisms that create political trust. Experiments allow a researcher to control the stimulus that a subject is given and to control the subject’s environment. Rigorous control comes at a price. It may be difficult to generalize to a broader set of contexts from findings uncovered by experiments in a specific lab setting. We do not see this as a problem for research using experiments. We advocate using experiments in conjunction with observational and archival data. No single method has a monopoly on truth.

Multiple methods force researchers to ask the same question from different perspectives and, in doing so, lead to greater confidence in results when the findings converge. From our perspective there are three unresolved questions that experiments can shed light on. First, it is important to establish the causal relationship between political trust and political institutions. The question is whether trust precedes effective institutions or vice versa. The contours of this question are now being tackled, as noted by several of the studies mentioned above. Here experiments are particularly well suited to establishing the causal relationship.

Second, we are puzzled by the extent to which attitudinal trust items relate to trust behaviors in natural settings. The inconsistency in measurement should give both experimenters and observational researchers pause. The concept of political trust has many dimensions and it is likely that few of our ‘workhorse’ measures are sufficient to explain all of them. Experiments can be a useful tool for developing and testing measurements.

Third, we do not know the extent to which strong institutions crowd out trust. It may be that strong institutions are a substitute for the norms of trust and trustworthiness. If so, strong institutions that can successfully monitor and sanction individuals may make trust unnecessary. But such institutions may be overly coercive. Instead political trust may be critical for placing a check on coercive political institutions.

NOTES

1. A second experiment corrects for threats to inference embedded in the first design, which comingled both the expertise and endorsement of the military. Here they use a 2×4 factorial design (the details of which the reader will be spared). They find, consistent with their first study, that it is not the endorsement alone that is necessary, but also the expertise held by the political institution. This leads to the conclusion that trust in institutions is shored up by expertise.
2. Such experiments are not confined to the laboratory (see, for example, English, 2012). Buchan et al. (2009) use the public goods game to assess whether exposure to globalization leads to greater trust. They use a within-subject design to measure contributions not only in groups that include people in their own locality, but also in groups that contain other people scattered across the globe. As subjects are increasingly exposed to globalization they are more likely to contribute to global public goods.
3. This study is part of a larger project that is designed to explore whether citizens and public officials share similar preferences and concerns about natural disasters (Donahue et al., 2014).
4. The public officials included elected officials (mayors, county judges/commissioners, and city council members) and appointed civil servants (including city managers, emergency managers, first responders, and others involved in city planning).
5. Subjects completed eight different games in total, with one selected randomly for payment. The remaining six games are not explicitly relevant to the research discussed here. For example, individuals also completed incentivized measures of risk and time preference, as well as charitable giving games and risk-sharing games.
6. Public officials also participated in a version of the first game. They were told they were participating with other public officials and they would be matched with another public official.

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PART II

CAUSES, CORRELATES, CONSEQUENCES

9. Biological and psychological influences on political trust*

Jeffery J. Mondak, Matthew Hayes and Damarys Canache

INTRODUCTION

The tremendous diversity of this volume's chapters demonstrates the complexity of political trust. This complexity is seen in how trust is conceptualized and measured, in its manifestations in different regions of the world, in its origins, and in its consequences. Our focus concerns the origins of political trust, and especially the possible role of relatively enduring aspects of the individual, factors that may shape orientations toward social and political stimuli.

The two broad sets of factors we consider are biological and psychological, with the latter limited to personality traits. For both we propose that people differ in fundamental ways, these differences involve relatively stable characteristics that primarily originate prior to the person's first encounters with the political world, and yet these factors matter for how the individual interacts with and assesses political institutions and actors. Following an introduction to concepts in the study of biology and personality, a three-part review of research on political trust is presented. The first considers work casting generalized trust as a personality trait that shapes political trust. The second section centers on broad-scale models of personality trait structure, and especially on the Big Five framework. The last section addresses biology.

BIOLOGY AND PERSONALITY: AN OVERVIEW

Biology and personality are key sources of individual differences. People differ genetically. Approximately 20 000 genes¹ contribute to differences among individuals. These genes, whether individually or in complex combinations, produce variation in appearance, disposition, and behavior. A person's biological composition is highly stable over time. It is not fundamentally reconfigured as the person moves from one context to another.

Personality is also an enduring source of individual differences. Personality is a relatively stable psychological structure that influences attitudinal and behavioral patterns. Personality traits are the basic units of personality.² Traits refer to people's general, persistent tendencies of behavior. For example, people high in extraversion exhibit particular patterns of behavior over time and across situations: they are outgoing, sociable, and talkative. If we were to track someone high in extraversion and someone low in extraversion as they navigate a variety of situations, we should see systematic differences in the extent to which they interact with others, feel comfortable in social settings, and engage in conversation. Since there are a multitude of possible trait dimensions, such as extraversion or neuroticism, scholars of personality have sought an overarching order or structure to

personality traits to avoid the ‘semantic nightmare’ (John and Robins, 1993, p. 219) that can result from too many unconnected traits being studied independently. The result is the ‘five-factor’ or ‘Big Five’ model of personality trait structure, which identifies five orthogonal trait dimensions that capture much of the central components of personality.

Three characteristics of personality traits provide justification for their status as relatively enduring influences on attitudes and behavior. First, traits are highly heritable. A general rule of thumb is that heritability levels for personality traits center near 0.50, indicating that roughly 50 percent of their variation across the population traces to biology. When analysts have assessed the heritability of personality traits using techniques to minimize or correct for measurement error, heritability estimates as high as 0.79 have been recorded (e.g., Heath et al., 1992; Riemann et al., 1997). Second, owing in part to their bases in biology, personality traits are highly stable. Psychologists have measured traits in individuals at one point in time, and then measured them again in those same individuals years later. For several key traits, Costa and McCrae (1980) report six-year error-corrected stability levels as high as 0.95, and Rantanen et al. (2007) report nine-year stability levels between 0.65 and 0.97. Third, not only is personality stable over time, but so, too, are its effects on attitudes and behavior (Bloeser et al., 2015). Consequently, personality operates as a source of constancy; when people’s attitudes and actions change over time, they do so despite the inertial pull of personality.

Researchers have employed a variety of analytical strategies when studying biological influences on political attitudes and behavior. Twin studies, which are used to gauge whether genetic differences contribute to population variation in a given phenomenon, are a cornerstone in this area. Data from twin studies are used to determine whether, and to what extent, a specific disposition, attitude or behavior is heritable. The logic of twin studies is quite simple. Monozygotic (identical) twins share 100 percent of their genetic content, whereas dizygotic (fraternal) twins share an average of 50 percent. Consequently, if data on a variable such as political trust are gathered from twins, comparison of the correlations for the monozygotic and dizygotic groups facilitates estimation of heritability, and also of the extent to which environmental influences twins share or do not share contribute to variation in the factor in question.

A second approach in the study of biology and politics seeks to identify political correlates of particular genes. This research proceeds in two general ways. The first is to focus on one specific gene, and see if its variants, or alleles, correspond with variation in a political variable. This is what is known as the candidate gene approach; for applications in research on politics, see Fowler and Dawes (2008) and Settle et al. (2010). The second strategy is genome-wide research, which entails a broad-scale hunt for genetic differences between groups of people who vary on some factor of interest (e.g., Hatemi et al., 2011).

A third approach in the study of biology and politics focuses on physiological attributes other than genes. Some of this research examines brain structure and function in an effort to determine which brain regions are associated with politically relevant cognitive and emotional processes, and whether variation in brain structure and activity corresponds with variation in patterns of political behavior. Scholars also examine physiology as it relates to the autonomic nervous system to gauge whether differences in involuntary physiological responses to stimuli are correlated with matters such as political ideology (e.g., Smith et al., 2011). Yet another approach examines the activity of hormones – biochemicals produced in the body that regulate many physiological functions. These

diverse approaches can be useful in helping to pinpoint which biological processes are consequential for political attitudes and behavior.

Compared with the study of biological influences, research on personality effects exhibits less methodological diversity. This is because the validity of self-report data is widely acknowledged. People are adept at assessing their own psychological dispositions, and self-ratings are highly correlated with ratings provided by close associates such as spouses and peers. For data acquisition, it follows that researchers interested in personality effects can measure personality within the same survey or experiment used to gather data on political attitudes and behavior.

We believe that biology, personality, and political trust are all linked in that biology can influence personality, which in turn influences trust. The proposition that personality might serve as a link between biology and other political and social attitudes traces to Eysenck (e.g., Eysenck and Wilson, 1978), who posited that personality traits are determined 'strongly by inherited features of the central and autonomic nervous system' (Eysenck, 1954 [1999], p. 181). Social attitudes in turn partly reflect the projection of those personality traits. It follows that personality traits can be seen as mediating the influence of genetics on social and political attitudes, a point made explicit by Eysenck and Wilson (1978, p. 308): '[O]ur own interpretation emphasizes first of all the important contribution made by genetic factors in the determination of social attitudes. . . Our view is that personality factors in large part mediate this aspect of social attitude formation'.

This overview has been intended to provide basic familiarity with concepts and methods involved in research on biology and personality. The utility of this research should become evident as we contemplate specific work on political trust. We begin with a two-part assessment of relevant research on personality, followed by discussion of research on biology and trust. Research on trust has long differentiated between people's broad trust in others and their trust in political actors and institutions. The former typically is labeled 'generalized trust' or 'interpersonal trust', and is often employed as a predictor of political trust. A two-part logic motivates such analyses. First, people are presumed to vary in their basic levels of trust in others. Second, if political trust partly constitutes a specific instance of a broader phenomenon, then generalized trust should predict political trust. Robert Lane (1959, p. 164) offered the classic articulation of this thesis: 'If one cannot trust other people generally, one can certainly not trust those under the temptation of and with the powers which come with public office. Trust in elected officials is seen to be only a more specific instance of trust in mankind'.

GENERALIZED TRUST AND PERSONALITY

Generalized trust gains relevance for present purposes because such trust has been posited to be a personality trait. Discussing Lane, Aberbach and Walker (1970, p. 1202) write: 'Other scholars stress personality factors which are basically independent of political considerations as explanatory variables'. That is, Lane's 'trust in mankind' is taken to be a personality factor. Subsequent authors have concurred with this interpretation (e.g., Cole, 1973).

Although several authors have described generalized trust in terms of personality, they have often done so in a passing manner. For instance, although both Aberbach and

Walker (1970) and Cole (1973) refer to generalized trust as a component of personality, neither includes a definition of personality or any rationale for why trust should be viewed as being part of personality. Similarly, these studies offer little discussion of the properties of their empirical measures of generalized trust, and no discussion of whether these measures provide valid representations of trust as an element of personality.

Our view is that a person's tendency to be trusting constitutes a personality trait. First, a characteristic pattern of trusting others would fit within the parameters of the definitions of personality traits noted above. Second, applied psychological research commonly conceives of trust as a personality trait (e.g., DeNeve and Cooper, 1998). Third, trust is a component of many broad-scale measures of personality trait structure. For instance, distrust is central to the vigilance factor of Cattell's 16PF³ (Cattell, 1957; Cattell and Mead, 2008), and trust is a component of the agreeableness dimension of the Big Five personality framework. Fourth, generalized trust exhibits the high levels of temporal stability characteristic of personality measures (e.g., Uslaner, 2002).

Although generalized trust is plausibly defined as a personality trait, there remains the issue of measurement. In psychological research, personality traits typically are measured with data pertaining to an individual's patterns of thought and behavior. In measuring trust as a trait, the analyst likely would administer a self-rating protocol, with respondents asked the extent to which they 'trust others', 'trust what people say', 'distrust people', and so on.⁴ In contrast, survey-based measures of generalized trust ask about respondents' views regarding the trustworthiness of others. For example, items included in the General Social Survey ask respondents whether they feel that 'most people would try to take advantage of you' and 'most people can be trusted'.

People who score high in trust as a personality trait should tend to express the view that other people can be trusted, meaning that attitudinal measures of the perceived trustworthiness of others should be related to trust as a trait. Still, the attitudinal approach provides data one step removed from personality. We see two reasons for concern. First, we are unaware of efforts to validate attitudinal measures of generalized trust as representations of trust as a personality trait. Second, although we expect the attitudinal measures to be correlated with trait measures of trust, it is conceivable that factors other than personality also influence respondents' answers. To provide a valid measure of trust as a personality trait, a scale should capture personality, and *only personality*. Responses on the attitudinal measures may be influenced by factors beyond personality, such as an individual's recent experiences or news stories the person has seen.⁵ In light of this concern, if generalized trust is to be taken as a measure of personality, we see it as preferable that data be drawn using adjectival self-rating scales.

A third matter is whether focus on a single trait offers the optimal means to advance our understanding of either the antecedents of political trust or the larger role of personality in mass politics. Our concerns about this approach are best appreciated by juxtaposing research strategies centered on a single trait with a common alternate approach, the utilization of broad-scale representations of trait structure. This second course seeks to generate a holistic depiction of individuals' personality traits, and then to determine which aspects of personality, if any, influence the attitudes and behaviors under consideration.

Compared with use of a broad-scale personality framework, a focus on a single relevant personality trait enjoys the advantage of specificity. The attitude or behavior the analyst seeks to understand is studied in conjunction with its most obvious psychological

predictor. In the present case, political trust is linked back to generalized trust (see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton, and Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle).

Specificity is a worthy advantage, but one that must be weighed against a series of limitations. First, regressing specific attitudes on general variants of those same attitudes yields only limited insight. It should not be considered shocking that people who are generally trusting tend to exhibit political trust.⁶ If our answer to the question ‘Who trusts politically?’ is ‘People who are trusting’, then we merely have pushed our inquiry back one level. Deeper insight would be gained only with identification of the antecedents of generalized trust.

A second limitation of focusing on individual traits is that doing so may discourage attention to other important predictors. Generalized trust is a personality trait, but it is merely one among at least dozens, if not hundreds, of others.⁷ If the search for psychological origins of political trust is limited to the single most obvious predictor, we risk overlooking the significant roles played by other traits. If our objective is to devise a comprehensive account of the factors that influence political trust, then we should not shut off further attention to personality merely because a single consequential trait has been identified.

A third limitation in focusing on a single trait is that doing so runs counter to the objective of a cumulative, integrated base of scientific knowledge. For scientific progress to occur most efficiently, connections among individual research efforts must be transparent. Theory-based inquiry facilitates this end, whereas ad hoc inquiry does not. In discussing the state of research on personality and politics, Paul Sniderman emphasized this same point nearly 40 years ago:

[T]he field of personality and politics has acquired a jerry-built appearance. Observation suggests that political scientists inspect the array of psychological hypotheses, personality theories, and experimental findings like single-minded customers at a bargain counter, each bent on obtaining whatever suits his or her immediate purpose. The upshot is a mélange of ideas, borrowed from disparate sources, sometimes tested but more often intuitive and anecdotal in character. (Sniderman, 1975, p. 16)

The counter to a field with a jerry-built quality is for research to be linked by reliance on an integrative theoretical framework. For researchers in trait psychology, one framework, the Big Five approach, has been especially prominent since the late 1980s. In the next section, we outline the basic components of the Big Five approach, review applications in research on trust, and present some new evidence from a cross-national survey of countries in the Americas.

THE BIG FIVE AND POLITICAL TRUST

The Big Five approach focuses on openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability. These dimensions are posited to capture the bulk of variation in personality trait structure. Although empirical identification of these factors occurred in the late 1950s (Tupes, 1957; Tupes and Christal, 1958, 1961), the Big Five did not begin to achieve prominence among students of personality until the late 1980s.⁸ Since then, thousands of studies invoking the Big Five have been published,

marking what psychologists have deemed a ‘paradigm shift’ (John et al., 2008, p. 114). Within political science, research applying the Big Five has grown abundant within the past decade.⁹

Because the objective of this chapter is to specify the possible influence of personality on political trust, we offer only a brief summary of the Big Five trait dimensions, along with a discussion of what relationship, if any, each should be expected to have with trust. We will then review the findings of studies that have employed the Big Five as predictors of political trust, and report the results of new tests with data from the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey.

The Big Five Trait Dimensions

The first Big Five trait dimension, openness to experience, refers to an interest in new information, experiences, and approaches. Measures of openness include adjectives such as ‘analytical’, ‘curious’, and ‘imaginative’, along with phrases such as ‘am full of ideas’ and ‘love to think up new ways of doing things’. In the political realm, openness has been found to be related to ideological liberalism, political knowledge and attentiveness, and various aspects of political participation.

Past research supports the expectation that openness to experience will be negatively related to political trust. First, individuals high in openness tend not to accept matters on faith, instead preferring to seek out information and form their own conclusions. The expression of political trust would not be a default judgment for people scoring high in openness because their inquisitive character is inconsistent with the very idea of having a default judgment. Second, openness to experience is associated with a persistent search for new and better ways of doing things. This receptivity to alternates to the status quo can lead to weak attachments to one’s present contexts. In the workplace, for example, openness has been linked to turnover (Timmerman, 2006) and decreased loyalty to the worker’s current organization (Moss et al., 2007).

The third reason openness is posited to be inversely related to political trust derives from research on openness, trust, and political knowledge. Using data from multiple surveys, research has found openness to be positively related to political knowledge (Mondak, 2010, p. 102). This effect is unsurprising given the characteristic thirst for information that marks individuals high in openness. At least in the US context, knowledge, in turn, produces negative effects in models of opinion toward Congress (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 1995, 2002). These latter results occur because knowledgeable citizens have deep, institution-specific stocks of information available to guide their judgments, reducing reliance on simplistic, characteristically positive criteria (Mondak et al., 2007). If these patterns generalize beyond the US Congress, the implication would be that openness corresponds with heightened levels of political knowledge, which, in turn, corresponds with more critical views of government.

The second Big Five trait dimension, conscientiousness, includes specific traits such as being organized, reliable, and hard working. Conscientiousness has been linked with aspects of workplace performance and lifestyle choices and behaviors. However, the empirical record with respect to political attitudes and behaviors is mixed. Conscientiousness consistently predicts ideological conservatism, but relationships with other political attitudes and with political participation tend to be modest at best. Past research offers

little basis to expect an effect of this trait dimension on political trust. People who are conscientious should be trustworthy themselves, but whether they should be expected to be trusting of political actors is less clear. We might envision that the cautious behavior of individuals high in conscientiousness would leave them slow to develop political trust. Conversely, if conscientiousness corresponds with a feeling of duty to support one's government, a positive relationship might be expected.¹⁰ The bottom line is that we do not see a strong basis to project a relationship between conscientiousness and political trust.

The third Big Five trait dimension, extraversion, refers to an individual's preference for sociability. Extraverts are talkative, outgoing, and socially engaged. Research in political science has identified links between extraversion and social behaviors such as engaging in political discussion, working on campaigns, and the desire of elected officials to seek higher office. Conversely, extraversion has only rarely been found to be linked to political attitudes.

The possibility of relationships between extraversion and trust offers fertile ground for speculation. Extraverts value personal relationships. Consequently, a positive relationship between extraversion and interpersonal trust seems likely.¹¹ Matters are less clear for political trust. If the phenomenon in question is *local* political trust, a positive effect is plausible. Extraverts are engaged in their communities, and the opportunities for development of personal connections with local officials might foster trust. But the targets of political trust are often impersonal, distant political institutions such as the national government as a whole, and the nation's legislative, executive, and judicial branches. In this context, the extravert most often will be unable to develop personal connections. Given the importance of personal relationships to extraverts, the inability to form such relationships with the national government may be off-putting. Hence, although null relationships between extraversion and political trust are conceivable, we see a basis to envision a negative effect. What is interesting about this is that interpersonal trust and political trust usually are found to be modestly positively correlated. If extraversion drives up interpersonal trust while driving down political trust, these effects may partly explain why interpersonal trust and political trust are not more strongly correlated.

The fourth Big Five trait dimension, agreeableness, is the easiest for which to forecast a relationship with political trust. As we have emphasized, the Big Five are broad dimensions. Each incorporates subsidiary facets. For agreeableness, interpersonal trust is one of those facets;¹² to be agreeable means in part to be trusting. This brings two implications. First, positive relationships should be observed between agreeableness and interpersonal trust. These arguably would not be causal connections. Instead, any correspondence between the two would exist because interpersonal trust is a component of the broader trait dimension of agreeableness.¹³ Second, given that interpersonal trust is typically found to be modestly correlated with political trust, a similar relationship between agreeableness and political trust is expected.¹⁴

In the previous section, we noted our concern with depictions of the personality bases of political trust that focus exclusively on generalized trust as a means to represent personality. Our alternate is to situate generalized trust within a comprehensive depiction of personality trait structure. Approaching personality from the perspective of a framework such as the Big Five permits students of political trust to attend to the role of generalized trust while also incorporating multiple other trait dimensions.

The final Big Five trait dimension is emotional stability. Individuals scoring high in

emotional stability tend to be calm and relaxed, whereas their neurotic counterparts exhibit tension and anxiety. In research on political attitudes and behaviors, relatively few effects for emotional stability have been observed, although some evidence suggests that emotional stability corresponds with matters such as a reduced likelihood of contacting public officials (Mondak, 2010, pp. 154–5). Individuals scoring high in emotional stability are easygoing, uncritical, and characterized by positive affect (e.g., Costa and McCrae, 1980; David et al., 1997). If this temperament carries over to judgments about politics, the most plausible effect would be a positive relationship between emotional stability and political trust.

Thus far, our discussion of the Big Five has highlighted the most likely effects of these trait dimensions on political trust as based on our reading of theoretical depictions of the Big Five and of empirical research regarding phenomena other than trust. This discussion is meant to offer guidance for assessment of extant empirical research. We turn next to review past works that have included Big Five measures as predictors of political trust.

Evidence of Big Five Effects on Political Trust

Few studies have examined possible relationships between the Big Five and political trust. Mary Anderson conducted separate telephone and context surveys in the city of Tallahassee, Florida, in 2004. In both surveys, local political trust is measured with an item that asked the extent to which respondents trust local officials ‘to do what is right’. The Big Five were measured with a ten-item battery, with two items per trait dimension.¹⁵ Mondak and Halperin (2008) examined the relationship between the Big Five and political trust using data from Anderson’s telephone survey and found a statistically significant negative effect for openness, along with a significant positive effect for agreeableness. Anderson extended these analyses by revisiting personality effects with data from her telephone survey (2010a, 2010b), and adding parallel models with data from her context survey. Findings from the telephone survey are identical to those seen earlier, with a strong negative effect of openness on political trust, a strong positive effect of agreeableness, and null results for the remaining trait dimensions. The statistically significant positive agreeableness effect is also seen in the context survey, but results for the other traits, including openness, are insignificant.

To our knowledge, the only other study to explore possible personality effects on political trust is Henrieke Voortman’s (2009) thesis at Universiteit Twente in the Netherlands. Voortman’s data, part of a Dutch panel survey, include an extensive Big Five battery. Political trust is examined with separate models concerning trust in the Dutch government, parliament, political parties, and democracy. In Voortman’s models, all personality effects for all four dependent variables are statistically insignificant. Given our strong expectations for links between the Big Five and political trust, these null results may seem perplexing. However, Voortman’s analysis sheds light on the likely cause of the null findings. The correlations between satisfaction with government performance and the four trust variables are all high, nearing or reaching 0.60, not surprising given the unpopularity of the center-right Christian Democrat Appeal (CDA) party at the time of the survey. Hence, it appears that the trust measures were capturing specific attitudes regarding the incumbent government, leaving little room for personality to exert significant influence.

In an effort to add to the empirical record in this area, we turn next to some new analyses. Specifically, we explore the possible influence of the Big Five on two political trust variables as measured as part of the 2010 AmericasBarometer survey. The AmericasBarometer was administered to representative samples in 26 nations.¹⁶ Data necessary for current analyses are available for each of these except Haiti and Honduras. In most countries, the sample size is approximately 1500, with larger samples obtained in four nations. Internet surveys were conducted in Canada and the United States. All other data were obtained via face-to-face interviews.

Two dependent variables were constructed to measure political trust. The first, 'trust in national institutions', includes data from four items that ask respondents the extent to which they trust the national government, the national legislature, the Supreme Court, and the president or prime minister in their respective countries.¹⁷ The scale is coded to range from zero (low trust) to one (high trust; mean = 0.50, s.d. = 0.26). The second, 'trust in all political institutions', includes data from these same four items, along with responses to questions concerning trust in the justice system, the armed forces, the national police, political parties, local government, and elections for a maximum total of ten items.¹⁸ This measure is also coded to range from zero to one (mean = 0.50, s.d. = 0.22). Values on the two trust scales are highly correlated ($r = 0.92$).

A variant of Gosling et al.'s (2003) ten-item personality inventory was used to measure data on the Big Five. All personality variables are coded to range from zero (lowest observed value on the trait) to one. Descriptive statistics are as follows: openness, mean = 0.64, s.d. = 0.27; conscientiousness, mean = 0.67, s.d. = 0.25; extraversion, mean = 0.58, s.d. = 0.25; agreeableness, mean = 0.65, s.d. = 0.25; emotional stability, mean = 0.53, s.d. = 0.26.

To test for possible effects of the Big Five, we regress the two dependent variables on the Big Five scales in models that also include several control variables, with all except age coded to range from zero to one: age, sex, wealth, support for the political opposition, internal efficacy, and external efficacy.¹⁹ Multilevel mixed-effects models are estimated because individuals are nested within the study's 24 nations. Results are depicted in Table 9.1.

Because all predictors except age are coded to range from zero to one, coefficients indicate the effect of movement across the full range of each independent variable on political trust. Hence, estimates in Table 9.1 reveal the substantive magnitude and statistical significance of each variable, and also permit coarse comparisons across the coefficients. Nearly all coefficients in the models, including those for the Big Five, reach statistical significance. This is unsurprising given that the models include over 25 000 observations. Substantively, the strongest effect in both models is for external efficacy, although reverse causality cannot be ruled out in this case; that is, it may be that levels of political trust influence perceptions that public officials are interested in what people think.

Although the Big Five variables produce statistically significant coefficients in both models, the effects for conscientiousness and emotional stability are substantively slight. These results are in the expected directions in that political trust rises with both trait dimensions. However, the effects are sufficiently small, particularly when we recall past null results for conscientiousness and emotional stability, to recommend against the conclusion that these trait dimensions play noteworthy roles in shaping political trust.

The remaining Big Five dimensions produce substantively more sizeable effects.²⁰

Table 9.1 Predictors of trust in government institutions

	All Institutions		National Institutions	
	b	SE	b	SE
Age	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***
Sex	-0.00	0.00†	-0.00	0.00
Wealth	-0.00	0.00	-0.02	0.01***
Opposition	-0.04	0.00***	-0.08	0.00***
External efficacy	0.22	0.00***	0.26	0.00***
Internal efficacy	0.07	0.00***	0.07	0.00***
Openness	-0.03	0.01***	-0.03	0.01***
Conscientiousness	0.01	0.00**	0.01	0.01
Extraversion	-0.03	0.01***	-0.03	0.01***
Agreeableness	0.03	0.01**	0.04	0.01***
Emotional stability	0.02	0.00***	0.01	0.01*
Constant	0.35	0.01***	0.36	0.01***

Notes:

† $0.05 < p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 35 162.

N (level 2): 24.

Multilevel mixed effects model with individuals nested within countries.

Source: AmericasBarometer (2010).

Individually, the coefficients rival in size those for wealth, support for the political opposition, and internal efficacy. The personality effects are more impressive when two or more are considered together. For instance, moving from being a disagreeable extravert to an agreeable introvert corresponds with a predicted shift of 0.09 points on the zero to one measure of trust in national institutions. This combined effect slightly exceeds the impact of moving from having voted for an opposition presidential candidate to having voted for the winning president.

An open question is whether the effects of personality traits are consistent across geographic contexts. The work of both Anderson (2010a, 2010b) and Voortman (2009) examine personality traits within a single context. With the AmericasBarometer, we can begin to investigate whether the effects of personality are consistent across nations or if they vary in meaningful ways. We use a mixed effects model and allow the effect of our key personality traits (openness, extraversion, and agreeableness) to vary by country, which allows us to determine how the influence of each of these traits on political trust differs across countries.²¹

There is remarkable consistency in the direction of effect for openness, extraversion, and agreeableness. We observe a negative relationship between extraversion and trust in all institutions²² in 22 out of 24 countries, and between openness and trust in all institutions in 21 out of 24 countries. We also observe a positive relationship between agreeableness and trust in institutions in 21 out of 24 countries. Although the direction of effect is similar across countries, there is some variation in the size of the effect (openness s.d. = 0.03; extraversion s.d. = 0.03; agreeableness s.d. = 0.04). For example,

the effect of both openness and extraversion in Guatemala is over twice the magnitude of the average effect. These results suggest that the relationship between personality and political trust is consistently in the same direction, but nuances exist in the exact strength of the relationship.²³

Present findings and those reported in prior research support three general conclusions. First, variation in levels of political trust reflects the influence of personality. Strong, consistent effects for openness and agreeableness are seen in results from the 2010 AmericasBarometer and in Anderson's (2010a, 2010b) research in a US community. Effects for extraversion are observed only in the current study, but the magnitude of these effects exceeds that of openness and agreeableness. Second, the effects of personality traits on political trust appear remarkably consistent across national boundaries – we see the same direction of effect in all but two or three countries. But third, personality is only one piece of the puzzle. Voortman's (2009) findings reveal that, depending on the circumstances in which trust is measured, personality may be inconsequential. Further, even when significant personality effects are seen, personality variables do not dominate other predictors in terms of their explanatory force. Political trust is a complex and multifaceted phenomenon, with personality traits being among its many predictors.

BIOLOGY AND TRUST

Although scholars have long contemplated possible biological bases of political attitudes and behavior, research in this area has accelerated markedly since publication of Alford et al.'s (2005) study on the heritability of ideology. To date, little of this research has been of direct relevance to political trust. In contrast, a voluminous body of research explores the biological bases of generalized trust. In this section, we begin with a brief review of that work. As we have seen, a modest correlation is often found between generalized trust and political trust, with that relationship at least partly indicative of the causal influence of the former on the latter. Hence, research establishing a biological basis of generalized trust would imply a downstream effect on political trust. In addition, research on biology and generalized trust constitutes a roadmap in that the approaches used in this work can be applied in efforts to examine biology and political trust. We end this section with discussion of one study that follows this course.

There are three strands of research on biology and generalized trust.²⁴ The first uses twin studies data to gauge heritability. In some instances, trust has been represented with data from conventional attitudinal measures (e.g., Sturgis et al., 2010; Oskarsson et al., 2012), with results establishing a substantial genetic basis for trust. In other research, generalized trust has been measured behaviorally, with data from the trust game; once again, trust has been found to be heritable (Cesarini et al., 2008). Less research has been conducted on the specific process or mechanisms that may underlie this relationship between genes and trust, but recent evidence suggests that the biological influence on political trust may operate via threat stimuli (Ojeda, 2014). These works demonstrate a biological influence on generalized trust, but do not reveal specific processes or mechanisms that may underlie this relationship. The remaining strands of research take up this matter.

The second area of research uses neuroimaging techniques such as fMRI and EEG to identify a correspondence between trust and neural activity in different brain regions

(e.g., Delgado et al., 2005; King-Casas et al., 2005; Krueger et al., 2007; Boudreau et al., 2009).²⁵ The most common approach in this work has subjects engage in tasks such as participation in the trust game while undergoing a brain scan. This research has pinpointed brain functions related to trust, and also has revealed how different trust-related tasks activate processes in different regions of the brain.

The third strand of research on biology and trust explores whether levels of various hormones influence attitudinal and behavioral measures of generalized trust. Observed effects include a positive relationship between oxytocin and trust (e.g., Kosfeld et al., 2005; Zak et al., 2005a) and negative relationships between trust and both cortisol (Takahashi et al., 2005) and testosterone (Zak et al., 2005b). Together, research on the brain and on hormones has made noteworthy progress in pinpointing the biological structures and processes that correspond with generalized trust.

The strongest evidence of a link between hormones and trust pertains to oxytocin, a powerful hormone produced in the pituitary gland. Given evidence of its relationship to generalized trust, oxytocin represents a logical starting point in explorations of the biological bases of political trust. Recognizing this, Merolla and her colleagues (2013) conducted a laboratory study in which some participants received intranasal doses of oxytocin. Effects on both generalized and political trust were then observed. Oxytocin infusion increased trust in political figures such as George W. Bush and Barack Obama, and brought a similar effect on trust in the US government. However, in each case these relationships were observed only among subsets of the study's participants. Oxytocin infusion boosted political trust mostly among (1) individuals who had low pre-test generalized trust, and (2) Democrats. Merolla et al. (2013) comment on both the significance of these conditional effects and the possibility that aspects of the political environment, including the actions of public officials and candidates, might induce oxytocin release, thereby affecting political trust. Like Merolla and her co-authors, we see this study as an intriguing first step toward exploration of biological influences on political trust. Further research employing the techniques that have been utilized in work on generalized trust – twin studies, neuroimaging, and additional work on hormones – is to be encouraged.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has addressed the origins of political trust, with focus on the possibility that levels of trust are shaped by relatively enduring features of the individual. Most relevant research has examined links between personality traits and political trust. Generalized trust, often labeled as being a personality trait, has been found in numerous studies to be modestly positively related to political trust. This chapter also has contemplated personality from the perspective of a broad-scale model of personality trait structure, the Big Five approach. The available evidence suggests that agreeableness is positively related to political trust, whereas negative relationships exist between political trust and both openness to experience and extraversion. Personality traits are largely rooted in biology, and scholars have been actively endeavoring to identify biological influences on social and political variables. Hence, in this chapter's final section, research relevant to biology and political trust was reviewed. Scholars have utilized a variety of methods to examine biology and

generalized trust, but researchers are only now beginning to apply those same techniques in studies of political trust.

There are several areas of great potential for future research in this vein. First and foremost, researchers should begin examining the mechanisms through which biology, personality, and political trust are linked. Scholars such as Ojeda (2014) are beginning to do just this in the case of the link between biology and trust. But more research is needed on whether personality serves as a mediator between biology and political trust. Such research would contribute greatly to our understanding of political trust and the individual predispositions that affect it. Second, the new evidence we present in this chapter reinforces the importance of personality to our understanding of political trust, but many unanswered questions remain. Specifically, we do not explain the cross-national variation that exists in personality effects. Given the substantial body of literature that suggests institutions can shape trust (e.g., Levi, 1996; Levi and Stoker, 2000), it is plausible that institutional differences between these countries shape not only trust itself, but also the relationship between personality and trust. Third, as evidenced in this chapter, researchers are only beginning to scratch the surface of the biological determinants of trust. This area of research should prove fruitful as scholars continue expanding the use of biological methods to understanding political phenomena.

NOTES

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- 1. The precise number of genes contributing to individual differences, protein-coding genes, has not been determined. As research has proceeded, estimates have been revised downward. The notion of biological differences includes but is not limited to the notion of genetic differences. For instance, researchers have studied biology and politics via focus on physiological differences across individuals, an approach that speaks to biology without requiring attention to genetics (e.g., Oxley et al., 2008; Smith et al., 2011).
- 2. For detailed discussion of definitions of personality and personality traits, see Mondak (2010, pp. 4–11). Most students of personality see personality as encompassing more than just traits, but trait approaches are dominant in the field, and traits are seen as central components of personality.
- 3. The 16PF system is a set of 16 primary personality factors including warmth, reasoning, emotional stability, dominance, liveliness, rule-consciousness, social boldness, sensitivity, vigilance, abstractedness, private ness, apprehension, openness to change, self-reliance, perfectionism, and tension. These primary factors can be aggregated into global trait dimensions that correspond to the Big Five.
- 4. These examples are from the International Personality Item Pool, accessed 27 July 2016 at <http://ipip.org.org>.
- 5. Our present concern is that data on generalized trust may capture something beyond personality. The flip side of this concern, which we take up below, is that elements of personality beyond generalized trust may influence political trust.
- 6. Given the seemingly self-evident nature of the relationship between generalized trust and political trust, our view is that this relationship is best used as a starting point for research rather than being seen as an end in itself. For instance, an interesting empirical question to consider is why some people who score high in generalized trust do *not* exhibit political trust.
- 7. Allport and Odber (1936) identified nearly 18 000 trait terms in an analysis of an unabridged dictionary. Many of those terms are synonyms of one another, and thus the number of distinct traits is fewer, yet still quite numerous.
- 8. For an initial history of the Big Five, see Digman (1990). Important early works include Digman (1989), Goldberg (1990, 1992), and McCrae and Costa (1987). Goldberg has been a leader in the lexical approach to the Big Five, which focuses on the use of adjectival markers. McCrae and Costa have endeavored to further the theoretical bases of the Big Five approach (e.g., McCrae and Costa, 2003, 2008), and to explore its cross-cultural applicability (e.g., McCrae and Costa, 2006; McCrae et al., 2010).

9. For an introduction to the Big Five and its applicability to research in political science, see Mondak (2010, especially Chapter 2). For reviews of applications of the Big Five in political science, see Caprara and Vecchione (2013), Gerber et al. (2011), and Mondak and Hibbing (2012).
10. Our ambivalence about how conscientiousness might be related to political trust is mirrored in other domains. For instance, Walczuch and Lundgren (2004) discuss the link between conscientiousness and trust in e-commerce, and note reasons why both positive and negative relationships are plausible. In their empirical tests, a negligible and statistically insignificant positive effect was found.
11. Evidence is mixed on this point. Some studies find the expected positive relationship between extraversion and interpersonal trust; for example, Hiraishi et al. (2008) and Anderson's (2010a) context survey. Other studies find no such link; for example, Dohmen et al. (2008) and Anderson's (2010a, 2010b) telephone survey.
12. Depictions of the Big Five differ somewhat in terms of their content and the labels used to identify particular components. Hence, our reference to specific subsidiary facets constitutes a rough guide, but readers should be aware that some depictions of the Big Five will describe slightly different content. For agreeableness, components in addition to trust include morality, generosity, cooperation, modesty, and sympathy.
13. Hiraishi et al. (2008) offer a different view. In a series of structural-equation models focused on the Big Five and interpersonal trust, they find strong evidence that agreeableness, even stripped of its trust facet, exerts causal influence on interpersonal trust.
14. Mooradian et al. (2006) advance a logic similar to what we have outlined here, but with focus on trust in peers and trust in management within the workplace. In their study, interpersonal trust is framed within the Big Five perspective, and analyses show that both agreeableness and its trust subcomponent strongly predict both forms of trust within the workplace. In turn, trust in peers is found to influence sharing with the work group.
15. Psychologists often measure the Big Five with batteries including as many as 240 items. Generally, this is not possible in applied research, such as when Big Five measures are added to political surveys that often include a total of fewer than 100 items. This has led several teams of scholars to develop and test brief measures of the Big Five. The upshot of this research is that the Big Five can be represented effectively, albeit coarsely, with brief scales (see Gosling et al., 2003; Woods and Hampson, 2005; Rammstedt and John, 2007; Mondak et al., 2010).
16. The countries are Argentina, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Suriname, Trinidad and Tobago, the United States, Uruguay, and Venezuela.
17. We select these four items because they are the only four items that were asked in all countries that specifically reference the national government. There are theoretical reasons to believe that certain personality traits might have different effects at the national versus local level. These differ only slightly from those used in Bargsted, Somma and Castillo (Chapter 24 in this volume). Using their four items yields substantively identical results except for the direction of effect for gender.
18. These items were not asked in all nations (for example, there is no military in Costa Rica, and thus the armed forces item was not asked), and all respondents did not answer every item. To minimize the loss of cases, the variables are constructed using data from all items asked of and answered by the respondent.
19. Age is coded as the respondent's age in years. Sex is coded 0 = male, 1 = female. Wealth is a count of household services and items (electricity, telephone service, Internet, and so on). Support for the opposition is coded 1 if the respondent supported an opposition party's candidate for president or prime minister in the most recent national election. Internal and external efficacy are single-item measures of the extent to which the respondent understands the most important political issues in the country and the extent to which people in government in the country are interested in what people think.
20. We also estimated a model with interpersonal trust as the dependent variable. Statistically significant effects emerged for extraversion, agreeableness, and emotional stability. These results are noteworthy. First, the coefficient for agreeableness was equal in size to that for extraversion, and half the size of that for emotional stability. Given that generalized trust is a facet of agreeableness, a stronger relationship might have been expected. Findings for the other two trait dimensions demonstrate the value of casting the net widely via use of a broad-scale framework. Second, the coefficient for extraversion is positive. This is to be expected, given the value extraverts place on interpersonal relationships. However, this result is important in light of the negative influence of extraversion on political trust. Interpersonal trust is modestly positively correlated with the two measures of political trust ($r = 0.18$ for trust in all institutions; $r = 0.15$ for trust in national institutions). The effects of extraversion – positive for interpersonal trust, negative for political trust – provide one reason these correlations are not higher. Wealth operates in the same manner as extraversion, with wealthier respondents exhibiting relatively low levels of political trust and relatively high levels of interpersonal trust.
21. Results available from the authors upon request.

22. Results are substantively similar for trust in national institutions.
23. The variation in personality effects does not follow a coherent pattern. For example, the USA and Canada have positive effects for extraversion, suggesting that national language or level of democracy might explain the variation. However, our other English-speaking countries (Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago) were negative and much closer to the mean, as were countries with similar levels of democracy such as Costa Rica and Uruguay.
24. The present discussion is necessarily brief. For a more thorough treatment, see the excellent review by Riedl and Javor (2012).
25. fMRI is a technique using an MRI machine to measure blood flow to specific parts of the brain, allowing researchers to assess brain activity. EEG is a technique that measures brain activation via changes in electrical activity along the scalp. Both techniques are widely used due to their non-intrusive nature.

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10. Emotion, cognition, and political trust

Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and Dona-Gene Barton

INTRODUCTION

From the ‘Day of Anger’ on the streets of Paris to violent protests in Ukraine to Americans opposed to National Security Agency spying, people around the world in 2014 readily expressed their dissatisfaction with their governments (*The Economic Times*, 2014; *The Muslim News*, 2014). Even when people are not angry enough to take to the streets, many people in many countries express low levels of trust in government and politicians. Understanding what leads to trust or distrust in government is an important endeavor for political scientists. In this chapter, we address the cognitive and affective factors that influence political trust levels. The vast majority of the research in this area takes a cognitive approach to understanding political trust, yet it is clear from the real world of politics that emotions play a key role in political distrust. Ignoring emotions is detrimental to our efforts to get a full understanding of political trust.

We begin by examining the prevailing approach to political trust, an approach that emphasizes rational calculations of risk, the knowledge needed to make these calculations, and the cognitive abilities that allow people to process information quickly and efficiently (see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). This approach, although widely used, misses the important effects of emotions on political trust. Next, we discuss the much more limited research that examines the emotional and cognitive underpinnings of political trust in some detail. We conclude the chapter by raising potential avenues for future research that take into account new research on the affect–cognition relationship. To move research on political trust forward, we contend that it is essential that scholars recognize the interplay between emotions and cognition and attend to both.

THE COGNITIVE BASES OF POLITICAL TRUST

When people *think* about whether they trust the government or politicians, relying on cognition rather than affect, the demands on their information level and their ability to process that information to determine whether the institutions or politicians are trustworthy are high, perhaps unreasonably high. Researchers who take a cognitive approach focus on the cognitive puzzle people must solve (assessing risk by evaluating performance within the context of expectations), the knowledge or information people use, and people’s cognitive ability and the shortcuts they use. We discuss each of these areas of focus before turning to the affective side of trust.

Cognition and Risk Assessment

The prevailing approach to understanding political trust draws heavily on the cognitive, rational approach used to understand interpersonal trust.¹ The argument is straightforward. At its most basic level, trust involves vulnerability and the assessment of risk. The truster must make a prediction about whether the trustee will act in the truster's best interest (Hardin, 1999, p. 26). This prediction involves an assessment of risk because trusters cannot know with complete certainty if they were right to trust until after they have acted. If the truster determines that there is a high probability that the trustee will act in the truster's best interest and therefore takes the risk, he or she is left vulnerable. The prediction could potentially be wrong and the trustee could end up being untrustworthy.

The decision about whether to trust or not is a rational one, according to this view. Assessments of risk are based on rationally weighing the positives and negatives, the benefits and costs, of trusting and predictions of the trustee's future behavior. What becomes fundamental in this process is knowledge. Hardin (1999) makes it clear that it is impossible to trust someone without having some knowledge about the person. 'To say "I trust you" means that I know or think I know relevant things about you, especially about your motivations toward me' (*ibid.*, p. 24). At a very basic level, people use what knowledge they have to develop expectations about the trustee's likely behavior and, based on these expectations, to determine if it is worth the risk to trust someone (Levi and Stoker, 2000). If the truster has complete information about the other person, the assessment of whether to trust or not would be straightforward. Indeed, there would be no risk because the truster would know fully well if he or she should trust or not. In the real world, people do not have complete information and must therefore make risk assessments based on the knowledge they have at hand. People naturally vary in how knowledgeable they are about the trustee. The knowledge that is the easiest to use and readily available comes from prior experience with the person – if X lends \$20 to Y and Y pays X back, then X knows she can trust Y with her money in the future – but it can also be based on second-hand knowledge. When knowledge is second-hand, as Hardin suggests, it can be accurate or inaccurate. What I 'think I know' might actually be wrong.

Researchers who work in the area of political trust use the basic elements of this rational approach to interpersonal trust (interests, risk assessments, predictions and expectations, and knowledge) to analyze political trust levels. Moving trust from the interpersonal to the political realm, however, entails adjusting how we think about these basic elements. Deciding whether to trust an individual (Person X assessing Person Y) based on knowledge gained from past experience (Person X's past experiences with Person Y) is much more direct than determining whether government authorities and the institutions within which they work can be trusted.

Researchers of political trust still employ the idea of interest but it is of a more general quality. For example, Citrin and Muste (1999, p. 465) define political trust as 'confidence that authorities will observe the rules of the game and serve the general interest'. Corruption scandals in Washington or elected officials' sexual peccadillos do not involve most Americans' direct self-interest, but they raise serious concerns about the willingness of these officials to adhere to the rules guiding proper official and personal behavior and whether Americans' general interest is being well served.

The broader understanding of interests and the large, complicated nature of government

make it difficult for people to rely on their direct experiences with government officials to decide whether to trust or not. Instead, knowledge of government performance becomes the key to making risk assessments and predictions. People have expectations about what the government should be doing and when the policy outputs of government fall short of these expectations, people lose trust (see, e.g., Hetherington, 2005; Schoon and Cheng, 2011). For example, people expect the government to take care of the economy. If the government pursues economic policies that increase unemployment or inflation or that lead to slow economic growth, political trust levels will likely decrease because the government has not served the general interest of its citizens. Political trust therefore involves a risk assessment, but what is being assessed is the performance of the government and its elected officials. Drawing on Fiorina's (1981) conceptualization of party identification, Hetherington (2005) refers to political trust as a 'running tally' of government performance, with people comparing political outcomes to expectations and keeping a tally of how the government fares.

The move from interpersonal trust to political trust is more of a leap than a small step, but the emphasis on cognition and rationality remains strong. We will focus in our discussion of the cognitive bases of political trust on the key factors that allow people to make risk assessments: knowledge and where that knowledge comes from, and cognitive ability and the use of heuristics (see also Chapter 12 by Rudolph).

Knowledge and Political Trust

Within the cognitive approach, knowledge plays a key role because of its association with risk assessment. Greater knowledge 'allows one to make relatively confident predictions regarding the likelihood that the object of trust is indeed trustworthy' (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012, p. 55). When determining whether to trust a person, direct experience is likely the best source of knowledge. The person knows from personal experience if the other person can be trusted. An argument can be made that people use personal experience when deciding whether to trust the government as well. Popkin (1991) argues, for example, that people can easily gain political knowledge through everyday experiences. When a person goes to the grocery store and finds the cost of milk and bread have increased significantly or talks with a neighbor who has lost her job, the person can easily figure out that the economy is struggling. The person would then become less trusting of the government because of the expectations–performance gap. The expectation is that the government should take care of the economy; the performance evaluation is that the person's direct experiences show it has not. Yet research shows quite convincingly that sociotropic considerations have a stronger impact on attitudes and behavior than pocketbook considerations (e.g., Kinder and Kiewiet, 1981; Markus, 1988; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2000).

Relying on direct experience with the government appears not to be associated with more global attitudes toward the government, including political trust. This appears to be the case even when looking at direct personal experiences with government officials. According to a *Washington Post* poll, three-quarters of Americans who had contact with a federal employee in the previous year thought the employee had done his or her job fairly or very well (Rein and O'Keefe, 2010). Yet a Gallup poll taken at about the same time showed trust in government to be extremely low, with only 11 percent having a great deal of trust (Gallup, 2013). Assessing whether to trust a single individual is, of course,

very different from assessing whether to trust a large, complicated government with many employees. Direct experience with, say, someone who works for the US Postal Service is a minuscule part of the government overall, and it would not make a lot of sense to use the trustworthiness of the postal worker to judge the trustworthiness of the whole government. As such, the knowledge upon which most people base their risk assessments of government must be indirect (see Hooghe et al., 2012).

Most research points to two sources of knowledge people use as the bases for political trust: the mass media and education. Both of these sources offer indirect knowledge that bolsters expectations and provides information on outcomes. The valence of the coverage, however, tends to differ. The media often provide information about government performance that is negative, with an emphasis on conflict, government inefficiency, poor performance outcomes, and scandals. Schools, on the other hand, often emphasize a more idealistic view of government by focusing on the institutions and, in the American case, the intentions of the framers of the Constitution.

Researchers disagree to some extent over whether the mass media increase or decrease political trust (see also Chapter 22 by Newton). The more widely accepted view is that the media, especially television, contribute to cynicism and distrust because of their negative content (Robinson, 1976; Patterson, 1993; Capella and Hall Jamieson, 1997). Others, however, suggest that the media's effect is more nuanced; the type of medium matters (with television leading to more distrust and newspapers to more trust) as do pre-existing levels of trust (Norris, 2000; Avery, 2009).

The important consideration for our purposes, however, is what knowledge is generated by the media that might be used in people's risk assessments when deciding whether to trust the government. In the United States, news stories about Congress focus heavily on legislative maneuvering, scandals, and conflict (among individuals, between parties, with the president, with other political actors), which are most often portrayed as unnecessary bickering and partisanship (Morris and Clawson, 2005). Television news stories often highlight vitriolic exchanges among government officials (Mutz and Reeves, 2005). Ignored are the real policy differences, not only among elected officials but also among the American public, about what should be done to solve the country's problems. The knowledge people gain from television coverage of the government, at least in the United States, is therefore likely to make them less likely to risk trusting the government to do what is in the people's interest. People likely walk away from media coverage of government, thinking elected officials are in it for their own (selfish or partisan) interests.

The other source of knowledge that affects political trust is education. Many studies, but not all, find a positive relationship between education and political trust, with the higher educated being more trusting of government (see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian). The main argument for a positive relationship is that education increases knowledge about government, so higher-educated people better understand the political system and the culture, norms, and pressures within which political institutions operate (Hooghe, 2011). A better understanding of the political system allows for more practical expectations and more accurate assessments of risk, which then leads the higher educated to be more trusting. Hooghe and his colleagues (2014), however, argue that higher education does not have an impact on political trust levels. Rather, people who pursue more education (i.e., attend college) have higher political trust to begin with because they come

from a higher status and more privileged background. According to this argument, education does not have a value-added impact beyond the effects of status.

Clearly education has an impact on political knowledge, even taking into account social status. It may be that education not only provides the knowledge to judge government performance, it also might increase expectations concerning how government should work. According to Hetherington (2005), political trust results from people comparing their expectations about government with government outcomes. When the gap is large, with expectations being high and outcomes being poor, people have little political trust. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1996) argue that education in the United States gives Americans a glorified understanding of government that leads to false expectations. Rather than learning about the messiness, the inefficiency, and the conflict-ridden nature of Congress and its relation with the president, school children are taught to hold a pristine view of the government. This pristine view of government learned in schools is wildly different from what people see in media coverage of government, which leads to diminished political trust.

Hakhverdian and Mayne (2012) find that the relationship between education and political trust depends on context. Education is negatively related to political trust in more corrupt countries and positively related to political trust in less corrupt countries. They argue that higher-educated people have more knowledge with which to judge a government but they are also more normatively turned off when they see the government doing bad things. This work is particularly important for two reasons. First, it reinforces the idea that education fosters higher expectations for democratic governments. If the higher educated have a sense that democratic governments should be clean and transparent, then witnessing actual government performance that falls far short of this ideal would decrease trust. Second, much of the research on political trust implies that increased knowledge leads to increased trust. More knowledge about an entity, however, only leads to greater trust if the knowledge is positive. Higher-educated people have both higher education and more knowledge about the actual negative performance of the government. Knowledge makes it easier for educated people to make accurate risk assessments, but it does not guarantee that the outcome will be trust.

The expectations–outcome gap raises another important consideration. What do people have in their minds when they think about expectations and outcomes? Governments likely do some things well and other things not so well, or at least people perceive the government doing well in some areas and not so well in others. The gap, therefore, is a variable and its width depends on the policy area people are thinking about at the time. Hetherington and Husser (2012) found that political trust levels among Americans were significantly higher when they were primed to think about foreign policy than when they were primed to think about domestic policy. Interestingly, Americans have significantly less information about US foreign policy than about domestic policy, suggesting that, contrary to the cognitive approach, knowledge might not be needed for higher trust. Instead, having more knowledge might decrease trust if negative information outweighs positive information.

A problem with the knowledge–trust relationship is that people's knowledge might simply be inaccurate. Hardin's (1999) point that knowledge can be accurate or inaccurate and still affect interpersonal trust also holds for political trust. Although many people, especially Americans, are not well informed about politics, what knowledge they hold is

not necessarily correct. People might, and likely do, perceive government performance to be much worse than it really is because of this inaccurate information. In a clever study examining the impact of objective information on knowledge and, subsequently, political trust, Cook et al. (2010) found that when people are given objective information about a government program relevant to their lives (in this case Social Security), their knowledge increases as does their confidence in the government. Useful, accurate information pushes aside the inaccurate knowledge people hold about government and, at least in this case, increases their political trust.

Cognitive Ability

Knowledge, whether gained through education or the media, affects political trust. The ability to use knowledge in the sophisticated way suggested by the cognitive approach requires the ability to calculate risk and predict future behavior based on the past behavior of government officials or institutions. It is therefore likely that cognitive ability, not just knowledge, is related to political trust. People who are more intelligent are better able to connect all of the relevant dots when making a risk assessment, including knowing what knowledge is relevant when deciding whether to trust government's and discerning others' motives. 'If trust depends on an assessment of how others will deal with the interests of the actor, intelligence allows actors to determine more successfully the motivations of other actors one encounters and interacts with' (Hooghe et al., 2012, p. 604). Intelligent people are also able to engage in the abstract reasoning needed to understand that political trust helps foster collective action and the achievement of societal goals (Hooghe et al., 2012).

Education therefore plays a potentially pivotal role not only in the knowledge imparted to students but also in its role in the development of cognitive ability. Hooghe et al. (2012) find that cognitive ability plays a significant intermediary role between education and political trust. Education has a direct effect on political trust, but education also plays a role in increasing people's cognitive ability, which then increases trust. Ingrid Schoon and her colleagues (Schoon et al., 2010; Schoon and Cheng, 2011), on the other hand, model education as an intermediary link between cognitive ability and political trust (see also Deary et al., 2008). Cognitive ability was assessed when the study participants were young (around 10 or 11 years old) and their political and social attitudes were assessed when they were older (in their 30s or 40s). Cognitive ability has a direct effect on political trust and an indirect effect through occupational status, although there are important gender differences. The impact of cognitive ability on political trust among men is mediated by occupation status, whereas among women the effect is direct and stronger.

Cognitive ability has also been linked to the ability to more efficiently process political information. Political sophisticates are those who have numerous and wide-ranging political cognitions that are well organized. Not surprisingly, intelligence is highly related to political sophistication (Luskin, 1990). Given the cognitive demands of trust judgments, it makes sense that cognitive ability would be associated with trust. Interestingly, the relationship between cognitive ability and political trust is positive, which means that more intelligent people think more highly of their government than less intelligent people (Schoon et al., 2010; Schoon and Cheng, 2011; Hooghe et al., 2012). These studies,

however, were done in advanced Western democracies that score low on corruption. If intelligence affects people's ability to process information, it makes sense to predict that intelligent people in corrupt democracies would have low political trust.

Political sophisticates have the knowledge and cognitive capacity to process information relevant to political trust quickly and easily. Many people, however, are not interested in politics, pay it little attention, and are rarely motivated to expend the cognitive effort needed to make sense of what the government is doing and how they ought to judge government processes and performance. The cognitive model of political trust places heavy demands on people, in terms of obtaining and processing information and using abstract reasoning that goes along with making trust judgments, but it is unlikely that they actually go through this process each time they decide whether to trust the government. They are busy with many things other than politics – jobs, families, friends, hobbies – leaving little time to gather the requisite knowledge. Fortunately, people are able to use cognitive heuristics when determining their political trust level, which dramatically simplifies the task at hand. Heuristics allow people to make judgments based on minimal information and little cognitive effort. These heuristics 'keep the information processing demands of the task within bounds' (Abelson and Levi, 1985, p. 255).

Based on accumulated experiences in their everyday lives, people figure out fairly quickly how to determine the trustworthiness of others. Constant feedback on whether their trustworthiness assessments have been accurate gives people the information they need to develop cognitive heuristics they can use in future situations involving whether to trust another person. People who live in communities with an active civic life are especially likely to develop a trust heuristic. In such communities, they are socialized to be trustworthy themselves and to view others as trustworthy (Letki, 2006). Scholz and Lubell (1998) argue that people generalize the trust heuristics they learn through direct experiences in their face-to-face communities to large-scale societies, and specifically to government. When a situation arises in which they must determine whether or not to trust the government, the decision is relatively easy given their trust heuristics.

People also use their trust in one part of the government to decide whether to trust other parts. Americans appear to generalize their trust in Congress to the federal government as a whole (Hetherington, 2005). Trust in the federal government is also strongly and positively related to trust in their local government (Rahn and Rudolph, 2005). In Great Britain, trust in political parties and trust in politicians are unidimensional, suggesting that people assess various political actors taking into account shared context and a generalizable trust heuristic (Hooghe, 2011). Trust heuristics are not limited to intranational entities, however. Armingeon and Ceka (2013) find that Europeans' trust in the European Union is heavily influenced by the trust they have in their national government. More work needs to be done to determine how trust heuristics are developed and applied, but it is clear that people utilize information and trust judgments from political entities they know more about and apply them to political entities about which they are less knowledgeable. For both the politically sophisticated and unsophisticated, these trust heuristics diminish the cognitive demands of the cognitive approach to trust.

POLITICAL TRUST AND THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS

As reviewed above, research on cognitive processes underlying political trust levels have tended to focus on how the citizenry makes rational calculations based on risk assessments of government performance of the involved institutions and political actors. Alternatively or additionally to the ‘cognitive “route to trust”’ (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012, p. 56) scholars have argued over the past two decades that it is important to consider the extent to which affective processes play a role in the development and maintenance of political trust levels. At a basic level, affective cues or emotional responses to actions or the lack thereof on the part of government can serve as information shortcuts that allow individuals to form political evaluations on the basis of an even less cognitively demanding route than is assumed by those who lean heavily on cognitive heuristics (Rahn et al., 1996; Rahn, 2000; Schwarz, 2000; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012). The implications of low-information rationality (e.g., Simon, 1985; Popkin, 1991) for the formation of political trust levels are such that the cognitive route may be less utilized than previously thought. As Grimmelikhuijsen notes, ‘a decision to trust a government organization may therefore not always be conscious and/or rational’ (2012, p. 57). The question as to whether affective information serves as a replacement or a complement to more cognitively based deliberations is one that is still in need of empirical investigation, a point we will return to later, but the importance of the role of affect and emotion in determining political trust levels is one that psychologically makes sense given the cognitive constraints individuals face. Additionally, in light of advances in our understanding of how information processes work in the brain, it is unrealistic to expect cognitive processes to work in isolation from those affective in nature (e.g., Lieberman, 2003;Forgas, 2012; Lodge and Taber, 2013).

In recent years, careful research on the role of affect and emotion in political reasoning has made important advances (e.g., Marcus et al., 2000; Neuman, 2007; Lodge and Taber, 2013) but the dominance of the cognitive revolution is still apparent when one compares the number of studies devoted to understanding cognitive processes versus those attending to affective or emotional reactions. Nowhere is this gap more pronounced than in the case of research on political trust. Although prior research has long recognized the affective dimension involved particularly in interpersonal trust relationships (Lewis and Weigert, 1985; McAllister, 1995), Grimmelikhuijsen points out this is less so in the case of ‘institutional trust relations such as trust in government’ (2012, p. 57; also see Lewis and Weigert, 1985). This is not to say that scholarly definitions of political trust have neglected the affective underpinnings of political trust. For instance, Thomas in his exploration of trust in government agencies and the associated employees notes that ‘trust includes cognitive, emotional and behavioral components’ (1998, p. 173). Rudolph and Evans describe political trust as ‘a global affective orientation toward government’ (2005, p. 661). Despite recognition at a conceptual level that political trust involves both cognitive and affective bases, empirical assessments focused either in part or wholly on the emotional side of the coin have been few and far between. Below we provide an overview of the pioneering efforts to advance our understanding of the affective and emotional foundations of political trust. Next, we briefly review the emerging perspective that cognitive and affective processes are intricately connected. The main takeaway in our view is that future research should attend to *both* routes to political trust. We identify a number of research avenues that would aim to take this call seriously. As scholars strive to correct the imbalance in

the current literature that is dominated by cognitive approaches, it would be wise to take advantage of the theory building present in the growing literature on interpersonal trust where greater attention has been paid to the role of affect and emotion (e.g., Jones and George, 1998; Williams, 2001; Dunn and Schweitzer, 2005; Myers and Tingley, 2011).

Adding Emotion to the Cognitive Mix

There is still much work to be done to disentangle and better understand the interconnected relationship between cognitive and affective processes underlying political trust levels. This being said, a handful of studies have taken important first steps that have advanced our understanding of the role of emotion when it comes to the degree to which citizens trust government and its associated actors. These works stand out because they are among the few that empirically assess both the cognitive and affective bases of political trust. Two of these are concerned with the ability of mass media, especially television, to activate emotional reactions that subsequently influence political trust.

Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1998) provide one of the first efforts to differentiate cognitive versus emotional reactions to Congress. They contend that the mode of media exposure is key to understanding whether individuals' attitudes toward Congress, including trust levels, are cognitively or emotionally based. In short, the medium matters. Specifically, they posit and provide empirical support for the claim that individuals are more likely to have negative emotional reactions to Congress when information is obtained via digital media such as television and radio, compared to newspapers. The argument holds that the visuals of television along with the controversial nature of talk radio are more likely to capture people's attention as well as to evoke emotional reactions. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1998) find that neither usage frequency nor choice of media outlet influenced cognitive evaluations of members of Congress, measured via feeling thermometers. But as predicted this was not the case for emotional reactions to Congress, measured using survey self-reports. Greater media exposure, and in particular, exposure to television and radio, tended to evoke more negative emotional reactions toward Congress.

Emotions and Media Content

Similarly, Mutz and Reeves (2005) focus on disentangling emotional reactions from cognitive evaluations as moderated by exposure to televised content, specifically when it contains political incivility. Central to their theoretical account is the argument that when political actors violate face-to-face social norms of politeness, television viewers' emotional reactions will not be mediated by cognition. That is, the cognitive awareness that this is 'only television' will not kick in to moderate reactions. Using a series of experiments, Mutz and Reeves show that viewing uncivil political disagreements compared to civil versions of the same discourse lowered levels of trust in politicians, Congress, and the American political system. Additionally, a unique feature of their design involved collection of physiological measures that enabled them to offer a direct assessment of whether incivility triggered emotional, gut-level reactions as hypothesized. While cognitive assessments measured as feeling thermometers toward the political actors involved in the discussion were not adversely affected, skin conductance levels were higher among viewers of the uncivil exchange, signaling an automatic emotional response. Mutz and

Reeves also show that the uncivil versions of the political discussion were perceived to be more entertaining and viewers were more likely to indicate a desire to watch the program again. Thus the same emotional reaction linked to lowered trust levels is also associated with increased entertainment value. The authors point out the concerns this finding raises for promoting a citizenry that is both attentive and trusting.

These two works empirically investigated the cognitive *and* emotional processes that influence the public's trust in government institutions and the associated political actors. Whereas Hibbing and Theiss-Morse's (1998) work on political trust levels addresses the emotional versus cognitive effects of the *medium* used to deliver the message, Mutz and Reeves (2005) build on this theoretical foundation to further elucidate how specific *content*, in this case incivility, influences political trust levels. With a similar focus on the content of the message, Grimmelikhuijsen (2012) explores the route by which exposure to transparency involving government performance affects political trust levels via either cognitive or affective processes. In short, the author argues that government transparency could influence political trust levels via two distinct routes. On the one hand and representing the cognitive route, increased knowledge of the government's workings resulting from greater transparency could be the cause of higher political trust levels. On the other hand and representing an affective response, the author argues that individuals should experience greater positivity when greater levels of transparency are present and that this emotional response could lead to higher political trust levels. To investigate the extent to which cognitive versus affective processes are at play, Grimmelikhuijsen (2012) uses an experimental design in which participants accessed different versions of a website involving the topic of local air pollution where the key manipulation involved the level of transparency such that information was either easy or difficult to comprehend. Measures of knowledge gained via exposure to information on the websites capture the potential cognitive influences while the degree of transparency is linked to affective processes that the author assumes to occur when transparency is greater regardless of the amount of knowledge gained. Interestingly, this is not a direct measure of affective processes but rather it is assumed that mere exposure to transparency generates a positive affective response. Grimmelikhuijsen (2012) finds mixed evidence that both cognitive and affective processes linked exposure to transparency and trust in a specific government agency. However, the factor that had the largest contribution to trust levels in a specific government agency was self-reported general political trust levels. 'Existing attitudes towards government are thus far more important than the effect of transparency or knowledge alone' (Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012, p. 67). The extent to which cognitive versus affective processes contribute to the development of general political trust levels is not addressed by this particular study and thus calls for future investigation.

What About Positive Emotions?

Most research on emotions and political trust has tended to focus on negative emotions. This general trend in the literature is well illustrated by the studies discussed above. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (1998) utilize emotional reaction measures that assess the extent to which individuals felt anger, unease, fear, or disgust toward members of Congress. The physiological measures of arousal used by Mutz and Reeves (2005) are unable to differentiate the valence of the emotional responses evoked by exposure

to incivility but it seems more plausible that the emotional responses are negatively valenced given their erosive effects on political trust levels. In addition to these examples, Thomas points out that the National Election Study items used to construct the Trust in Government Index ‘speak to a limited conception of trust, in which trust in government is contrasted with cynicism or an individual’s feeling of alienation from, or hostility toward, government’ (1998, p. 167).

A notable exception to this trend in the literature is Gross et al.’s (2009) emphasis on positive emotions when they examine the interrelationships between confidence in government and feelings of hope and pride in the period immediately following the 2001 terrorist attacks. Their study also stands out as one of the few to utilize panel data (collected in fall 2001 and summer 2002) to explore the ability of emotional responses to sustain confidence levels that at the time were unusually high. To build their theoretical expectations, they draw on Schwarz’s (2000) affect-as-information approach, an approach that was similarly adapted by Rahn (Rahn et al., 1996; Rahn, 2000) in her work on social trust. The overarching argument is that affective information is less cognitively demanding to acquire and will be applied when deemed relevant to the decision-making task at hand. Extending this argument to confidence in government, Gross et al. posit ‘that emotional reactions to terrorist threats are seen as relevant to judgments about the political institutions responsible for the fight against terrorism’ (2009, p. 110). In short, government performance in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks could be responsible for generating specific emotional responses. In turn, these emotional responses could be viewed as a product of government performance and consequently could be used as a heuristic to inform assessments of the government institutions and the political actors involved. Both the emotions of hope and pride had immediate effects on confidence levels but as predicted by cognitive appraisal theories that differentiate between specific discreet emotions, the prospective emotion of hope contributed to sustaining confidence levels nearly one year later while the retrospective emotion of pride did not. Additionally, the authors investigate whether confidence levels may influence emotional responses and in fact find ‘a reciprocal relationship between confidence and hope: Each helped maintain the other’ (*ibid.*, p. 120).

Gross et al. (2009) make a compelling case that there is a place for positive emotions in the maintenance of political trust levels. As the only study to our knowledge to explore the role of positive emotions, this is an area that could benefit from greater theoretical development and further empirical investigations. As Gross et al. (2009) point out in their concluding comments, future work needs to explore the generalizability of their findings given the unique context of the period immediately following the 2001 terrorist attacks.

Furthermore, rather than focusing on negative or positive emotions, it would be helpful for scholars to develop theoretical expectations regarding the conditions when one type versus the other is likely to be more influential. Additionally, it would be informative to know which of the two types of emotion is more influential when it comes to affecting political trust levels. It would seem reasonable to expect a negativity bias but this remains an empirical question. Next, we review the emerging perspective regarding the interconnected nature of cognition and affect before highlighting a few areas where future research could make important contributions to our understanding of political trust.

POLITICAL TRUST AND THE INTERSECTION OF EMOTION AND COGNITION

Cognitive perspectives prevail when it comes to research on the foundations and effects of political trust. A glaring reality of the state of political trust research that explores the role of affect and emotion is its scarcity. At best the singular reliance on the cognitive approach is myopic. To have a fuller understanding of how citizens formulate and adjust their levels of trust in political institutions and the associated actors, future research should attend to the role of affect in these processes. We would like to take this call a step further and suggest that it is important for greater effort to be devoted to understanding how cognitive and affective processes work together to influence political trust levels.

Given advances in our theoretical accounts of information processing as well as methodological advances in neuroscience, the idea that cognitive and affective processes are competing ones that can be analyzed separately is now viewed as an outdated mode of thought. Despite lingering debates as to whether affective processes should be viewed as part of a ‘separate system’, the emerging trend in the fields of psychology, neuroscience, and, more recently, political psychology, is to adopt an ‘interactionist approach’.Forgas writes, ‘most contemporary affect-cognition approaches in social-psychology also assume, explicitly or implicitly, that affect is part of a single, integrated cognitive representational system’ (2012, p. 6). It is generally accepted that affective reactions precede cognitive processes but within a time frame of milliseconds, making the separation of the two more of a theoretical quibble (e.g., Forgas, 2012; Lodge and Taber, 2013). Lodge and Taber have this to say on the issue: ‘[A]ffect and cognition are unitized in memory and difficult (we believe impossible) to disentangle in practice, though they remain conceptually distinct’ (2013, p. 53). The debate over whether it is possible to separate cognitive and affective reactions can be traced to the heart of long-standing criticisms of self-report emotion measures. More recently, studies involving brain scans (e.g., Lieberman, 2003) speak to this ongoing debate and provide further empirical support for the idea that cognition and affect are closely integrated and interact as part of a single system. Additionally, considering that trust evaluations have been shown to be made in the brain within milliseconds (Dimoka, 2010), it is questionable as to whether it would be possible to truly disentangle the cognitive and affective contributions to such rapid-fire assessments. We tend to agree with the emerging perspective that realistically it is extremely difficult, perhaps impossible given the current state of measurement approaches, to separate the interconnected relationship between cognitive and affective processes.

POLITICAL TRUST AVENUES TO SIMULTANEOUSLY EXPLORE EMOTION AND COGNITION

Despite these advances in our understanding of information processing, scholars have yet to fully integrate these new ways of thinking about thinking and feeling into the main theories and methodological approaches employed in research on political trust levels. Consequently, the opportunities for significant advancements in this area remain great. As reviewed above, important inroads have been made to expand our understanding of the affective bases of political trust but much remains to be done in this area. To conclude,

we identify specific ways future research can expand our understanding by attending to both the cognitive and affective routes to political trust. To keep our comments brief, we will primarily focus on a few general areas where we see tremendous potential for growth.

Past research that has attempted to examine both cognitive and affective processes has tended to view them as alternative or competing routes to political trust. Our theoretical accounts would be more realistic if research began with the notion that political trust involves cognitive *and* affective processes. Thus our studies should include measures of both cognitive and affective reactions. Furthermore, it is very likely that some of these affective processes occur outside conscious awareness (e.g., Lodge and Taber, 2013). This recognition has important implications for the measurement approaches employed to study political trust levels. Mutz and Reeves' (2005) use of physiological measures is the only exception to widespread reliance on self-report emotion measures. Greater effort should be made to integrate measures capable of capturing automatic emotional reactions.

Although cognitive and affective processes may both contribute to political trust levels, this is not to say that certain mediating factors, be they rooted in context or in individual differences, may influence the extent to which cognitive versus affective factors are more influential. This is an area where we see potential for scholars to make significant progress in advancing our theoretical accounts. For instance, in times of turmoil such as those involving economic crises or war, affective processes may play a larger role than cognitive ones. In terms of individual differences, knowledge levels may determine the extent to which affective versus cognitive processes drive trust levels. Additionally, personality factors may play a decisive role in the tendency to rely on affective versus cognitive factors when developing political trust (see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache for a detailed discussion of work exploring the influence of personality on political trust). A direct comparison of the contributions of cognitive versus affective factors in the development and maintenance of political trust levels has yet to be conducted.

With the notable exceptions of the studies on incivility and transparency (e.g., Mutz and Reeves, 2005; Grimmelikhuijsen, 2012), limited research has addressed the question of what aspects of media coverage are likely to influence political trust levels and more specifically which elements are more likely to activate affective versus cognitive reactions. Although early research documented that television in particular tends to evoke emotional responses, greater effort needs to explore the specific content more or less likely to produce emotional reactions that are consequential for political trust levels. Beyond the content of coverage, future political trust research may also want to attend to how other aspects such as the frequency of media coverage activate emotional reactions. For instance, salacious information when initially encountered may produce an emotional reaction but after prolonged exposure such information could eventually fail to have much impact at all (e.g., Mitchell, 2013). Greater attention should be paid to the specific nature of media coverage responsible for activating emotional responses.

Interestingly, research on the affective bases of political trust has yet to address directly the central theoretical accounts that are used in the more traditional cognitive approaches. For instance, studies dominated by the cognitive approach to trust tend to focus on rational calculations involving the assessments of risk, predictions of future behavior, and the gap between expectations and outcomes. It seems reasonable that affective reactions might also play a role in these calculations and risk assessments yet empirical research has yet to explore this possibility.

CONCLUSION

Political trust levels provide a critical component of the foundation for any electoral system. Assessing the health of that foundation is a central task of political trust research. This is why there is concern when citizens take to the streets and political trust levels seem to continually plummet, leaving one to wonder how many consecutive years will headline-making, all-time lows be mathematically possible. Thus it comes as no surprise that political scientists have long been interested in peering into the minds of citizens to better understand the factors that influence political trust. Integral to the formation and all too often erosion of the citizenry's trust in government are the roles of thinking and feeling.

As highlighted by our review, despite the significance of both, political trust research has tended to be divided into two camps. Evoking imagery of a David versus Goliath scenario, only a handful of studies explore the role of affect and emotion compared to the mammoth body of research on the role of cognition. This division in the literature reinforces a false dichotomy between cognition and emotion and fails to integrate our enhanced understanding of the ways the two interact in our brains. Cognitive and affective processes work together to produce and alter the degree of trust individuals place in the political system and its representatives. Like other areas in political science, the lingering effects of the cognitive revolution are clearly evident in the current research streams. Our hope is that by highlighting this discrepancy, future political trust research will take up the call to seriously attend to both cognition and affect and more importantly the interaction of the two. We look forward to seeing this imbalance corrected and to the blurred lines that follow.

NOTE

1. An alternative to the rational, or strategic, approach to interpersonal trust is Eric Uslaner's 'moralistic trust'. Moralistic trust involves no calculations of risk or predictions of another person's behavior. It is, instead, universal trust such that a person decides to trust other people because it is the right thing to do (Uslaner, 2002).

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11. Education, socialization, and political trust*

Quinton Mayne and Armen Hakhverdian

INTRODUCTION

It is a century since the publication of *Democracy and Education*, in which John Dewey (1916) extolled the potential of education to produce better citizens and better democracy. Since then and with the emergence of the field of political behavior, a great deal of empirical research has been undertaken aimed at uncovering education's impact on the functioning of democracy. As a result, a large body of scholarship now exists on the effects of education on all manner of electoral and non-electoral behavior (Parry et al., 1992; Verba et al., 1995; Nie et al., 1996; Schlozman et al., 2012). In contrast, individual-level research on political trust has generally paid scant attention to education as an explanatory variable. This is not to say that education is absent from individual-level studies of political trust. Included as a standard demographic control, education is in fact a perennial variable in models of political trust, but until fairly recently its inclusion has been justified with little reflection. Moreover, as is often the case with standard control variables, results relating to the effects of education are generally noted only in passing. As a consequence, surveying the large body of existing individual-level research on political trust reveals little evidence of cumulative learning or any sense of collective understanding among scholars regarding the effects of education.¹ To begin to understand the effects of education on political trust therefore involves a certain amount of excavation, bringing to light a whole series of findings that have been more or less hidden from sight.

This chapter is founded on the proposition that citizens grant or withhold political trust based on their evaluation of the performance of political actors and institutions. Within this broader so-called 'rationalist' framework of political trust, we focus on the norms and skills that citizens draw on to make informed judgments about institutional performance. These norms and skills do not emerge out of thin air; rather, they are formed and cultivated over time. From early on, children, adolescents, and young adults are exposed to a variety of environmental influences – schools, home life, and so on – that shape their personality, predispositions, abilities, and attitudes. In short, citizens are socialized into thinking and behaving in ways that may or may not lead to the generation of political trust. We understand political socialization as 'society's molding of the child' (Sears, 1975), and in the pages that follow we focus on the educational system as a site where a considerable part of this 'molding' takes place. More specifically, education has what we have previously labeled 'accuracy-inducing' and 'norm-inducing' functions (Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012): the former enables citizens to obtain and make sense of information when evaluating political actors; with the latter citizens are more likely to be normatively troubled by evidence of institutional dysfunction.

It is important to note though that schools and universities are but one agent of socialization. The family is critical too. Transmission of norms and values from parents to children has long been an important area of research within electoral studies, in part because

partisan predispositions were early on shown to be passed from one generation to the next (Jennings and Niemi, 1974). Whether or not a transmission model of parental socialization is applicable to other attitudes besides partisan attachments is less well understood. If norms and skills are acquired more at home than at school, then there is good reason to doubt any account that suggests education as having a causal effect on political trust. We address this very issue in the latter part of this chapter.

We begin with an overview of existing research that reports findings related to the individual-level effects of education on political trust. Mapping the results of this research suggests that the relationship between education and trust is context specific. We then turn to a review of earlier research in which we argue that the relationship between education and political trust is conditional on the performance of a country's democratic institutions. This is followed by an overview of research that examines the role that schools and colleges play in generating political trust among adolescents and young adults. We conclude the chapter by drawing attention to a recent body of scholarship that calls into question the causal import of education, arguing instead that education should be viewed as a proxy for preadult socialization processes that occur largely outside of the educational environment.

UNEARTHING PATTERNS

Systemically cataloguing the findings of research that relies on mass survey data, it appears that there is no consistent individual-level relationship between education and political trust. A large number of empirical studies suggest that education exerts a positive and statistically significant effect on political trust; an equally large body of work suggests the opposite. In a third set of studies, authors find that education and political trust are unrelated at conventional levels of statistical significance. These contradictory findings emerge without regard to the object of political trust – whether the analysis in question uses data for trust in a single political institution or a summative measure of trust in several political institutions. What does appear to coincide with the nature of education's effect is the type of country or countries in which survey data are collected.

Table 11.1 contains bibliographic references to around 40 separate publications on political trust. We have organized these based on whether they contain empirical analyses of data drawn from established democracies, new democracies, or a mix of the two.² In classifying existing research in this way, a striking pattern becomes clear. In studies that find a statistically significant positive relationship between education and political trust, the data on political trust have overwhelmingly been gathered in high-income, consolidated democracies. Analyses that reveal a statistically significant negative relationship between education and political trust rely on survey data that come almost exclusively from new or consolidating democracies. Finally, studies that fail to establish a statistically significant relationship between education and political trust are more or less as likely to use data from old as well as new democracies.

These findings clearly suggest that the effect of education on political trust is context specific. But why, compared to their less educated counterparts, are more educated citizens generally more trusting of political institutions in long-standing democracies, while in new and consolidating democracies the opposite is largely true? This was the very

Table 11.1 Relationship between education and political trust

Sample	Positive	Negative	Statistically Non-significant
Old democracies	Anderson et al., 2005	Cook and Gronke, 2005*	Anderson and LoTempio, 2002*
	Anderson and LoTempio, 2002*	King, 1997*	Bäck and Kestilä, 2008*
	Bäck and Kestilä, 2008*	Mangum, 2011*	Catterberg and Moreno, 2006
	Chanvrial et al., 2011*		Chang and Chu, 2006*
	Christensen and Lægreid, 2005*		Cook and Gronke, 2005*
	Criado and Herreros, 2007		Denters et al., 2007
	Denters et al., 2007		Earl Bennett et al., 1999*
	Goul Andersen, 2004*		Hetherington, 2005*
	Hetherington, 1998*		Kumlin, 2004
	Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 1995		Listhaug, 2006*
	Kumlin, 2004		Magalhães, 2006*
	Listhaug, 2006*		Mangum, 2011*
	Magalhães, 2006*		McAllister, 1999
	Miller and Borrelli, 1991*		Newton, 1999*
	Moy and Scheufele, 2000*		Schyns and Koop, 2010*
	Newton, 1999*		Zmerli et al., 2007
	Norris, 1999		
	Norris, 2000		
	Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck, 2002*		
	Schnaudt, 2013*		
	Strømsnes, 2003*		
	Van de Walle et al., 2005*		
	Zmerli et al., 2007		
New democracies	Kluegel and Mason, 2004*	Canache and Allison, 2005	Askvik et al., 2010
	Morris and Klesner, 2010*	Catterberg and Moreno, 2006	Anderson et al., 2005
	Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck, 2002*	Chang and Chu, 2006*	Catterberg and Moreno, 2006
	Schnaudt, 2013*	Chiru and Gherghina, 2012**	Cleary and Stokes, 2006*
		Čuvalo, 2013*	Chiru and Gherghina, 2012**
		Denters et al., 2007	Čuvalo, 2013*
		Hutchison, 2011	Denters et al., 2007
		Hutchison, 2011	Hutchison, 2011
		Hutchison and Johnson, 2011	Johnson, 2005
		Johnson, 2005	Kim, 2005*
		Kluegel and Mason, 2004*	Kluegel and Mason, 2004*
		Kuenzi, 2008*	Kuenzi, 2008*
		Magalhães, 2006*	Magalhães, 2006*
		Manzetti and Wilson, 2006*	Manzetti and Wilson, 2006*
		McAllister, 1999	McAllister, 1999
		Mishler and Rose, 2001	Mishler and Rose, 2001
		Schyns and Koop, 2010*	Schyns and Koop, 2010*

Table 11.1 (continued)

Sample	Positive	Negative	Statistically Non-significant
New democracies		Manzetti and Wilson, 2006* McAllister, 1999 Seligson, 2002* Štulhofer, 2004* Zmerli et al., 2007	Seligson, 2002* Wong et al., 2009 Zmerli et al., 2007
New and old democracies	Anderson et al., 2005 Anderson and Singer, 2008 Kotzian, 2011 Norris, 1999 Van der Meer, 2010 Weakliem, 2002	Denters et al., 2007 Kotzian, 2011 Mishler and Rose, 2001 Weakliem, 2002	Anderson and Tverdova, 2003 Denters et al., 2007 Kotzian, 2011

Notes:

Some studies appear more than once because they present separate and divergent results for individual countries or because they examine a single country using data from different time periods and find that the effect of education on political trust changes over time.

* Reported finding comes from analyses of data from a single country.

** Reported finding comes from analyses of data from a single country as well as pooled data for multiple countries.

question that we sought to shed light on in an earlier study (Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012). Using individual-level data on political trust from 13 Western European and eight Eastern and Central European democracies, collected in 2008–09 as part of Round 4 of the European Social Survey (ESS), we found clear evidence that the direction and magnitude of the effect of education on political trust was conditional on the pervasiveness of public sector corruption. In countries with low levels of corruption, education boosts political trust, whereas in countries with comparatively high levels of corruption, education dampens political trust. In addition, our analyses also showed evidence that education moderates the effect of corruption on political trust. Specifically, we found that the corrosive effect of corruption on political trust increases with individual-level education, except, however, for the least educated whose trust in political institutions appeared to be unaffected by corruption. A somewhat worrying finding from a democratic point of view, this suggests that some citizens (and arguably those with the fewest socioeconomic advantages) are inured to corruption and other forms of systemic dysfunctionality.

When we replicate our previous analyses with the sixth wave of the European Social Survey, we reach similar conclusions. Figure 11.1 displays mean levels of political trust for higher- and lower-educated citizens alongside a country's level of public sector corruption.³ In most countries the higher educated exhibit more trust in political institutions than the lower educated, but the strength and direction of this 'trust gap' clearly varies across countries. As countries become more corrupt, the trust gap becomes smaller, disappears altogether, or even reverses in sign. Figure 11.2 shows that the relationship between this trust gap and a country's level of public-sector corruption is quite strong.

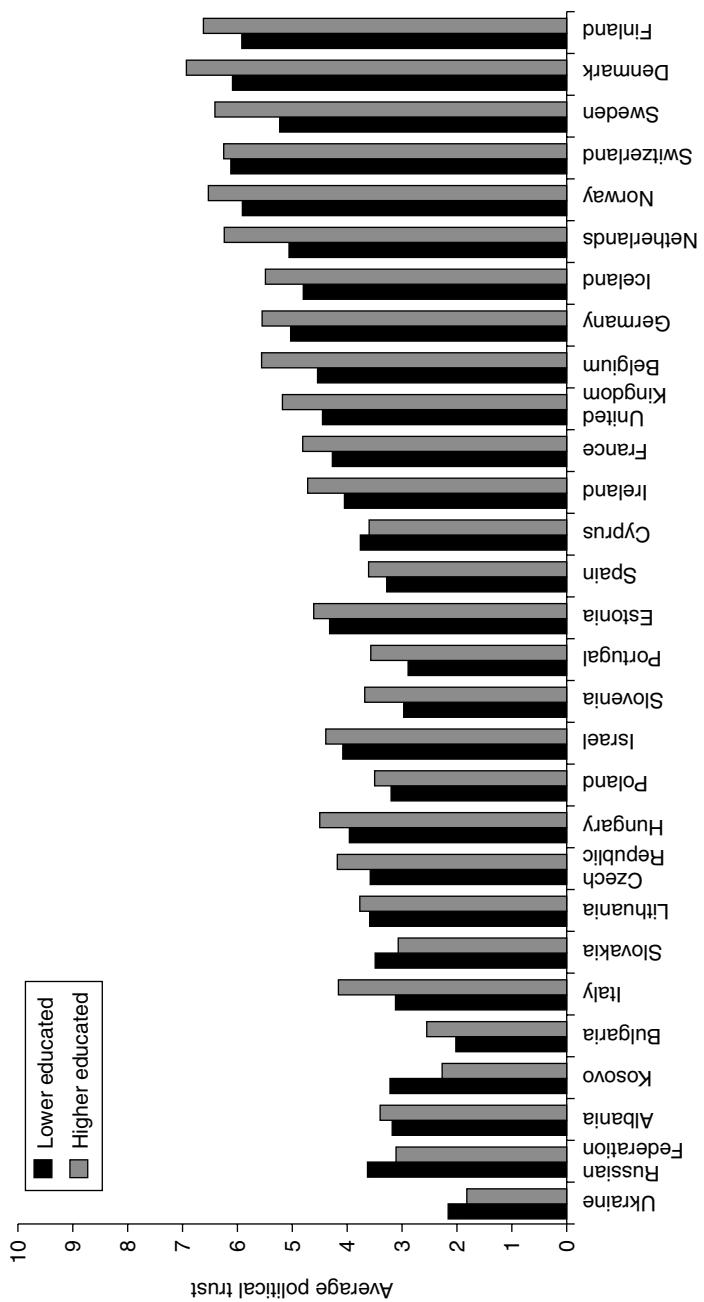


Figure 11.1 Education and political trust in Europe

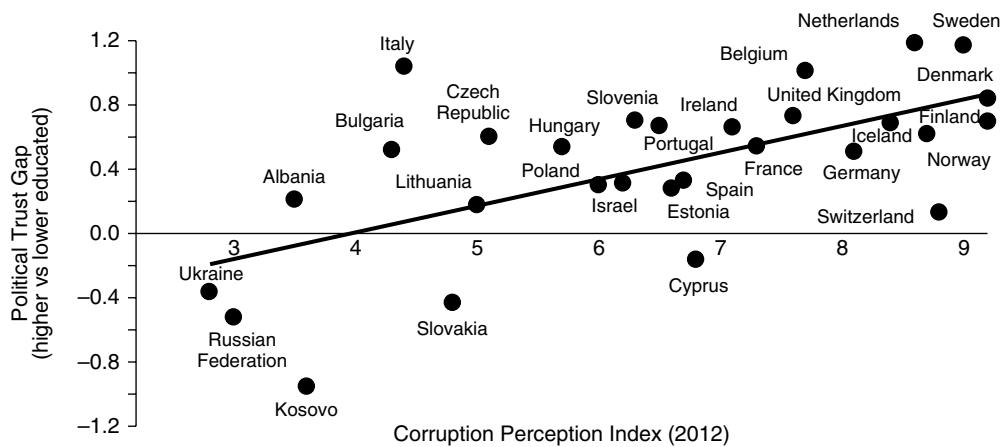


Figure 11.2 *The education gap, corruption, and political trust in Europe*

Institutional dysfunction is usually accompanied by strong feelings of distrust, especially among higher-educated citizens. Van der Meer and Hakhverdian (2016) found similar patterns using data from the ESS with another, larger sample of countries and different measures of political trust.

Our earlier study made the argument that we observe these interactive effects of education and corruption on political trust for two reasons. First, citizens grant or withhold political trust based on their evaluation of the performance of political actors and institutions. Second, citizens with more education are not only more likely to be better able to identify practices that undermine the smooth functioning of democratic institutions, they are also more likely to be normatively troubled by such practices.

RATIONALIST EVALUATION

Our first proposition regarding the interactive effects of education and corruption relies on a fundamentally rationalist account of political trust. In contrast to ‘culturalist’ understandings of political trust as something with deep socio-cultural roots, we view political trust through a ‘rationalist’ lens as a primarily evaluative orientation (Hetherington, 1998; Mishler and Rose, 2001). As such, our theoretical prior is that political trust is largely a product of popular judgment regarding the performance of political institutions. Put simply, ordinary citizens extend trust to political institutions that are working well and withhold trust from those that are not. From a rationalist point of view, political trust will therefore be driven in important ways by the extent to which a citizen believes political institutions are meeting the standards she sets for procedural and policy performance. This idea that political trust is fundamentally the product of a performance-based evaluation finds a great deal of support in the sizeable body of work that has examined the effects of public sector corruption on attitudes related to political support. Time and again we see the corrosive effects

of corruption on people's trust in the actors and institutions of government (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Seligson, 2002; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Chang and Chu, 2006; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012; see also Chapter 19 by Uslaner). What this literature highlights is that corruption undermines political trust in a number of different ways. On the one hand, it affects the procedural performance of political institutions; on the other hand, corruption makes it extremely difficult for governments to produce policies and services that are responsive to the general public (Warren, 2004; Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005).

ACCURACY AND NORMS

If the granting and withholding of political trust is fundamentally driven by a rationalist evaluation of institutional performance, why should education matter? Based on existing research there are sound theoretical and empirical reasons to believe that education not only helps citizens accurately identify practices that undermine the smooth functioning of democratic institutions, but also that it leads citizens to be more normatively troubled by such practices. For simplicity's sake, we refer to these as the accuracy-inducing and norm-inducing functions of education. To be clear, in arguing that education serves these two functions we are explicitly acknowledging that children, adolescents, and young adults *acquire* skills and norms as a result of their schooling. Or, borrowing the terminology of Sears (1975), our basic claim is that students are in an important sense 'molded' by schools, colleges, and universities.

Any act of evaluation requires a capacity to obtain and make sense of information related to the object being evaluated. In the case of political trust, the object of evaluation is the performance of political institutions and actors. In view of the findings of a wealth of single-country and comparative research, there is every reason to believe that education enhances the ability of citizens to acquire and process the very information required to accurately evaluate the performance of political institutions and actors. Even after controlling for a host of other variables, formal education produces a number of different and oftentimes related changes in individuals that facilitate the acquisition and processing of information necessary for arriving at an accurate assessment of the functioning of political institutions.

Education has, for example, repeatedly been shown to have a positive effect on the amount and type of attention citizens pay to politics and public affairs. The more educated consistently express more interest in politics than the less educated (Verba et al., 1995; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996). Education has also been shown to be positively related to time spent reading newspapers, itself an important means of obtaining political information (Dee, 2004; Elvestad and Blekesaune, 2008; Shehata and Strömbäck, 2011). Moreover, citizens with higher levels of education have a greater tendency to undertake a range of political activities that provide opportunities for learning about the quality of political institutions. This includes, for instance, attending public meetings, making contact with public officials, and following electoral campaigns (Milligan et al., 2004; Pattie et al., 2004; Aars and Strømsnes, 2007).

A large body of research also underscores the important direct and indirect role played by formal education in enhancing political knowledge. The more educated are more

likely to respond correctly to questions of fact related to the key players and workings of their political system (Hyman et al., 1975; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996; Milner, 2002). The more educated have also been shown to be better able to place parties on issues and ideology and more likely to form attitudes consistent with their own ideological leanings (Jacoby, 1991; Gordon and Segura, 1997; Aarts and Semetko, 2003). Interestingly, there is also evidence to suggest that, compared to the less educated, the higher educated are more likely to accurately assess their particular country's overall respect for human rights (Anderson et al., 2005).

While education makes it easier for citizens to acquire and process information related to the performance of democratic institutions and actors, there is nothing intrinsic about the possession of such information that should lead citizens to view underperformance or mismanagement negatively. In order to hypothesize about this link between knowledge and evaluation we need to establish *how* citizens react to information about democratic dysfunction. Education has long been shown to leave an indelible mark both on people's broad normative proclivities and on the store they set by democratic rule. For example, over the years research has repeatedly shown that support for a range of liberal moral values, including equality and tolerance, grows with years of schooling (Hyman and Wright, 1979; Bobo and Licari, 1989; Nie et al., 1996; Vogt, 1997). Scholars have also argued that in established democracies the more educated are more likely to support and defend core democratic values and principles (McClosky and Zaller, 1984, pp. 239–40; Dalton, 1994, p. 483; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002, p. 771). In the past decade, drawing in part on earlier waves of modernization research, a body of work has emerged that also highlights the positive links between years of schooling and support for democracy in new democracies and non-democracies (Jamal, 2006; Evans and Rose, 2007; Kotzian, 2011).

To recap, it was based on these two bodies of work, supporting the accuracy- and norm-inducing functions of education, that we provided a theoretical account of our empirical observation that the magnitude and direction of the effect of education on political trust was conditional on levels of corruption. Given the cross-national survey data available we were unable, however, to test for the existence of the accuracy- and norm-related mechanisms linking education and political trust. Moreover, in retrospect an implicit assumption of our earlier research was that formal education provides adolescents and young adults with particular skills and commitments that they draw on only later in life to evaluate the performance of political institutions. In other words, skills and commitments are primarily acquired through pre- or early adult socialization in formal education, and political trust is generated later. There are grounds, however, to believe that the granting and withholding of political trust is more immediate and actually results from cumulative experience bridging adolescence and adulthood.

SCHOOLS OF TRUST

In the past decade or so, and especially in the last five years, scholars (mainly from political science but also from education and psychology) have made efforts to open up the black box of education and scrutinize the mechanisms by which and the conditions under which schooling might affect political trust.⁴ Most of this new research relies on data

drawn from surveys of adolescents. Some of this uses cross-sectional data, mainly from a single country where young people enrolled in different schools or different educational programs are the object of study. Most of these studies, however, rely on single-nation panel data, tracking individuals in the same country through their adolescence, and in some instances even into their 20s. In addition a small number of published pieces use single-country post-adolescent panel data, focusing on the effects of higher education, while an even smaller set of publications uses cross-sectional data with a mixed sample of adolescents and adults. It is also worth noting that most research published to date that explicitly seeks to uncover the mechanisms by which education *per se* affects political trust relies on survey data from a small sample of advanced industrial democracies.

Two key findings emerge from this literature. The first is that, despite being formally excluded from the political sphere in important ways such as not being permitted to vote and not paying taxes, adolescents hold observable and even stable political opinions, not least in the area of political trust. Second, several scholars note what they view as a striking similarity between aggregate levels of political trust among school-age children and adults in the same country (e.g., Torney-Purta, 2004, p. 472). Taken together, these findings cast some doubt on arguments that suggest a temporal lag between the ‘treatment’ of receiving education when one is young and observation of its effects on political trust in adulthood. The assumption underpinning such arguments is that during formal education young people acquire skills and norms, some of which are explicitly political and democratic in nature, that in adulthood form the basis for the generation of political trust. By demonstrating, however, that individuals have already developed a sense of political trust in their youth, recent research underscores the importance of examining the role played by schools and educational programs in generating this trust.

What is it then about formal education that facilitates or stymies the production of political trust among adolescents and young adults? By focusing on different aspects of the school or educational environment, existing research suggests two broad sets of answers to this question. The first relates to how schools provide students with particular experiences of authority and social relations. The second concerns the curriculum and programs that students pursue. What both these bodies of research share is a common (though not always explicitly stated) understanding of institutions of formal education as sites of political socialization. During their time in school or university, students are exposed to a range of stimuli inside and outside the classroom and lecture hall, which have the potential to boost or dampen political trust. Importantly, some of these stimuli (such as curricular choices, pedagogical technique, leadership style, and institutional organization) have deliberately been put in place in part because of their purported political effects, including their ability to produce and transmit certain types of political norms and values. In some instances, the trust-generating agent of political socialization is an individual or group of individuals – for example, the teacher or principal; in other instances, however, agency might be better thought to inhere in different types of structures and processes that characterize the context or environment of the school itself.

A number of published articles test the argument that schools affect political trust by functioning as moral communities and institutions of authority. While at school students obtain first-hand experience of bureaucratic rules and procedures aimed at rewarding good behavior and punishing bad. The types of rules that schools seek to uphold and

the processes and values that guide their application will, it is thought, provide students with valuable ‘street-level’ information about the functioning of higher-level political institutions beyond the schoolyard. As a result, students who perceive their school to be performing well will extrapolate from this experience and be more likely to express trust in their country’s political institutions. Scholars have looked at this question of performance mainly from the point of view of procedural fairness and freedom of expression, hypothesizing that both will positively affect students’ level of political trust.⁵ The small amount of research published in this area, drawing on data from Belgium, Israel, Sweden, and the United States, broadly supports this hypothesis. The more fairly students believe their teachers treat them and the fairer they believe school rules are, the more likely they are to express political trust (Duke et al., 2009; Resh and Sabbagh, 2014). Moreover, students with experiences of ‘open classrooms’, in which teachers welcome debate and disagreement, have also been found more likely to express political trust (Claes et al., 2012; Dassonneville et al., 2012). Drawing on cross-sectional data from Sweden, some research (Kokkonen et al., 2010) has also extended the idea that schools provide trust-enhancing social experiences to look at the effects of ethnic diversity, finding that students in schools that allow for greater inter-ethnic personal contacts report higher levels of political trust.

The second approach taken to identifying the mechanisms by which education could affect political trust is a curricular one. Specifically, it focuses on different types of formal instruction that purposefully expose students to political information and provide space for debate and reflection on politics. Scholars have followed two tacks in this area: the first and larger body of research examines the individual-level effects of enrolment in civics education; the second considers how students’ course of study at university affects their level of political trust.⁶ Work in both of these areas is generally animated by a discussion of the supposed positive effects of formal instruction in civics and politics on political trust. The evidence in support of the return of civics education for political trust is rather weak, however.⁷ Some research reports find fairly small effects (Denver and Hands, 1990; Claes et al., 2012) or no effects (Finkel and Ernst, 2005); other research finds that the effect of civics education on political trust loses statistical significance at conventional levels after controlling for levels of political trust prior to exposure to civics education (Dassonneville et al., 2012). Exposure to civics education has also been found to have a negative effect on political trust (Finkel et al., 2000).⁸ As for research on how university students’ course of study bears on their sense of political trust, a panel study of Swedish college students finds that studying political science boosts political trust while studying law or communication does not (Esaiasson and Persson, 2014). Other research (Jacobsen, 2001), using data from Norway, finds that political trust declines over time among students of economics, a feeder for private-sector employment, but not among students enrolled in courses that traditionally lead to jobs in the public sector such as nursing, social work, and teaching.

EDUCATION AS CAUSE OR EDUCATION AS PROXY?

Thus far we have presented the case for a causal relationship between education and political trust, identifying schools and colleges as key sites of socialization. Our argument was based on a summary of empirical studies that show education and political trust to

be related. These studies highlighted a range of possible causal mechanisms that link an individual's educational attainment and her evaluation of political institutions. More recently, however, this conventional view of 'education as cause' has been called into question by scholars who argue that both education and its suggested political outcomes are in fact the by-product of preadult socialization, which largely occurs outside of the school environment (e.g., Kam and Palmer, 2008; see Persson, 2014 for an excellent overview). In this final section we address this recent line of work on 'education as proxy' by considering how other possible agents of socialization besides schools and universities can help generate political trust.

Causal Inference

To say that education and political trust are causally linked is to say that education has added value with respect to political trust. Specifically, those who obtain higher levels of education act and think differently from those who do not *because* of their formal schooling. For instance, had higher-educated individuals dropped out of school early or entered, say, a vocational track rather than tertiary education, a causal argument would imply that, in this counterfactual situation, the same individual would develop other skills and norms. This argument generalizes to other aspects of 'education as cause' beyond the decision to go to college. A student who has been exposed to a civics curriculum would hold different attitudes from those in a counterfactual situation where the same student did not undertake a civics education.

Identifying a causal effect is easy enough (Rubin, 1974). Consider two particular outcome variables, Y^T and $Y^{\sim T}$. These can be political trust levels or any other outcome of interest. Y^T refers to the situation where the treatment is present, that is, the political trust score of an individual who has received more education. $Y^{\sim T}$ refers to the case where the treatment is absent, that is, the political trust score of an individual who has received less education. The effect of education on political trust could be calculated by subtracting the latter from the former: $(Y^T - Y^{\sim T})$. However, for any one individual, we never observe both outcomes. One of the two outcomes assumes a counterfactual situation. Methodologists refer to this predicament as the 'fundamental problem of causal inference'.

In order to estimate causal effects, researchers therefore rely on so-called 'average treatment effects' by shifting the focus of the analysis from specific units to a population of units. In doing so, the average treatment effect amounts to the difference in the outcome between two equivalent groups of units. Random assignment to treatment conditions, say by way of an experimental and control group, ensures this equivalence, so that a difference in outcomes can be solely attributed to the presence of a treatment. However, when treatments are not randomly administered across groups, researchers run the risk of wrongly attributing a difference in outcomes to that treatment. Kam and Palmer argue that the 'education-as-cause' approach ignores the fact that assignment to levels of education is anything but random: '[H]igher education should be seen as a proxy for a series of preadult experiences and predispositions' (2008, p. 614). The decision to pursue further education or different types of education cannot be represented by a statistical coin flip; it is itself the result of a host of individual-level characteristics, such as cognitive ability, family background, values, and personality. To the extent that these factors also cause the outcome variable of interest, regressing that outcome on levels of education will yield

biased estimates. However, surveys rarely contain appropriate measures for many of these variables, making it difficult for researchers to convincingly demonstrate causal effects using observational data.

Preadult Experiences and Political Trust

To be sure, Kam and Palmer (2008) mainly criticize the education-as-cause approach as it has been applied to understanding political participation (also see Berinsky and Lenz, 2011; Persson, 2012). Still, their framework remains highly relevant to students of political trust, if only because many of the suggested ‘preadult’ factors might themselves predict or at the very least correlate with an individual’s willingness to grant or withhold trust. What is particularly important for our direct purposes here is to be able to pinpoint where, when, and how individuals directly acquire political trust or acquire the norms and abilities with which they can subsequently adequately evaluate political actors. Part of that process of learning might go on in schools and colleges, but the transmission of accuracy- and norm-related values and practices takes place in other venues as well, prime among them the family. We should also stress that processes of political socialization are not inconsistent with an evaluative (or rationalist) account of political trust. As already discussed, schools and universities are in fact key agents of socialization. However, if it turns out that the acquisition of norms and abilities occurs outside of formal education, say at home or elsewhere, a revision of the conventional account might be in order.

Political socialization has long occupied a central role in the study of electoral behavior, in part because early classics in the field strongly emphasized partisan attachments as explanations for vote choice (Campbell et al., 1960). These partisan predispositions, in turn, were thought to develop during childhood as a result of socialization processes within the family, as partisan loyalties were transmitted from parents to their children. Almost half a century after the publication of *The American Voter*, Lewis-Beck et al. still maintain that ‘a young person’s party identification is an inheritance from one’s parents’ (2008, p. 138). Compared to other agents of socialization parental influences were particularly powerful in the development of adolescent political predispositions (Jennings and Niemi, 1974, 1981).

However, the transmission model of socialization does not apply equally well to other political orientations. For instance, Beck and Jennings (1991) find that the inheritance of political characteristics was rather limited. That is to say, parental interest in politics, media use, and political participation are correlated to these very same variables among youths, but the strength of association remains modest in size. If political sophistication and interest are important individual-level attributes for our understanding of political trust, then this line of research would leave room for other societal actors such as schools to transmit these orientations.

Moving to studies that focus directly on socialization with regard to political trust, Mishler and Rose (1997, 2001) have actually all but dismissed the role that early socialization plays in fostering an individual’s propensity to trust political actors. They hypothesize that interpersonal trust is likely to develop early in childhood through interactions with parents, family members, and peers and is subsequently projected on to political institutions. However, Mishler and Rose in the end find no evidence in support of these so-called ‘cultural’ theories of trust, where early socialization is argued to play a major role in

developing political trust. They conclude instead that political trust is best explained by institutional theories that focus on political and economic performance.

Hooghe et al. (2014) carried out a more direct test of the education-as-proxy model based on a panel of Belgian late adolescents and young adults. Their findings indicate that differences in political trust are largely in place before adulthood. Schoon and Cheng (2011) employ structural equation modeling using British data to find that family background exerts a direct impact on political trust, although, echoing arguments made by Mishler and Rose (2001), they also find support that preadult experiences are supplemented by later experiences that further shape political trust. Finally, Jennings et al. (2009) present correlations between the political attitudes of parents and children for numerous political attitudes and, echoing earlier findings of Beck and Jennings (1991), find that the inheritance of partisan attitudes is far stronger than attitudes related to political engagement and political trust. Only among politicized households do Jennings et al. (2009) find a moderate relationship between the political trust of parents and their offspring. In sum, the conventional view of ‘education as cause’ with regard to political trust might overstate the added value of education if both political trust and its normative and cognitive predictors are developed outside of traditional venues of education.

Value Change and Political Trust

Though socialization involves the transmission of values and practices by particular agents – be they schools, universities, parents, other family members, political parties, places of worship, and so on – to individuals, the context within which socialization occurs matters greatly for the rate of inheritance and durability of these values and practices. Kam and Palmer (2008), the main proponents of the ‘education-as-proxy’ approach, find, for example, that college education had an observable effect on protest behavior because of the fact that college campuses in the late 1960s and early 1970s served as focal points for spurring students into action. They find that, all else equal, college attendees in that period were 18.1 percent more likely to participate in demonstrations than individuals who did not attend college. For this particular cohort, college provided a social context where interaction with peers proved consequential for subsequent political behavior. Familial socialization may not always be pivotal. As Beck and Jennings (1991, p. 757) note, ‘the traditional influence of parental socialization can be modified in the face of a powerful competing *Zeitgeist* at a critical point in the life cycle’.

The economic, social, and political conditions during adolescence and early adulthood have attracted a great deal of attention from political scientists who seek to explain value change in advanced democracies. The work of Ronald Inglehart has been particularly influential in this regard (Inglehart, 1977, 1990; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005). Inglehart famously argued that younger generations develop a different set of values from those of older generations as these younger generations come of age during periods of unprecedented economic recovery and growth. In contrast to older generations who were first-hand witnesses of the atrocities of World War II, younger generations take economic well-being and personal safety for granted and in turn are more concerned with quality of life, self-expression, and democratic empowerment. A process of generational replacement then results in a value shift in society as a whole from materialist to postmaterialist values.

Inglehart’s thesis on value change has important implications for attitudes related

to system support: as materialists tend to gravitate towards social order, hierarchy, and authority, they are more likely to express support for the dominant political institutions of their country. Postmaterialists on the other hand reject political and social authority, in part because they are more demanding of political institutions and more critical of the way these institutions actually function. Due to their antipathy toward the conventional actors and institutions of representative democracy, including political parties, parliaments, and governments, postmaterialists should exhibit lower levels of political trust. In addition, as postmaterialists tend to have more demanding expectations regarding democratic inclusion and empowerment, they are likely to express lower levels of political trust when faced with the traditional institutions of representative democracy. As a result, as the scales of society tip from materialist to postmaterialist, it is thought that aggregate levels of political distrust will increase. Observing a decline in citizen support for political institutions across advanced democracies, Russell Dalton (2004) has tested for this hypothesized relationship between postmaterialism and political distrust. Specifically, he shows that the steepest decline in aggregate political trust levels is among the upper socio-economic strata in society, the wealthier, higher-educated, and more skilled citizens, and not among lower-educated, marginalized groups. The Dalton–Inglehart argument centers on the proposition that value change among younger cohorts spills over into their judgments of political processes. Transmission of values from one generation to the next is not strong enough to counter period-specific formative experiences, and as a result younger cohorts develop levels of political cynicism and opposition to authority that are much higher than those of previous generations.

CONCLUSION

Until fairly recently few individual-level studies of political trust paid much attention to education as an explanatory variable. That being said, when viewed as a single whole, existing research on political trust paints a rather suggestive picture of the effects of education. Specifically, it points to the possibility that the relationship between education and political trust is context specific. In earlier research (Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012) we proposed that the macro-contextual variable conditioning the effect of education on political trust was the quality of a country's democratic political system. Capturing this notion of democratic performance using a measure of public-sector corruption, we found strong evidence that education and corruption interact to affect political trust. In contexts of low levels of corruption more educated citizens are more trusting of political institutions than less educated citizens. However, in contexts of high levels of corruption, the more educated are actually more distrusting of political institutions than fellow citizens with less education. We argued that this interaction occurred because higher-educated citizens are not only more likely to be better able to identify practices that undermine the smooth functioning of democratic institutions but also more likely to be normatively troubled by such practices.

An implication of this interactive account of education and corruption is that the effects of rising educational standards on political trust should be contingent on change in a country's democratic performance over the same period. Therefore, where democratic performance remains high and stable, educational expansion should translate into higher

aggregate levels of political trust. Where democratic performance falters and declines or where low levels of democratic performance persist (due to the difficulty of rooting out corruption, for example), we would expect to see political distrust increase in the aggregate as populations become on average more educated.

What the above account does not recognize, however, is the possibility that the standards used by ordinary citizens to evaluate democratic performance may change over time, and may actually change more or even only among a subset of the population, including the more educated. Scholars such as Ronald Inglehart and Russell Dalton suggest that this is indeed the case. As we discussed earlier, they argue that citizens – and especially higher-educated citizens – have become increasingly critical of the hierarchical and mediated nature of representative democracy and more inclined to judge democratic institutions according to the ways in which they allow for meaningful voice and participation. Based on this argument, it is thought that political trust should decline in the face of changing societal values that result from rising aggregate levels of education. But just as values change in society as a whole and among sub-groups such as the higher educated, so can and do democratic institutions. Moreover, if the institutions of representative democracy are altered over time to better meet the changing demands of citizens for voice and inclusion, then rising levels of education should not necessarily translate into rising levels of political distrust. In other words, there is nothing about education *per se* that should encourage institutional distrust. To date, however, comparative cross-national research has not considered the ways in which rising levels of education and concomitant shifts in values interact with changes in democratic institutions to affect political trust. Though doing so poses certain challenges from the point of view of data collection, taking into account simultaneously change over time in democratic institutions on the one hand and change in education levels and political values on the other represents a promising avenue of inquiry for future research on political trust.

Looking back on our earlier research, an implicit and unsubstantiated assumption was that formal education furnishes adolescents and young adults with capacities and commitments that they draw on later in life to evaluate the performance of political institutions. Put simply, schools provide skills and values but play little role in generating political trust. However, as our review of a small but growing body of research to emerge in recent years indicates, there is good reason to believe that political trust is generated in part, perhaps even in large part, through processes of socialization during adolescence and early adulthood. That being said, what role young people's formative experiences in formal education play in generating political trust continues to be debated. On the one hand, some studies suggest that schools and colleges facilitate or stymie the generation of political trust. This research highlights a number of mechanisms connecting formal education and political trust; this includes how schools provide students with direct, front-line experiences of institutional authority, the types of social interactions that schools enable, and the success or failure of schools to expose students to political information and debate. On the other hand, recent research casts doubt on these arguments, suggesting instead that school and college serve as proxies for predispositions, skills, and norms formed elsewhere, and especially in the family.

In both of the above accounts preadult socialization plays an important role in generating political trust. A potential key difference between the two accounts is worth noting,

however. The former account, which emphasizes the importance of schools and formal education as agents and sites of socialization, is very much in consonance with an evaluative understanding of political trust. According to existing research in this area, young people become trusting not because they are surrounded by other trusting peers and teachers; rather, young people become trusting because their personal experiences inside and outside the classroom provide them with a range of evidence that allows them to arrive at judgments about the broader political system. In contrast, the latter account, which sets great store by family life, seems potentially more congruent with a culturalist understanding of political trust. This is because this second line of argument seems to suggest that trust is more likely to be generated among young people who grow up with parents and in families who are trusting of political institutions.

Given the relatively small number of extant studies that explicitly focus on the effects of education on political trust, much remains to be learned in this area of research. As this field of inquiry expands in the coming years, more research will surely emerge on the question of how the generation of political trust is a dynamic process. As a result, we look forward to learning more about the ways in which and the degree to which young people are socialized into granting and withholding political trust. In addition, however, it is important that future research examines the individual-level and contextual factors that influence whether and how young people 'update' their level of political trust during adulthood. Our hope is that as scholars grapple with this cumulative learning approach to political trust they will increasingly turn to methods and data that allow them to isolate the effects of different aspects of formal education from those that result from familial and other forms of preadult non-educational socialization. Finally, given the importance of better understanding the potential context-specific relationship between education and political trust, we hope that future studies will use data from a much broader sample of countries than the small number of high-income consolidated democracies that currently dominates research in this area.

NOTES

- * The authors would like to thank Jan W. van Deth as well as participants of the *Handbook on Political Trust* workshop, held in Frankfurt am Main, Germany, May 2014, for their feedback and comments on this chapter.
- 1. Even a passing comment, such as that by Mishler and Rose (2001, p. 50) about how the effects of education might differ in new democracies compared to old, is a rarity (see also Grabb et al., 2009, p. 382).
- 2. Several studies estimate separate models of political trust using data from one or more old democracies and one or more new democracies. If this is the case, the same publication appears in more than one column.
- 3. Political trust was measured using ESS items TRSTPRL, TRSTLGL, TRSTPLC, TRSTPLT, and TRSTPRT. The question reads: 'Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0–10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust. Firstly... [country]'s parliament?' The question is repeated for the legal system, police, politicians, and political parties. The mean score for these five items forms the dependent variable.
- 4. An early antecedent of this recent research is the body of US work to emerge in the 1960s that focused mainly on the effects of exposure to civics instruction on political trust (or political cynicism as it was referred to at that time). The most cited study from this period is that of Langton and Jennings (1968).
- 5. See Chapter 16 by Grimes in this volume for a discussion of the effects of procedural fairness on political trust among adults.
- 6. A third but underdeveloped line of inquiry examines the association between political trust and the type of

- school in which a student is enrolled. This includes, for example, whether political trust is related to whether a student is enrolled in a school with a more vocational or academic curriculum, a division that is common in several European countries. Hooghe et al. (2014) find that respondents in a technical track have significantly less political trust compared to those in a general track, and those in a vocational track have even lower levels of political trust.
7. This reaffirms the early findings of Langton and Jennings (1968, p. 858) who report a weak (and curvilinear) effect between exposure to civics education and political trust.
 8. This last result may not be that surprising. The analysis in question uses data from survey respondents in the Dominican Republic. If civics education produces better knowledge of the actual functioning of political institutions, then (following Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012) we might indeed expect civics education to dampen political trust in contexts where democratic institutions are performing poorly.

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12. Political trust as a heuristic

Thomas J. Rudolph

INTRODUCTION

Democratic theorists have long heralded the virtues of political trust. Political trust contributes to the health and vibrancy of democratic polities by encouraging citizens to engage in collective action (Hardin, 1999). Some have described political trust as a commodity that is useful in helping political actors to achieve their goals (Luhmann, 1979). Political trust enables elected representatives to place collective interests ahead of parochial concerns by affording legislators greater leeway to depart from constituency preferences (Bianco, 1994). Political trust is, simply put, ‘essential to a democratic community’s well-being’ (Mara, 2001, p. 820).

Empirically minded scholars have demonstrated that political trust, or trust in government, is politically consequential in a variety of meaningful ways. Political trust increases citizen compliance with government demands such as tax paying (Scholz and Lubell, 1998; Alm and Torgler, 2006; see also Chapter 13 by Van Deth). Similarly, political trust encourages citizens to engage in collective restraint in the face of social dilemmas such as water shortages (Tyler and Degoeij, 1995). Researchers have also shown that political trust or the lack thereof affects voting behavior by influencing populist voting (see also Chapter 15 by Bélanger) and the likelihood of voting for incumbents or third-party candidates (Hetherington, 1999). Finally, political trust shapes citizens’ willingness to support civil liberties, particularly under conditions of perceived threat (Davis and Silver, 2004).

In his seminal book on political trust, *Why Trust Matters*, Marc Hetherington (2005) likens political trust to a ‘running tally of how people think the government is doing at a given point in time’ (p. 9). Informed by this notion of trust as a running tally, a growing body of literature has begun to conceptualize political trust in psychological terms by describing it as a heuristic. According to this trust-as-heuristic perspective, political trust functions as a heuristic or decision rule that helps people decide whether to support or oppose government action. Using this theoretical approach, scholars have shown that political trust powerfully influences citizens’ support for government initiatives across a wide range of issues. Such findings suggest that political trust has a more proximate and powerful impact on citizens’ policy preferences than previously understood.

This chapter provides an overview of the literature on political trust as a heuristic. The first section of this chapter lays some conceptual foundations by discussing the psychological principles underlying the concept of heuristics and how heuristics have been applied to the study of politics. A second section applies the concept of heuristics to the study of political trust and presents a theory about the conditions under which political trust is expected to influence public support for government action. Particular attention is paid to the role that risk and sacrifice play in shaping the link between political trust and citizens’ policy judgments. The third section reports empirical evidence in support of

the trust-as-heuristic thesis. The chapter concludes by discussing the main findings of this literature and their implications.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HEURISTICS

Within the field of social psychology, the concept of heuristics is premised upon two basic principles of human judgment. The first is commonly referred to as the 'least effort principle' (Chaiken et al., 1989; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Chaiken and Trope, 1999). The least effort principle presumes that individuals often possess limited or incomplete information when making social judgments. The least effort principle is based on the belief that people prefer to spend as little cognitive effort as possible when processing information in a judgment situation. Individuals are depicted as 'cognitive misers' who, if given a choice, prefer to engage in less effortful rather than more effortful forms of information processing (Fiske and Taylor, 1991).

Individuals, however, are not simply motivated by a desire to make decisions in an effortless and efficient manner. People are also motivated to make decisions or judgments that are reasonably accurate. A second basic principle of human judgment is often referred to as the 'sufficiency principle' (Chaiken et al., 1989; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; Chaiken and Trope, 1999). The sufficiency principle is based on the belief that people, motivated by a desire to make accurate or 'good' decisions, will expend the amount of effort necessary to reach a sufficient amount of confidence in the quality of their decision. It is rooted in the assumption that each person in each judgment situation carries a 'sufficiency threshold' that must be met or surpassed in order to reach the desired level of confidence in one's decision.

Taken together, the least effort and sufficiency principles help to provide the motivational basis for one of the leading psychological theories of information processing: the heuristic-systematic model (Chaiken, 1980; Chaiken et al., 1989). The heuristic-systematic model is a dual-process model that proposes two different modes of information processing. These two modes differ primarily in terms of how effortfully people process information when making a decision or judgment. Systematic processing, the more effortful mode of thinking, is defined as a 'comprehensive analytic orientation in which perceivers access all informational input for its relevance and importance to their judgmental task' (Chaiken et al., 1989, p. 212). Heuristic processing, the less effortful mode of thinking, is defined as a 'more limited processing mode requiring much less cognitive effort and capacity than systematic processing' (*ibid.*, p. 213). Given individuals' general preference for less effortful over more effortful forms of information processing, it is widely assumed that, whenever possible, individuals will prefer to engage in heuristic processing rather than in systematic processing.

One mechanism that facilitates individuals' ability to engage in heuristic processing is the use of cognitive shortcuts or rules of thumb. Such shortcuts are commonly referred to as heuristics. Heuristics have been defined as 'rules of thumb for judgment' (Kunda, 1999, p. 56). Similarly, heuristics have been described as 'shortcuts that reduce complex problem solving to more simple judgmental operations' (Fiske and Taylor, 1991, p. 382). Psychologists have identified a number of common heuristics that people use to make inferences or judgments more simply and more efficiently (Tversky and Kahneman,

1974; Kahneman and Tversky, 1982). The representativeness heuristic, for example, helps people make inferences about whether a person or object is representative of (or belongs to) a particular category without expending much effort to gather and analyze detailed information about that person or object. Consider the following example from the political world. Suppose that a prospective voter wishes to determine whether an unknown congressional candidate featured in a campaign advertisement is a Democrat or a Republican. The ad mentions that the candidate is a pro-choice environmentalist who supports same-sex marriage and voted in favor of Obamacare. If the voter possesses even a rudimentary understanding of the stereotypical characteristics of each political party, then he or she, without much difficulty, might reasonably use the representativeness heuristic to infer that the unknown congressional candidate is a member of the Democratic Party.

Informed by insights from social and cognitive psychologists, political scientists have fruitfully applied the concept of heuristics to the study of political reasoning and judgments for nearly three decades. Political scientists have described heuristics as 'judgmental shortcuts, efficient ways to organize and simplify political choices, efficient in the double sense of requiring relatively little information to execute, yet yielding dependable answers even to complex problems of choice' (Sniderman et al., 1991, p. 19). Heuristics are particularly useful tools in political reasoning because many citizens – at least in the United States – are relatively uninformed about political matters and do not possess great stores of political information (Bartels, 1996; Delli Carpini and Keeter, 1996).

One of the earliest applications of heuristics to the study of politics is the 'likability heuristic' (Brady and Sniderman, 1985; Sniderman et al., 1991). Sniderman and colleagues argue that people can make reliable inferences about where political groups stand on policy issues based largely on whether they like or dislike those groups. To make reasonably reliable inferences about a group's position, they contend, an individual only needs to be familiar with his or her own policy preferences and know whether he or she likes the group in question. Liked groups can be attributed policy positions that are close to the individual's positions while disliked groups can be attributed positions that are more distant. In this respect, the likability heuristic functions as a simple decision rule that helps people make inferences in an effortless and reasonably accurate manner. The likability heuristic anticipates that if you 'follow the rule of predicting what others believe by taking account of what you believe, weighted by your feelings toward them, and you will be right, by and large' (Sniderman et al., 1991, p. 93).

Scholars have identified a variety of other heuristics that have the potential to influence individuals' political judgments. Voters, for example, may rely on party labels or candidates' demographic characteristics as a heuristic when making inferences about candidates' policy positions (Popkin, 1991). Citizens have used endorsements or trusted source cues as a heuristic when forming policy judgments (Carmines and Kuklinski, 1990; Mondak, 1993). Similarly, experimental analysis has shown that citizens may use cues from interest groups as a heuristic when deciding whether to support or oppose a particular ballot initiative (Lupia, 1994). Other research suggests that institutions, such as penalties for lying or verification threats, can help unsophisticated citizens make better-informed decisions (Boudreau, 2009). Citizens, it seems, have a variety of heuristics at their disposal to simplify and expedite their political judgments. Although heuristics often enable people to make reasonable judgments in the absence of complete information, it should be noted that heuristics are subject to errors and biases and can sometimes

lead people to make poor or suboptimal decisions (Kuklinski and Quirk, 2000; Lau and Redlawsk, 2001, 2006; Druckman et al., 2009; Dancey and Sheagley, 2013).

THE TRUST-AS-HEURISTIC THESIS

As the literature review from the previous section has made clear, the task of making political judgments is often complicated by two factors. First, many citizens are not particularly well informed about political matters. Second, many citizens are not motivated to become well informed because they have a preference for engaging in less effortful forms of information processing. As a result, when judging the merits of a given policy initiative, people often lack either the ability or the motivation to sort through the complex details of the proposal, weigh them carefully, and make a fully informed judgment. Because people are motivated to have a sufficient degree of confidence in their policy judgments, though, they will look for opportunities to simplify their decision-making process. Heuristics provide such an opportunity.

In the context of forming policy judgments about new or untested government policies, a burgeoning line of research has suggested that political trust, or trust in government, serves as a particularly useful heuristic. Under this trust-as-heuristic thesis, political trust operates as a simple heuristic or decision rule that enables people to more easily make evaluative judgments concerning government policies or actions (Hetherington, 2005; Rudolph and Evans, 2005). The trust heuristic is said to become activated when people are asked to evaluate government policies (or actions) under conditions of risk. Policies are defined as risk laden when two conditions are met. First, there must be a certain degree of uncertainty about the likely outcomes of the policy. Second, there must be some potential for the projected policy outcomes to be desirable or undesirable in nature (Rudolph and Popp, 2009). Under such conditions of uncertainty and risk, the trust-as-heuristic thesis posits that the decision to support or oppose a policy initiative is reduced to a simple question of trust; ‘other things equal, if people perceive the architect of policies as untrustworthy, they will reject its policies; if they consider it trustworthy, they will be more inclined to embrace them’ (Hetherington, 2005, p. 51). The trust-as-heuristic thesis anticipates that citizens who trust government will be more likely than citizens who distrust government to support risk-laden policies or to support government action under conditions of risk.

But why is political trust expected to work in this way? Why are trustful citizens expected to be more likely to support risk-laden policies than distrustful citizens? Scholars have proposed one possible account to explain the mechanism through which the trust heuristic works. That mechanism implies a linkage between political trust and beliefs about government credibility. As a barometer of citizens’ feelings toward government, political trust is based partly on citizens’ degree of satisfaction with government performance and processes (see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). But trust does more than simply reflect public satisfaction with past government performance and processes. Trust is also prospective in nature and represents an expression of citizens’ willingness to accept government promises about the future consequences of a policy. Trustful citizens are more likely than distrustful ones to believe government claims about the purported benefits of a risk-laden policy (Rudolph, 2009; Rudolph and Popp, 2009). Trustful citizens are more likely to believe government promises, psychologists suggest, because trust increases the

likelihood of message acceptance and persuasion (Hovland and Weiss, 1951; Hovland et al., 1953).

In the main, the trust-as-heuristic thesis anticipates that political trust will increase public support for risk-laden policies. The explanatory power of the trust heuristic, however, is expected to vary across people and policies. The key to understanding the conditions under which political trust is expected to shape policy support is the concept of sacrifice. Sacrifices occur, generally speaking, when somebody gives up something of value to benefit others with no expectation of reward in return. When an individual is required to give money or to pay taxes in order to advance the interests of political minorities or to benefit social groups to which that individual does not belong, that individual is said to have sacrificed his or her material interests. As originally conceived, the trust-as-heuristic thesis predicts that the effects of political trust on policy support will be greatest among those for whom supporting the policy in question requires the sacrifice of material interests (Hetherington and Globetti, 2002; Hetherington, 2005). The influence of political trust on policy support is expected to be comparatively smaller among those who stand to benefit from the proposed policy, that is, members of beneficiary groups.

Government policies frequently impose unequal costs and benefits on different constituencies. Consider, for example, the difference between redistributive and distributive policies. Some policies, such as Medicaid, food stamps, and welfare, are redistributive in nature. They are redistributive in the sense that their costs are widely distributed across the mass public but their benefits are narrowly concentrated among certain segments of the population. In other words, redistributive policies require members of political majorities to make material sacrifices for the benefit of political minorities. Distributive policies like Social Security and environmental protection, by contrast, are characterized by a near universal distribution of costs and benefits. The costs for such programs are widely distributed but so are the benefits. Since most people can expect to reap some benefits from distributive policies, supporting distributive policies does not require people to make material sacrifices. For this reason, it has been argued, political trust should be a more powerful determinant of policy support for redistributive policies than it is for distributive policies (Hetherington, 2005). When trying to explain public support for redistributive policies, political trust should exert greater influence among members of non-beneficiary groups than among members of beneficiary groups because only the former are called upon to make a material sacrifice (*ibid.*).

Although the trust heuristic was initially seen as applicable only in cases involving the sacrifice of material interests, recent work has broadened the theory to include cases involving the sacrifice of ideological principles (Rudolph and Evans, 2005; Rudolph, 2009; Rudolph and Popp, 2009). This argument is based on the observation that many government policies do not impose equal ideological costs on liberals and conservatives. The decision to support increased government spending on social programs, for example, imposes few ideological costs on liberals. Liberals are ideologically predisposed to support the use of the federal government as a vehicle through which to bring about social and economic change. Simply put, supporting increased government spending on social programs requires no ideological sacrifice on the part of liberals. Conservatives, by contrast, are ideologically inclined to prefer limited government and to support market-based solutions to social and economic problems. For conservatives to support the expansion of government services, they must be willing to sacrifice their ideological principles. Such asym-

metric ideological costs suggest there should be an interaction between political trust and ideology such that ideology moderates the effects of political trust on policy support. In cases involving increased government spending or the expansion of government services, the nature of unequal ideological costs creates the expectation that the effects of political trust on policy support will be more pronounced among conservatives than among liberals.

It is important to note, however, that political trust is not always a more potent predictor of policy support among conservatives than it is among liberals. Although perhaps rarer in frequency, there are some instances in which support for government action requires greater ideological sacrifice among liberals than on the part of conservatives. When citizens are asked to weigh the merits of redistributive tax cuts, the trust heuristic is expected to exert greater influence among liberals than among conservatives because such policies impose greater ideological costs on the former (Rudolph, 2009). The privatization of Social Security represents another example in which support for a risk-laden policy imposes a greater ideological burden on liberals than it does on conservatives (Rudolph and Popp, 2009). As a result, the trust-as-heuristic thesis anticipates that trust will matter more to liberals than to conservatives in judgments about whether to support Social Security privatization.

EMPIRICAL SUPPORT FOR THE TRUST-AS-HEURISTIC THESIS

The literature provides considerable empirical support for the trust-as-heuristic thesis across a variety of issue domains. In one of the first applications of the theory, Hetherington and Globetti (2002) analyze the effects of political trust on public support for a series of race-targeted initiatives. Examining the link between political trust and support for race-targeted programs provides a good test of the theory, they argue, because ‘race-targeted policies are a good example of policies asking sacrifice for some but not others’ (*ibid.*, p. 255). For white people, they contend, supporting policies such as affirmative action, education quotas, aid to black people, and increased government spending on black people requires a willingness to sacrifice material self-interest for the benefit of a racial minority. Political judgments requiring these types of sacrifices are expected to activate the trust heuristic. In such judgment situations, the trust-as-heuristic theory predicts that, among white people, political trust will increase public support for each of these race-targeted policies.

To test the theory’s predictions, Hetherington and Globetti (2002) use data from multiple years of the American National Election Studies (ANES) to model white peoples’ support for race-targeted policies as a function of political trust, partisanship, ideology, racial resentment, and a variety of other control variables. If political trust operates as a heuristic in the manner predicted, then it should be positively associated with individuals’ support for race-targeted policies. The results provide strong and consistent confirmation. As expected, political trust increases white peoples’ support for affirmative action, education quotas, aid to black people, and government spending on black people. The absence of political trust, they suggest, helps to explain why some white people who profess support for racial equality do not always support the policies that are designed to promote it.

In a more expansive test of the trust-as-heuristic thesis, Hetherington (2005) explores

the relationship between political trust and public support for increased government spending across a variety of different issues. Using data from multiple surveys conducted by the ANES, Hetherington's (2005) analysis supports the proposition that political trust functions as a useful heuristic in two respects. First, political trust is shown to be a potent predictor of public support for increased government spending on several redistributive policies such as welfare programs, food stamps, and assistance to black people. Trust is particularly influential in such policy judgments, he argues, because such programs entail widespread sacrifice but concentrate benefits quite narrowly among specified beneficiary groups. Importantly, though, political trust is shown to have little influence on public support for increased government spending on distributive programs such as Social Security, crime prevention, and environmental protection. Consistent with the trust-as-heuristic thesis, political trust is relatively inconsequential in such policy judgments because these policies distribute benefits widely and, as a result, do not require individuals to sacrifice their own material self-interest.

Hetherington's (2005) analysis supports a second fundamental proposition of the trust-as-heuristic thesis. Within the same policy domain, he finds that, as expected, political trust exerts greater influence on policy judgments among members of non-beneficiary groups than it does among members of beneficiary groups. When analyzing public support for greater government spending on food stamps, for example, he finds that political trust matters more to the non-poor than to the poor because such support requires greater material sacrifice by the former than by the latter. For similar reasons, political trust is also more influential among the non-poor as a determinant of support for welfare spending than it is among the poor. In the domain of race, political trust matters more to non-black people than it does to black people in predicting public support for greater government assistance to black people. A consistent pattern emerges across all three issues; the trust heuristic is more consequential among members of non-beneficiary groups than it is among members of beneficiary groups.

Rudolph and Evans (2005) provide additional empirical support and extend the trust literature by demonstrating that the utility of the trust heuristic is not limited to policy judgments requiring the sacrifice of material interests. They argue and demonstrate that the trust heuristic is also activated in cases for which policy support requires the sacrifice of ideological interests. Using data from the 2000 National Annenberg Election Survey, they model individuals' support for government spending across multiple issues as a function of political trust, ideology, and the interaction between the two. Their multivariate analysis provides strong and consistent evidence that ideology moderates the effects of political trust on support for government spending. More specifically, they find that, as expected, the effects of political trust are more pronounced among conservatives than they are among liberals. This comports well with the trust-as-heuristic thesis since the decision to support increased government spending only requires an ideological sacrifice on the part of conservatives.

To illustrate how ideology moderates the effects of trust, Table 12.1 reports the simple percentage of liberals and conservatives who support increased government spending, by level of political trust, across seven different policy issues. Each policy issue is categorized by whether it represents a redistributive or distributive government program. Consider first the effects of political trust and ideology on support for increased spending on education. Only 54 percent of conservatives with low levels of trust in government support

Table 12.1 Support for increased government spending (%) by political trust and ideology

	Low Trust	High Trust	Difference
<i>Redistributive policies</i>			
Education			
Liberals	81	81	0
Conservatives	54	65	+11
Health care			
Liberals	81	83	+2
Conservatives	51	63	+12
Medicaid			
Liberals	68	73	+5
Conservatives	41	52	+11
Aid to mothers			
Liberals	60	64	+4
Conservatives	36	47	+11
<i>Distributive policies</i>			
Social Security			
Liberals	68	63	-5
Conservatives	48	55	+7
Environment			
Liberals	81	82	+1
Conservatives	50	61	+11
Medicare			
Liberals	82	81	-1
Conservatives	58	68	+10

Note: Table entries represent the percentage of liberals or conservatives who support increased government spending for the specified policy at the specified level of political trust. Low and high levels of trust are determined by a simple median split.

Source: National Annenberg Election Survey (2000); adapted from Rudolph and Evans (2005).

greater spending on education while 65 percent of conservatives with high levels of trust in government do so, an increase of 11 percentage points. Among liberals, however, political trust has no influence on support for education spending, as low- and high-trust liberals are equally likely to support it. A similar pattern holds for each of the other three redistributive policies. In the case of health care, political trust increases support for greater spending among conservatives by 12 percentage points. Among liberals, by contrast, the effect is much smaller at 2 percentage points. In the cases of Medicaid and assistance to poor mothers with young children, political trust increases support for greater spending among conservatives by 11 percentage points. The size of trust's impact among liberals is markedly smaller in magnitude at only 5 and 4 percentage points respectively.

The results in Table 12.1 show that ideology also moderates the effects of political trust on public support for increased government spending on distributive policies. Recall that

political trust was initially not thought to influence support for government spending on distributive programs because such programs distribute benefits widely and thus do not require individuals to make a material sacrifice. When sacrifice is conceptualized in ideological terms, however, trust does matter among those for whom supporting increased government spending requires the sacrifice of ideological principles. As shown in Table 12.1, only 48 percent of low-trust conservatives support greater spending on Social Security while 55 percent of high-trust conservatives do so, an increase of 7 percentage points. Consistent with expectations, though, political trust fails to increase support for spending on Social Security among liberals. Among conservatives, political trust increases support for greater spending on the environment and on Medicare by 11 percentage points and 10 percentage points respectively. In policy judgments concerning both the environment and Medicare, the effect of political trust among liberals is substantively and statistically negligible. Importantly, the results also indicate that, across all seven issues, the magnitude of ideologically based differences in policy support decreases as political trust increases. By conceptualizing sacrifice in ideological terms and by subsequently demonstrating that ideology moderates the effects of political trust on support for distributive as well as redistributive spending, Rudolph and Evans (2005) show that political trust influences a much wider range of policy judgments than previously understood.

In each of the policy judgments examined so far, the utility of the trust heuristic is greater among conservatives than among liberals. But this pattern of asymmetric influence, although consistent across multiple issue domains, is not universal in nature. Rudolph (2009) identifies the conditions under which political trust should matter more to liberals than to conservatives as a determinant of policy judgments. Trust should matter more to liberals, he argues, in policy judgments when supporting the policy in question requires a greater ideological sacrifice among liberals than it does among conservatives. The 2001 Bush tax cuts provide an ideal test case because the redistributive nature of these tax cuts makes them a risk-laden policy that, in ideological terms, is far more costly to liberals than to conservatives.

Using data from 2002 and 2004 American National Election Studies and from the National Survey of Americans' Views on Taxes (2003) sponsored by the National Public Radio/Kaiser Family Foundation/Kennedy School of Government, Rudolph (2009) analyzes the relationship between political trust, ideology, and public support for tax cutting. Political trust has very little influence on tax cut sentiment among conservatives, he finds, because conservatives are ideologically predisposed to favor tax cuts and thus do not have to sacrifice anything in order to support them. The story is quite different among liberals, who are ideologically disinclined to support tax cuts that disproportionately benefit the wealthy. The results once again provide clear and consistent evidence that ideology moderates the effects of political trust on policy judgments. In the case of tax cuts, however, the trust heuristic exerts its greatest influence among those for whom policy support requires the greatest ideological sacrifice, namely liberals.

To more clearly illustrate the nature of the interactive relationship between political trust and liberalism, Table 12.2 reports the percentage of liberals and conservatives who support particular types of tax cuts by level of political trust. In both 2002 and 2004, the ANES asked respondents whether they favored or opposed the Bush tax cuts. Among liberals with low levels of political trust, only 25 percent (2002) and 11 percent (2004) favor them. Among high-trust liberals, though, these figures climb to 50 percent and

Table 12.2 Support for tax cutting (%) by political trust and ideology

	Low Trust	High Trust	Difference
<i>Tax cut policies</i>			
Inheritance tax repeal (2002 ANES)			
Liberals	55	64	+9
Conservatives	84	84	0
Bush tax cuts (2002 ANES)			
Liberals	25	50	+25
Conservatives	86	90	+4
Bush tax cuts (2004 ANES)			
Liberals	11	41	+40
Conservatives	78	87	+11
Accelerated tax cuts (2003 Kaiser)			
Liberals	28	49	+21
Conservatives	78	81	+3
Permanent tax cuts (2003 Kaiser)			
Liberals	21	32	+11
Conservatives	82	86	+4

Note: Table entries represent the percentage of liberals or conservatives who support the specified tax cuts at the specified level of political trust. Low and high levels of trust are determined by a simple median split.

Sources: American National Election Studies (2002, 2004); National Survey of Americans' Views on Taxes (2003, sponsored by NPR, the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, and Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government); adapted from Rudolph (2009).

41 percent, an increase of 25 and 40 percentage points respectively. The corresponding effects of political trust among conservatives are much smaller at 4 and 11 percentage points. A similar pattern emerges when examining public support for three other specific tax cuts, such as (1) repealing the inheritance tax, (2) accelerating the Bush tax cuts, and (3) making the Bush tax cuts permanent. Among liberals, political trust increases support for these three tax cuts by approximately 9, 21, and 11 percentage points respectively. The effects of trust among conservatives are significantly smaller at 0, 3, and 4 percentage points.

Tax cuts are not the only exception to the rule. In policy judgments concerning the privatization of Social Security in the United States, Rudolph and Popp (2009) find that the trust heuristic is once again more influential among liberals than among conservatives. Using data from the 2004 ANES, they model privatization sentiment as a function of political trust, ideology, and an interaction between these two variables. Respondents were asked whether they favored or opposed the idea of letting individuals put a portion of their Social Security payroll taxes into personal retirement accounts that would be invested in private stocks and bonds. Since liberals are ideologically inclined to oppose such a policy, political trust should have a big influence on their willingness to support it. It does. Rudolph and Popp (2009) find that political trust has a substantively significant impact on privatization sentiment among liberals but has only a modest impact among conservatives.

Table 12.3 Support for Social Security privatization (%) by political trust and ideology

	Low Trust	High Trust	Difference
<i>Social Security privatization</i>			
Liberals	32	55	+23
Conservatives	67	71	+4

Note: Table entries represent the percentage of liberals or conservatives who support the privatization of Social Security at the specified level of political trust. Low and high levels of trust are determined by a simple median split.

Source: American National Election Studies (2004); adapted from Rudolph and Popp (2009).

The results in Table 12.3 illustrate the nature of trust's asymmetric impact on support for the partial privatization of Social Security. As can be seen in Table 12.3, 32 percent of liberals with low political trust express support for privatizing a portion of Social Security. Among liberals with high levels of political trust, this figure rises to 55 percent, an increase of 23 percentage points. The magnitude of trust's impact among conservatives is far more muted. Among low-trust conservatives, support for Social Security privatization stands at 67 percent. Among high-trust conservatives, though, support climbs to 71 percent, an increase of only 4 percentage points. Once again, the results indicate that the ideological gap in policy support between liberals and conservatives gets smaller as political trust increases.

The preceding studies suggest that, when examining the relationship between political trust and citizens' policy judgments, ideology serves as an important moderating variable that regulates the effects of political trust. But the concept of ideology itself may not always be unidimensional in nature. Recent work distinguishes between operational ideology and symbolic ideology and observes that they often conflict with each other in the political world (Stimson, 2004; Ellis and Stimson, 2012). Operational ideology is based on principled ideological beliefs about the proper role of government or the merits of a particular policy. Symbolic ideology, by contrast, is based on ideological attachments to the people or groups associated with a particular policy. When these two types of ideology are in conflict with each other, citizens must sometimes decide whether to base their policy judgments primarily upon principled considerations of ideological beliefs or upon symbolic considerations of ideological attachments. This implies that citizens must sometimes choose between the principled sacrifice of ideological beliefs and the symbolic sacrifice of ideological attachments.

Popp and Rudolph (2011) designed and employed a survey experiment to examine whether either type of ideological sacrifice plays a greater role than the other in moderating the effects of political trust on individuals' policy judgments. Respondents were asked whether they support a large, government-sponsored economic recovery plan that was experimentally attributed to then President Bush or to then President-elect Obama. To support a given plan, each type of ideologue would be required to make a different type of sacrifice. To support an Obama plan, a 'consistent conservative' (a self-identified conservative who espouses conservative economic values), would need to make both a principled and a symbolic sacrifice. To support the same plan, a 'conflicted conservative' (a self-identified conservative who espouses liberal economic values) would only need to

make principled sacrifice while a ‘conflicted liberal’ (a self-identified liberal who espouses conservative economic values) would only need to make a symbolic sacrifice. Finally, supporting the Obama plan would not require a ‘consistent liberal’ (a self-identified liberal who espouses liberal economic values) to make either type of sacrifice.

Popp and Rudolph (2011) show that both types of ideological sacrifice work to moderate the effects of political trust on policy judgments concerning government intervention in the economy. Two findings are particularly worthy of note. First, they find that the effects of political trust on policy judgments increase with the amount of ideological sacrifice made. In other words, the effects of trust are greatest among those for whom policy support requires both a principled sacrifice and a symbolic sacrifice and are weakest among those for whom policy support requires neither type of sacrifice. The effects of political trust are of moderate magnitude among those for whom policy support requires either a principled sacrifice or a symbolic sacrifice but not both. Second, they find that the moderating effects of principled sacrifice and symbolic sacrifice on political trust are roughly comparable in magnitude.

Recent research suggests that, in the context of policy judgments, the utility of the political trust heuristic is also moderated by issue salience and media attention. Combining pooled cross-sectional ANES data from 1980–2004 with media content analysis, Hetherington and Husser (2012) find that the effects of political trust on policy judgments within an issue domain depend, in part, upon how much media coverage focuses on that particular issue domain. During periods in which media coverage primes people to think about government in terms of race and redistribution, the effects of political trust on racial policy preferences are much greater than when the media is focused on non-racial issues. Similarly, the effects of trust on foreign policy preferences are larger when media coverage primes people to think about government in terms of foreign policy than when media coverage is focused elsewhere. Collectively, these results suggest that the effects of political trust on policy judgments within a single issue domain will not be constant over time but, rather, will fluctuate according to the salience of a particular issue domain in the mind of the mass public.

One recent study reports that the level of government involvement that a given policy entails moderates the effects of political trust on policy judgments (Hetherington and Rudolph, 2011). In March 2010, President Obama signed the Affordable Care Act into law, the most significant piece of health care reform legislation enacted since the 1960s. Consistent with the trust-as-heuristic thesis, political trust is positively associated with support for this risk-laden policy. During the legislative debate leading up to this law, the US Congress considered many different types of health care reform proposals. Some of these proposals, such as the single-payer plan or the public option, would have entailed high levels of direct involvement by the federal government. Others, such as tax credits to help people buy private health insurance, would have entailed very little government involvement. Some proposals, such as the employer mandate, entailed moderate levels of government involvement. Hetherington and Rudolph (2011) find that the strength of the relationship between political trust and support for government-sponsored health care reform increases with the level of government involvement. Trust, for example, is a much stronger predictor of support for a single-payer plan or the public option than it is of support for tax credits. Their findings suggest that the effects of trust on policy judgments are moderated not only by traits of citizens, but also by traits of the policies themselves.

Empirical support for the trust-as-heuristic thesis is not limited to the American context. Using cross-sectional survey data from Germany, Trüdinger and Bollow (2011) find support for two of the theory's key propositions. First, consistent with theoretical expectations, they find that political trust influences public support for welfare state reforms across three different policy domains. Germans with higher levels of political trust are more likely to support welfare state reforms concerning health care, pensions, and family policies. Second, they find some evidence that the effects of political trust are stronger among those for whom policy support requires material or ideological sacrifice. These results suggest that public attitudes toward welfare state reforms are not simply a function of self-interest. Rather, they underscore the importance of political trust in shaping public support for governmental reforms.

CONCLUSION

In the world of politics, citizens must often make complex judgments in the absence of complete information. Political psychologists have argued that heuristics operate as a cognitive shortcut that can help people make reasonable decisions in a relatively effortless manner. In the context of policy judgments, political trust can serve as a particularly useful heuristic when citizens make evaluative judgments concerning risk-laden policies or government action under conditions of risk. The trust heuristic reduces complex policy judgments to a simple question of trust. Across a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues, a growing body of evidence suggests that political trust increases public support for the government's position.

Although political trust generally increases public support for risk-laden policies, scholars have found that the effects of trust are moderated by at least three different factors. First, the effects of political trust are typically larger among those for whom policy support requires the sacrifice of material or ideological interests than they are among those for whom policy support requires no sacrifice. Second, within the same issue domain, the effects of trust on policy judgments fluctuate over time and tend to increase with issue salience and media attention. Finally, the utility of the trust heuristic is conditioned by the level of government involvement in a particular policy. Political trust is a stronger predictor of support for policies entailing higher rather than lower levels of government involvement.

The findings from the literature on political trust as a heuristic carry a number of important implications. First, they suggest that political trust is a valuable resource that can be used to bolster public support for government action. Although initially thought to increase support primarily for liberal policy initiatives, political trust can also be used to buoy public backing for conservative initiatives as well. Second, the consistent nature of the interaction between political trust and ideology suggests that trust can help to bridge ideologically based differences in policy support. It does so primarily by boosting support among those who are ideologically predisposed to reject the policy in question. Finally, by narrowing the ideological gap in policy judgments across multiple issues, political trust has the potential to facilitate legislative compromise.

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13. Compliance, trust and norms of citizenship

Jan W. van Deth

INTRODUCTION

Compliance to common decisions and social norms seems to be indispensable for the persistence and vitality of any society. Without some minimum level of acquiescence, unpopular or unwanted decisions can only be implemented by power, coercion or control. Obviously, the necessity of enforcements makes collaboration and the production of collective goods less likely due to the implied rise of transaction costs. This is especially menacing for democratic decision-making processes. With their reliance on consensus, peaceful settlements and respect for minority rights, these systems depend – almost by definition – on citizens' willingness to comply voluntarily. Hence, particularly, criticisms of the functioning of democracies pointing to declining feelings of solidarity and community bonds, low levels of political trust or even a spread of distrust and cynicism on the one hand, and growing claims for individual independence ('individualization') on the other, have to be taken seriously. How, then, can democracies combine the claims and expectations of an emancipated and individualized citizenry with the requirements of compliance with unpopular or unwanted decisions without permanent enforcements?

In particular, compliance with tax norms and tax regulations attracted the attention of many scholars, apparently puzzled by the fact that large majorities of citizens simply pay taxes although the personal advantages of non-compliance are evident and tempting (cf. Torgler, 2003). Broadly speaking, two approaches can be discerned to answer the question why people comply with unfavourable rules and decisions (cf. Tyler, 1990, pp. 4–6). On the one hand customary economic explanations point to rational evaluations of the consequences of non-compliance and focus on determinants of self-interested behaviour such as the chances of being caught or the punishments and penalties waiting. An alternative line of research depicts moral and ethical standards as the main explanation for remarkable compliance rates. In these approaches rewards or punishments are not unimportant, but normative considerations that go well beyond transactional exchanges or coercion are taken into account as well. Citizens mainly acquiesce to decisions they do not like, because they believe the procedures applied or the outcomes obtained are ethically or morally appropriate. According to this line of reasoning people will accept evident individual and social disadvantages – such as tax assessments or conscription – as long as their ethical or moral standards are met. In this way norm-based compliance provides a plausible explanation for widely spread pro-social behaviour beyond restricted rationality.

In the political arena, key normative considerations emphasize prescriptions and guidelines for the behaviour of individual citizens. Since ethical and moral standards can be very broad and abstract in the case of values and value orientations (think of 'equality' or 'fairness'), their application usually becomes highly ambivalent. By referring to particular circumstances, norms specify concrete conduct based on normative consideration (Homans, 1961, p. 40); that is, norms are injunctive or prescriptive (for example 'you

ought to help the needy'). In democracies important norms deal with the behaviour of individual citizens and the question is which normative considerations an imagined 'good' citizen ought to endorse in order to support the functioning of democratic procedures. Such a hypothetical 'good' citizen is, for example, considered to obey the laws, to cast a vote, to be socially engaged and to care for less fortunate people. Each aspect of this image can be formulated as a norm of citizenship (van Deth, 2007; Dalton, 2008a, 2014) and each of these norms depicts the behaviour of an ideal citizen in a world deprived of practical limitations. Support for these norms can be seen as support for tangible pro-social and pro-democratic normative considerations. Because this support is likely to result in compliance with unfavourable decisions, for the persistence of democracy the crucial question is not whether citizens are always obedient, active and solidary, but rather the extent to which they support these norms.

Generally speaking, compliance with norms for ethical or moral reasons seems to be closely related to reciprocity and trust; that is, citizens are probably more likely to acquiesce to decisions when they are confident that other people will do the same or that the political system will even out negative consequences of one-sided compliance. As Hooghe and Zmerli (2011, p. 3) remark: 'the underlying logic seems to be that if citizens feel the authorities can no longer be trusted, there is less reason to comply with social norms'. Obviously, the reverse seems to be plausible too: exactly because many citizens support pro-social norms trusting other people, 'authorities' or government agencies is less risky.

In this chapter the relationships between political trust and support for norms of citizenship are explored. Although we are dealing with the consequences of political trust in this part of the Handbook, norms are treated as independent as well as dependent variables. Since a concise overview of the theoretical explanations presented for this association and the main conceptual distinctions required shows diametrically opposing claims about the presumed causality, an empirical test using a three-wave panel of young people is carried out. The main result of these analyses is that the widely reported positive correlations between political trust and support for citizenship norms in cross-sectional designs can be mainly attributed to the positive impact of these norms on political trust. Apparently, normative considerations come first for many young citizens and, as time goes by, the level of political trust is attuned to their level of support for norms of citizenship – not the other way around.

TRUST AND SUPPORT FOR NORMS

The literature on compliance is extensive and covers many distinct approaches, which – as already indicated – can be distinguished in two major groups.¹ Confronted with retaliation and deterrence people will be disposed to comply, first, because they want to avoid some unfavourable response – be it legal penalties and enforcements or social exclusion and neglect, or any other 'tit-for-tat' (Ayres and Braithwaite, 1992). Compliance, however, can also be intrinsically based on the conviction that some norm is ethically or morally appropriate and should be followed for its own sake; that is, these norms are to be followed irrespective of the likelihood of reciprocal responses and irrespective of the invincibility or vulnerability of the actor. In this second group of approaches willingness to consent is not based on 'one's self-interest', but on 'a feeling of obligation or responsibility that leads

to self-regulatory behavior' (Tyler and Huo, 2002, p. xiv). In a similar way Uslaner (2002, ch. 2) distinguishes between 'strategic trust' and 'moralistic trust' referring to evident gratifications and moral considerations, respectively.

Trust as a 'moral value' (Uslaner, 2002, p. 5) can be relevant for norm-based compliance and support for norms in several ways, which can be summarized in three main categories based on the direction of the alleged impact: (1) trust and support for norms are functional equivalents, (2) trust is a determinant of support for norms, and (3) support for norms is a determinant of trust. Furthermore, although many authors simply presume that trust and support for norms are positively related, there is no need to exclude negative impacts (Zmerli, 2008, pp. 238–41; 2010).

Trust and Norms as Functional Equivalents

Probably the most widely spread interpretation of the relationships between trust and norms is based on the presumption that the two concepts can play the same role or perform the same function in broader explanations ('nomological networks', cf. Cronbach and Meehl, 1955, p. 290). Consequently, trust and support for norms usually will be positively correlated without being causally dependent. Many social capitalists, for instance, list trust and support for norms simply as two cultural aspects of social capital (next to associational involvement as the main structural aspect) (cf. van Deth, 2003, pp. 81–3). In his seminal work on the functioning of democracy Putnam defines social capital as: 'features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks, that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions' (1993, p. 167). Since trust and norms are depicted as functional equivalents here – they both 'can improve...coordinated actions' – the two concepts will be positively correlated but not necessarily causally linked. Several authors report such correlations and refrain from causal interpretations. For instance, Knack and Keefer (1997) use trust and support for norms of citizenship as distinct indicators of social capital and distinct determinants of economic performance – yet both variables appear to be clearly positively correlated.

Similar lines of arguments are presented in debates about compliance. For example, Tyler and Huo (2002, p. 212) claim that trust and norms of citizenship are not directly related, but belong to the same type of intrinsic motivations 'that are societal orientations – the legitimacy of legal authorities, trust in other people in the community, and identifications with society'. People will comply with the law 'because, they feel, it is the right thing to do' (*ibid.*). A second example is provided by Etienne (2011, p. 307) who refers to the distinction between 'automatic' and 'planned' compliance and depicts the latter as 'the intentional pursuit of various goals, such as to maximize one's utility, fulfil a moral obligation such as duty or trust, or dispose of one's fear of sanctions'. Here 'duty' and 'trust' are specimens of 'moral obligations' and 'the intentional pursuit of various goals'. As with social capital, in both examples trust and support for norms are not presumed to be causally related: positive correlations are due to the fact that they play similar roles or perform the same function in explaining behaviour as variants of 'intrinsic motivations' or 'moral obligations'.

The use of trust and norms as functional equivalents does not require further considerations about the relationships between the two (although multicollinearity may cause serious problems in empirical analyses). However, when the relationship is extended to

some other factor that trust and norms might have in common, the further exploration of (spurious) correlations becomes crucial. Neo-Tocquevillian approaches to social cohesion and social capital typically refer to the importance of regular social contacts (especially involvement in voluntary associations) as the lurking factor for both trust and norms. This practice transforms the depiction of trust and norms as two specimens from a larger category of functional equivalents – as proposed by Putnam in his seminal work – into distinct factors whose apparent relationships are probably spurious; that is, restricted to a conjoint connection with regular social contacts.

Trust as a Determinant of Norms

Various authors propose that trust is a determinant of normative orientations. Usually, these approaches start from the concept of trust as a ‘value’ learned relatively early in life (Uslaner, 2002, p. 60) or as a ‘general assessment of the political culture in a country’ (Hooghe and Zmerli, 2011, p. 5) – therefore, trust is presumed to be more persistent and less dependent on external influences than orientations such as norms are. Obviously, trust will have a positive impact on norms: if general principles are accepted, specific expressions are likely to follow consistently. The empirical record corroborates the presumed positive co-variation. Tyler and Huo (2002, pp. 78–82) show that ‘institutional trust’ has a direct and positive impact on ‘feelings of obligations to obey the law’ (which they summarize under the general label ‘legitimacy’).² Using cross-sectional data from 26 European countries on attitudes towards the police and courts, Tankebe and Liebling (2013, p. 349) conclude that ‘trust in the police is an important factor in shaping people’s sense of police legitimacy’. More specific interpretations are presented in explanations of tax compliance. On the basis of an extensive overview of the literature and of analyses of cross-national survey data, Torgler (2003, p. 204) concludes at several places that ‘including many countries and control variables we found that trust has a significant positive effect on tax morale’ (see also pp. 301–5 and 327). Yet the main explanation presented for this effect is limited to a simple restatement: ‘Trust in public officials might tend to increase taxpayers’ positive attitudes and commitment to the tax system and tax-payment, which has finally a positive effect on tax compliance. . . if taxpayers trust the public officials, they are more willing to be honest’ (*ibid.*, pp. 195–6; see also pp. 214 and 221–3). Apparently, this positive impact is not restricted to political trust, but can also be expected for personal trust: ‘People who trust each other are in a closer interaction, which might produce a positive attitude towards contributing to the public good and paying the taxes’ (*ibid.*, p. 282). Empirical – cross-sectional – evidence underlines the validity of this expectation, but again, specifications of the presumed mechanisms are missing (*ibid.*, pp. 282 and 310).

Instead of focusing on the positive effects of trust for norm support, Marien and Hooghe (2011, p. 267) explored the consequences of a lack of political trust for law compliance (‘legal permissiveness’). They reached very similar conclusions as Torgler presented:

The results show that respondents with low levels of political trust are significantly more likely to accept illegal behaviour such as tax fraud than respondents with high levels of political trust. . . the hypothesis that low levels of political trust will be associated with less law compliance within a society is supported.

Support for Norms as a Determinant of Trust

The most unpretentious explanation of the relationship between norms and trust is to consider trust as an ethical or moral principle in itself: trust is a ‘moral value’ or at least has ‘a moral foundation’ (Uslaner, 2002, pp. x and 2). In this way trusting other people or institutions is a direct – and rather trivial – consequence of support for the norm that other people or institutions should be trusted.³ More interesting variants of this line of arguing point to the fact that shared norms allow people to trust other citizens, because it makes their actions more predictable. Putnam (1993, p. 177) refers to this direct connection by stating: ‘Individuals are able to be trusting (and not merely gullible) because of the social norms and networks within which their actions are embedded’. Notice that in direct interpretations along these lines the question is not whether somebody supports norms – the relevant impact results from the fact that the social environment of the person considered is characterized by support for these norms. In other words: trust is seen as a consequence of the degree to which norms are shared in a group and not necessarily of the individual level of norm support.

Beside these direct impacts of norms on trust more elaborated arguments can be found in compliance debates focusing on *trustworthiness* instead of trust.⁴ In these approaches norms are used as standards to evaluate the trustworthiness of fellow citizens or government agencies: if other people or government agencies can be expected to base their actions on norms that I myself consider important, then I can trust them. In her comparative work on military service in several countries, Levi (1997, p. 204) concludes that for compliance ‘sometimes approval is important, but even more important is the perception that government actors and other citizens are behaving according to widespread notions of fairness’. These last ‘notions’ are especially important since they ‘establish the standards of fairness for government trustworthiness’. Levi’s study shows that apparently ‘standards of fairness’ are determinants instead of consequences of trust. In a similar way Tyler (1990) depicts ‘normative attitudes’ and the way people have been treated by legal officials as the two most important factors that explain ‘why people obey the law’. Expanding this line of research Tyler and Huo (2002, p. 15) use the concept ‘motive-based trust’ to analyse the acceptance of decisions by courts and the police: ‘The individual who experiences fair procedures is encouraged to trust the authorities’.

Interesting and important as these studies of compliance might be, the crucial point is that the impact of norms on trust is considered to be dependent on an evaluation of the actual behaviour or the motives of other people or government agencies – hence the substitution of trust by trustworthiness in many studies. Evidently it is not the degree of support for some norm that is expected to result in trust, but the correspondence between actual behaviour or motives of citizens or agencies on the one hand, and a norm used as a ‘standard of fairness’ on the other. Furthermore, if the explanations are based on the idea that predictability is the main mechanism – as, for instance, Tyler and Huo (2002) argue – one does not even have to share a norm to foresee outcomes and therefore to offer trust.⁵

Various conclusions can be based on this concise overview of the literature. First and foremost, we see that the direction of the presumed causal link between trust and norms of citizenship is disputed. Whereas several authors postulate that trust and norms are functional equivalents and therefore do not require further causal considerations, others

depict trust as a determinant of norms or claim that norms determine trust. Remarkably almost all these claims are underpinned by analysing cross-sectional data only.⁶ Second, two main mechanisms linking trust and norms positively can be discerned, which has been expressed clearly in Uslaner's (2002) concepts of 'strategic trust' and 'moralistic trust'. Whereas the first variant bases the relationship between trust and norms on the predictability of consequences resulting from norm compliance (that is, they deal with trustworthiness instead of trust), the second variant emphasizes the inherently moral nature of trust. Finally, slightly more complex interpretations based on covariance between trust and norms – spurious relationships, conditional effects, interactions, and so on – are usually neglected. Taken together, these results lead to the conclusion that:

[. . .]norms of social order and political trust are mutually interdependent. Although political trust increases an individual's propensity to abide by laws and regulations and avoid free-riding behavior, norms of social order likewise increase a citizen's willingness to put trust in political institutions and actors. (Zmerli, 2010, p. 662)

EXPLORING CAUSAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN TRUST AND NORMS

Instruments and Research Strategy

The direction of the relationships between trust and support for norms is disputed with distinct arguments from distinct theoretical perspectives. Yet the empirical evidence used to underpin these claims is usually based on cross-sectional data only. Since various rival interpretations seem to be theoretically plausible and consistent only an exploration of panel data can provide evidence on the empirical validity of these claims at the individual level. For obvious reasons high-quality panel data are still very rare and usually limited to information about special groups. As our focus here is on the empirical validity of rival causal claims and not on reliable estimations of some population characteristics, the Belgian Political Panel Survey (BPPS) is selected as a large high-quality panel for secondary analyses of the relationships between trust and norms.⁷

The BPPS 2006–11 is a three-wave panel survey of Belgian youngsters interviewed at ages 16, 18 and 21 (from both the French- and Dutch-speaking communities; see Hooghe et al., 2011). In the first wave, a representative sample of 6330 young people in secondary schools (fourth year of secondary school or tenth grade), representative of the various tracks in each school participating in the study, were interviewed about a wide range of social and political topics. A total of 3025 respondents were interviewed in each of the three waves, enabling us to follow the interdependencies of trust and support for norms among young people during a critical phase in their lives.

For measuring *political trust* the BPPS asks respondents to indicate their degree of trust in seven political institutions separately:

Please indicate the degree of trust you have in the following institutions:

- (1) Police
- (2) The courts
- (3) Belgian parliament
- (4) Regional parliament (Flanders or Brussels/Wallonia or Brussels)

- (5) European parliament
- (6) Belgian government
- (7) Political parties

Responses range from ‘no trust’ (0) to ‘a lot of trust’ (10).

In each of the three waves especially ‘political parties’ and the ‘Belgian government’ receive relatively low levels of trust, whereas the ‘police’ and ‘the courts’ are much more trusted. This distinction in levels of trust for judicial vs political institutions is a common characteristic of this instrument in many studies and one could argue that for political trust the selection of items should be restricted to clearly political objects such as parliaments, government and parties. The clear distinctions in the levels of trust for the seven items, however, does not point at different types of (objects of) political trust among Belgian young people. Factor analyses (principal component analysis – PCA) reveal a clear one-dimensional latent structure underlying the items in each wave (explaining 67, 65 and 59 per cent of the variances). Apparently, for young Belgians political trust is not restricted to executive and representative branches, but also includes trust in regulatory institutions. For that reason, the scores for the evaluation of the seven institutions are averaged and the resulting indicator for political trust ranges from ‘low political trust’ (0) to ‘high political trust’ (10). In the first two waves, the mean scores are just below the scale mid-points (5.25 and 5.32). Yet a clear decline in political trust is visible for young Belgian adults in the third wave of the panel (mean 4.78).

In order to see whether the empirical results to be obtained for political trust also apply to other modes of trust – and therefore to trust in general instead of political trust in particular – the relationships between political trust and support for norms will be compared with the results for similar relationships including a second type of trust. The BPPS includes two common questions for *social trust* that are combined in a single indicator here by averaging the responses to the statements that ‘most people can be trusted’ and that ‘people are helpful’ (response scales from ‘you can’t be careful enough with people’ (0) to ‘people can be trusted’ (10); and from ‘people first of all think of themselves’ (0) to ‘people are helpful’ (10), respectively). The final scale for the social trust indicator used ranges from ‘low social trust’ (0) to ‘high social trust’ (10). Belgian youngsters show a rather low and continuously declining level of social trust when they reach adulthood (mean values of 4.59, 4.45 and 4.34 for the combined indicator in the three waves).

Measuring support for politically relevant norms is not easy due to the very broad, abstract or even vague nature these normative considerations usually show. Instead of relying on instruments focusing on ethically and morally based prescriptions and guidelines for the functioning of society or democracy, a much more concrete and clearer way to deal with normative consideration in politics is the use of the image of a ‘good’ citizen. Such a hypothetical ‘good’ citizen is, for example, considered to be politically and socially engaged, to obey the laws, or to care for the less fortunate. Each aspect of this ideal citizen can be easily formulated as a *norm of citizenship*. Apparently, many citizens have a clear notion of such an ideal ‘good’ citizen and they differentiate their support for distinct norms accordingly (Denters et al., 2007; van Deth, 2007; Dalton, 2008a, 2014). As in several other studies – Citizenship, Involvement, Democracy (CID), European Social Survey (ESS), International Social Science Programme (ISSP) – support for norms of citizenship is measured in the BPPS by directly presenting a number of qualities that an ideal ‘good’ citizen in a democracy should have:

In a democracy being a good citizen means:

- (1) Supporting people who are less fortunate than yourself
- (2) Casting a vote
- (3) Obeying laws
- (4) Volunteering in some organization
- (5) Being active in politics
- (6) Reporting a crime if you see one
- (7) Following political news
- (8) Committing yourself to the neighbourhood

Responses range from ‘completely unimportant’ (0) to ‘very important’ (5).

The levels of support for each of these norms among Belgian young people appear to be very different, ranging from very high levels for law-abidingness and reporting crime (averages above 3.5) to rather low levels for volunteering and being politically active (averages about 2.0 or lower). These results are clearly in line with findings for representative samples in various countries (Roßteutscher, 2004; Denters et al., 2007; van Deth, 2007; Denters and Van der Kolk, 2008; Bolzendahl and Coffé, 2013). A factor analysis (PCA) of the scores for the eight items reveals a clear – and very similar – three-dimensional structure in each of the three waves. The first dimension covers the *politically based* type of citizenship norms with all three political items (voting, politically active, following news). The second dimension covers the *socially based* type of citizenship norms based on the three social items (supporting others, volunteering, neighbourhood). Finally, a *duty-based* type of citizenship norms is reported for the two remaining items (law-abidingness, reporting crime). The distinction found among young Belgians between two types of engaged citizenship on the one hand and a duty-based type on the other, is clearly in line with available empirical findings from population studies (Roßteutscher, 2004; Dalton, 2008a, 2008b, 2014; Denters and Van der Kolk, 2008). Especially Dalton (2008a) emphasized a shift in citizenship from duty-based to engaged norms – a shift that should be particularly visible among younger people who are ‘reshaping American politics’. This expectation has been confirmed by Oser and Hooghe (2013) for Scandinavian students.

Figure 13.1 presents the general depiction of possible relationships for two variables – one mode of trust and one type of citizenship – in three panel waves. The intra-individual persistence for each of the two variables is indicated by the respective autocorrelation coefficients (α_1 and α_2 for trust; β_1 and β_2 for norms). The remaining arrows reflect the three main ways to depict the relationships between trust and norms as mentioned in the previous section. First, the idea of trust and norms as covariates without direct causal relationships (be it as functional equivalents or as the results of some confounding factor) is denoted by the cross-sectional correlations at each point in time (γ_1 , γ_2 , γ_3). The minimum requirement for the plausibility of causal effects is that asserted causes precede asserted consequences. This condition is, second, depicted by the three arrows in south-eastern direction for the impact of trust on norms (δ_1 , δ_2 , δ_3). The third type of presumed effects is depicted by the three north-eastern arrows, which show the effects of norms on trust (ε_1 , ε_2 , ε_3). A comparison of the strengths of the coefficients γ , δ and ε provides empirical evidence on the likelihood of the various interpretations for the relationships between trust and norms.

Trust and norms of citizenship are both linked to a number of attitudinal, social and

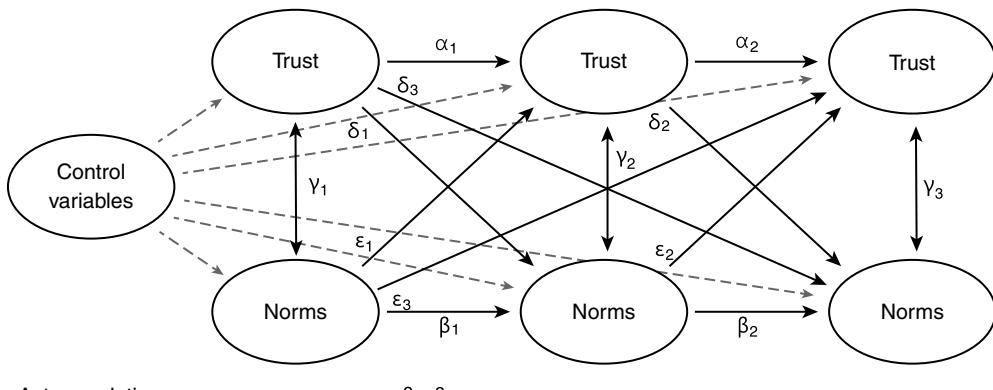


Figure 13.1 *A three-wave, two-variable model for trust and norms*

socio-demographical factors that might account for their relationships.⁸ Since the analytical ‘distance’ of trust and support for norms with other normative political orientations is rather limited, we focus on social and socio-demographical antecedents. Dalton (2008a, ch. 3) shows that the ‘social basis’ of citizenship norms can be defined by age, education, income, gender, race, religious practices and party attachment (cf. Denters et al., 2007, p. 103; Coffé and Van der Lippe, 2010, pp. 489–92). Relatively high scores on various indicators for socioeconomic status, social capital and political engagement increase the general likelihood to support norms of citizenship. However, the impact of these factors clearly differs for the main types of trust and norms of citizenship distinguished. Control factors for the analyses of the relationships between trust and norms of citizenship are: gender, education, church attendance, involvement in voluntary associations, number of good friends and political interest (see notes to Table 13.1 below).

The main aim of the explorations here is not to develop an encompassing model including the most salient antecedents of trust or norms of citizenship. Instead, we focus on tests of the three main interpretations of the relationships between trust and norms following the three main effects already specified with the arrows for γ , δ and ε in Figure 13.1.

Empirical Results

Before we turn to the question about the causal relationships between political and social trust on the one hand and support for three norms of citizenship on the other, the cross-sectional associations (γ) between these various orientations controlling for a number of socio-demographic and attitudinal features of the young respondents are explored. The estimates for the relevant regression coefficients are summarized in Table 13.1 for models of the effects of trust on norms (first coefficient in each cell) and for models of the effects of norms on trust (second coefficient). The findings show a straightforward pattern: all coefficients are positive and only one out of 36 estimates does not reach an acceptable level of statistical significance. These cross-sectional findings indicate that trust

Table 13.1 Cross-sectional relationships between trust and norms of citizenship (linear regressions; standardized coefficients)

	Political Trust						Social Trust						Social Trust					
	2006 (γ_1)			2008 (γ_1)			2011 (γ_1)			2006 (γ_1)			2008 (γ_2)			2011 (γ_3)		
	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$
Politically based	0.221***	0.237***	0.201***	0.218***	0.236***	0.275***	0.062***	0.071***	0.061***	0.065***	0.079***	0.079***	0.093***					
Socially based	0.155***	0.154***	0.181***	0.176***	0.147***	0.149***	0.153***	0.180***	0.194***	0.203***	0.229***	0.234***						
Duty-based	0.260***	0.254***	0.238***	0.220***	0.232***	0.219***	0.022	0.076***	0.057***	0.067***	0.054***	0.051***						

Notes:

$t \rightarrow n$: coefficient for the impact of trust on norms.

$n \rightarrow t$: coefficient for the impact of norms on trust.
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N_{\min} : 2629.

All regressions controlled for: gender: male (1), female (2); education: 16 and 18 years; educational goals 'no secondary' (1), 'secondary' (2), 'higher education' (3), 'university' (4); 21 years; education goals at age 18; church attendance: ceremonies attended last year: 'never' (1) to 'more than once a week' (5) (missing values in 2008 replaced by mean values for 2006 and 2011); voluntary associations: number of voluntary associations; friends: number of good friends 'none' (1) to '15 or more' (7); political interest: 'not interested' (1) to 'very interested' (4).

Source: Belgian Political Panel Survey (2006–11).

and support for citizenship norms at all three points in time are undoubtedly positively related – a result that is clearly in line with many findings presented in the literature (cf. Zmerli, 2008, p. 179). In addition, our analyses allow for a specification of the relative strengths of these correlations for distinct citizenship norms and two types of trust. Since the 35 statistically significant γ -coefficients range from 0.051 for the correlation between duty-based norms and social trust to 0.275 for the correlation between political trust and politically based norms, it is clear that general statements about the relationships between trust and norms are not very helpful. Instead, we see that the coefficients for political trust are always higher than corresponding results for social trust; that is, political trust seems to be much more clearly related to citizenship norms than social trust.⁹ Furthermore, the relationships between distinct types of trust and support for citizenship norms are rather trivial: political trust is most strongly related to politically and duty-based citizenship norms; social trust appears to be only substantially related to socially based citizenship norms. These patterns are visible in each of the three waves of the study and are apparently not time-specific or dependent on a specific phase in the transition from youth to young adulthood.

Having corroborated the positive association between trust and norms cross-sectionally, the next question deals with causal relationships: do political and social trust determine support for various norms – or is the reverse relationship more likely? To answer this question a comparison of the relative strengths of the respective δ - and ϵ -coefficients is required. The available panel data are very suitable for this task by using so-called ‘fixed-effect’ estimations, which focus on intra-individual comparisons of causal effects by removing the impacts of all time-invariant characteristics (cf. Kohler and Kreuter, 2008, pp. 249–53; Allison, 2009; Brüderl, 2010, pp. 971–5). Especially when more than two waves are available, fixed-effect models provide efficient estimates for the net effects of predictors on the outcome variables (Brüderl, 2010, p. 974). The results of these computations are summarized in Table 13.2 for models based on the presumption that trust

Table 13.2 Time-lagged relationships between trust and norms of citizenship (multilevel fixed-effects models)

	Political Trust		Social Trust	
	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$	$t \rightarrow n$	$n \rightarrow t$
Politically based	0.021**	1.529***	0.007***	0.581***
Socially based	0.013***	1.168***	0.015***	1.435***
Duty-based	0.016**	1.312***	-0.000	-0.029

Notes:

$t \rightarrow n$: coefficient for the impact of trust on norms.

$n \rightarrow t$: coefficient for the impact of norms on trust.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N_{\min} : 7670.

Dummy variables for 2008 and 2011 included (see Table 13.3).

All regressions controlled for education, church attendance, voluntary associations, friends and political interest (see Table 13.1).

Source: Belgian Political Panel Survey (2006–11).

determinates norms (first coefficients in Table 13.2; δ) and for the impact of norms on trust (second coefficients; ϵ).¹⁰ Furthermore, as with the cross-sectional analyses relevant controls for socio-demographic and attitudinal features of the young adults are included in all computations. Finally, temporal variations in the dependent variables (either trust or norms), which are not adequately captured by the explanatory variables in the models, have to be taken into account. This can be done by introducing two dummy variables for the second and third waves in 2008 and 2011. In this way, the scores in the succeeding waves are contrasted with results of the omitted first wave: If these dummies are statistically significant a time relevant change is immediately detected (cf. Allison, 2009).

The positive associations between trust and norms as already depicted for cross-sectional relationships in Table 13.1 are also visible in five of the six cells in Table 13.2. Here, too, we find that only for social trust and duty-based citizenship norms the estimates do not reach an acceptable level of significance. Much more importantly, however, are the comparisons of the relative strengths of the coefficients. For all combinations of trust and norms, the effects of norms on trust are substantially higher than for the reverse effects ($\delta > \epsilon$). In fact, the relative effects of trust on norms are extremely modest (the second coefficients in Table 13.2 are about 70–90 times larger than the first ones). The first and foremost conclusion, therefore, is that neither political nor social trust can be seen as a cause of support for citizenship norms – the empirical evidence clearly shows that, instead, political and social trust depend on support for norms of citizenship. Conclusions presented by authors such as Levi (1997), Tyler (1990), or Tyler and Huo (2002) suggesting that ‘standards of fairness’ or ‘normative attitudes’ are determinants instead of consequences of trust are fully corroborated by our results. Consequently, the widely spread ideas that trust and support for norms are functional equivalents or that trust determines support for norms are rejected unambiguously.¹¹

A further specification of these findings can be based on the estimates for the dummy variables for the distinct waves of the panel data set. As mentioned, these dummies contrast the scores in the second and third waves with the scores obtained in the first wave and so provide a direct indication of changes due to factors not included in the models. As can be seen in Table 13.3 the estimates for most of these dummies reach acceptable levels of statistical significance, but the effects are all rather modest or negligible. Only for entering into adulthood in the last wave substantial coefficients are obtained for models based on the presumption that norms determine trust (coefficients for $n \rightarrow t$ in Table 13.3). Both for political and for social trust these coefficients are all negative indicating a downward development of levels of trust and support for norms that were already clear from the descriptive results presented above. Since the highest estimates are found for modelling the impact of each of the three norms of citizenship on political trust it is clear that especially the level of political trust decreases among adolescents when adulthood is reached. This finding, too, is clearly in line with the evident decrease in this type of trust as indicated by the sharp drop of the average level of political trust in the third wave. Taking into account the causal dependencies of norms of citizenship on trust, then, results in the conclusion that political and social trust change in particular at the end of the transition from youth into young adulthood – and these changes are partly caused by changes in the levels of support for various citizenship norms. Any claims about the persistence of trust – ‘If trust does indeed reflect moral concerns, it should be stable over time’ (Uslaner, 2002, p. 50) – are falsified by the results presented here.

Table 13.3 Changes in trust and norms of citizenship in 2008 and 2011 as compared to 2006 (multilevel fixed-effects models with year dummies)

		Political Trust		Social Trust	
		<i>t</i> → <i>n</i>	<i>n</i> → <i>t</i>	<i>t</i> → <i>n</i>	<i>n</i> → <i>t</i>
Year dummies 2008	Politically based	0.047***	-0.073	0.048***	-0.133***
	Socially based	-0.002	0.013	0.000	-0.098*
	Duty-based	0.024***	-0.027	0.024***	-0.098*
Year dummies 2011	Politically based	0.026***	-0.562***	0.018**	-0.165**
	Socially based	-0.003	-0.511***	-0.006	-0.146*
	Duty-based	0.029***	-0.558***	0.022***	-0.140*

Notes:

t → *n*: coefficient for the dummy variable in models for the impact of trust on norms (see Table 13.2).

n → *t*: coefficient for the dummy variable in models for the impact of norms on trust (see Table 13.2).

* *p* < 0.05; ** *p* < 0.01; *** *p* < 0.001.

N_{min}: 7670.

All regressions controlled for education, church attendance, voluntary associations, friends and political interest (see Table 13.1).

Source: Belgian Political Panel Survey (2006–11).

CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The general results of these analyses can be summarized in a few statements. First, irrespective of the type of trust or modes of citizenship considered, we always find positive cross-sectional relationships. Second and most importantly, the causal ordering is unambiguous: norms of citizenship clearly have an impact on trust; that is, trust depends partly on these normative orientations, not the other way around. Third, contrary to many claims, trust does not appear to be relatively stable over time but declines evidently during the transformation into adulthood. Finally, trust apparently is not trust: for each of the first three conclusions it is clear that considerably stronger effects are obtained for political than for social trust.

We started this expedition with the observation that citizens' unwillingness to comply voluntarily is especially menacing for democratic societies. Yet support for norms stressing pro-social behaviour and compliance does not appear to depend on trust. On the contrary – all findings indicate that neither political nor social trust is a determinant of support for norms of citizenship. Obviously, those people who support citizenship norms rely on higher 'standards of fairness' and, consequently, will be more willing to trust other people or government agencies, whereas less support for these norms results in lower levels of trust. If trust and support for norms have benevolent consequences for democracy it is clear that the initial effect is due to support for norms and not to trust. For a vibrant democracy the much stronger requirement that both attitudes should be well developed and mutually reinforcing will be difficult to meet. Yet this requirement should not disguise the fact that support for norms of citizenship is causally prior to trust – and therefore is more important for strengthening democracy.

Two cautionary remarks on the generalizability of the findings should be considered before we turn to recommendations for further research. First, the respondents in our analyses represent a special group of people: Belgian youngsters from 16 to 21 years. Although this is a particular group of citizens, a number of findings for this group are doubtless in line with results obtained with representative population samples (for instance, average levels of trust and norms support, latent structure of support for citizenship norms, substantial positive cross-sectional correlations). For that reason, novel results that are based on the panel design of the study cannot be simply attributed to selection bias. Yet it is clear that adolescence is a very specific phase of life, which is likely to be characterized by a number of considerable and intensive changes. From these last two conclusions it follows that the reported declines in trust and support for norms of citizenship might be overestimated due to the specific age groups studied – the finding for the causal relationships, however, are much less likely to be influenced by the reliance on information from young respondents only. Nonetheless, a firmer corroboration of these findings is possible if three-wave panel data on trust and norms of citizenship for representative samples of the population of one or more countries would become available. This apparent lack of data establishes a first lacuna in the study of trust and normative orientations that should be filled as soon as possible.

Second, it should be stressed that the empirical strategy followed here conceived trust and support for norms as individual features that in some way are linked at the individual level. Especially approaches focusing on predictability – and consequently on trustworthiness – show that it is not the degree of support for some norm that is expected to result in trust, but the correspondence between actual behaviour or motives of citizens or agencies on the one hand, and a norm used as a ‘standard of fairness’ on the other. If people or agencies are likely to comply with some norm, then their behaviour becomes predictable and hence they can be trusted. The crucial point is that predictability does not require personal norm support: one does not have to share a norm to foresee outcomes and therefore to offer trust. For an empirical exploration of this interpretation, however, information about the perception of norms and the likelihood that other people or agencies will comply with these norms is needed. Unfortunately, such data are even more difficult to find than panel data. As with the first cautionary remark the second one also results in a clear recommendation for future research: theoretical and empirical research of the relationships between trust and normative orientations should be based on an integrated approach including (perceptions of) the degrees to which actors, agencies or institutions meet specific ‘standards of fairness’.

NOTES

1. See, for a brief overview of older studies, Tyler (1990, pp. 19–39). An overview of ‘mixed motives’ and ‘tit-for-tat’ is presented by Ayres and Braithwaite (1992, pp. 20–53) and of the relationships between political trust and law compliance by Marien and Hooghe (2011, pp. 268–72).
2. Tyler and Huo (2002) base their arguments partly on the analyses of panel data, but they do not use these data to explore rival causal interpretations. Furthermore, they introduce the concept of ‘motive-based trust’ and show that here, too, a direct and positive impact on ‘decision acceptance’ exists (2002, p. 89).
3. See Gouldner (1960, pp. 171–6) for an early discussion of similar arguments for the ‘norm of reciprocity’.
4. The distinction between trust and trustworthiness has been especially stimulated by the work of Hardin (2002). Scholars stressing the ethical and moral ‘foundations’ of trust sharply reject this argument

- (Uslaner, 2002, p. 15). Putnam speaks of ‘vicious spirals (or virtuous circles), as my expectations of others’ trustworthiness influence my trustworthiness, which in turn influences others’ behaviour’ (2000, pp. 138–9).
5. Arguments pointing to country- and culture-specific (macro) differences in ‘conformity’ are presented by Bond and Smith (1996).
 6. Among the very few exceptions are the panel analyses presented by Tyler and Huo (2002).
 7. I am grateful to Marc Hooghe and Ellen Quintelier of the University of Leuven for making these data available to me for the present analyses.
 8. See Mondak (2010, pp. 134–5) and Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache in this Handbook for overviews of the relationships between ‘personality traits’ and normative orientations. More specifically, Weinschenk (2014) presents a recent and extensive overview of the importance of ‘personality traits’ for the ‘sense of civic duty’.
 9. Obviously, these conclusions can only be based on comparisons of unstandardized coefficients. Since the distributions are rather similar and all models include the same set of control variables a comparison of the standardized coefficients results in the same conclusions.
 10. I am grateful to Joscha Friedrich for assisting me with the computations of these models.
 11. A general lack of empirical evidence for the impact of trust on compliance based on experimental data from a very different area (alarm systems) is presented by Bustamante (2009).

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14. Participation and political trust

Oscar W. Gabriel

POLITICAL TRUST AND PARTICIPATION: A COMPLEX RELATIONSHIP

Trust and participation have become fashionable fields of social science research over the last decades. A deeper scholarly interest in the question ‘How, why and with what effects do people become active in political life?’ developed during the behavioral revolution in political science in the 1950s. At that time, theory-guided, empirical research on political behavior evolved as the leading paradigm in US political science and also triggered investigation of political participation. In the mid-1960s, Lester W. Milbrath (1965) published a comprehensive report on the current state of research on political participation. Only a few years later, some of the pioneer studies in the respective areas were published and witnessed the emergence of a new participatory style in modern democracies (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978; Barnes et al., 1979). Since then, research on political participation has become a prominent field of empirical political science. Broad empirical evidence on the problem whether, in what forms, and for what reasons people take an active role in politics was published, in part drawing on national and in part drawing on cross-national data (for a recent overview see Van Deth, 2009).

Political trust was not a similarly visible topic in political science up to the 1970s. Eventually, the dramatic decline of political trust in the United States from the mid-1960s to the mid-1970s (Miller, 1974; Lipset and Schneider, 1983) induced an exploding research on political trust and legitimacy, spreading to Europe. But most empirical studies yielded rather ambiguous evidence on the assumed crisis of trust or even legitimacy, at least as the scope of research was extended beyond the United States (for example, Norris, 1999a, 2011; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Dalton, 2004; Montero and Torcal, 2006; Zmerli and Hooghe, 2011).

When the concept of ‘social capital’ was introduced in political analysis (Putnam, 1993), interest in social and political trust boosted once more, but with a slightly shifted focus. Analyzing political trust remained an important theme of research, but it was increasingly complemented by a broader scope on the role of social or interpersonal trust on social life in general, particularly on the impact of trust on social integration, socioeconomic development, and the quality of human life (Halpern, 2005).

Actually, social and political trust and participation figure as prominent objects of social research and are addressed in numerous theoretical and empirical contributions referring to manifold aspects of social life. At first glance, the main challenge for a contribution examining the links between those concepts is elicited by the overwhelming number of publications to be reviewed. But, as becoming obvious when having a closer look at current research, speculations about the impact of the crisis of confidence on political participation outweigh by far sound empirical research on the relationship between trust and participation. Mostly, social and political trust did not turn out as

important determinants of political participation. Similarly, the linkages between social trust and social participation proved to be flimsier than expected. And research on the impact of participation on trust is almost non-existent.

In reviewing the state of empirical research, this contribution will focus on those parts of scholarly literature that explore the interrelationship between (social and political) trust and (social and political) participation. In doing so, we will first reconstruct the view of the culturalist theories of democracy. This approach looks at trust and participation as closely interrelated parts of a syndrome of civic attitudes and behaviors fostering the stability and performance of democracy. In the second approach examined here, the theory of political support-alienation, the view on trust and participation is different. Trust is regarded as an attitude preceding participation. Depending on the specific configuration of trust and involvement, political apathy, conventional political activity or political protest will result. In presenting these two approaches, we will first develop the theoretical arguments and then turn to the existing empirical evidence on the relationship between trust and participation.

CULTURALIST APPROACHES TO TRUST AND PARTICIPATION

The Concept of Civic Culture: Trust, Participation, and Stable Democracy

The search for the attitudinal and behavioral prerequisites of stable democracies has been a main concern of political sociology since the end of World War II. Induced by the challenges of democratic government by totalitarian regimes, explaining why some states had maintained stable democratic regimes in times of crises – while others had failed – was the great theme of the early empirical theories of democracy. As part of this research, analyses of political culture emerged as a distinct subfield of political science and emphasized the function of a fit between democratic attitudes and behaviors (micro level) on the one hand and democratic institutions and processes (macro level) on the other as a necessary condition of democratic stability.

The idea of stable democratic regimes as embedded in a proper cultural context was developed in the 1950s by Almond (1956) and Lipset (1959 [1981]). As stated by Almond (1956), stable Anglo-American democracies had developed in the environment of a homogeneous-secular culture. By contrast, democracies on the European continent, such as Germany, Italy, and France, were characterized as based on a fragmented and ideological political culture and therefore failing to achieve democratic stability (similarly Lipset, 1959 [1981]). Somewhat later, Almond and Verba elaborated these rather impressionistic assumptions more systematically and introduced the ‘civic culture’ as the particular distribution of patterns of orientation toward political objects among the members of the nation conducive to a stable democratic regime (Almond and Verba, 1963 [1989], p. 13).

Although the description of the contours of a civic culture still lacked systematic rigor, trust and participation – explicitly, social trust as well as social and political participation – were regarded as core elements of this type of political culture:

[. . .]orientations favorable to participation within the political system play a major role in the civic culture, but so do such nonpolitical attitudes as trust in other people and social participation

in general [my emphasis]. The maintenance of these more traditional attitudes *and their fusion* [original emphasis] with the participant orientations lead to a balanced political culture in which political activity, involvement, and rationality exist but are balanced by passivity, traditionality, and commitment to parochial values. (Almond and Verba, 1963 [1989], p. 30)

Political trust, although not explicitly mentioned as an element of the civic culture, was conceived as part of the traditional, subject component of the civic culture (*ibid.*, pp. 191ff, 341ff). Since political culture is conceived as a pattern of political attitudes, but not of behavior, the focus of the empirical parts of the ‘civic culture’ was not on social and political participation. Nevertheless, Almond and Verba thought of social and political participation as closely related to cultural orientations. Accordingly, civic engagement should be understood as a necessary link between socio-political attitudes on the one hand and system stability on the other. It was seen as bridging the gap between latent individual dispositions and systemic characteristics such as political stability and performance. Favorable attitudes towards democracy induce supportive political behavior that, in turn, fosters democratic stability.

Some of the attitudes facilitating social and political participation were analyzed in detail by Almond and Verba. These were a felt obligation to participate (*ibid.*, pp. 126ff), subjective political competence (*ibid.*, pp. 140ff, 159ff), and the individual disposition to exert influence in politics (*ibid.*, pp. 145ff). But the authors were rather reluctant in answering the question of how widespread these attitudes would be in a true civic culture. Also, they did not analyze whether and to what degree these attitudes really performed as antecedents of civic engagement.

The assumptions on the role of trust and participation as preconditions of stable and well-performing democratic regimes were tested in only a handful of empirical studies, starting with Almond and Verba’s own publication. Due to the low number of countries included in the study (five) and because of the limitations of data processing facilities at the beginning of the 1960s, Almond and Verba were only able to present some illustrative examples on the different role of trust and participation in stable and unstable democracies. The view of participation as civic duty, the sense of civic competence, outgoing social engagement, and social trust were indeed much more widespread in the USA and Great Britain than in Germany and Italy (*ibid.*, pp. 126ff, 140ff, 209ff). Formal membership in voluntary associations turned out as the only exception in this pattern with the highest level in the USA and the lowest in Italy, but roughly similar rates in Great Britain and Germany (*ibid.*, pp. 246ff). In line with the view of the civic culture as a pattern of coherent orientations, social trust and the sense of civic competence were positively related to each other in the four countries mentioned before at the individual level (*ibid.*, pp. 194ff). By contrast, but consistent with the civic culture approach, trust in people did foster civic cooperation only in the established democracies, but not in Germany and in Italy (*ibid.*, pp. 227ff). Within the limitations of empirical research mentioned before, evidence rather supported than disconfirmed Almond and Verba’s hypotheses on a positive contribution of trust and participatory orientations to the stability of democratic regimes.

More recent and refined tests of the civic culture hypotheses did not lead to similarly convincing results. First and foremost, the simultaneous impact of participation and trust on the persistence of democratic regimes was never analyzed, mainly because some studies included social trust as a potential determinant of democratic stability, but not political

trust and social and political participation (Inglehart, 1988, pp. 1210ff; 1999; Lipset et al., 1993; Muller and Seligson, 1994; Granato et al., 1996; Inglehart and Welzel, 2005, pp. 173ff). This comes as a bit of a surprise since the relevant data would have been available for empirical analyses.

Thus, social and political trust and social and political participation were regarded as important parts, products or conditions of a civic culture in theory in the civic culture tradition. However, how those concepts were assumed as linked together was poorly specified. Even poorer is the state of empirical research on the interrelationship between them.

Social Capital: Trust and Participation as Elements of a Civic Community

Thirty years after the publication of the ‘civic culture’, the basic ideas of the early culturalist theories of democratic stability were renewed under fundamentally changed political circumstances. In view of the large number of new democracies having increasingly replaced authoritarian and totalitarian political regimes (see, for more details, Haerpfer et al., 2009), concern with democratic stability appeared by no means as outdated. It could not be taken for granted that the new democratic regimes would be able to master serious crises. Nevertheless, the focus of research shifted from explaining democratic stability to analyzing the antecedents of the quality of the existing democracies and the performance of democratic government.

Putnam’s research on the quality of democratic government in Italian regions (Putnam, 1993) laid the ground for this modified approach to empirical democratic theory. Similar to Almond and Verba, but with a different focus, he hypothesized that the asset of social capital available in a ‘civic community’ was the main determinant of a well-performing regional government. As he found, social capital mattered strongly for good government in Italian regions, even if socioeconomic modernity was controlled for. More explicitly than in the ‘civic culture’, social trust and informal and formal social participation were included in Putnam’s definition of social capital as ‘features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks’ (*ibid.*, p. 167). Parallel to Almond and Verba’s concept of political culture as a *pattern* of orientations, Putnam uses the term ‘features of social organization’ and thus assumes a close correlation rather than a unidirectional causal relationship between trust and participation. Also parallel to Almond and Verba, trust and participation figure as antecedents of a systemic characteristic, that is, democratic performance.

This assumption was partly supported by empirical research. In his pioneer study, Putnam found consistently strong, positive bivariate relations between the strength of the civic community and various attributes of good government such as institutional performance, Republicanism, electoral reformism, and satisfaction with life. On the other hand, a strong civic community went alongside weak clientelism and clericalism as well as weak feelings of powerlessness (*ibid.*, pp. 91ff).

Since the days of Putnam’s *Making Democracy Work* (1993), the impact of social capital on various aspects of societal modernization and democratic government was elaborated on and tested in a plethora of publications (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). In a replication and extension of his earlier analysis, Putnam tested the impact of social capital on various aspects of quality of life and good government in the US federal states. The composite measure of social capital he used included indices of social

and political engagement as well as of social trust. As he found, good living conditions of children, good health, tolerance of gender/race equality and civil rights, equality of income distribution and civic equality were enhanced by the level of social capital, while the opposite was the case with crime, pugnaciousness, mortality, and tax evasion (Putnam, 2000, pp. 296ff).

These assumptions were partly confirmed in other empirical studies. On the other hand, there were also different findings on the role of social capital in fostering democratic government. All in all, the role of social capital and its constituent components to democratic government and governance is far from being obvious (see, for more details, Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Newton, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2006; Boix and Posner, 1998; Sullivan and Transue, 1999; Gabriel et al., 2002; Knack, 2002; Paxton, 2002; Uslaner, 2002, pp. 190ff; Van Deth et al., 2007; Meulemann, 2008).

Due to differences in the study designs and in the variables under scrutiny, it is not possible to draw informative general conclusions on the role of trust and participation from the available empirical evidence. Some of the studies dealt with social capital as a systemic asset of modern societies. Others were more concerned with the consequences of the individuals' participation for social capital. Still others undertook attempts to integrate the macro and micro levels of analysis. The results of these different approaches to the role of social capital did not always fit together. Moreover, there were major differences in the particular components of social capital investigated in the respective studies. While some of them focused on the role of social engagement in strengthening democracy, others emphasized the role of social and political trust in democratic regimes. Moreover, social and political trust were not always related to each other and thus did not consistently impact on other characteristics of a democratic regime. Finally, different forms of social engagement yielded different results at the individual and systemic levels respectively (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle).

POLITICAL TRUST AS AN ANTECEDENT OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The Role of Political Trust in Early Studies of Political Participation

So far, the focus of this chapter was on the joint role of trust and participation in maintaining a stable and well performing democracy. Apart from this field of research, the relationship between political trust and political participation became a topic in theory as well as in empirical research by the end of the 1960s. This did not happen accidentally. After an unusual era of citizens' preoccupation with their private lives and a seemingly high level of satisfaction with the political system, but a rather low rate of active involvement in politics in the first two post-war decades, the representative Western democracies were witnessing a double transformation. First, the public became increasingly cynical with politics and, second, active political involvement increased and changed at the same time. Between 1964 and 1970, the share of Americans trusting the government always or most of the time dropped from 76 to 54 percent. While 64 percent had stated that government was run for the benefit of all people in 1964, the respective figure was only 41 percent six years later (Miller, 1974, pp. 952ff; see also Citrin, 1974; Lipset and Schneider, 1983).

During the late 1950s and the 1960s, political behavior began to change in the USA and elsewhere in the Western world. As demonstrated by Barnes, Kaase et al., unconventional forms of political behavior, characterized as not conforming to the standards of behavior considered as appropriate in democratic politics so far, were now increasingly used as means of exerting political influence (Barnes et al., 1979; explicitly: Kaase and Marsh, 1979, p. 37).

The change of political behavior was caused, among others, by a shift in political value orientations and the issue agenda of Western publics, on the one hand, and by specific political events, on the other. Initially, American involvement in the war in Vietnam was the most prominent target of mass protest. However, the agenda widened to include the concerns for racial equality, women's liberation, minority rights, a more democratic style of decision-making, a thorough liberalization of social life, world peace, and so on (Miller and Levitin, 1976). At the same time, the social basis of protest broadened. Initially, 'new politics' concerns were mainly articulated by the student protest movement. Subsequently, large parts of the public relied more and more on legal protest and civil disobedience in order to make their voices heard. The coincidence of declining political trust and the formation of the protest movement gave grounds for asking the question of whether these two developments were causally related to each other, or, to put it more precisely, whether people turned to protest activities because they did not trust political actors and institutions any longer (Miller, 1974, p. 951).

Surprisingly, political trust did not play a key role as a determinant of political participation in the leading research projects. The main concerns of the Verba group, which conducted several large-scale empirical studies in the 1960s to the 1980s, were as follows: first they wanted to outline the more and more differentiated and specialized system of political participation (voting, campaigning, communal activity, and particularized contacting as the main categories); second their aim was to analyze the impact of the socioeconomic resource level on political participation; and finally they tried to find out whether and how institutional affiliation mediated the relationship between access to socioeconomic resources on the one hand, and various forms of political participation on the other. Political trust was not included in the research design and in the explanatory models (Verba and Nie, 1972; Verba et al., 1978). This was also not the case when the research design was broadened and the 'civic voluntarism model' developed into the most promising and widely used explanatory approach in empirical research on political participation (Verba et al., 1995; Schlozman et al., 2012).

As regards the second large-scale research project on political participation, the Political Action study, the situation was somewhat different. Here, political trust was initially considered as contributing to protest politics. In the chapter on the theoretical foundation of the research project, Kaase and Marsh (1979) referred explicitly to the explanation of social and political protest presented by Gamson (1968) and pointed to the important role of political trust as a determinant of protest: 'The core variables relevant to the processes are the trust of the nonauthorities in the political authorities, the former's trust in the nonpartisan nature of the institutions of the political system, the perceived success of attempts by nonauthorities to influence outcomes' (Kaase and Marsh, 1979, p. 38). Some of the theoretical arguments on the motivational basis of political protest were elaborated in Ronald Inglehart's theory of value change (Inglehart, 1971; see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian). According to him, the strong

and steady improvement of the living conditions of the citizens in the Western part of the world had led to a shift from materialist to post-materialist value orientations. One of the assumed results of value change was a new structure of the issue agenda of the mass publics as described before. However, the limited capacity or willingness of the – still materialist – political elite to conform to those new demands was supposed to generate a misfit between the expectations of large parts of the citizenry and the conduct of public affairs. As a consequence, some observers stated a decline of political trust. This, in turn, was seen as leading to the spread of legal and illegal protest activities ('elite challenging behavior') and a parallel retreat from traditional forms of political behavior ('elite directed participation') (Inglehart, 1979). Unconventional political participation was thus understood as typical behavior of the politically dissatisfied – and therefore distrusting – post-materialists. Given the important role of political trust in the exchange between the citizens and the authorities, it comes as a surprise that Inglehart did not include political trust as a variable in his statistical models aimed at explaining political behavior, particularly unconventional political participation (*ibid.*).

While political trust played a non-existent to marginal role in the pioneer studies of political participation, a different field of research developing roughly at the same time was far more important in this respect. Several studies trying to explore the impact of political (dis-)trust on political participation aimed to identify the causes of why a sizeable number of citizens had disengaged from conventional political participation. Different kinds of behavior were considered as expressions of political disenchantment: apathy in general and abstention from voting in elections were on one side, political protest, particularly in the forms of civil disobedience, aggressive political participation, riot participation, and political violence made up the other domain. Finifter (1970, pp. 402ff) distinguished between extreme disengagement, apathy, reform orientation, and political integration as four different types of political behavior. According to her, the following combination of political powerlessness (low efficacy) and perceived political normlessness (low trust) would lead to the kinds of behavior described before. Strong feelings of powerlessness and normlessness would induce extreme political disengagement, strong powerlessness going alongside with low normlessness would lead to political apathy while the opposite combination of the respective attitudes would be conducive to participation in legal protest (Table 14.1).

Table 14.1 Distrust and inefficacy as determinants of political participation

		Political Powerlessness (Inefficacy)	
		High	Low
Perceived Political Normlessness (Distrust)	High	Extreme Disengagement (Separatist and revolutionary movements, complete withdrawal)	Reform Orientation (Protest groups working within the institutional framework)
	Low	Apathy (Very low level of political involvement)	Integration (Conformative participation)

Source: Finifter (1970, p. 407).

Many scholars agreed with the assumption that the rise of unconventional activities had something to do with a decline of political trust/support or with increasing political alienation (see also Gamson, 1968; Paige, 1971; Schwartz, 1973; Wright, 1976, 1981; Muller, 1977, 1982; Muller and Jukam, 1977; Sniderman, 1981, pp. 47ff; Muller et al., 1982). Most analyses of the role of political trust as a determinant of political activities were published by Muller and his associates who assumed that people perceiving political leaders, political institutions, and/or the political regime as remote from the public, incompetent, unresponsive, not honest or unfair would lack strong incentives to engage themselves in conventional forms of political action. They would see this type of engagement as futile, since they would doubt that political leaders would seriously take the demands of the public and even its activist strata into account when making their decisions. In this line of reasoning, a direct path was drawn from political discontent/distrust to political apathy or participation in various forms of protest.

Muller considered low political trust as one condition of aggressive political participation and presented empirical evidence confirming that assumption. But he also showed that this relationship was mediated by other factors (Muller and Jukam, 1977, pp. 1576ff). Similarly, Sniderman (1981, pp. 86ff) found the far highest level of protest (around 30 percent) among the politically disaffected, that is, people evaluating the political system and authorities thoroughly negatively. By contrast, the share of protesters turned out to be considerably lower among all more strongly committed groups (less than 10 percent). On the other hand, as demonstrated by Muller et al. (1982), the impact of political trust on aggressive political participation vanished if system support was controlled for.

Recent Findings on Trust as a Determinant of Participation

Since the beginning of the 1980s, research on trust and participation could have profited from a remarkable improvement of the data situation (see, for more details, Keil, 2009). A considerable number of national surveys and several large-scale cross-national survey programs offered a good opportunity to investigate the links between political trust and participation deeply, systematically and on a broad cross-national and cross-temporal database. However, research did not keep pace with the improved data situation, and a still very limited number of empirical studies have dealt with the problem under investigation here.

Most of the studies conducted in the last two decades departed from the state-of-the-art distinction between conventional (institutionalized) and unconventional (non-institutionalized) political participation. They tried to answer the question whether and how political trust impacts on these two different forms of political participation. The hypothesis more or less explicitly guiding empirical research assumed political trust as fostering conventional political participation, but dampening political protest (for example, Hooghe and Marien, 2013, pp. 134ff).

Often, scholars found the expected negative impact of political trust on participation in protest activities (Kaase, 1999, pp. 16ff; Norris, 1999b, pp. 258ff; Rivat and Stauer, 2012, pp. 250ff; Gabriel, 2013, pp. 402ff; Hooghe and Marien, 2013, pp. 137ff; Hooghe and Quintelier, 2013, pp. 233f). As underlined by these findings, people who trust the government or the political institutions do not have an incentive to use political protest as a means of making their voices heard. Or, the other way round: people distrusting political

leaders or political institutions will be more strongly motivated to engage in protest than trusting citizens.

But there is also other empirical evidence contradicting the assumption that political trust impacts negatively on protest. Accordingly, Goul Andersen and Hoff drew the following conclusion from a study of the relationship between political trust and political participation in three Nordic democracies: '[I]n Denmark, there is no longer any association between political protest and political trust, and in Norway and Sweden, participation in political protest is even *positively* related to political trust' (Goul Andersen and Hoff, 2001, pp. 178f, original emphasis; see also Parry et al., 1992, pp. 185ff; Gabriel, 2004, pp. 331ff). In line with this contradictory evidence, some studies on the impact of political trust on *specific forms* of political protest, such as consumerism, issue-oriented participation, and abstention from voting (see, for example, Dalton, 2004, pp. 173ff; Gabriel, 2004, pp. 331ff; Zmerli, 2008, pp. 276ff; Steinbrecher, 2009, pp. 229ff), also led to inconclusive findings. If a relationship between political trust and those various forms of political protest existed at all, it turned out as weak and inconsistent. Dalton's findings on the relationship between political trust and participation in protest and in demonstrations in 12 democracies can serve as a master example for this puzzling state of research (Dalton, 2004, pp. 173ff). In some nations, political trust showed a negative impact on at least one of the two protest activities under scrutiny, but in others political trust was positively related to protest, and in still others these variables were unrelated.

Several studies also dealt with the role of political trust as an antecedent of conventional or institutionalized political participation and of various forms of getting involved in traditional activities. As in the analyses of political protest, the data stemmed in part from cross-national, and in part from national surveys. In one of the earliest studies conducted in Britain, Parry et al. (1992, pp. 185ff) did not find a consistent relationship between cynicism and various forms of conventional participation. Although the least cynical groups of citizens showed the highest levels of turnout and contacting, a monotonic relationship between those variables did not exist. Regarding campaign activity and collective action, the most and the least cynical were roughly similar to each other. The finding of a positive impact of political trust on turnout was confirmed in several other studies (Goul Andersen and Hoff, 2001, pp. 74f; Norris, 2002, pp. 83ff, 127ff; Zmerli, 2008, pp. 276ff; Hooghe and Quintelier, 2013, pp. 233f; Dalton, 2004, pp. 173ff; Ceka, 2013, p. 1628; differently, Gabriel, 2004, pp. 331ff).

Not surprisingly, conventional political participation in general (Hooghe and Marien, 2013, pp. 137ff; differently, Gabriel, 2004, pp. 331ff; 2013, pp. 402ff; Hooghe and Quintelier, 2013, pp. 233f) as well as specific forms of conventional political activity such as contacting politicians or administrative leaders (Zmerli, 2008, pp. 276ff) and joining a political party or working actively in those organizations (Norris, 1999b, pp. 258ff; 2002, pp. 83ff, 127ff; Goul Andersen and Hoff, 2001, pp. 74f; Ceka, 2013, p. 1628) are fostered by political trust, but almost as often, such a relationship could not be established empirically. Interestingly, the same pattern was found in a study examining the impact of political trust on various forms of participation in deliberative processes in the United States. Political trust mostly did not matter for participation in face-to-face or digital deliberation, and if it did, the impact was a negative one (Jacobs et al., 2009, pp. 53ff).

Apart from the weak coefficients of the association between political trust and partici-

pation that are typical of most studies reported before, one of the results is particularly puzzling. Although the models tested in the analyses of Hooghe and Marien (2013) and Hooghe and Quintelier (2013) differed only slightly and the database used in their analyses was the same, their findings on the links between political trust and political participation were not the same in the two studies. This might be due to the large sample sizes leading to some statistically significant, but substantially meaningless relationships between the variables under observation (see also Norris 1999b, 2002).

In view of the low impact of trust on participation, some scholars aligned to the more differentiated explanatory model as outlined before. They doubted that political trust was a genuine determinant of participation, but rather worked as a mediator variable when analyzing the impact of political efficacy on political participation. Alternatively, political efficacy could also be regarded as a mediator variable, bringing the hidden impact of political trust on participation to the light. According to the logic underlying this research, trust alone does not matter for political activity, but the impact of political trust on political participation would be seen when interacting with feelings of political efficacy. However, this intuitively plausible assumption did not find support by most earlier empirical research referred to above. More recently, Goul Andersen and Hoff detected an interaction of low trust and low political interest in their study of civic engagement in Nordic countries. The interplay of those variables fostered abstention from voting, but this relationship vanished if perception of voting as a civic duty was taken into consideration (Goul Andersen and Hoff, 2001, pp. 41f). Similar results were presented by Hooghe and Marien (2013, pp. 134ff). But again, some other studies did not confirm the assumption that political trust becomes only a relevant predictor of political participation if interacting with some kind of cognitive engagement (Parry et al., 1992, pp. 185ff; Gabriel, 1996).

Although the assumptions that political trust would foster traditional political activity but dampen political protest and that social trust would generally be conducive to political participation appear highly plausible at first glance, they are not convincingly supported by empirical research. Rather, the findings seem to vary across time, space, and other factors. Thus, the disappointing findings of the early studies are not mainly due to poor indicators or inadequate methods of statistical analyses. More recent studies not suffering from these shortcomings did not convey less inconsistent empirical results.

CONCLUSION

Only at first glance is the analysis of the relationship between political trust and participation an easy endeavor. Although theoretical and empirical research on the two topics is abundant, a closer look soon makes evident that the linkages between the two characteristics of good citizens and democratic polities have not been investigated very often. Even less has existing research generated unambiguous findings on the issue. Assumptions on the connection between trust and participation were elaborated in two different branches of research. According to cultural theories of democracy, that is, research on the political culture of democratic regimes and on the role of social capital, trust and participation should be more widespread and more strongly interrelated in stable and well-performing democracies than in other types of political regimes. These assumptions are at least partially confirmed by some empirical studies, but not by all. Theories of political

support-alienation as the second approach to the variables under scrutiny here focus more specifically on the relation between political trust and political participation. In this field, however, most research is not in line with the view of political trust as fostering conventional political activity and preventing people from political protest. According to most empirical studies and to results presented here, political trust and participation are often unrelated to each other, particularly if moderator variables are taken into account. If there are statistically significant relationships between the variables, they are often weak, inconsistent or even contradictory.

It can hardly be said what accounts for this puzzling situation of research. Maybe, the inconsistent findings are due to a lack of appropriate indicators of trust and participation and maybe they indicate a failure of the theory. Particular attention should be given to exploring the role of largely unknown contextual factors as mediators between trust and participation and to the causal ordering of these two variables.

Attributing the inconsistent findings to measurement problems seems to be the least convincing explanation. Admittedly, the validity of the measures of trust – but less so participation – was not undisputed (for example, Feldman, 1983; Craig et al., 1990). But in view of the long and broad tradition of empirical research in these fields, this can only apply to early research. Recent surveys such as the European Social Survey and some national studies use well-established indicators of political trust and participation. Nevertheless, the results achieved in analyzing those data do not turn out as more convincing than in earlier stages of empirical research.

As a closer examination shows, the theoretical argumentations presented in the studies on political support-alienation are less convincing than it might appear at first glance. While arguments on the opposite behavioral effects of political distrust were well elaborated in the efficacy-distrust hypothesis, this does not apply to the same degree to trust. Political trust can also imply opposite consequences for the citizens' political behavior. On the one hand, it can lead to inactivity because people think that a responsive political elite will correctly perceive their demands and take them into account even if the electorate remains passive. But political participation, particularly voting in elections, can also be interpreted as a kind of supportive civic behavior and thus be positively related to political trust. The weak and inconsistent relationships between the two variables may result from opposite characteristics of different parts of the publics, eventually canceling each other out at the mass level as it comes to modeling the link between political trust and participation. Thus, more research seems to be needed in order to identify under what particular conditions political trust will lead to political participation or to disengagement.

As part of the attempts to specify the relationship between political trust and participation, new strategies of research could be helpful. So far, most analyses deal with the relationship between political trust and participation in general and almost necessarily ignore the specific circumstances leading people to apathy, to protest or to conventional forms of activity. The use of nationwide survey data as a base of research could intensify the problem mentioned before and induce a fallacy of misplaced abstractness. A careful examination of specific cases of successful and failed participation and of the role played by political leaders in this context would possibly shed more light on the dynamics of the relationship between political trust and participation.

Finally, more attention should be devoted to the question of whether trust can not only be regarded as a cause, but also as a result of participation. The underlying assumption

is at least as plausible as the traditional one. Civic participation gives an opportunity for the acquisition of civic values, norms, skills, and attitudes. Thus, we can assume that political trust is, at least in part, transmitted in the process of early political socialization (for example, Abramson, 1983, pp. 209ff). However, it is strengthened or even generated by political experience in adult life, among others by participating actively in the political process. Although the general view on political participation as a shaper of civic orientations is by no means a new one, this is largely an unexplored field of research (Mansbridge, 1999, pp. 315ff).

Given this set of possibilities for broadening and deepening the research on the relationship between political trust and participation, there is no reason to conclude that the two phenomena are unrelated. It rather seems to be the case that many aspects of the problem have not yet been tackled in an appropriate manner. As a contribution to strengthening democratic regimes, particular emphasis should be given to research exploring the way political participation can generate and maintain people's trust in political leaders, in political institutions, and in the entire political system.

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15. Political trust and voting behaviour*

Éric Bélanger

INTRODUCTION

The large reservoir of politically distrustful citizens across Western democracies (see some of the chapters in Part III of this volume) has raised concerns about the legitimacy of the political system as a whole. Perceiving one's own institutions of governance and representation as performing poorly, or as being untrustworthy, can lead some citizens to become disillusioned with their political system. In this chapter, we explore what the impact of political trust might be on participation in the democratic process, particularly looking at vote choice. As will become clear, non-mainstream political parties, also referred to as 'challenger' parties, can be expected to benefit more from distrust than mainstream ones.

Challenger parties fulfil numerous functions in a political system. One of these functions is to act as a vehicle for discontented voters within the system. It is sometimes argued that the fortunes of challenger parties can be taken as a barometer indicating public discontent with the political system. By capturing the votes of those dissatisfied with how the democratic system is working, challenger parties allow for the peaceful expression of discontent within the confines of electoral politics. This vote-gathering role is also attributable to the fact that challenger parties are seen as an alternative to traditional parties, which are often a source of distrust. In doing so, challenger parties may be fulfilling an important role in maintaining and strengthening the legitimacy of the democratic process.

With this 'tribunician' function¹ of challenger parties in mind, we can expect that political distrust is associated with voting for challenger parties. While several other factors can be related to the emergence of challenger parties, political distrust appears to be an important element for understanding the electoral success of these parties and candidates. It also seems to be an underdeveloped area of research in the literature on support for challenger parties. This chapter's overview of this phenomenon will also consider the potential effect of institutions (i.e., the possibility to abstain from voting) and challenger-party campaign strategies on the link between distrust and electoral support for challenger parties.

We define a challenger party as a political party that has never been elected to government and in the eyes of voters remains an untested alternative. In contrast, a party that has formed a government at least once before is considered an established party (or a traditional, mainstream party) unless it has not been in government for a very long time. What really differentiates challenger parties from the other ones is not so much their rank or size as their institutional status within the party system.² These are parties that are not part of the 'governing club', so to speak; that is, they are not considered as a natural (or traditional) governing alternative because they are either new or they have been unable yet to enter the club.³

The chapter discusses the relationship between political trust and voting behaviour in three steps. It first offers a theoretical framework that can account for the relationship

between these two variables. It then addresses the question of whether or not that relationship can be seen as unidirectional, going from political trust to vote choice. It then concludes by discussing the political implications that a link between trust and voting behaviour entails.

POLITICAL TRUST AS A DETERMINANT OF VOTE CHOICE

Several studies have found political trust to be highest in the most proportional electoral systems, and in the most open party systems (Van der Meer, 2010; Marien, 2011; see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). If the democratic project is one of ‘institutionalizing distrust’ (Braithwaite and Levi, 1998; Warren, 1999), it seems possible then that challenger parties may be contributing in some capacity to this aim.

Indeed, there are two different ways to interpret the electoral success of challenger parties. The first approach, which is rather negative, believes that the emergence of a challenger party destabilizes the party system (Mazmanian, 1974). The presence of challenger parties can upset the balance among established parties and make the formation of a stable government more difficult. The breakthrough of a challenger party can also be seen as a symptom of more serious system dysfunctions. For example, it can be viewed as a result of established political parties failing to be effective vehicles of representation and inadequately responding to new demands from the citizenry (Lawson and Merkl, 1988; Daalder, 1992). Established parties have an incentive to preserve the existing conflict lines within society, but from time to time challenger parties can successfully impose a new conflict line that forces established parties to react and reposition themselves if they want to try to survive the change (Schattschneider, 1960; Mair, 1997). In that sense, a more positive approach can be taken with respect to challenger parties, one that sees them as fulfilling important functions within the political system.

Distrust and the Functions of Challenger Parties

In general, three main functions are attributed to challenger parties. First, challenger parties often act as innovators in public policy because they bring new ideas to the table and force traditional parties to adjust their legislative agendas (e.g., Rosenstone et al., 1996; Adams et al., 2006; Meguid, 2008). Second, they can initiate major realignments within the electorate (e.g., Zingale, 1978; Rosenstone et al., 1996; Martin, 2000). It may be the case that a non-traditional party lays claim to a new issue (perhaps one based on which the party has been created) and attracts a large bloc of voters with whom this new issue resonates. The emergence of this issue on the electoral scene may be enough to erode support for established parties and reconfigure the basis on which these established parties used to compete (Schattschneider, 1960; Mair, 1997).

A third function often assigned to challenger parties, and the one that is most relevant for this chapter’s purposes, is to act as a vehicle for voters to channel their dissatisfaction (Ranney and Kendall, 1956, p. 458; Fisher, 1974, p. 175). Discontented voters switch to a non-traditional party either to signal their frustration with the system or because they believe that the challenger party cannot do worse than any of the traditional party alternatives with regard to political representation and governance. This is akin to the

'tribunician' function of political parties identified by Georges Lavau (1969, pp. 38–9; see also Hamel and Thériault, 1975). By promoting the expression of disenchantment with the political process via the ballot box, challenger parties contribute not only to keeping dissatisfied voters within the system, but also to discouraging them from using unconventional means of protest action.

If challenger parties actually fulfil such a function, then it is conceivable that they are able to mobilize some of the malaise felt by a number of citizens in industrialized societies towards democratic processes and institutions. In their bid for voter support, challengers often tend to put all traditional parties together in the same bag and to exploit voters' hesitations to support old parties that appear disconnected from the needs and interests of the general population (Lemieux, 1965). Therefore, one would expect political distrust to be associated with voting for challenger parties and to be a significant determinant of electoral support for these parties. A growing number of studies suggest that this is indeed the case.

Hetherington (1999) examined the impact of political trust's decline on vote choice in US presidential elections from 1968 to 1996. His study shows that political trust affects vote choice, but that this relationship varies according to whether there is a third candidate (i.e., an independent candidate) in the presidential race. In a two-way race, he observes that the opposition party collects the votes of those less trusting of the government. However, in a three-way race, he finds that the third party candidate reaps the electoral support of those less politically trustful. This finding is similar to that of Peterson and Wrighton (1998), who suggest that the presence of independent candidates in US elections allows voters to express their dissatisfaction toward government institutions. These conclusions are also confirmed by Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002, pp. 72–4), who have shown that support for independent candidate Ross Perot in 1992 and 1996 was partly due to dissatisfaction with the governmental process.

Such a phenomenon was not only observed in the United States, but elsewhere too. A study by Miller and Listhaug (1990) shows that a new party emerged in Norway during the 1970s (the Progress Party) and was able to mobilize dissatisfied Norwegian voters, possibly halting the decline of political trust in this country. By contrast, the continued erosion of public confidence in the United States and Sweden during the same time period can be explained by the absence of any new partisan alternatives in these two countries. In the wake of Miller and Listhaug's work, several other European studies have reported that low levels of political trust lead some voters away from the major parties and toward non-mainstream parties (Pattie and Johnston, 2001; Bélanger and Aarts, 2006; Hooghe et al., 2011; Bäck and Kestilä-Kekkonen, 2014; Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2017).

Examining the phenomenon in Canada for the period 1984 to 1993, Bélanger and Nadeau (2005) have shown not only that old-line major parties suffer electorally from declining political trust but also that some challenger parties benefit more from this than others. Contrary to what was the case in the previous two elections, distrustful Canadian voters in 1993 were more likely to support the Reform Party or the Bloc Québécois than to vote for the New Democratic Party (NDP), suggesting that the transition from a three- to a five-party system had eroded the NDP's role as a vehicle for channelling citizen distrust.⁴

Voicing Distrust by Supporting a Challenger Party

How can a possible causal link between political trust and electoral support for challenger parties be conceptualized? We believe that the most useful theoretical approach is one based on the work of Hirschman (1970), which can be fruitfully adapted to the study of elections and voting behaviour (Gidengil et al., 2001; Kang, 2004; Kselman and Niou, 2011).

In any political system, a certain amount of dysfunction or underperformance is considered both normal and inevitable. This is generally tolerated by the members of the system, that is to say, the citizens. In that sense, political trust constitutes a reservoir of favourable attitudes that can help citizens tolerate a certain level of dysfunction, underperformance or even misbehaviour within the political system (Easton, 1965, 1975; Gamson, 1968). It is only when there is the perception of a significant deterioration in regime performance and the quality of its outputs that citizen dissatisfaction toward the system starts to increase and their support for the system starts to decrease. As expressed by Newton and Norris (2000, p. 61): ‘Government institutions that perform well are likely to elicit the confidence of citizens; those that perform badly or ineffectively generate feelings of distrust and low confidence. The general public. . .recognizes whether government or political institutions are performing well or poorly and reacts accordingly’.

An approach inspired by Hirschman (1970) assumes that members of the system who are dissatisfied with its operation do not accept the current situation when their dissatisfaction exceeds a certain threshold. Come election time, two possible courses of action are available to distrustful citizens. The first is abandoning the party system by abstaining from voting (*exit*). This is the path that will be taken when distrust is too high – when people believe, for example, that political parties are not vital to the functioning of the political system. Research on this question in the United States typically concludes to a null relationship between political trust and electoral participation (see Citrin, 1974; Miller, 1980; Shaffer, 1981; Rosenstone and Hansen, 1993). As Citrin and Luks (2001, p. 26) put it, ‘political mistrust stimulates voice rather than exit’. Nevertheless, it makes sense to expect that distrust might act as an alienating factor and that some politically distrustful voters might be less likely to participate in elections. In fact, cumulative evidence from political systems other than the USA suggests that abstention does constitute an alternative choice for at least some distrustful voters (Pattie and Johnston, 2001; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005; Grönlund and Setälä, 2007; Bäck and Kestilä-Kekkonen, 2014).

The second possibility is the expression of their discontent by voting for a challenger party (*voice*). We can then say that distrust is expressed by abandoning traditional parties, which are seen as partly responsible for the current systemic dysfunction and underperformance (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002, pp. 45–6). As Hetherington says (1999, p. 321), ‘those low in trust. . .perceive the institutionalized alternatives as incapable of addressing their concerns, and hence they may welcome other options’. In other words, the challenger parties are seen – and used, perhaps strategically – as a means of expression by distrustful voters (Bergh, 2004; Kselman and Niou, 2011). However, these parties can also be considered as potential agents of change that will improve the system (Kang, 2004).

From this perspective, a vote for a challenger party is a potentially more effective way of improving an unsatisfactory situation than abstention. With enough success, a challenger

party may be able to elect several deputies and channel discontent back into the legislative arena. It may even have a reasonable chance of eventually coming into power, thereby replacing the unsatisfactory traditional alternatives. Even modest success on the part of the challenger party will divert some votes from traditional parties. In contrast, a decline in voter turnout due to a large number of distrustful voters choosing to abstain will substantially decrease support for established parties in absolute terms, but will also affect all parties in the system. The established parties will continue to be elected as normal, but by a smaller proportion of the population. In this way, the system loses some of its legitimacy, but its functioning in and of itself is only marginally affected.

This conceptual approach builds partly on recent work on the decline of parties in established democracies, which argues that the main reason for the decline is that traditional parties no longer adequately fulfil their representative functions (Lawson and Merkl, 1988; Daalder, 1992; Ignazi, 1996; Dalton and Wattenberg, 2000). The attention that such an approach brings to these general political trends is a strength, but it also has its weaknesses. These limitations become apparent when one wants to study political parties and voting. Using just one approach cannot provide an adequate understanding of all the facets of the role that political parties play in democracies (Gunther et al., 2002, p. 16). Similarly, voting behaviour is the result of a complex decision-making process, in which diverse factors such as voters' socio-demographic profiles, their values, their ideological orientations, their assessment of the performance of the party in power, and strategic considerations may come into play (e.g., Miller and Shanks, 1996). An approach only concerned with general voting trends does not account for the differences between parties or the particularities of their respective support bases and may underestimate the ability of political parties to actively structure vote choices themselves. Therefore, although the above framework suggests that political trust (or lack thereof) is a key determinant in voting for challenger parties, it does not mean to say that the nature of this relationship will necessarily be identical for all challenger parties in all democratic systems examined.

Indeed, there are at least two factors that have the potential to moderate the relationship between political distrust and support for challenger parties.⁵ The first factor is institutional. According to Hirschman (1970, p. 33), when abandonment (exit) is not an available option, expression (voice) remains the only possibility for discontented individuals who want to make their dissatisfaction known. Applied to the study of voting behaviour, Hirschman's logic suggests that if voting is compulsory (meaning abstention is a prohibited option under electoral law), the only recourse available to discontented voters is to support a challenger party. By implication, this argument leads one to expect that the effect of distrust on support for challenger parties is greater in contexts with compulsory voting than in those without. This hypothesis has been confirmed by Bélanger (2004a) when comparing Australia, where voting is compulsory, to two other Westminster-type systems (although the indicator of discontent used in this study is not political trust but rather anti-party sentiment). Recent case studies of Belgium likewise indicate that the high levels of populist party votes and invalid (or blank) votes in that country may be due to distrustful voters behaving under a compulsory voting system (Pauwels, 2010; Hooghe et al., 2011; Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2017).

The second moderating factor is challenger parties' campaign strategies. In their efforts to mobilize the vote, non-mainstream parties have an incentive to criticize the democratic institutions in place and to identify inefficiencies therein. These parties also often tend to

blame the mainstream parties as being responsible for system failures and present them as underperforming entities. By placing particular emphasis on these topics during an election campaign, challenger parties may succeed in causing issues of political trust to weigh more on a voter's mind as they go to the ballot box (Jenkins, 2002). Thus, the strength of the link between distrust and challenger-party voting is partially incumbent on the role of campaign strategies in mobilizing electoral support. This view is consistent with the work of Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2002, p. 61) according to which 'dissatisfaction with process leads people to vote for candidates who make procedural reform a major part of their campaign'.

Political Trust and Populist Parties

So far, we have discussed political trust mainly as a diffuse attitude towards the government and the political system, as well as their functioning and performance. However, mistrust can sometimes be directed more precisely at the elites (or establishment) who are in charge of political decision-making within the existing system. This more specific dimension of political mistrust has been alternatively referred to in the recent literature as populism, a phenomenon that has often been linked to the electoral success of so-called populist parties (e.g., Taggart, 2004; Ivarsflaten, 2008; Rooduijn, 2013; Van Kessel, 2015).

Populism has been defined by Mudde (2004) as a 'thin' ideology characterized by a Manichean view of the world as being separated between two homogeneous groups, namely the good people (i.e., ordinary citizens) and the bad elite (i.e., the current rulers). Populists argue that politics ought to be the expression of the people's general will. They instil distrust of the elites by claiming that the latter are corrupted and that they do not take decisions in the interests of the people (Mudde, 2004; Rooduijn, 2013). By extension, populism also feeds on anti-party sentiment; established political parties are viewed as corrupting the link between leaders and supporters, and between the state and the people (Bélanger, 2004a; Mudde, 2004, p. 546). Established parties are thus seen by populists as putting their own interests above those of ordinary citizens.

Such an anti-elitism discourse, and the public's anti-establishment attitudes that it can appeal to, have been found to explain in part the rise of populist parties in the recent West European context (Pauwels, 2010; Rooduijn, 2013; Schumacher and Rooduijn, 2013; Van Kessel, 2015). In many cases, these populist parties have also adopted an anti-immigrant discourse. The proximity between these parties' anti-immigration position and that of voters on this issue certainly constitutes a core reason for the relative success of these political parties (e.g., Van der Brug et al., 2000; Ivarsflaten, 2008; Arzheimer, 2009). While they might be in agreement with the policy positions of a populist party, an additional motivation for these voters to support such a party is that it is not part of the governing establishment. Like any other 'normal' parties, populist parties effectively occupy an ideological niche of their own on the political spectrum. But they also try to mobilize support by often presenting themselves as a new kind of representational vehicle, different from the old-line parties. They picture the established party elites as incompetent, unresponsive, and untrustworthy, and argue that they will do differently. This image makes them highly attractive to the discontented parts of the electorate.

Hence, anti-elitism and policy proximity ought to be seen as two distinct determinants of populist party support. Protest (or anti-elite) voting and policy (or ideological)

voting are explanatory models that ought not to be seen as ruling each other out. To varying degrees, both types of motivation matter to citizens' support for populist parties (Schumacher and Rooduijn, 2013; Van Kessel, 2015) and for challenger parties more generally (Bergh, 2004; Bélanger and Aarts, 2006; Ivarsflaten, 2008).

IS THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRUST AND VOTE EXOGENOUS?

The previous section's theoretical discussion considers political trust as an *independent variable*. But political trust is a *political variable*, that is to say, an attitude (or perception) whose main referent is politics itself. As a consequence, it is not completely exogenous to party politics and the political debate, and thus can be seen by some as a *dependent variable* and as being determined by vote choice itself.

Since the publication of *The American Voter* (Campbell et al., 1960), the classic chicken-and-egg problem has often been raised in work studying the impact of perceptions on individual voting behaviour. Do the voting determinants identified by Campbell and colleagues really come prior to vote choice in the causal chain, or are they rather determined by individuals' pre-established partisan preferences? Indeed, it is always possible to argue that factors such as a voter's ideological orientation or their assessment of the incumbent party's performance, studied as independent variables, do not really explain vote choice because they can be explained by vote choice itself. The possible endogeneity of voting determinants is attributable to two factors, projection and persuasion (see Miller and Shanks, 1996, p. 207), whose impact on opinion formation can be characterized as a form of rationalization (Lodge and Taber, 2013). How might these two phenomena affect the study of a causal link between political trust and vote choice?

Projection implies a bias in individuals' opinions, in the sense that they have biased attitudes attributable to their pre-established partisan preferences. Responses to the commonly used political trust survey items were the subject of significant criticism in the United States during the 1970s, precisely because of this argument. In particular, Citrin (1974) objected to the work of Miller (1974) by suggesting that answers to questions on political trust reflected more respondents' dissatisfaction with the incumbent government than with the overall governance system and process. In the same vein, in Canada, Lambert and colleagues (1986) have argued that voters identifying with the incumbent party tended to have higher trust in the government than those who did not. The projection effect suggested by these authors has to do with the fact that voters identifying with the incumbent party tend to have a more positive (and therefore biased) assessment of the government simply because their preferred party is in power. Thus, their partisan preference is 'projected' onto their feelings of trust in the government. The reverse is also true regarding voters who identify with opposition parties: these individuals are more likely to be distrusting of the government.

In contrast to projection, persuasion is much more than a bias. It implies that voters will adjust some of their opinions so that they are consistent with those put forth by their preferred party or candidate. The persuasion argument gives agency to political parties and candidates in building their electoral support by modifying, or even creating, a citizen's political orientations.

Such a position suggests that challenger parties, by adopting a discourse that is critical of government institutions and traditional parties, would help build or fuel political mistrust within the population. According to this argument, third party supporters in US presidential elections were not more cynical than other American voters before supporting these parties. Only after having chosen to support a third party candidate – for reasons other than dissatisfaction with democratic actors and institutions – did these individuals become discontented, having been persuaded by the party's critical discourse on this issue. According to Koch (2003, p. 50), 'third party candidates provide their supporters with explanations and solutions for contemporary political issues and social maladies. . . [and in doing so] are responsible for heightening scepticism toward American government and its leaders rather than simply being the primary beneficiaries of support from the most cynical'. In this case, drawing any sort of causal relationship from political distrust to a vote for a third party would be misleading, because it is the third party itself that had created this dissatisfaction in order to solidify its electoral base. The same persuasion argument has been made with regard to the support of discontented voters in favour of the emerging Lijst Pim Fortuyn right-wing populist party in the 2002 Dutch parliamentary election (Van der Brug, 2003).

These objections to the exogeneity of political trust within the electoral context are significant enough that they should be given serious attention. That said, although the concerns are valid, they do not appear to be entirely convincing. In our view, the arguments of projection and persuasion do not hold up against three important counterpoints.

Firstly, conceptualizing political trust as an essentially endogenous variable is incompatible with the idea of a significant reservoir of dissatisfaction towards political institutions among citizens of established democracies. The documented existence of such a reservoir indicates two things. First, the discourse of non-mainstream party leaders like Ross Perot, Pim Fortuyn and others cannot be the root cause of political distrust. Although persuasion efforts by such parties and their leaders may have impacted attitudes of trust (Rooduijn, 2013; Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2017), it can only explain a small part of the broader phenomenon. In fact, studies using long-term panel data indicate that supporters of newly created challenger parties were already among the most distrustful before the arrival of these parties on the electoral scene (Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005; Bélanger and Aarts, 2006). Secondly, distrust is not unique to a country – it is observed across Western democracies. This phenomenon suggests that distrust does not sync with fluctuations in the popularity of the ruling parties in a country, thereby challenging the projection argument.

Second, political mistrust is only weakly related to voters' pre-established partisan identification (Clarke and Kornberg, 1993, p. 294; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005, p. 126). This does not mean that political trust is not influenced by individuals' partisan preferences. Generally, those who identify with one of the traditional parties are somewhat more satisfied with the political system, while those who identify with challenger parties seem to be a little less satisfied. However, what this means is that once measures of political trust are purged from their partisanship-based endogeneity, for example with the use of multivariate statistical analysis, it is then possible to study political trust as an exogenous independent variable. The fact that both Citrin's (1974) and Miller's (1974) analyses are bivariate in nature can only lead us to conclude that their opposition at the time over the issue of a possible projection effect was exaggerated; this question is less controversial today due to the widespread use of multivariate analysis.

Third, recent studies have shown that beyond these partisan effects, responses to political trust survey items enable us to adequately measure voters' feelings toward the general functioning of their government. Hetherington (1998) has shown that the effect of trust on evaluations of the US president is much stronger than the reverse relationship. The author also showed that trust is more strongly related to more generalized measures of support (such as for the regime and institutions) than for more specific measures (such as for certain policies). Therefore, evaluations of the incumbent president's performance can only explain partially the decline of political trust in the United States between 1964 and 1996. The US-based work of Hetherington and others (Craig, 1979; Peterson and Wrighton, 1998; Chanley et al., 2001; see also Hooghe, 2011) clearly shows that the target of political trust is mostly generalized (or diffuse),⁶ thereby contradicting the early claims of Citrin (Levi and Stoker, 2000, pp. 480–83). It is noteworthy that Citrin himself has come to endorse this conclusion: 'Upon reflection, the debate between Miller and Citrin probably posed too stark a distinction between support for the political system and trust in the government of the day' (Citrin and Luks, 2001, p. 11).

We believe that these counterpoints are sufficient to mitigate concerns regarding the study of political trust as an independent variable. While it cannot be denied that challenger parties can contribute to fuelling discontent within the electorate, the majority of distrustful voters who turn to challenger parties at election time do so in part because they are unhappy from the outset and because it is one motivation (among others) for supporting a non-mainstream party. At the very least, it can be said that political distrust is as much a cause as a consequence of populist party voting, and that both causal effects are at play (Rooduijn, 2013). One of the important conditions for the recent rise of challenger parties in advanced industrial democracies is thus the existence of a significant reservoir of political disaffection among the citizenry.

POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE TRUST AND VOTE RELATIONSHIP: UNCHARTED TERRITORY

In this chapter, we have focused on citizen dissatisfaction with regard to the political system, its institutions, and their functioning – sometimes expressed as an anti-establishment attitude – as a possible determinant of vote choice. The evidence reviewed herein indicates that perceptions of distrust have a significant effect on voting behaviour and voting for challenger parties in particular. This consequence of the democratic malaise can be added to those already identified by Norris (1999, pp. 258–68) and Dalton et al. (2000, p. 61), such as greater non-conventional political participation and recourse to protest, civil disobedience actions and more fragility among newer democratic regimes.

That said, the literature also shows that the overall effect of political trust on support for challenger parties is not uniform across contexts and can be moderated by at least two variables. First, the campaign strategies of challenger parties have the ability to accentuate the impact of political distrust on vote choice. By explicitly adopting trust between citizens and the government as one of their campaign themes, these parties are able to turn dissatisfaction felt by part of the population into significant electoral support. It is not impossible that the emphasis that non-mainstream, populist parties place on themes of political trust can affect the amount of discontent felt within the electorate

(Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2017). However, as argued in the previous section, it seems that challenger parties' strategies increase voter mobilization during the campaign more than they convert opinions. Campaign effects and priming on the part of the parties appear to be more plausible phenomena than persuasion to account for the voting behaviour of distrustful citizens. This is consistent with findings from several studies that have examined this question with attitudinal variables other than political trust (e.g., Feldman and Conover, 1983; Conover and Feldman, 1989; Jenkins, 2002).

However, taking abstention into account reveals that challenger parties' mobilization capacities remain somewhat limited. Recent results indicate that political distrust might also lead some citizens to not vote at all. These findings challenge the usual conclusion of American work on the issue, and thus offer an interesting counterbalance to the current US bias in the literature on political trust and participation. Therefore, it seems necessary to take into account, both conceptually and empirically, the possibility of abstention – including compulsory voting rules – when it comes to assessing the impact of political trust on voting behaviour. In addition, future efforts should aim at identifying the factors that explain why some mistrustful voters abstain while others are successfully mobilized by challenger parties. It would be necessary to explore this issue in more depth before really being able to distinguish between what drives a voter to abstain and what drives them to vote for a non-mainstream party.

Two important macro-sociological trends have been observed in Western societies in recent decades. The first is a significant and persistent fall in voter turnout in many of these societies (Gray and Caul, 2000). The second is a greater fragmentation of party systems. Indeed, in most major democracies the number of political parties on the national electoral scene has significantly increased since the late 1970s (Dalton et al., 2000; Grofman et al., 2009). This includes the growth in the number of populist radical right-wing parties in Western Europe since the 1980s (Taggart, 2004). Considering the findings that indicate that political distrust at the individual level is linked to both challenger party support and abstention, it is possible that, at the macro level, distrust has created fertile ground for the growth of challenger parties, but also an environment that is more conducive to the decline in voter turnout. However, to really be able to draw such conclusions, it would be necessary to study the issue over a longer period than what has been examined in the literature so far.

Certainly, political distrust has been associated with electoral system change in countries like Italy, Japan and New Zealand in the 1990s (Dalton, 2004, pp. 179–81). However, whether distrust has also led to party system dealignment and/or realignment in Western democracies remains unclear. The same conclusion applies to the question of whether the explosion of new parties on the electoral scene can alleviate distrust. Some studies have reported a rebound in trust following the surge of challenger parties (Miller and Listhaug, 1990; Bélanger and Nadeau, 2005) while others have observed a 'spiral of distrust' instead (Hooghe and Dassonneville, 2017). Again, only longitudinal studies will be able to clarify the relationship between party system change and the dynamics of political trust. As other chapters in this volume show, there are numerous sources of political (dis)trust. Although new alternatives to traditional parties can help strengthen the legitimacy of a system based on party competition, this cannot prevent citizens from being demanding and critical of the democratic process.

Second, extant studies have shown that lower levels of political trust are linked to

individuals' electoral participation in a mostly static way. The effect of mistrust on the decline in electoral turnout in established democracies remains to be thoroughly analysed in a more dynamic manner. Part of the decline in voter participation might indeed be related to political distrust, but other factors are also likely at work. The fact that challenger parties mobilize and channel the population's mistrust of government is still not enough to keep citizens in the electoral arena.

A final point is worth discussing, which involves the Hirschman framework having been proposed in this chapter for analysing the relationship between trust and voting behaviour. In this approach, supporting the old-line parties ('loyalty') can be seen as the default option, and voters need a reason – distrust – to abandon them. This view implies that voters do not really vote 'for' a challenger party but simply vote 'against' the established parties. In the rather strong words of Kang (2004, p. 100): 'Except for a small number of core supporters, most voters for a third party cast ballots without serious commitment to it'. While at first glance this may indeed appear to be the case, such a narrow interpretation of the framework would miss two crucial points that this chapter has striven to make. The first is that protest voting and policy voting are not mutually exclusive and that each of these two models represents a set of motivations for supporting a challenger party. The second point is that challenger parties, and especially those of the populist type, are themselves partly responsible for the prevalence of such a dichotomous, 'us-versus-them' worldview. That this view would, in the end, translate into voters' behaviour should not come as a surprise.

NOTES

- * I thank Chris Chhim for his help in preparing this chapter.
- 1. To use Lavau's (1969) terms. We elaborate on this notion in the next section.
- 2. Challenger parties are often referred to as 'third parties' in Anglo-Saxon bipartisan systems (e.g., Pinard, 1971; Rosenstone et al., 1996; Bélanger, 2004b).
- 3. On this analogy, see Martin (2007, pp. 277–8).
- 4. A similar relationship has been observed with respect to another indicator of political cynicism, that of anti-party sentiment among the Canadian public (Gidengil et al., 2001; Bélanger, 2004a).
- 5. There is, of course, an antecedent institutional factor, namely the openness of the political system to the entry of new political parties (proportional vs majoritarian systems). We do not consider this factor in this chapter since we focus on voting for challenger parties that have already entered the system. For accounts of the factors behind the organizational emergence, or formation, of new party movements, see, among others, Harmel and Robertson (1985), Perkins (1996), Lucardie (2000), Hug (2001), Tavits (2006), and Lago and Martinez (2011).
- 6. Although note that Cook and Gronke (2005) argue that more refined question wordings of the traditional trust survey items allow for a better measurement of diffuse support.

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16. Procedural fairness and political trust

Marcia Grimes

INTRODUCTION

Political trust reflects and builds upon myriad factors, only some of which relate to political institutions and actors themselves (Norris, 2011). As several chapters in this volume detail, individual factors such as education, socialization, and psychological disposition may all shape an individual's willingness to defer to political authorities. This chapter turns to the institutional determinants and in particular to the link between procedural fairness and citizens' confidence in institutions, rulers, and regimes.

The basic notion that procedural propriety builds confidence in authorities and institutions is a cornerstone of democratic theory. Members of the demos accept electoral defeat and remain committed to the rules of the game because they feel the electoral contest was reasonably free and fair. Similarly, representation makes taxation more palatable. How collective decisions are made strongly informs citizens' willingness to defer to authoritative rules and rulings. Beyond these most fundamental instances, however, complexity increases exponentially. Which *procedures* affect citizens' political trust and which *approaches to or qualities of* decision-making processes engender or undermine trust; to what extent are procedures *observable* to the demos; and are procedural expectations and assessments sufficiently *uniform*, both in terms of positive and negative assessments, as well as in terms of observability, within a political system to affect the reserve of good will at the aggregate level?

This chapter explores the empirical evidence elucidating these questions, drawing on research expressly related to procedural fairness with an emphasis on field-based research, as several recent reviews extensively cover experiment-based research on procedural fairness (Ambrose, 2002; MacCoun, 2005; Tyler, 2006). The review suggests that a wealth of investigative work substantiates the link between perceived procedural fairness and political trust in a broad range of settings and types of issues (e.g., Tyler, 1990; Grimes, 2006). That said, less is known regarding the determinants of perceived procedural fairness, an issue that constitutes somewhat of a micro-level lynchpin in the model linking macro-level institutional structures and the behavior of authorities on the one hand, to citizens' trust in political institutions on the other. Perceptions of procedural fairness, similar to political trust itself, may build in part on observation and assessment of decision-making in action, but may also build on social, psychological, or affective factors extraneous to the political realm (see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache, Chapter 10 by Theiss-Morse and Barton, and Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian).

This chapter structures the examination of the link between political trust and procedural fairness around three areas of inquiry that together touch upon the questions mentioned above. First, the chapter explores the issue of the conceptualization of procedural fairness in the literature. While some conceptual convergence exists, a lack of consistency greatly impedes any effort to develop a theoretically informed and systematically

tested understanding of what type of procedural propriety might prove relevant to the legitimacy of authority depending on the setting, the type of authority, and the nature of interactions between citizens and the authority, as well as the mechanisms by which procedural fairness is theorized to engender or undermine political trust.

The remainder of the chapter then surveys the evidence, beginning first with the link between *perceived* procedural fairness and political trust – the issue that has received the most extensive attention in empirical research – and then explores the much smaller body of evidence on the implications of actual procedures for political trust.¹ The third area of inquiry covered here relates to the link between transparency and political trust, and therefore sheds needed light on the question of whether procedural assessments build on observations of political decision-making. The chapter concludes with a consideration of gaps in the research field and possible lines of inquiry that would expand our understanding of the legitimating effect of decision-making procedures.

CONCEPTUALIZING PROCEDURES AND WHY PROCEDURES MATTER

Procedural fairness offers, by some accounts, one of the more attainable and normatively compelling means of maintaining or even restoring the reservoir of good will needed for governments to negotiate compromises and enforce decisions without having to resort to the use of force when enforcing every rule or implementing every decision (Klosko, 2000). As it is impossible for all citizens, political parties, interest groups, social movements, or advocacy organizations to secure their preferred policy outcomes all of the time, perceptions of fairness in political decision-making may dissuade parties, when dissatisfied with decision outcomes, from routinely filing (potentially costly) appeals, or from engaging in anti-systemic political actions. The scholarly exploration of procedural fairness is therefore often justified in terms of generating knowledge on how public power can be structured and exercised in order to enhance political trust as well as compliance with and willingness to accept authoritative decisions, thereby reducing the need for excessive monitoring and sanctioning mechanisms in the political system.

What, more exactly, is meant by procedures and procedural fairness? Beginning at the highest level of abstraction, procedures may include both formal rules structuring decision-making, such as when a planning code requires authorities to organize public consultation when making decisions, or rules that structure and delimit how front-line bureaucrats should reach a decision in, say, cases of welfare entitlements. Many aspects of decision-making processes are not stipulated in formal rules, however, and these aspects may even affect perceived fairness more strongly than actual adherence to formal rules. The non-formalized aspects, or the *quality* of the decision-making process, include the extent to which a decision process conforms to a specific normative conceptualization of democracy, such as deliberative democracy (Gutmann and Thompson, 1996) or empowered participatory governance (Fung and Wright, 2003), but also the extent to which authorities behave in accordance with basic social norms, showing respect, courtesy, and consideration. These two procedural aspects, formal rules and non-formalized qualities, it is important to note, may at times entail a trade-off (though do not do so inherently). Legal scholar Cass Sunstein (2006) points out that court decisions that are highly

accommodating of individual circumstances may diminish consistency, predictability, and therefore also impartiality in the application of the law. Rigid application of the law may, conversely, preclude consideration of salient circumstances specific to the case. Similarly, cordial and respectful treatment may mask a failure to follow formal points of order, or even be tactically used by authorities to induce acceptance of decisions that citizens would otherwise find highly objectionable, such as the construction of a facility associated with health risks in their local community, what MacCoun aptly terms the double-edged sword of procedural fairness (2005). Responsiveness to citizens' input may also infringe upon other principles central to democracy, such as political equality (Grimes and Esaiasson, 2014). These aggregate-level implications are, however, unlikely to affect political trust in the short to medium term, but certainly warrant continual scrutiny by policy and research communities.

A second dimension of variation within the realm of procedures is how removed or proximal a decision procedure is from the public eye, spanning from constitutional arrangements, electoral systems, deliberations in higher court and the intricacies of operations of national legislatures, down to specific bureaucratic decisions affecting a citizen directly. The proximity to citizens is correlated to, though analytically distinct from, the degree of observability of procedures, as well as the extent to which citizens have direct, first-hand exposure to a process (as in participatory decision-making). Procedural fairness may therefore potentially be relevant for trust in specific officials or offices, but also for political trust at the most diffuse level (Norris, 2011, p. 24; see also Chapter 2 by Norris), that is, from street-level decisions with immediate implications for citizens' lives, up to rule-making and policy formation, and constitutional decisions regarding procedures for rule-making (Esaiasson et al., 2012, p. 786).

The vastness of the realm of procedures in a state apparatus, combined with the multiplicity of definitions of propriety in decision-making suggests an extensive matrix of hypotheses regarding which aspects of procedural fairness matter and what procedural approach affects confidence in authorities given the decision-making setting. While conceivable, many of these hypothetical hypotheses are not plausible. Formal procedures or praxis in decision-making settings far from the public eye or interest will in all likelihood have very little impact on public confidence, barring instances in which major breaches come to light. Major procedural aberrations or irregularities, if detected and exposed, can of course markedly undermine trust (Chanley et al., 2000; Bowler and Karp, 2004). The scholarly work centering on the concepts of procedural fairness or procedural justice focuses largely on the implementation and enforcement phase of the policy process, and often with direct citizen involvement, that is, the procedures most observable to citizens.

Why then might procedural fairness matter for political trust? As a useful starting point, Hibbing and Alford (2004) argue, using insights from game-theoretical experiments as well as evolutionary biology, that the importance of procedural fairness, and fairness in general, stems from a strong and virtually universal aversion to being the sucker. Individual survival has for millions of years required successfully functioning in a group, both by contributing to collaborative efforts but also assuring that we benefit from collaborative efforts. Authorities perceived to act in their own self-interest trigger this aversion, prompting indignation and rejection of the authority and its decisions.

The focus on decision arenas in which citizens interact first hand with decision-makers influences how procedural fairness is most often conceptualized, but also the mechanisms

via which procedural fairness is theorized to affect political trust. Within the realm of policy implementation and enforcement of laws, the procedural aspects that are posited to influence political trust also vary considerably among studies. In one of the earliest explorations of the implications of procedural fairness, Thibaut and Walker (1975) emphasize instrumental aspects of procedural fairness; the perceived ability to exert influence in a decision-making process affects views of a group authority and its decisions because it engenders a feeling of control and being able to secure a more favorable decision outcome. Subsequent accounts have instead explored the social psychological dimensions of the phenomenon. That group authorities treat group members in a respectful and impartial manner, showing due consideration and attentiveness, is argued to enhance members' perceptions of their own standing in the group (Lind and Tyler, 1988), which in turn affects each member's willingness to defer to the group authority and accept any decisions issued by the authority, a mechanism known as relational justice. The bulk of experimental studies from the field of social psychology examine and compare the effects of these two dimensions of procedural fairness, either instrumental justice or some variation of relational justice (see Tyler, 2006 for a review).

Other theoretical accounts linking procedural fairness with political trust emphasize instead procedures as a heuristic, a datum that reveals more about an authority than a policy or specific decision outcome. Trust, theoretically defined, reflects a belief in the 'benevolent motivation and performance capacity' of an actor or authority (Norris, 2011, p. 19), but also builds on the perceived predictability of behavior (Braithwaite and Levi, 1998), and the neutrality and impartiality in the exercise of authority (e.g., Murphy et al., 2009). Evaluations of procedural aspects of the political and policy processes may plausibly provide cues regarding an authority's future behavior with respect to predictability, neutrality, and impartiality, in particular if observations reveal processes that run counter to these standards of good government. Procedural failures indicate more systemic departures from neutrality, impartiality, and capacity in public institutions, which would presumably have more deleterious effects on political trust than a single unpopular or unwanted decision. Procedural aspects in other words convey a message about the modus operandi of an organization – the state of the orchard rather than the apple – with procedures at higher levels signaling ineptitude, ineffectiveness, or particularism at higher levels of the political system.

The theoretical claims linking procedural fairness to political trust are compelling, are consistent with normative justifications of democracy, and resonate with existing knowledge regarding individuals' need for fairness and relative status within a group. While plausible, procedural fairness theory rests on a number of assumptions that may fit some – but certainly not all – authoritative decision settings. Moreover, as the next section explores in more detail, answers to the more fine-grained questions outlined at the outset regarding which procedures, and which procedural approaches are observed and assessed more favorably, remain somewhat disparate. Do citizens observe and assess procedural aspects of institutions and operations, both political and administrative? Is it reasonable to expect sufficient agreement regarding what is considered procedurally fair?

PROCEDURAL FAIRNESS AND POLITICAL TRUST

A number of authors have previously surveyed the evidence on the role of procedural fairness in fostering political trust, with some reaching the conclusion that the hypothesized linkage remains more of a theoretically compelling argument than a causal relation substantiated by empirical observation (Weatherford, 1992; Miller and Listhaug, 1999, p. 214; Levi and Stoker, 2000, pp. 500–501; Klosko, 2000, pp. 210–28; Esaïasson, 2010), and others instead seeing the procedural fairness–political trust link as an open and shut case (Ambrose, 2002; MacCoun, 2005; Tyler, 2006). The latter tend to see a strong link between *perceived* procedural fairness and political trust as sufficient corroboration of the procedural justice theory, while the former instead have sought evidence linking variations in political trust to variations in actual procedures. As the following discussion shows, the link between *perceived* procedural fairness has indeed found considerable support in empirical investigation.

Several studies building on survey data document a strong association between perceived procedural fairness and political trust. Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2001, p. 147) conduct a national survey that first asks respondents to report whether decision-making power ought to rest in the hands of elected representatives and bureaucrats, or whether they feel that ‘ordinary people’ ought to have a larger role in making political decisions. Those who prefer to delegate authority in decision-making are termed ‘institutional democrats’, while those who feel the broader public ought to have a larger role are termed ‘direct democrats’. The survey also asks respondents to evaluate decision-making in the United States on the same scale from direct to institutional democracy and the authors then compute a ‘process gap’ capturing discrepancy between process preferences and perceptions. The study finds the process gap to be one of the strongest predictors of government approval, only slightly weaker than a similarly computed policy gap (*ibid.*, p. 151).

Stacy Ulbig also detects the link between process assessments and political trust in two separate studies. Analyses of American National Election Studies data reveal a strong overlap in trust in government and the perception that the government is neutral, cares what people think, and that politicians pay attention to the people that elected them (Ulbig, 2002, pp. 798–99). In a follow-up study, Ulbig directs survey respondents’ attention to the local level, asking about satisfaction with citizens’ ability to express demands and concerns (voice), as well as the extent to which citizens’ voices actually are taken into account in local policy-making (influence). Respondents who felt citizens had both voice and influence were much more trusting of municipal government than those who perceived citizens had voice without influence (Ulbig, 2008, p. 533). Another attitudinal study finds similar patterns with respect to the US Supreme Court, that is, that people who perceive that the court conforms to standards of relational justice also tend to report a higher willingness to accept the court’s rulings (Tyler et al., 1996, p. 924).

Other scholars have narrowed the analytical scope and focus on specific types of decision-making processes – often democratic innovations intended precisely to reinvigorate waning political trust and civic engagement. Font and Blanco (2007) examine, for example, the self-reported effects of participating in citizen juries in Spain on political trust and find little evidence of enduring effects. In contrast, Christopher Carman (2010) focuses on perceptions of a Scottish innovation allowing citizens to petition parliament with suggestions or demands. Carman’s survey of those who have lodged such a petition

asks respondents to evaluate ‘whether the process was easy to understand, whether the [Petitions Committee] kept them informed of their petition’s progress and handled their petition fairly’ (Carman, 2010, p. 739). Petitioners who deemed the process fair along these dimensions also expressed significantly higher levels of trust for the Scottish system (a composite measure of trust for the parliament, the incumbent executive, and Scottish politicians). Perceived fairness in land-use planning is also associated with a more accepting and trusting attitude toward wind power developers, with the planning process captured as being handled transparently and fairly, and with the perception that developers had given ‘local people’ a say in the process (Firestone et al., 2012, pp. 1392–8).

In addition to affecting political trust, perceived procedural fairness has also been linked to willingness to accept unfavorable decisions or comply with regulatory measures that impose costs on the individual (see also Chapter 13 by Van Deth). Government assemblies and offices make decisions on a continual basis that incur costs or inconveniences on citizens, including disruptions in the local environment, laws prohibiting a range of activities, and collection of taxes. While compliance with these demands is not conceptually synonymous with political trust, the two may both reflect a common underlying perception that government offices are rightful bearers of authority and power (Grimes, 2006). Survey data suggest that individuals who perceive that government offices such as tax authorities, student loan offices, and the police treat citizens in a fair and respectful manner are significantly more inclined to express a willingness to comply with the demands of these offices (Murphy et al., 2009).

These studies taken together provide a wealth of evidence that perceptions of procedural fairness in decision-making processes are linked to higher levels of political trust. All of these studies, however, leave open questions of the direction of causality. With respect to the Carman study of parliamentary petitions in Scotland, for example, it is possible that petitioners with *ex ante* higher levels of trust in the Scottish system make more charitable assessments of the petitioning process. Ample research from other areas of public opinion research supply evidence that prior attitudes often serve as a filter through which new information is selected and evaluated; information that concurs with existing attitudes is taken on board, while information contradicting our prior opinions tends to be disregarded or discredited (e.g., Hetherington, 1998; Zaller, 1992; see also Chapter 12 by Rudolph). Thus even evaluations of the ease and user-friendliness of a petitioning process may to some extent be colored by *ex ante* trust for political institutions.

A methodological approach particularly sensitive to the bias introduced by respondents’ using trust as a heuristic is exemplified by Tom Tyler’s study of attitudes regarding the California Public Utilities Commission. The study asked respondents to anticipate the treatment they would receive if they went before the Commission to influence water consumption regulations. Respondents who anticipated that the Commission would be polite, considerate, and fair in decision-making also felt a somewhat stronger obligation to comply with the Commission’s rulings on restricted water consumption (Tyler, 1997, p. 327). Anticipated behavior of public officials is very likely to be inferred from political trust. The Hibbing and Theiss-Morse (2001) study limits this type of bias to some extent by asking respondents about their specific process preferences and then asking them to assess actual decision-making along the same criteria. Shaun Bowler and colleagues offer evidence that the direction of causation may nonetheless run in the other direction. They find a strong and significant link between low political trust and a preference for direct

democracy (Bowler et al., 2007), indicating that trust may affect process preferences, and thereby also (dis)satisfaction with procedural aspects of American politics as well.

The exploration of procedural fairness has received the most rigorous attention and produced the most convincing results in studies building on panel data and investigating assessments of interactions either with law enforcement authorities (Tyler, 1990), the judiciary (Tyler et al., 1989), planning authorities (Grimes, 2006), or front-line bureaucrats (e.g., Kumlin, 2002). Tyler's two studies both ask people to assess an authority and respond to the indicators of legitimacy beliefs both before and after some form of contact with authorities, allowing *ex ante* attitudes to be controlled for, and both find that perceived procedural fairness plays a decisive role in the legitimacy of authorities, as well as in people's willingness to accept court rulings and comply with rules. These effects prevail even once prior attitudes and the substantive outcomes of the contact are taken into account. Grimes (2006) captures residents' assessments of decision-making procedures and of political trust at two points in time during the course of a large-scale land use policy issue, and finds that assessments of procedural fairness effect change in individual levels of political trust.

UNDERSTANDING PROCEDURAL ASSESSMENTS

These studies provide convincing evidence that perceptions of procedural fairness shape sentiments of political trust. In order to gain a more complete picture regarding the implications of authoritative decision-making for citizens' confidence in those institutions, we must also explore and establish links between *perceptions* of procedural fairness and the *actual* decision-making procedures and/or the behavior of authorities. In other words, even if perceived procedural fairness is strongly linked to political trust, such findings say little about the importance of fairness in decision-making or the manner in which to design processes to enhance confidence in political institutions. Without a more in-depth understanding of which approaches to decision-making meet with more positive or skeptical assessments on the part of citizens, the policy implications of the research field will remain murky.

In a study using a field experimental approach, classes in a secondary school are asked to make a decision regarding the use of a sum of money, with different classes employing distinct decision-making procedures. Comparing six decision-making arrangements, each well-founded in normative theory, Esaiasson et al. (2012, p. 796) find that arrangements that allow for direct participation in decision-making, such as direct voting or deliberative discussion, are evaluated in significantly more positive terms than arrangements in which decision-making authority is delegated to experts or representatives.

A few innovative studies have found ways to investigate citizens' reactions to decision-making situations, though not all of these focus specifically on the implications for political trust. Bowler and Donovan (2002), for example, examine whether the number of referenda held in different states in the United States affects citizens' internal and external efficacy as measured in the American National Election Studies. Their analyses indicate that the existence of direct democratic opportunities in a state has a considerable, positive effect on both internal and external efficacy, even once all other relevant determinants of efficacy are taken into account. The effect of the number of state referenda on both

internal and external efficacy is on par with the effect of a person's level of education (Mendelsohn and Cutler, 2000; Bowler and Donovan, 2002 report similar findings).

Comparative political research also reveals that the structure of decision-making in a political system as a whole may shape citizens' satisfaction with democracy (see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer for coverage of this literature). Citizens of more consensual systems tend to be slightly more satisfied with how democracy works in their country, and, more importantly, the electoral losers (those who voted for a party not elected into power) in consensual systems are much more satisfied with democracy than losers in majoritarian systems (Anderson and Guillory, 1997; see also Anderson and LoTempio, 2002). Banducci and co-authors (1999) take advantage of a rare reform of electoral system in an established democracy to investigate the implications of this meta-decision procedure on the perceived legitimacy of the political system. They examine the shift in New Zealand from a first-past-the-post majoritarian system to proportional representation, and reveal that the institutional change enhanced voters' assessments of the responsiveness of parliament and their own ability to influence political decisions.

A third approach instead takes advantage of naturally occurring variations in authorities' interactions with citizens to explore implications for political trust. These studies show that different institutional settings tend to generate systematic differences in political trust and perceived procedural fairness among aid recipients, even once other relevant factors are taken into account (Mettler and Soss, 2004). Institutional settings in which street-level bureaucrats have considerable discretionary power, and in which aid recipients have little or no possibilities to challenge decisions regarding aid allocations, tend to undermine citizens' confidence in political institutions (Kumlin, 2002), and foster a sense that both the service provider and the political system generally are not responsive to citizens' demands (Soss, 1999; Kumlin, 2002). Furthermore, contact with welfare programs that require no means testing (e.g., public health care in Sweden) tend even to enhance political trust and assessments of the responsiveness of public authorities (Kumlin, 2002).

Hasisi and Weisburd (2011) explore similar issues but in a very different setting, namely security at the airport in Tel Aviv, comparing the perceptions of travelers subject to luggage searchers with those who experience more routine security procedures. The survey, in a similar fashion to those discussed previously, detected a strong relationship between perceived fairness in treatment by airport security and trust for airport security officers. The research also finds that perceptions of non-neutral security procedures and actual experience with airport security both affect trust for officials. Israeli Arab travellers tend to have significantly less trust for airport security officials than Israeli Jewish passengers, but, the authors find, this difference is entirely attributable to the fact that Arab travelers are also to a larger degree subject to invasive search procedures. In other words, ethnic differences disappear when procedural differences are controlled for (*ibid.*). Evidence from a field study of a series of public consultation meetings in Sweden is less conclusive, however (Grimes, 2008). Despite marked differences between two sets of meetings in terms of criteria of good deliberation, participants of the two sets of meetings express the same levels of trust for the authority involved.

Research on compliance and acceptance of authoritative decisions, a conceptually related area of inquiry, also explores institutional and procedural determinants of consent to authority (see also Chapter 13 by Van Deth). As with investigations on political trust, many studies on compliance also rely on respondents' perceptions of fairness, rather than

independent measures of procedural propriety. Peter May (2004) notes that regulatory scholars increasingly question the previously popular notions of deterrence theory, which posits that fear of detection and punishment are the primary motivations in compliance with regulatory policies. May examines home-builders' compliance with building codes and finds that the perception that inspectors are fair, helpful, and knowledgeable correlates with a sense of obligation to comply with codes. Murphy (2004) shows that compliance with taxation laws in Australia correlates strongly with trust for tax authorities, which in turn correlates with perceptions that those tax authorities exercise impartiality in enforcement, show respect for the rights of citizens, actively seek citizen input in improving the system, and show consideration for the average citizen (*ibid.*, p. 200).

Margaret Levi's comparative historical studies explore, for example, states' varying degrees of success in inducing citizens to volunteer for military service (1997) and to pay taxes (1988). Both of Levi's studies elucidate the consequences of the structure of political institutions for citizens' willingness to comply with the demands of the state. Levi's most significant finding with respect to this study is that polities that prove better at encouraging willing cooperation are those whose governments behave fairly and impartially both in making and implementing political decisions (Levi, 1997, p. 204).

Esaiasson (2010) explores willingness to accept authoritative decisions in a more contemporary and pedestrian setting: the acceptance of unwelcome decisions at employment offices. Building on scenario experiments the study compares the independent and combined effects on three attitudinal indicators of decision acceptance. The study considers the independent and combined effects of two procedural parameters: cordiality and respectful treatment (informal procedures) on the one hand, and clarity and correctness with regard to relevant policies on the other (adherence to formal procedures). Each of these procedural manipulations had bearing on attitudes toward the decision outcome, though only scenarios in which both procedural criteria were met affected all indicators in a robust manner.

To sum up, the evidence linking perceived fairness in decision-making with political trust is robust and spans a broad range of authorities and political settings. Conclusions regarding whether different procedural approaches matter for political trust and consent to authoritative decisions is, however, more scant, and many questions remain. Institutional variation in the form of the use of referenda or the design of the electoral system also has some observed implications for indicators of support for the political system. Similarly, political rulers or regimes that honor fundamental principles of fairness also more easily secure compliance of subjects or citizens than those who disregard such principles. In smaller settings, extreme differences in decision-making procedures, such as those involving the invasion of privacy (physical searches, extensive questioning about personal finances, and lifestyle) have the strongest documented effect on political trust. Such procedures are both extremely observable, and strongly go against the grain of norms of socially appropriate behavior in many societies.

The effects of other types of procedural approaches, those less proximal to direct public participation and observation, have produced more ambiguous results. The dearth of studies on more fine-grained differences in decision-making procedures may to some extent stem from the methodological difficulty in studying perceptions of decision-making in real-life political or administrative bodies. Isolating assessments of specific decision-making processes from the cacophony of information on political goings-on is

no small challenge. It may simply be that procedural justice has less influence on political trust than theory leads us to expect because little clear and concise information about specific decision-making procedures reaches the public domain. Extrapolating from the findings reviewed above, one might expect that greater insight into decision-making would have a neutral or positive effect on trust, if only because most decision-making procedures do not and cannot infringe in any way on personal integrity and privacy in the way that airport searches do. Recent research on the link between transparency and political trust sheds some light on this question.

TRANSPARENCY AND POLITICAL TRUST

Transparency in decision-making has strong moorings in normative conceptualizations of good government, though it is quite distinct in many respects from the procedural attributes discussed above. Government transparency may be defined as the publication and provision of timely and relevant information to evaluating the performance of political institutions and public officials (Bellvar and Kaufmann, 2005; Besley, 2006). From a normative perspective, transparency is posited to be a necessary precondition for democratic accountability to occur (Bentham, 1839; Besley, 2006), and a value that in and of itself will induce honesty and integrity on the part of public stewards. Unlike relational justice, voice, or the formal structure of the decision-making process, however, transparency by itself has very little meaning. Information has an inherent value only by virtue of the fact that its absence is normatively objectionable: secrecy surrounding the grounds for political or administrative decisions, or non-disclosure in matters related to the use of public resources. In this respect, transparency is a necessary condition for avoiding perceptions of arbitrary, conspiratorial, or self-serving behavior on the part of state officials.

In the positive, however, information may be more or less accurate and intelligible, and, more importantly, may reveal both favorable as well as unfavorable qualities of political and administrative institutions. Thus while a normative value *per se*, transparency may expose aspects of political institutions and the policy process of which citizens disapprove. The inherent ambivalence of transparency for political trust may be captured by the contrasting views of two renowned thinkers: Jeremy Bentham enthusiastically proclaimed the public would reward open government with the confidence bestowed upon it, while Otto von Bismarck pointed to two things one should never witness in production – sausages and laws. Bismarck's quip suggests that even if transparency does not expose extensive venality, egregious incompetence, or disregard of formal procedures, the political debates and the policy process may fall short of an imagined ideal.

Evidence to date has, if anything, affirmed rather than resolved this ambivalence. Taking advantage of the introduction of a Freedom of Information Act (2000) in the United Kingdom, Ben Worthy (2010) inquires whether the transparency reform has accomplished its stated objectives, which relate to public understanding of, participation in, and trust toward public institutions. Interview data reflecting the views of civil servants as well as journalists, information requesters, members of NGOs, and transparency activists suggest that confidence has instead been undermined, in part because requesters felt they became more acutely aware of the extent of information *not* available for disclosure to the public, and in part because available information predominantly suggested

negative performance (*ibid.*, p. 575; see Roberts, 2006 for similar claims regarding the United States and Canada). Bauhr and Grimes (2014) take this line of exploration further to explore whether transparency reforms have differential effects on political trust depending on the prevalence of corruption in a country. The theoretical expectation would be that transparency reforms might affect political trust in some contexts but undermine it in others, depending on the type of practices exposed. The results instead indicate that at no level of corruption does transparency enhance political trust, but that in countries with comparatively lower levels of corruption, transparency in fact does evince a negative relationship with political trust (*ibid.*, pp. 16–17). Greater access to information about government activities, even when those activities are in no way plagued with malfeasance, seems if anything to undermine trust in government.

Experimental research attempts to disentangle whether the correlational findings mentioned above are related specifically to information about procedural aspects of government affairs, but also produces mixed findings. De Fine Licht (2011) presents respondents with descriptions of policy decision-making processes in which the process, as well as the volume of information provided, varies. The descriptions of the process tend to have little bearing on assessments of the process. Counter to expectation, however, more information tends to lead to lower trust (De Fine Licht, 2011; De Fine Licht et al., 2014; see also Grimmelikhuijsen, 2009, 2010). A follow-up study found, moreover, that while larger volumes of information do not enhance the perceived fairness of a policy process, verbal cues *suggesting* that the process is transparent in fact do enhance the perceived fairness of a process. Statements of process transparency are much stronger determinants of perceived transparency than the provision of detailed information about a policy process and decision (De Fine Licht, 2014).

PROCESS EFFECTS ON POLITICAL TRUST: TAKING STOCK AND MOVING FORWARD

A consistent finding from the research reviewed here is that political trust is strongly associated with *perceived* procedural fairness. In policy decisions in which citizens have direct interactions with decision-makers, such as in decisions regarding welfare benefits, or interactions with court officials or police officers, evidence supports the contention that the demeanor of administrative personnel in interacting with citizens affects citizens' confidence in the authority and willingness to accept the decision outcome. More invasive case evaluation procedures, whether in the form of probing questioning or suitcase searching, undermine trust (Kumlin, 2002; Mettler and Soss, 2004; Hasisi and Weisburd, 2011). The research reviewed here does then provide some foundation for recommendations of how to enhance – or at least avoid the erosion of – trust for specific authorities and authoritative decisions.

Beyond this most specific level of political trust, and aside from the invasive/non-invasive dimension, the evidence becomes thinner and more difficult to interpret. The dearth of investigations into the effects of other types of decision processes may be a testament to the methodological difficulties of studying assessments of single policy processes. They could, however, also stem from the difficulty of publishing null results. Given the merit of theoretical claims linking political trust to procedural fairness, and

the weight of evidence linking perceived procedural fairness to political trust, null results most certainly warrant dissemination. More pressing, however, is to explore further *why* procedures do not seem to affect political trust, if in fact they do not. Do most citizens simply lack sufficient interest or access to information on political decision-making? If so, effects may become visible if citizens are examined by varying levels of political interest and knowledge. It may also be the case that heterogeneity exists among citizens, masking effects at the aggregate level. If citizens' conceptualizations of what constitutes a fair process diverge substantially, any given process may meet with favorable assessments by some but criticism by others. Greater sensitivity to citizens' normative expectations may prove a fruitful avenue for future research.

Taken together, the research surveyed in this chapter suggests a need for continued investigation of whether procedural fairness indeed has an effect on political trust in arenas other than front-line bureaucracy. Doing so involves investigating whether citizens observe and assess decision-making procedures, or whether surveys designed to tap into such assessments perhaps capture responses primarily inferred from respondents' overall sentiments toward government. To the extent that citizens do observe and evaluate the processes by which decisions are made, against what standards do they evaluate those processes? To what extent are those standards uniform within (or even across) political systems? Continued investigation of these questions will enhance our understanding of the ebb and flow of political trust.

NOTE

1. The chapter focuses on research dealing specifically with political authorities, either involved in taking political decisions or implementing it. In doing so, it excludes the considerable body of research dealing with organizational justice, that is, fairness within organizations, most often between employers and employees (MacCoun, 2005 and Fortin and Fellenz, 2008 review this literature).

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17. Democratic input, macroeconomic output and political trust

Tom W.G. van der Meer

INTRODUCTION

The Great Recession that began in the late 2000s spurred a range of scholars to investigate its effects on political trust (e.g., Polavieja, 2013; Armington and Guthmann, 2014; Torcal, 2014; Theocharis and Van Deth, 2015; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016). Unsurprisingly, these studies report that political trust did indeed experience a long-lasting decline after 2007 in many countries. Those countries that were hit hardest by the economic downturn, such as Greece and Spain, witnessed the sharpest declines in political trust (Armington and Guthmann, 2014; Theocharis and Van Deth, 2015). Van Erkel and Van der Meer (2016) argue that these declines are fully explained by the downturn in macroeconomic performance, suggesting that these declines are best understood as a response to the economic recession itself and not to the deep political divides and indecisive governmental responses. Torcal (2014), however, shows that changes in political trust between early and late 2012 are explained not only by economic evaluations but also by citizens' subjective evaluation of political responsiveness.

This distinction between democratically responsive input institutions and macroeconomic output as rivalling explanations of political trust fits a longer tradition. Fritz Scharpf (1997, 1999, 2003) introduced the distinction between input-oriented legitimacy and output-oriented legitimacy. According to Scharpf (2003), in Western society 'legitimacy has come to rest almost exclusively on trust in institutional arrangements'. Input-oriented legitimacy reflects government *by* the people (Scharpf, 1999, pp. 7–10). A fundamental tension in this approach is that between simple majority rule on the one hand and responsiveness, accountability and deliberation to prevent totalitarian democracy on the other. Output-oriented legitimacy reflects government *for* the people (*ibid.*, pp. 11–21), though institutional arrangements may vary by constraining centralized majority power or – by contrast – by enabling effective and efficient governmental policy outcomes (Scharpf, 2003). The concepts of input- and output-oriented legitimacy both suggest that political trust has a rather evaluative nature, reflecting the state of democratic input (elections, responsiveness, accountability) and of political output (most notably economic outcomes), respectively.

The ongoing scholarly concern with supposedly declining levels of political trust across the Western world (e.g., Crozier et al., 1975; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Dalton, 2004; Thomassen, 2015) is inherently related to the evaluative nature of trust. Political trust is as much a characteristic of the citizens who do or do not trust (see also Chapter 9 by Mondak, Hayes and Canache and Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian), as it is of the political bodies that are being trusted.

This chapter uses the general framework offered by Scharpf (1997, 1999) somewhat

liberally¹ to provide a theoretical and empirical overview of the common explanations of political trust that find their roots in characteristics of the political body itself. Specifically, it deals with two aspects of the political body: input institutions (such as elections, representation, accountability) and institutional output (most notably macroeconomic performance). A third institutional feature – throughput – is only discussed as a (crucial) confounding explanation of political trust next to input and output institutions (cf. Dahlberg and Holmberg, 2014 who extensively discuss bureaucratic quality). Quality of government, corruption and procedural fairness are discussed extensively elsewhere in this Handbook (see Chapter 16 by Grimes and Chapter 19 by Uslaner).

This chapter sets out to discuss the extent to which political trust is a reflection of *objective* input-oriented democratic procedures (representation and accountability through elections) and output-oriented performance, though it will also pay attention to citizens' *perceptions* of these procedures and performances. The chapter surveys the theoretical claims and empirical findings. First, though, it discusses the trust-as-evaluation approach that implicitly or explicitly underlies much of the research in this subfield.

THE EVALUATIVE NATURE OF POLITICAL TRUST

Trust as a Relationship Between Subject and Object

Many theoretical explanations of political trust implicitly consider trust to be – at least to some extent – an evaluation. Conceptually, trust implies the existence of a relationship between subject A (the truster) and object B (the trustee). More precisely, trust is the evaluation of that relationship by subject A. 'A trusts B to do x' (Hardin, 2000). Trust is inherently defined by a degree of uncertainty of the subject over the object: while the object holds power over the subject, the subject is uncertain of the object's future behaviour and cannot enforce it. The larger the power imbalance, the more difficult it will be to trust the object.² Yet, the alternative – constant monitoring – is costly itself.

This evaluative approach towards political trust has led scholars to focus not only on the subjects that do or do not trust (their socialization, their genetic dispositions, their social background, their attitudes etc.), but also on the characteristics of the object (good government), as well as the interplay between subject and object characteristics. The very same components that are applied to understand trust relationships between individuals have been applied to understand the trust of citizens in their elected officials and their political institutions (cf. Kasperson et al., 1992; Van der Meer, 2010).

Effects, Explanations and Conditions

The literature has made quite some inroads into understanding the extent to which political trust is affected by the governments' input institutions (democratic processes) and institutional output (performance). Admittedly, perceptions of economic performance, accountability and impartiality are strongly related to political trust (e.g., Citrin and Green, 1986; Ulbig, 2002; Hetherington and Rudolph, 2008; Van der Meer and Dekker, 2011; Elinas and Lambrianou, 2014). However, the extent to which political trust is determined by *actual* political performance and *actual* procedures remains hotly debated. Some

conclude that good macroeconomic performance stimulates political trust (e.g., Clarke et al., 1993; Cusack, 1999; Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Taylor, 2000; Anderson, 2009), others that it does not (e.g., McAllister, 1999; Dalton, 2004; Rahn and Rudolph, 2005; Oskarsson, 2010; Van der Meer, 2010; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012). Some argue that political trust benefits from a proportional electoral system (e.g., Banducci et al., 1999; Magalhães, 2006), others that it is in fact the inverse (e.g., Norris, 1999).

Since the mid-2000s, scholars have put the evaluative approach under increasingly close scrutiny. The question *how* macro-level characteristics such as democratic input institutions and institutional output drive political trust at the micro level has become more important. To the extent that political trust is evaluative, these macro–micro effects ought to be mediated by citizens' perceptions and evaluations of the macro level. No longer satisfied with direct macro–micro relationships, various studies therefore began to inspect the supposed causal chain itself: the mechanisms (or mediators) that ought to explain the macro–micro relationship such as individual perceptions (e.g., Aarts and Thomassen, 2008; Van der Meer and Dekker, 2011) and the conditions (or moderators) under which the macro–micro relationship ought to hold best such as individual political values (e.g., Anderson and Singer, 2008; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016).

The Missing Link: Benchmarks

A crucial missing link in most, if not all, macro–micro studies on political trust is the benchmark or standard to which politics is held. Low expectations are likely to boost evaluations. If we assume that citizens base their political trust on an evaluation, we ought to know what their expectations were to begin with. The benchmark may be idiosyncratic (purely subjective) or intersubjective, personal or derived from media and politicians. It may be based on comparisons to other countries, on expectations from past performance, or even both if there is some sort of absolute standard independent from time and place.

Although benchmarks are rarely modelled in the literature on political trust, they are continuously present, albeit implicitly. Scholars who study determinants of political trust in a cross-national design, for instance, fundamentally test whether political trust is higher if one's country performs better than other countries. In other words, the implicit assumption in these designs is that citizens base their political trust directly or indirectly on a comparison to other countries (or at least to a cross-nationally equivalent standard). Similarly, a longitudinal design implicitly assumes that political trust is the result of a historical comparison (or held to a longitudinally equivalent standard). When cross-sectional and longitudinal studies result in different conclusions, this does not have to be a methodological artefact but may instead reflect that one type of comparison prevails over another.

DEMOCRATIC INPUT INSTITUTIONS

Democratic Rule: Elections and Referenda

A lot of political trust research has focused on Western countries with relatively long histories of stable democratic rule. Europe offers an interesting site of comparison

between established and more recent democracies, the latter of which can be divided into countries that were formerly authoritarian and experienced a transition in the 1970s (Spain, Portugal, Greece, Cyprus) and the formerly communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe that experienced a transition in the late 1980s and early 1990s. The new democracies in Central and Eastern Europe experienced a so-called ‘honeymoon effect’ directly after democratization, boosting political trust as a reflection of high expectations that wore off quickly (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006). Familiarity with democratic traditions breeds trust in the political system (McAllister, 1999). Even after a democratic transition, it takes time for political trust to develop (Rose, 1994). Consequently, trust is higher in countries with a longer, uninterrupted history of democratic rule (e.g., Aarts and Thomassen, 2008; Anderson and Singer, 2008; Van der Meer, 2010; Marien, 2011; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012), seemingly robust to the concurrent negative impact of corruption. Institutional legacies of the past thus linger on, a generation after democratic transitions. A more detailed analysis of political trust in authoritarian societies and in transition countries is offered in other chapters of this Handbook (see also Chapter 4 by Rivetti and Cavatorta, Chapter 26 by Závecz, Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson, and Chapter 28 by Park).

Elections tend to bolster political trust (Clarke and Kornberg, 1992; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016; see also Chapter 26 by Závecz):

The high salience of national elections in temporary representative democracies suggests that even if these contests do not adequately perform all of the functions ascribed to them...their very occurrence should enhance, if only temporarily, people's feelings of satisfaction with the functioning of democracy in their country. (Clarke et al., 1993, p. 1002)

It is no surprise that elections boost trust and efficacy: they are a celebration of democracy, priming democratic values and illustrating democratic practices such as accountability and peaceful transitions. Intriguingly, the boosting effect of contested elections seems to hold not only in established democracies but also even in rural China. Manion (2006) shows that trust in local leaders is higher in those Chinese villages where elections have a higher ratio of candidates to elected positions.

Elections thus boost political trust. But while new governments may briefly benefit from this boost (Armingeon and Guthmann, 2014), ultimately it is the event of having elections and not the event of governmental change that drives the effect (Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016; see also Blais and Gélineau, 2007 on satisfaction with democracy).

Election *outcomes* affect different groups of voters differently. Most notably, trust is boosted amongst those groups of voters that voted for a party that won the elections and/or obtained governmental power, and brought down amongst those voters that did not (Anderson and LoTempio, 2002; Anderson et al., 2005; see also Blais and Gélineau, 2007 on satisfaction with democracy).

For direct democracy and public referenda the story is more complicated. They tend to boost internal and external political efficacy (Bowler and Donovan, 2002; Smith and Tolbert, 2004). However, evidence that direct democracy also pays off by stimulating political trust is mixed at best. Whereas Citrin (1996) and Hug (2005) find no significant effects, Dyck (2009) even finds the opposite effect: the actual use of referenda has a negative effect on political trust in the United States. Dyck explains that ‘democratic institutions put citizens in an adversarial relationship with their governments. This leads citizens to alter

their view of the political process, namely, to question if public officials are trustworthy' (Dyck, 2009, p. 559). Bauer and Fatke (2014) therefore distinguish between the strength of referenda rights and the actual use of these rights: their analysis of Swiss cantons suggests that the former stimulates political trust (by strengthening the potential of holding office-holders accountable) but that the latter indeed undermines political trust.

The Rules of the Game: Representation vs Accountability

Besides the very principle and occurrence of elections, many scholars have looked at the electoral institutions as explanations of political trust. While one set of electoral institutions emphasizes power convergence and accountability (majoritarianism), another set of electoral institutions emphasizes power sharing and proportional representation of votes into parliamentary seat shares (proportionalism). Following different theoretical sets of reasoning, both majoritarianism and proportionalism have been argued to stimulate political trust.

One side of the debate emphasizes that equal parliamentary representation builds trust because parliament mirrors society and because minority groups remain committed to the democratic regime as they find themselves represented (Karp and Banducci, 2008). Majoritarian and other disproportional systems (such as those with high electoral thresholds) undermine the representative function of parliament (Anderson and Guillory, 1997) as they translate votes into parliamentary seats with a bias towards bigger parties (Aarts and Thomassen, 2008) and a loss of minority votes (Banducci et al., 1999), whereas proportional systems translate votes to parliamentary seats as closely as possible (Norris, 1999; Magalhães, 2006). National political institutions would be trusted more in proportional systems than in disproportional systems, as there is a more direct sense of interest alignment and a feeling of connection to at least part of the political system (Hardin, 2000; Van der Meer, 2010): dissatisfied voters are more likely to keep committed to the system because their concerns may be voiced by small or new parties.

Yet the other side of the debate has made equally convincing claims, arguing that disproportional systems may undermine representation in favour of accountability (Powell, 2000). This allows citizens to enforce politicians' commitment to citizens' interests, as otherwise the latter will easily 'throw the rascals out' (Norris, 2011): politicians will act on behalf of their constituents if only from a well-understood encapsulated self-interest. The accountability is derived from disproportional electoral systems' bundling of political power to a limited number of political parties that generally do not have to form coalitions to reach majority governments. Consequently, political responsibilities are appointed more clearly than in proportional (multiparty, coalition) systems (Aarts and Thomassen, 2008). Because citizens are better equipped to enforce parliament's commitment to their interests and therefore more likely to experience that their vote matters (Ulbig, 2008), they are more likely to trust their political institutions (cf. Magalhães, 2006).

The debate thus positions representation (interest alignment) against accountability (enforceable commitment). 'The major difference between the majoritarian and proportional vision is their view on the essence of democratic government and consequently the function of elections' (Aarts and Thomassen, 2008, p. 6). Yet, despite decades of research, this debate has remained quite unresolved. Some studies find evidence that political trust is higher in countries with more proportional systems (e.g., Banducci et al., 1999;

Magalhães, 2006; Van der Meer, 2010; see also Anderson and Guillory, 1997 and Lijphart, 1999 on satisfaction with democracy). Other studies, however, find support for the opposing view that proportionality is in fact detrimental to political trust (e.g., Norris, 1999; see also Aarts and Thomassen, 2008 on satisfaction with democracy). A third group of studies finds no significant relationship on political trust at all (Oskarsson, 2010; Norris, 2011; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016; see also Wagner et al., 2009 and Listhaug et al., 2009 on satisfaction with democracy). Ultimately, evidence remains rather weak.

Most of these analyses have been cross-national tests, comparing different types of countries (Castles, 1994). Yet, there have been some intriguing designs. Banducci et al. (1999) made use of institutional changes to the electoral system in New Zealand, which moved from majoritarianism to proportionalism between 1993 and 1996. On a range of attitudes, Banducci et al. (*ibid.*, p. 542) find that voters are more trusting and efficacious in 1996 (after the reforms) than in 1993 (before the reforms): less likely to think that government is run by few interests, less negative on government responsiveness and more likely to think that their vote counts. However, such improvements are not found on all indicators, including a more direct question on trust in the government ‘to do what is right most of the time’. Moreover, as Marien (2011, p. 714) argues, ‘it is possible that these changes are the result of enthusiasm for the reform and not the increased proportionality as such’.

The study by Aarts and Thomassen (2008) is also noteworthy, although it focuses on satisfaction with democracy rather than political trust as defined in this Handbook. The authors distinguish between perceptions of accountability, perceptions of representation and satisfaction with democracy. Their analyses of the second module of the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (2001–06) cover 36 elections in 35 countries across the globe. Aarts and Thomassen show that perceptions of accountability and representation each contribute to satisfaction with democracy, the more so in combination. They find that satisfaction with democracy is lower in proportional systems than in majoritarian systems. More puzzling are their findings on the perceptions of representation and accountability. Although they expect to find that perceptions of representation are stronger in proportional systems and that perceptions of accountability are stronger in majoritarian systems, they empirically find the inverse. The effect on perceptions of accountability is especially strong. The authors themselves suggest that their measure for accountability³ may have been interpreted differently by the respondents.

Marien (2011) attempted a particularly intriguing way out of the theoretical and empirical deadlock. She argues that both proportionalism (inclusiveness) and majoritarianism (accountability) foster political trust, expecting trust to be highest in the most proportional and the most disproportional systems compared to those systems with more muddled electoral rules. Marien tests this expectation on 23 countries that participated in the third and fourth waves of the European Social Survey (2006, 2008). She finds supporting evidence for the curvilinear effect that is robust to the inclusion of various other contextual explanations. Yet, the interpretation of the curvilinear effect remains a matter of debate, as the effect is driven by the limitation that only two of the countries in the data set (France and the United Kingdom) have truly disproportional outcomes and are therefore influential cases. More analyses, especially ones that include more countries with disproportional electoral systems, are needed to investigate this promising venue.

The Interaction Effect of Electoral Institutions

Proportionalism and majoritarianism have been argued not only to affect the average levels of trust, but also its association with other factors. One of these interaction effects concerns the interplay between electoral institutions and winning or losing elections. Emphasizing the importance of inclusiveness, Anderson and Guillory (1997) show that winning and losing elections matters more in countries with disproportional systems: the winner takes all, the loser stands at the sidelines for the next governmental period. Consequently, the gap in losers' consent – that is, the gap in political trust between winners (those who voted for subsequently governing parties) and losers (those who voted for subsequently non-governing parties) – is larger in more disproportional systems. However, in subsequent studies evidence has been somewhat weaker. While Anderson et al. (2005) find weak additional support in an analysis of the Eurobarometer data of 1999, Marien (2011) finds no supportive evidence for this particular claim. Instead, she finds that winning or losing matters more in new democracies than in established democracies.

A second interaction effect focuses on the interplay between electoral institutions and subjective performance evaluations. Emphasizing accountability, Anderson (2000) argues that voters' economic evaluations (see below) have a stronger impact on their support for government parties in countries where government responsibility is assigned more clearly. Marien (2011) extends this line of reasoning, and finds that economic evaluations also have a stronger impact on political trust in majoritarian countries than in proportional countries.

MACROECONOMIC PERFORMANCE

Besides the procedural explanations discussed above, performance has long been considered a relevant cause of political trust as well. Easton (1975, p. 449) already argued that 'evaluation of outputs and performance may help to generate, and probably at all times will help to sustain, confidence in the authorities'. Diffuse support, according to Easton, is unlikely to be affected by the evaluation of specific policies, but rather by more general, performance evaluations over a longer time span.

At its core, it makes sense that the performance of institutions affects the trust that people have in them, at least to the extent that trust is a more or less rational evaluation. If political trust is a feeling 'that interests [are] attended to even if the authorities were exposed to little supervision or scrutiny' (*ibid.*, p. 447), one rationale for such feelings of trust lies in the current or recent performance of these very same authorities. Despite some inroads into studying the effects of performance in non-economic areas on political trust (e.g., King, 1997; Ulbig, 2002; see also Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson), and more general measures of political legitimacy (e.g., Gilley, 2006), political trust research has generally stuck to macroeconomic performance as the one that is 'critical to overall public support of government' (Miller and Listhaug, 1999).

Yet, the extensive research on the supposed effect of macroeconomic performance on political trust has led to paradoxical findings. At the individual level, decades of research has shown that citizens who have a positive evaluation of the performance of the national economy, tend to have more trust in politics (e.g., Citrin and Green, 1986; Kornberg and

Clarke, 1992; Lawrence, 1997; Chanley et al., 2000; Van der Meer and Dekker, 2011; Elinas and Lambrianou, 2014; but see Hetherington, 1998 for an exception). Sociotropic evaluations tend to matter more than egotropic evaluations.

A second line of research found similarly strong evidence that economic performance evaluations are related to political trust. Across time, political trust tends to fluctuate with or behind consumer confidence (Chanley et al., 2000; Dalton, 2004; Keele, 2007; Bovens and Wille, 2008; Hetherington and Rudolph, 2008). Keele (2007), for instance, explained quarterly fluctuations in trust in government in the USA between 1970 and 2000, and found significant effects of (changes in) consumer confidence, even when congressional approval, presidential approval, and interpersonal trust are already taken into account. In his analysis, consumer confidence has an immediate (rather than a more lagged) effect on trust in government. One year later, Bovens and Wille (2008) considered fluctuations in consumer confidence as one of the more likely from a list of ten explanations of the Dutch dip in political trust after 2002.

All in all, political trust tends to go hand in hand with subjective evaluations of the economy, be it at the micro level (individual judgements) or at the macro level (consumer confidence). That makes it the more puzzling that such a consistent effect is not found at the macro level, when objective macroeconomic performance indicators are modelled as determinants of political trust. For decades, scholars have focused on the effects of such objective performance indicators, including GDP per capita, economic growth, unemployment rates, inflation and budgetary deficits (e.g., Clarke et al., 1993; Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Kotzian, 2011a; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016). Yet, regardless of the macroeconomic performance indicator, findings have remained mixed at best.

Some studies find significant effects (e.g., Lipset and Schneider, 1983; Clarke et al., 1993; Cusack, 1999; Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Taylor, 2000; Anderson and Singer, 2008; Anderson, 2009; Marien, 2011; Kalbhenn and Stracca, 2015; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016), others find none (e.g., Dalton, 2004; Rahn and Rudolph, 2005; Oskarsson, 2010; Van der Meer, 2010; Kotzian, 2011a, 2011b; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012), find mixed effects depending on type of political trust (Weil, 1989), or even see evidence for inverse effects (McAllister, 1999).

The diversity of findings is illustrated by the extensive analyses of Miller and Listhaug (1999). Their study offers a wide range of cross-national and longitudinal tests, employing a range of data sets and three indicators of economic performance (inflation, unemployment and budgetary surpluses). In cross-national analyses of the World Values Survey 1990 data at both the aggregate and individual level, they find evidence that budgetary surplus stimulates political trust but that inflation and unemployment do not. Next, they find stronger support for the effect of budgetary surpluses in longitudinal analyses of a range of surveys of Sweden, the USA and Norway.

There are various reasons for the disparity of findings, at least among the majority of studies that employ cross-national analyses to explain political trust. Various early studies rely on less strict methodological designs. Some analysed individual-level data without cluster correction, which effectively disaggregates contextual characteristics and makes it more likely to find significant effects because standard errors are vastly underestimated (e.g., Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Taylor, 2000). Other studies were performed at the aggregate level, which conflates individual-level determinants (like unemployment and household income) with its contextual counterpart (like unemployment rate and GDP/capita),

rendering it impossible to pull apart the micro- and the macro-level effects (e.g., Weil, 1989; Clarke et al., 1993; McAllister, 1999; Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Anderson, 2009; Kalbhenn and Stracca, 2015). Finally, other studies may have underestimated the effect of objective macroeconomic performance indicators by controlling for subjective evaluations thereof (e.g., Rahn and Rudolph, 2005; Oskarsson, 2010).

However, even the set of studies that employed cross-national, multilevel analysis did not reach consistent outcomes. Some found significant macroeconomic effects (Taylor, 2000; Kotzian, 2011a, 2011b; Marien, 2011), others did not find any or at best very few effects (Oskarsson, 2010; Van der Meer, 2010; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012; Dahlberg and Holmberg, 2014; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016). The crucial difference seems to be the inclusion of corruption in the analysis as a rivalling explanation of political trust. All macroeconomic effects on political trust turn non-significant once corruption is included in these comparative, multilevel models (Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016). This signals how central the factor of corruption is to explaining political trust.

The Perception–Performance Paradox, and the Relevance of the Longitudinal Design

Perceived performance is a strong explanation of political trust; actual performance is at best found to be an inconsistent explanation. How can that be?

First, we could blame the theoretical approach that argues that performance is likely to affect political trust. Ultimately, it places strong assumptions on citizens' (1) abilities to gather sufficient information and formulate judgements on actual macroeconomic performance (cf. Duch et al., 2000), (2) uniformity regarding what they value as good performance on indicators such as inflation and deficits (cf. Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016), and (3) likelihood to hold national politics accountable for macroeconomic performance in times when nation states have lost power to supranational, international and non-political actors (cf. Peters and Pierre, 1998). Yet, it would be an equally extreme position to argue that citizens have no sensible idea on the state of the economy whatsoever, that there is no agreement whatsoever on the state of the economy, and/or that national politicians are not held accountable.

A second possible explanation for the existing paradox is that the effect of citizens' subjective evaluations of economic performance may not be rooted in objective macroeconomic performance all that well (Palmer and Duch, 2001). Rather, these evaluations may in part be endogenous to political trust, in the sense that trust functions as a heuristic (also see Chapter 12 by Rudolph), or more spuriously reflect general societal optimism. However, although such endogeneity issues may have boosted the estimated effect of subjective evaluations of economic performance on political trust, various studies have countered this problem. Keele (2007), for instance, introduced time lags to his aggregate level study, and controlled for a range of other variables such as congressional approval and presidential approval that would tap into the endogeneity issue, and nevertheless found significant effects of the subjective measures.

The third solution to the paradox is more likely to offer an explanation. Studies on the effect of actual macroeconomic performance on political trust have nearly all made a cross-sectional/cross-national comparison. Cross-national differences in trust were explained by cross-national differences in performance. This methodological set-up starts from an important, but hidden, assumption on the comparisons that citizens

make directly or – derived from media and/or politicians – indirectly. Methodologically, significant macro-level effects would suggest that political trust is higher or lower when countries perform better than others. In other words, it assumes that people base their trust in politics on a direct or indirect comparison to the economic performance of other countries. The lack of significant effects in recent cross-national analyses shows that not to be the case. But that does not mean that economic performance does not matter at all. Instead, the relevant comparison may be primarily longitudinal instead of cross-national (cf. Kayser and Peress, 2012): citizens may evaluate macroeconomic performance primarily to their recent past or to a more structural, country-specific norm.

This idea has been taken up in various recent studies. Armingeon and Guthmann (2014) perform time series analysis on three waves of the Eurobarometer between 2007 and 2011. They do not find significant effects of unemployment rates or austerity on political trust in a model that already takes citizens' perceptions of the state of the economy into account. Van Erkel and Van der Meer (2016) analyse 21 waves of the Eurobarometer between 1999 and 2011 in 15 EU member states. By eliminating cross-national variance on the dependent variables (political trust) and time-lagged independent variables (economic performance), their analysis focuses purely on within-country differences. They find that some macroeconomic performance indicators (most notably unemployment rate and budgetary deficits) affect political trust consistently and as expected, whereas a third (government's budgetary surplus) tends to stimulate political trust once influential cases are excluded. Finally, Bargsted, Somma and Castillo (Chapter 24 in this Handbook) analyse 17 Latin American countries using the Latinobarometer between 2002 and 2011. Their study (one of the few in the field outside Europe and North America) also eliminates cross-national variance, to find that gross national income stimulates within-country growth of political trust whereas economic inequality harms it.

These recent studies suggest that objective, macroeconomic performance may matter after all, not because citizens compare the performance of their country to that of others but because they have historical expectations on the state of performance.

The Missing Link: Expectations

Precisely these expectations seem to be the missing link in research on the performance–trust relationship. This may be surprising, as the importance of expectations for political trust research had already been recognized in the 1970s (Miller, 1974, p. 952).⁴ People not only differ in the importance they attach to various outcomes, they even tend to have different opinions on the direction in which policy should be taken. Such differences exist not only within countries but also between countries and across time. Any evaluation of macroeconomic performance is likely to be moderated by citizens' (changing) expectations. If the relevance of macroeconomic performance indicators really varies with citizens' expectations, these expectations would be the capstone of the trust-as-evaluation approach.

To date, there are few studies that attempted to deal with this missing link in political trust research. Anderson and Singer (2008, p. 574) argue that inequality should cause political distrust especially among those who care most about income redistribution:

[P]eople's ideological predispositions should motivate them to connect inequality with their views of the political system in different ways... Those who locate themselves on the right

are likely to view inequality less negatively than those who do not. As a result, the effects of inequality on attitudes toward government should be muted among those on the right and more substantial among those on the left.

A multilevel analysis of 20 countries in the European Social Survey 2002 supports their hypothesis: inequality has a stronger, negative effect on political trust (parliament, legal system, police, politicians) amongst left-wing citizens than amongst right-wing citizens.

Van der Meer and Hakhverdian (2016) extend that logic to different economic policy domains (unemployment, inflation, deficits, growth), using more concrete policy preferences than the overarching left-right position. Yet, this study of 42 countries in the European Values Study 2008 does not find any evidence that economic inequality and unemployment rates have stronger effects on citizens who prefer income equality and state provision, nor that inflation and budgetary deficits primarily affect those who prefer the inverse.

Other studies focused exclusively on the micro level to assess the role of expectations and preferences on political trust. Seyd (2015) compared British citizens' standards (i.e., the desired behaviour for their national politicians) to evaluations of politicians' behaviour to explain political trust (specifically defined as trust in politicians to tell the truth). He found that the expectations had a rather inconsistent effect and mattered considerably less than the evaluations themselves.

We therefore cannot yet speak of consistent evidence for the importance of expectations and preferences in the trust-as-evaluation approach. It is too early to assess whether this reflects a theoretical or rather a methodological shortcoming. First, scholars have focused on desired rather than expected behaviour, which should not be equated. Second, expectations may be highly idiosyncratic: different citizens' expectations may wildly vary by policy field (e.g., economics, immigration, environment etc.), by benchmark (cross-national, historical, absolute), and by salience, to name just a few. Third, expectations – like performance evaluations – may be partially endogenous to political trust (Van de Walle and Bouckaert, 2003; Seyd, 2015); if so, expectations and behaviour ought to be pulled apart more stringently in a panel design.

Hence, more research into the conditional impact of macroeconomic performance is required, with explicit reference to expectations and preferences. This requires precise measures on preferences, expectations and evaluations that ought to be directly comparable by design.

CONCLUSION

Input institutions and institutional output affect political trust. Cross-national studies illustrate that – above corruption and quality of government (cf. Dahlberg and Holmberg, 2014) – the proportionality of electoral institutions affects political trust in a somewhat curvilinear way (e.g., Marien, 2011). Macroeconomic performance does not have a consistent impact on political trust in cross-national studies, but is shown to be an important determinant in within-country, longitudinal studies (e.g., Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016). These patterns suggest that political trust, at least to some extent, can be understood as the result of citizens' evaluation of the political domain.

However, this trust-as-evaluation approach hinges on the macro–micro linkage. To the extent that political trust is an evaluation, macro-level processes and performances ought to be perceived and evaluated by citizens at the micro level. Macro-level effects ought to be mediated by micro-level evaluations, and moderated by micro-level expectations and preferences. Empirically, such linkages are not well established in quantitative survey research. Nevertheless, the study of political trust is moving towards integrating subject- and object-based explanations: increasingly, scholars focus on mechanisms, causal pathways, subjective perceptions and preferences.

One crucial aspect that is largely missing from the literature, though, is the role of expectations and benchmarks. Although recent studies include subjectively desired outcomes as moderators of the macro–micro relationship (Anderson and Singer, 2008; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016), subjectively expected outcomes have remained a blind spot. Precisely, these expectations might be the missing link in much of the current research: bad governmental performance may not matter so much if citizens did not have high expectations to begin with.

Implicitly, the literature insinuates that different macro effects on political trust are the result of different benchmarks that citizens use. Macro-level effects that are primarily found in cross-national studies suggest that citizens directly or indirectly compare the performance of their country to other countries. By contrast, macro-level effects that are primarily found in longitudinal studies (such as macroeconomic performance) suggest that citizens compare the current state of government to that of their own past. Finally, macro-level effects that are found regardless of the design of the study (such as corruption) suggest that citizens hold performance to an absolute standard. Scholars ought to be aware that their research design thus holds an assumption on the way citizens evaluate politics.

Much of our understanding of political trust as an evaluation of the political realm has been based on analyses of survey data derived from established Western democracies. The literature would benefit from expanding the geographic focus beyond North America and Europe to analyse macro effects in different settings. Chapter 24 on Latin America (by Bargsted et al.) and Chapter 27 on Africa and the Arab region (by Hutchison and Johnson) show intriguing parallels and differences to existing knowledge on North America and Europe. Also, while scholars have made great inroads via quantitative survey research, the literature on the macro–micro linkage in political trust could definitely benefit from more qualitative approaches as well. In-depth interviews, ethnographies and narratives might help establish the extent to which citizens underpin their trust in politics cognitively via preferences, expectations and evaluations.

NOTES

1. Scharpf explicitly argues that output-oriented legitimacy should not be equated with a positive evaluation of government performance, but rather with ‘structures and procedures that will generally ensure that policies are common-interest oriented’ (Scharpf, 2003, note 4).
2. Consequently, it makes sense that levels of trust in political institutions are relatively low: the modern state holds historically large power over its subjects that can hardly be avoided or ignored.
3. ‘Some people say that no matter who people vote for, it won’t make a difference to what happens. Others say that who people vote for can make a difference to what happens . . . Where would you place yourself?’

4. Indeed, various scholars have argued that rising expectations that are not met by government are the root cause of declining political trust (e.g., Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Dalton, 2004; cf. Thomassen, 2015).

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18. The welfare state and political trust: bringing performance back in

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INTRODUCTION

The welfare state and political trust are among the more scrutinized topics in comparative research on advanced industrial democracies. However, while impressive bodies of work about each of the two keep accumulating they have, we argue, been connected too infrequently. This is unfortunate as they are linked by common theoretical themes and, as this chapter will show, empirical patterns and correlations. At the same time, we shall also see that there is ample room for future research. Several key questions even remain largely unexplored.

The most pervasive common denominator is probably the possibility of decline; that is, simultaneously downward trends in certain aspects of political trust as well as signs of welfare state change and retrenchment. As for political trust, time series including the 1980s indicated no universal and lasting trend (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Norris, 2011). More recent analyses of longer time spans and more countries suggest ‘public scepticism about politicians and government officials is spreading to virtually all the advanced industrial democracies’ (Dalton, 2008, p. 243), although it should be said that the regional section in this Handbook (Chapters 23 to 28) finds rather complex answers to the question of just how big or universal any decline is. Be that as it may, *normative* support for the idea of democracy with its norms, rights and procedures has stayed strong or even grown. To capture this current ambivalence – endorsement of democratic principles but widespread or even growing dissatisfaction with their implementation – scholars have coined expressions like ‘dissatisfied democrats’ or ‘critical citizens’ (e.g., Klingemann, 1999; Norris, 1999).

In welfare state research, scholars have addressed the nature and impact of ‘permanent austerity’ (Pierson, 2001), a situation in which mature welfare states find it increasingly difficult to finance previous commitments to public services and income replacement systems. While apocalyptic ‘race to the bottom’ scenarios have clearly not materialized, important policy changes have occurred (for an overview, see Hemerijck, 2013). Korpi and Palme (2003) investigated net replacement rates in the public insurance systems for sickness, work accidents and unemployment for 18 OECD countries, and found that ‘the long gradual increase in average benefit levels characterizing developments up to the mid-1970s has not only stopped but turned into a reverse’ (*ibid.*, p. 445; cf. Allan and Scruggs, 2004; Palier, 2010). Similarly, results indicating gradual service deterioration and increasing resource scarcity (rather than radical system change) have been reported in comparative studies of public services such as education and health care (Clayton and Pontusson, 1998). And income inequality – which partly reflects the redistributive capacities of welfare states – increased during this period in many countries (Brandolini

and Smeeding, 2008). Most recently these slow retrenchment processes were accelerated in several countries by the Great Recession and the eurozone sovereign debt crisis with its austerity packages.

Austerity-driven retrenchment, however, is not the ‘only game left in town’ (van Kersbergen et al., 2014). A host of subtler, and even expansive, trends have been spotted. Some highlight a ‘dualization’ process where benefits and services remain rather stable for ‘insiders’, but where growing groups cannot access them due to part-time, fixed-term, or otherwise non-standard employment patterns (Emmenegger et al., 2012). By the same token, the notion that welfare states are being ‘recalibrated’ has gained currency (Ferrera, 2008). This entails a rebalancing of policy activity in which ‘new’ risks (Bonoli, 2005) – examples include work–life imbalances and skills obsolesce – receive more attention and resources, resulting in expansive reforms in family and active labour market policy. Relatedly, scholars have identified a partial shift from traditional welfare state goals such as income security and equality to a social investment-oriented welfare state (Morel et al., 2012), geared towards the creation, preservation and efficient use of human capital. Finally, especially Europe’s welfare states have become increasingly affected by multilevel governance and in particular European integration, which affects national social protection and public services in multiple ways, most of which are seen as very challenging if not outright destructive (Scharpf, 1999; Ferrera, 2005). Multilevel complexity, however, also emanates from regionalization and decentralization processes, where lower-level actors have a keen eye for welfare responsibilities as a vehicle for gaining legitimacy (McEwen and Moreno, 2005).

Normative support for welfare state policies seems to have remained largely stable throughout these changes. Especially support for large and costly social protection, such as pensions and health care, has been overwhelmingly positive and stable in most countries also in the face of reform pressures and policy changes. Meanwhile, concrete performance assessments are considerably more negative all throughout Europe (Van Oorschot and Meuleman, 2012). In other words, attitudes towards the welfare state display a pattern not unlike the ‘critical citizens’ phenomenon apparent for political trust; that is, many support the welfare state in principle at the same time as they are dissatisfied with its concrete performance.

We still lack full answers to questions about how welfare policies and policy change, and evaluations thereof, affect political trust. However, relevant findings are beginning to materialize and this chapter discusses in turn four reasonably distinct accumulations of studies. The first one has to do with the impact of evaluations of the performance and protection offered by services and income replacement schemes. A second and related literature focuses on the nature of citizens’ personal experiences of welfare state schemes. The third topic is the impact of big economic crises and the austerity policies they often, but not always, act as catalysts for. A fourth set of findings concerns the impact of welfare state-related contextual variables ‘in normal times’, such as the impact of welfare state generosity and income inequality on political trust.

Some limitations and characteristics of this chapter are worth noting. First, it will inevitably reveal that most research has been carried out in mature, Western, affluent welfare states. Second, although the chapter is placed in the ‘contextual’ section of this Handbook, some quite relevant work analyses individual-level variation in one country, or tests cross-level hypotheses about the interaction between contextual characteristics

of welfare states and individual-level variables. Third, we are immediately concerned here with the impact of welfare state variables on political trust. However, it is eminently possible to ask how trust in turn affects welfare support at the individual level, as well as macro welfare state development more generally. At the individual level, however, political trust does not seem strongly associated with generalized measures of welfare state support, according to several studies (Svallfors, 2002). However, it has been shown to positively influence acceptance for potentially painful welfare state reforms measured at a very concrete level (Trüdinger and Bollow, 2011). Finally, like the rest of this book, we will concentrate on the concept of 'political trust'. However, it will be evident that the research field has developed such that it is hard to discuss without sometimes considering findings for neighbouring concepts such as 'satisfaction with democracy' and 'political efficacy'.

An overall theme of ours is that political trust researchers should 'bring performance back in'. As noted below, much research on performance-type explanations of political behaviour is concerned with *macroeconomic* performance (also see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). While it is essential to communicate with this impressive body of work to fully make sense of the findings reported here, we also want to illustrate that (some) scholars may have been too quick to infer from weak relationships between the economy and trust that performance in other domains is also inconsequential. Welfare state-related performance and policy variables clearly can be important at the same time as much work remains to be done.

PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS

A first strand of the literature emphasizes performance evaluations of policy outputs and outcomes. Of course, considering performance factors is nothing new to the political trust literature. However, the vast majority of empirical studies have examined *macroeconomic* performance while often ignoring other policy domains. Still, far-ranging conclusions have been drawn, resulting in a general scepticism about the explanatory value of performance, at least in established democracies (cf. Listhaug, 1995; Dahlberg et al., 2014). For example, Dalton (2004) studied macroeconomic performance and political trust over time in a large number of advanced industrial democracies and concluded that '[t]he empirical analyses . . . demonstrate the limitations of the performance model. . . economic performance, whether measured in objective or subjective terms, does not seem to be a significant contributor to the long-term decline in political support during the later twentieth century' (pp. 126–7).

A common explanation for the seeming unimportance of (economic) performance highlights repeated experiences of electoral accountability. Such experiences teach citizens the value of punishing and rewarding incumbents at the polls, rather than blaming politics more generally. Accountability is also believed to generate affectively based diffuse support. Such support is by definition insensitive to short-term fluctuations in performance. In McAllister's (1999) formulation:

[t]he political economy of confidence of democratic institutions is . . . strictly limited. This conclusion underlies the gradual transformation that has taken place in the established democracies, where the frequency of national elections has slowly generated a reservoir of popular support for

democratic institutions, with citizens drawing a clear distinction between the institutions of the state on the one hand, and the party and leaders elected to conduct public policy on the other. (McAllister, 1999, p. 203)

Other political science subfields, however, increasingly see electoral accountability as fragile. Recent research on economic voting, for example, now concludes that accountability is more variant across time and space than previously realized (for overviews, see Anderson, 2007; Duch, 2007; Lewis-Beck and Stegmaier, 2007). Unfortunately, most institutional and contextual conditions conducive to accountability – such as single-party majority government, long period of incumbency, clear government alternatives, centralized government and so on – are unusual. Interestingly, Taylor (2000) found that macroeconomic performance has *weaker* effects on democratic dissatisfaction under the same rare conditions. Put differently, generalized political trust suffers from performance dissatisfaction when accountability does not work well.

Accountability may be particularly fragile in the welfare state domain. On top of generic political-institutional problems policy-makers often build obfuscating blame-avoidance strategies into the design of policies themselves (e.g., Weaver, 1986; Pierson, 1994; Hood, 2007; Lindbom, 2007). For example, retrenchment is likely to occur in an incremental and hard-to-detect fashion, in areas where client organizations are weak, or where retrenchment can occur as the result of non-decisions (that is, failing to adjust benefit ceilings and floors upwards with inflation) and opaque tinkering with eligibility criteria.

Consistent with these remarks, electoral punishment in the welfare state domain appears (even) weaker and more variable than in the macroeconomic realm (for an overview, see Kumlin and Stadelmann-Steffen, 2014). One study finds that dissatisfaction with salient and supported services such as education and health care had significant effects on government voting in only four of nine West European elections analysed. These effects were systematically contingent on institutional clarity of responsibility, and usually weaker than the impact of macroeconomic perceptions (Kumlin, 2007). Similarly, actual cuts in replacement rates are inconsequential for government survival in Western Europe unless cuts are very large and recent, or extensively covered in election campaigns (Armingeon and Giger, 2008; Giger, 2011; Giger and Nelson, 2011). It is unsafe, then, to assume positive experiences of well-functioning accountability in the welfare domain. The clinical distinction between specific incumbents and politicians and politics more generally is unusually difficult. Therefore, poor welfare state performance may be generalized beyond incumbents.

Most studies so far bear out that expectation. Analysing eight European countries, Huseby (2000) found that negative evaluations of performance in elder care, health care, job and social security all negatively affect attitudes towards the functioning of democracy, but not support for democratic principles. Similar findings were reached in more country-specific studies by Miller and Listhaug (1999) using Norwegian and American data, and by Roller (1999) reporting that former East Germans' comparisons between the communist and post-communist welfare state were unflattering for the latter in the 1990s; this in turn had negative consequences for political trust. Similarly, examining 15 Western European countries in the first ESS wave, Kumlin (2007) found that an index of dissatisfaction with health and education services hampers generalized political trust (rather than incumbent support) in nearly all examined countries (cf. Criado and

Herreros, 2007). Consistent with the reasoning above, Kumlin (2007) also found that service dissatisfaction has stronger effects in these regards compared to dissatisfaction with the economy. Finally, Lühiste (2014), using the fourth wave of the ESS, finds that the more positively an individual evaluates the state of social protection in the country, the higher the satisfaction with democracy.

The multilevel governance diffusion of responsibility noted in the introduction appears to leave imprints on performance–trust links. Dupuy and Van Ingelgom (2014) analyse possible legitimization effects of transferring social policy responsibilities to the two Belgian regions of Flanders and Wallonia. After the federalization in 1993, the two regions have – from once close starting points – seen divergent trends in regional trust. The authors argue that regional legitimacy building through social policy is more risky than commonly assumed. Its effects depend on several aspects of institutional and political context, such as the strength of contrast between old national and new regional policies, actual and perceived performance, as well as the nature of public discourse on these topics.

Looking upwards in the European political system, several studies indicate that dissatisfaction with national social protection damages trust also in the EU and support for integration. In contrast to results for macroeconomic performance (Anderson, 1998), these effects do not appear to be merely accidental by-products of dissatisfaction first affecting domestic political orientations, which then function as heuristic shortcuts projected onto the EU. Instead, citizens seem to be ‘blaming Europe’ in a more direct and conscious manner (Kumlin, 2009; Beaudonnet, 2014; Bücker and Kleiner, 2014). For sure, Europe blaming for perceived welfare malperformance varies across countries, depending on the nature of the welfare state itself (more Europe blaming in more generous welfare states), but also on what political elite actors tell citizens about the EU–welfare nexus. The importance of such ‘cueing’ is supported by experimental evidence (Kumlin, 2011a) as well as by comparative survey analyses showing stronger dissatisfaction effects on EU trust where the party system harbours more parties that are simultaneously pro-welfare state *and* Eurosceptic (Kumlin, 2009). Overall, at least many politically aware citizens seem to have developed meaningful perceptions about the distribution of responsibility for welfare state issues in the EU political system. Hobolt and Tilley (2014) find support for this contention in several policy areas, emphasizing as an overall explanation the considerable EU impact on domestic situations in combination with unusually poor accountability. In their words ‘[s]ince citizens are unable to vote for or against “a government” in the EU, when voters hold the EU responsible for poor performance they lose trust in the EU institutions instead’ (p. 7).

PERSONAL WELFARE STATE EXPERIENCES

A related group of studies suggest that performance evaluation processes affecting trust might be unusually driven by personal experiences of public services and welfare state schemes. This would be a further difference compared to macroeconomic performance where a classic stylized fact is that what matters are collective, sociotropic performance evaluations. The latter are seen as the results of information provided by political elites, experts and the mass media. Kumlin (2004a) proposes two explanations for why personal experiences may matter more in performance evaluations of the welfare state and

eventually for political trust. First, the nature of available political information differs, with a better supply of general, sociotropic information about collective experiences in the economic realm compared to welfare state territory; this makes personal economic experiences less crucial from an informational point of view (see also Mutz, 1998). Second, the nature of political responsibility varies across the two policy domains, with a clearer and closer link between responsible politicians and personal welfare state experiences, than between politicians and ups and downs in the personal pocketbook.

Several aspects of personal experiences might matter. The most obvious one is material self-interest where political trust may be enhanced if the individual perceives welfare protection and public services to benefit him or her. Kumlin (2004a) found significant self-interest effects of this kind in Sweden. However, consistent with social-psychological research on social justice (see also Chapter 16 by Grimes), experienced distributive justice and experienced voice opportunities had stronger effects. Those who have personally experienced injustice were less likely than others to be satisfied with the democratic system and to trust politicians. Interestingly, experienced justice variables did not seem to measure merely self-interest in disguise, but functioned rather as independent dimensions of judgement.

Other studies have looked more closely at which type of policy designs are more likely to generate positive experiences along these dimensions. What is striking here is the absence of Esping-Andersen's (1990) macro concept of 'welfare regimes', especially given how often it has been applied to welfare policy attitudes (e.g., Svallfors, 2003). Instead, scholars either analyse individual-level variation in design experiences within one country, or effects of specific and continuous aspects of regimes, such as generosity of a particular scheme. Both these approaches break with the more categorical and holistic regime tradition, which assumes that countries cluster into distinct groups with predictable values along many political, policy- and outcome-related variables.

Individual-level studies of policy design tend to conceptualize policy design in terms of the power relation between the individual citizen and the bureaucrat. Power relations can be affected by a multitude of institutional and individual factors. Soss (1999) compared Americans with experiences of the AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and the SSDI (Social Security Disability Insurance) respectively. He found that AFDC experiences had negative effects on beliefs about the responsiveness of government whereas SSDI experiences did not. This difference could not be attributed to socioeconomic differences that existed prior to welfare interaction. Rather, it seemed to be due to the AFDC having more power over its clients than the SSDI, and to the AFDC being worse at visibly considering clients' views and preferences. By giving citizens the feeling of being underdogs in relation to the state, AFDC experiences generated negative attitudes towards public institutions and the political system. Soss (1999, p. 364) made a general case for:

[...]studying welfare programs as sites of adult political learning. . . I argue that as clients participate in welfare programs they learn lessons about how citizens and governments relate, and these lessons have political consequences beyond the domain of welfare agencies. . . Because clients associate the agency with government as a whole, these program-specific beliefs, in turn, become the basis for broader orientations toward government and political action.

In this spirit, Kumlin (2004a) found in Sweden that experiences of 'customer institutions' – where bureaucratic discretion and means testing are rare, but exit options

frequent – tend to generate positive perceptions of social justice, and more political trust. Exactly the opposite appears true of experiences with ‘client institutions’, where discretion and means testing is frequent and exit options rare (cf. Hoff, 1993; Möller, 1996). Relatedly, Watson (2014) finds that experiences of welfare state benefits with stricter conditionality depress several aspects of democratic citizenship in the UK, including political efficacy. Findings such as these, then, clearly indicate that welfare state policy design may be of explanatory value. Of course, as discussed by Goodsell (1981), Campbell (2012) and Mettler and SoRelle (2014), there are numerous other ways in which policy design differences can be conceptualized and put to empirical use. Hence, continued theoretical and empirical work in this vein seems to be a promising area for future work.

Overall, the research discussed so far supports the idea that welfare state-related government performance evaluations and experiences can matter. But these studies also leave several questions open. Given the cross-sectional nature of much evidence, a fundamental question is whether bad evaluations and experiences really drive mistrust in a causal sense. The worry one would like to rule out is that they are merely results of projection and self-selection processes based on pre-existing attitudes (such as political trust). While more work is needed, several analyses show promising results. For example, Watson (2014) successfully uses various longitudinal designs to capture more closely the causal effect of policy design experiences on democratic citizenship. A small number of panel studies, moreover, indicate that welfare performance evaluations can elicit real change in EU attitudes (Kumlin, 2004b), left-right ideology (Kumlin, 2006) and incumbent government voting (Evans, 1999). Still, we need to know whether this also applies to political trust. A closely related question here is whether performance evaluations respond to ‘actual/objective’ trends and facts. Studying a large number of countries Van Oorschot and Meuleman (2012) find that perceptions of conditions for the unemployed (but not for the elderly) are indeed shaped by real-world conditions. Kumlin (2014a) instead analyses effects of survey experiments and TV campaign coverage combined with panel data to investigate how expert facts about welfare performance, and political debate over such facts, affect evaluations. Results suggest that performance evaluations are adjusted in the light of such information.

These observations are satisfying as they offer preliminary, though hardly final, evidence that performance evaluations and experiences can be more than simply results of projection and self-selection. We now move on to an accumulation of findings where such issues are somewhat less problematic in that independent variables – crisis and retrenchment – are more clearly exogenous events, and where dependent variables concern subsequent change over time in political trust, rather than cross-sectional variation.

CRISIS, RETRENCHMENT AND POLITICAL TRUST

As discussed previously, there is some scepticism about the explanatory value of macroeconomic performance. However, as Dalton (2004, p. 127) and others (Franz, 1986) have discussed, this may depend on the magnitude of the economic setback. It may require major, sudden, and perhaps sustained bouts of malperformance – that is, a crisis – for specific performance dissatisfaction to become generalized to political distrust. Major crises are interesting for this chapter as austerity measures and budget-balancing responses

can have adverse effects on welfare generosity, service quality, inequality and poverty. Certainly, the combination of harsh austerity measures and a severe drop in political trust after the 2008 Great Recession, although not uniform across countries, is consistent with this claim, at the same time as other factors like poor responsiveness also mattered (Armigeon and Guthmann, 2014; Torcal, 2014).

Several scholars have suspected that the combination of major economic crisis and decline in welfare protection is toxic for trust. Using pooled time-series analyses of Eurobarometer data from the years following the Arab oil embargo in 1973, Clarke et al. (1993) found only modest effects of unemployment rise and inflation on political trust. They contend that this was due to redistributive and stabilizing mechanisms of the welfare state. They argue, but do not explicitly test, that the set of social programmes that collectively define the welfare state:

[. . .]have strong counter-cyclical properties, and barring economic catastrophe that would severely inhibit their functioning, they, together with broad-based support for the values, norms, and procedures that collectively define the concept of representative democracy, circumscribe the political economy of public attitudes toward democratic political systems and the societies of which they are a part. (Clarke et al., 1993, p. 1017; see also Kornberg and Clarke, 1992, p. 58)

Likewise, historical accounts also emphasize how generous welfare regimes ‘cushioned societies against the worst effects of impoverishment and insecurity’, preventing a parallel to events in the early 1930s (Mazower, 1999, pp. 333, 346–47).

Based on these arguments one might formulate the hypothesis that economic crises hamper trust, not just because they represent big instances of macroeconomic malperformance, but also because they can hurt social protection when it is *needed the most*. Thus, the *combination* of major crisis and feared or realized retrenchment means citizens experience greater social risks at the same time as protection against those risks also deteriorate. It would be this combination that creates fear and frustration at the same time as it is inherently difficult to know who to blame for such complex events (see Haugsgjerd, forthcoming).

While large-N empirical evidence is scarce, several single-country over-time studies support this crisis–retrenchment hypothesis. In fact, some of the largest trust declines ever recorded were preceded by a package of poor performance involving an economic recession, rising unemployment and budgetary imbalances, significant and unpopular public sector restructuring, and rising inequality and poverty rates. By example, Newton (2006) examined four of the most extreme cases of trust decline among established democracies – Finland, Sweden, New Zealand and Japan – and found that:

[i]t is striking that all four countries experienced real problems of economic and political performance. . .real world problems caused citizens to revise their political opinions, and when these were (partially) solved in Finland, Sweden and New Zealand, the political mood became more positive and supportive. (Newton, 2006, p. 860)

Finland, for instance, experienced a dramatic economic recession between 1989 and 1993. In this period unemployment reached a historic high, government deficits trebled, taxes and interest rates increased steeply while welfare programmes and wages were cut. In addition, the government introduced a drastic restructuring of the economy

involving privatization, deregulation and cost-cutting (Newton, 2006, p. 852). Similarly, New Zealand experienced severe economic problems during the late 1980s combined with some of the most radical welfare retrenchment yet to be seen in Western welfare states (*ibid.*, p. 855; Starke, 2008). In both Finland and New Zealand, such developments were accompanied by a steep decline in political trust.

Sweden, too, partly fits this narrative, although it had already experienced a slow trust decline once severe economic crisis coupled with retrenchment hit in the early 1990s. And while trust levels did not decrease (even further) in the early years of the 1990s crisis, they began to bounce back as the economy recovered at the same time as subsequent election campaigns began to focus increasingly on welfare state performance, and as more resources were de facto directed to public services. Throughout the 1990s, moreover, researchers found sizable cross-sectional correlations between public service dissatisfaction and distrust. Holmberg (1999) contends that 'political' factors were generally more important for the trust decline compared to purely economic or media-related changes. More than this, Holmberg concludes 'without a doubt, the most important political explanation has to do with government performance – with people's evaluations of what they get from government and their assessment of what the government does. Government performance, and people's perceptions of that performance, are the central factors' (1999, p. 122). Relatedly, Oscarsson and Holmberg (2008) used open-ended survey questions to capture mistrusting Swedes' subjective explanations of their own mistrust. While many mentioned actor characteristics and scandals, about half of distrusters also brought up either bad policies or broken promises. Inspecting the former category revealed a strong focus on public services such as health care, elder care and education. As for the latter category, a study of election promises by Naurin (2011) suggested that one reason why many people think politicians break promises is that citizens include bad performance in their very definition of a broken promise. Put differently, behind the ubiquitous perception that politicians are dishonest promise-breakers often lies the idea that politicians have not performed as well as they somehow promised.

Moving to Portugal, the fiscal consolidation measures implemented in 2010 to 2011 involved significant cuts in pensions, child benefits, unemployment benefits, health care services, transfers to schools and municipalities, while taxes were substantially increased. Scholars contend that this decline in social protection and services is reflected in a drop in citizens' satisfaction with Portuguese democracy. More than this, analysis of the European Values Study (EVS) 'rejection of autocracy' items indicates that regime support has also been negatively affected in Portugal (De Sousa et al., 2014, p. 1532). However, evidence from other major economic setbacks suggests that such far-reaching consequences are not universal, but contingent on low levels of regime support when initially entering a crisis (Seligson and Muller, 1987; Finkel et al., 1989).

A recent analysis, finally, clearly indicates that negative evaluations of welfare state services fuelled the deterioration of trust in Greece during the Great Recession. Ellinas and Lamprianou (2014) use multiple rounds of European Social Survey (ESS) data collected both before and during the crisis to investigate the effects of social performance on political trust. Similar to studies discussed previously (see section on performance evaluations), such performance is measured as an average of two questions asking respondents about the state of education/health services. The effect of this index on political trust proved significant controlling for evaluations of economic performance. And although this relationship was initially present, it grew throughout the crisis. Accordingly, the authors

argue that '[s]ocial performance is more important for political trust during distressed than normal times, because the state fails to deliver social services when citizens need them most' (Ellinas and Lamprianou, 2014, p. 247). Reconciling Greek citizens with their political system will, therefore:

[. . .]require going beyond solutions that focus merely on how to improve fiscal performance and generate sustainable growth. Whether political institutions and actors regain trust will not only depend on the state of the economy but will also come down to whether citizens feel an improvement in the social services the state provides. (*Ibid.*, pp. 247–8)

Overall, the discussed case studies are broadly consistent with the claim that a combination of big economic crisis and threatened social protection can seriously hurt political trust. Not least, eye-catching examples of severe trust decline tend to be preceded by a large economic crisis in combination with, among other things, subsequent welfare retrenchment and dissatisfaction.

At the same time, the studies also illustrate how a whole range of economic, political and social problems are intertwined with welfare retrenchment in times of crisis. These are not easy to disentangle from each other. It may still be that crises matter because they represent massive macroeconomic malperformance rather than because they threaten the welfare state when it is needed the most. Future research should therefore dig more deeply into the specific mechanisms that hurt political trust in times of crisis. Specifically, it would be useful to know more about whether welfare retrenchment crises have stronger effects on political trust than economic crises in which social protection remains intact. However, this will require going beyond single-country-over-time research designs popular in this strand of the literature, for the benefit of comparative designs that capture variation in social policy responses to severe economic setbacks.

THE IMPACT OF POLICY CONTEXT IN NORMAL TIMES

A fourth and final accumulation of studies deals with welfare state-related contextual variables 'in normal times'. Some examine income inequality, a policy outcome partly affected by redistributive welfare state policies. Other studies capture more directly the scope and generosity of welfare state policies. Such research is interesting for this chapter in its own right, but also because the crisis literature discussed previously has not always been able to link crisis effects to welfare state-related variables beyond reasonable doubt. But if such variables explain country variation in 'normal times' it also seems plausible that they could be part of the explanation why big crises damage political trust. Let us first consider some of the empirical findings and then finish by pondering theoretical interpretations and future directions.

As for inequality, there are several types of studies available. For example, a case study of South Korea (Kang, 2014) finds that concerns with increasing inequality in the wake of the Asian financial crisis in 1997, together with growing disbelief in the government's ability to provide social protection, has hampered satisfaction with democracy. Moreover, a comparative cross-sectional multilevel analysis of World Values Survey (WVS) data even suggests a cross-sectional relationship between inequality and normative support for the

idea of democracy (Kriekhaus et al., 2014). Testing a more complex causal model with instrumental variable techniques, Uslaner (2011; see also Chapter 19) finds support for a reciprocal process he calls ‘the inequality trap’. A first assumption is that inequality and corruption are associated (through negative and reciprocal links with interpersonal trust). Second, both inequality and corruption have adverse effects on the quality of public service delivery, especially those relied upon by the poor. Third, inequality, corruption and poor service performance all negatively affect political trust as well as compliance with tax regulation. These outcomes in turn reinforce the inequality–corruption nexus, thus creating a vicious circle or a ‘trap’.

Uslaner’s results concern ‘transition countries’ involved in a consolidation of a newly won democracy. By contrast, Anderson and Singer (2008) reported that greater disposable income inequality affects political trust among countries from both Western and Central/Eastern Europe, controlling for individual-level variables. Interestingly, macro-economic conditions came out entirely insignificant once inequality levels were accounted for. Kumlin (2011b, 2014b) in turn built on these findings, while attempting to address two issues. First, cross-country variation at a single point in time introduces much variation that is hard to control; there should be leverage in analysing also within-country variation. Second, past studies analysed distant policy outcomes (that is, disposable income inequality) rather than politically controlled policy instruments shaping outcomes. One is left wondering whether political trust is really affected by public policy in the welfare domain or whether it is inequality that matters regardless of its links to policy. Kumlin’s three-level analyses of Eurobarometer surveys from three decades suggest unemployment benefit generosity in a given ‘country-year’ help explain variation in satisfaction with democracy. Disposable income inequality turned insignificant once policy variables were entered. Of course, these findings do not alter the observation that equality tends to coexist with greater political trust (as redistributive outcomes and policies correlate). However, they do suggest that citizens might respond to particularly salient redistributive policies – rather than to aggregated policy outcomes such as inequality – when thinking about how unequal or equal their societies are.

At the same time, unemployment benefit generosity is no panacea. Instead, its effect is conditioned by actual unemployment rates. Specifically, the results supported a ‘visible costs hypothesis’ predicting that a particularly strong vaccine against democratic dissatisfaction is the combination of generous unemployment benefits and low unemployment. Conversely, generous benefits lose their positive impact as unemployment rises. The interpretation is that citizens also take into account the *costs* of generous social protection, which grow with unemployment. This finding is interesting but not entirely easy to square with the crisis–retrenchment hypothesis (which holds that fast-deteriorating economic conditions combined with retrenchment drives down trust). One should note, however, that Kumlin’s data cover mostly normal fluctuations in the level and salience of unemployment. A speculation would be that crisis and non-crisis contexts are different. Perhaps concerns about social protection trumps cost concerns in panic-ridden crisis contexts, whereas long-term cost concerns are easier to consider in normal times.

The larger story emanating from these studies is that country contexts marked by more redistributive policies and outcomes enhance political trust. But why would this be so? Several theoretical ideas have been invoked, most of which receive either lukewarm support or have not been explicitly tested. The most basic mechanism would again

appear to be *self-interest*; it is those who benefit more than others from redistribution that develop more trust. Remarkably, however, inequality effects on trust do not interact with income (Anderson and Singer, 2008; Kriekhaus et al., 2014) and welfare generosity variables seem to exercise largely similar effects on democratic satisfaction across different socioeconomic groups (Kumlin, 2011b). A second possible mechanism is that people value equality/generosity and reward the political system when they get it. This received clear support in Anderson and Singer's study as leftists reacted more positively to equality. Still, the pattern was not perfect as there was a clearly significant positive effect also among non-leftists. Moreover, Kumlin (2011b) found few significant value interactions with welfare generosity. It was also noteworthy that unemployment benefits, a rather divisive part of Western welfare states, impacted the most on democratic satisfaction, more so than less contentious areas such as pension systems.

Future research might work harder on these possibilities but we are also clearly in need of new good theoretical ideas. One possibility that has not been tested all that much is that more equal and redistributive welfare states encourage a perception that the democratic playing field is level in terms of resources, participation and representation (which is, incidentally, often a correct perception; see Beramendi and Anderson, 2008). Relatedly, it has been suggested that generous and well-functioning social protection installs a stronger feeling of equal recognition by the state among most citizens (Goerres and Busemeyer, 2014; Shore, 2014). Such cognitive and affective mechanisms fit rather well with the results on perceptions of fairness discussed in Chapter 16 by Grimes. They might also explain why redistributive welfare policies and outcomes often seem to enhance political trust, regardless of individual interests and values.

CONCLUSION

Research on policy performance explanations of political behaviour and attitudes has been overwhelmingly concerned with macroeconomics. Researchers are often sceptical about macroeconomic performance as an explanation of political trust, while economic voting clearly plays a significant (but variable) role. This is good democratic news. A well-functioning democracy should, after all, withstand and channel dissatisfaction by offering citizens accountability in elections (and other settings), while generalized system support is kept intact or even strengthened in the process.

Welfare state-related variables often seem to work in the opposite way. Dissatisfaction and retrenchment rarely matter much for government support and survival but – as we have seen – rather consistently hamper generalized political trust. Specifically, evaluations and experiences of welfare performance correlate reasonably strongly with such trust in multivariate models. And big economic crises involving welfare retrenchment tend to hurt trust. Finally, we have seen that income equality and welfare state generosity appear to be beneficial for trust. We hasten to add that the underlying evidence is incomplete. There are causality issues to be better addressed and we need to grasp the exact reasons why economic crises can be so damaging. Finally, there is a need to better understand the mechanisms that produce associations between redistributive outcomes, welfare state generosity and political trust.

Bearing these caveats in mind, we think the accumulated evidence by now justifies the message to political trust researchers to *bring performance back in*. In fact, we urge scholars

to consider the factors discussed here to explain past as well as future developments and patterns. Looking to the past, gradually rising inequality and welfare retrenchment, and increasingly widespread and salient public service dissatisfaction, might well have played a role in the political trust decline documented for many (but not all) advanced industrial democracies. Looking to the future, welfare state scholars now recognize that mature welfare states are changing fast along multiple policy dimensions while inequality is on the rise. The research discussed here would suggest responsible political actors will often go unscathed even when pursuing unpopular welfare reforms that are not perceived to perform well. Instead, the evidence suggests that it is generalized political trust that will suffer in changing welfare states.

Or will it? Ultimately, this depends on how citizens perceive policies and performance. Policy change, for example, is a complex matter that is often hard to evaluate even for those who support existing welfare state arrangements. Change now seems less driven by a malicious neoliberal attack or an exceedingly destructive race to the bottom, but more often by a quest for sustainability in the face of demographic and economic realities. Relatedly, not all policy change has to do with cutbacks and clear-cut deterioration. Citizens in many countries have received considerable ‘cost containment’, ‘activation’, ‘social investment’ and ‘recalibration’ in return for retrenchment of income replacement systems and resource scarcity in services (Hemerijck, 2013). Future research could pay more attention to how citizens actually perceive the totality of these changes and how perceptions in turn affect trust. This would entail measuring not just reactions to policy changes and dissatisfaction with performance, but also perceptions of how economically necessary, inevitable and accepted the situation really is. An ‘accepting rather than supportive’ attitude to policy change and poor performance might well moderate relationships between many of the discussed independent variables and political trust.

Relatedly, we need to know how such perceptions are shaped. One question here is if and how reform-minded elites can exercise opinion leadership. Several scholars now argue that while defensive ‘blame avoidance’ arguments and strategies are certainly common they are to a surprising extent accompanied by ‘credit claiming’ for what would seem to be politically suicidal reform (Levy, 2010; Bonoli, 2012). Briefly, credit claiming entails putting uncomfortable reform pressures on the agenda, rather than hiding them away, and explaining why resources are scarce and policy change necessary.

Citizens on their part may be more able than previously realized to modify demands in the face of reform pressures (Naumann, 2014). An interesting topic for future work, then, is whether these tendencies among elites and citizens can alleviate negative effects of welfare state-related variables like inequality, retrenchment and performance dissatisfaction, on political trust.

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19. Political trust, corruption, and inequality*

Eric M. Uslaner

INTRODUCTION

We need political trust, Hetherington (2006) argues, because such confidence provides the support leaders need to enact programs to make people's lives better. Higher quality governments, Rothstein (2011) argues, are more trusted. Countries with good government spend more on social policies and have markedly better results on a wide range of outcomes – from water quality to health to social insurance and universal social welfare programs.

Strong government performance, in turn, breeds more trust (see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). Confidence in political institutions, Citrin (1974) argued, depends upon the perceptions of leaders' competence. When they get the job done, they are rewarded with the favor of the public. Getting the job done means keeping the economy strong (Listhaug, 1995; Pew Research Center, 2010, p. 19). It also means providing people with adequate services (Christensen and Laegreid, 2005; Uslaner, 2011).

Short-term performance matters, but the strong performance of a state that earns the trust of its citizens depends even more on two factors that shape both perceptions of government and how well government delivers services. Political trust depends upon the perception that our leaders are like ourselves; they share our values and represent our interests (Fenno, 1978). Corrupt leaders are perceived by ordinary people as out of touch and as the source of both scorn (for their lack of morality) and envy (for the wealth they gain from their dishonest behavior). Inequality leads people to believe that leaders listen far more to the rich than to others in society (Uslaner, 2012). And the wealthy want different things from the government than do the middle class and the poor – and they are more likely to get what they prefer in an unequal society (Gilens, 2012).

I consider how corruption and inequality lead to lower trust in government. Elsewhere I have presented the thesis of an 'inequality trap': corruption rests upon a foundation of unequal resources and it leads to greater inequality in turn. The aggregate linkage between corruption and inequality is not strong, so I argue that there is an indirect connection from high inequality to low generalized trust to corruption – and then to more inequality (Uslaner, 2008, ch. 2). While social and political trust have different foundations (Uslaner, 2002, ch. 5), there is a strong case that corruption and inequality lower both generalized and political trust (Uslaner, 2011). Corruption and inequality are linked together in a vicious cycle that enriches the wealthy and hurts the poor. They lead to poor service delivery and to a belief that the only way to get rich is to be corrupt.

The novelist F. Scott Fitzgerald (1926) famously wrote in an essay: 'The very rich are different from you and me'. Years later Ernest Hemingway (1936) reportedly replied: 'Yes, they have more money'.¹ But ordinary people see the rich as more than wealthy. In highly unequal societies, they may link inequality with corruption – and thus they will have no confidence in their leaders.

To show that this is a general argument, I examine these linkages between perceptions of inequality and corruption and political trust across different regions of the world in which corruption is seen to be a large problem: the transition countries, the Arab world, Africa, Latin America, and Asia. First, I examine these linkages in the formerly communist countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union through the Life in Transition Survey 2 (LiTS 2) conducted in 2011. I also show how perceptions of corruption and inequality lower political trust in Africa using the 2004 Afrobarometer. Then I turn to the Middle East and examine these questions through the 2006 Arab Barometer. Finally, I use the 2007 Global Barometer to consider these linkages in Latin America and Asia.²

Across these different contexts the message is clear: perceptions of corruption and inequality lead to less political trust. Although the questions in these surveys vary substantially, the outcomes show that similar dynamics work across countries with higher levels of corruption. I focus on these countries since there is a different dynamic in countries with lower levels of corruption and inequality (see also Uslaner, 2008, chs. 7, 8).

CORRUPTION, INEQUALITY, AND POLITICAL TRUST

People trust government when they believe that: it is competent, it delivers basic services, it keeps the country prosperous, its decisions are fair (Rothstein and Teorell, 2005; You, 2006). Fairness is based upon honesty and equality of treatment. Corruption lies at the heart of distrust of government. The American National Election Studies for many years included a trust in government scale. In addition to the question ‘How much of the time do you trust the government in Washington to do what is right?’, the trust scale included: ‘Do you think that quite a few of the people running the government are crooked, not very many are, or do you think hardly any of them are crooked?’ The trust measure also presumed that equality is central to public confidence, as reflected in the question: ‘Would you say the government is pretty much run by a few big interests looking out for themselves or that it is run for the benefit of all the people?’³

Corrupt leaders enrich themselves at the expense of the public. The common interest between the rulers and the ruled is weak when people see their leaders as dishonest. Public funds go into leaders’ bank accounts (likely offshore) instead of into hospitals, schools, and roads. How do people know if their leaders are corrupt? When corruption is ‘done well’, it cannot be observed. But both elites and ordinary people have perceptions of dishonest government. At the country level, the most common measure is the Transparency International (TI) Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). These are expert surveys conducted every year in what are now 178 countries. While some have criticized this measure as *only* perceptions, no one has devised a better measure across countries. A large number of surveys across the world have questions of ordinary citizens on their corruption perceptions. And the public and elites agree: there is a strong correlation between mass and elite perceptions of corruption (Holmberg et al., 2009). We may not be able to specify exactly what corruption is, but people (and elites) do seem to know where their country stands. As the late Potter Stewart, a Justice in the United States Supreme Court, admitted that he could not define pornography – but ‘I know it when I see it’ (Oyez, n.d.).

The linkage between corruption and political trust holds in different parts of the world

– there is nothing cultural about this connection. Corruption and inequality are part of the same syndrome of bad government.

Glaeser et al. (2003, pp. 2–3) argue that:

[. . .]inequality is detrimental to the security of property rights, and therefore to growth, because it enables the rich to subvert the political, regulatory, and legal institutions of society for their own benefit. If one person is sufficiently richer than another, and courts are corruptible, then the legal system will favor the rich, not the just. Likewise, if political and regulatory institutions can be moved by wealth or influence, they will favor the established, not the efficient. This in turn leads the initially well situated to pursue socially harmful acts, recognizing that the legal, political, and regulatory systems will not hold them accountable.

Inequality can encourage institutional subversion. . .the havenots can redistribute from the haves through violence, the political process, or other means. Such Robin Hood redistribution jeopardizes property rights, and deters investment by the rich.

Corruption acts as a tax on the poor. The well-off can afford bribes, but the poor often do without basic services. Corruption robs the state of resources for providing basic services to all citizens, but especially the poor. People who turn to the informal economy have few legal rights (their employment is not legal and there are no contracts or unions representing workers in the informal sector). Corruption is particularly rampant in those services the poor most depend upon: the police, the schools, and the medical sector. Countries with high levels of corruption have poor service delivery.

The failure of corrupt states with rising inequality to provide basic services illustrates the inequality trap: the wealthy may bribe local authorities to ensure that their services are fixed first or obtain services from private providers. The poor don't have these options. When governments don't have the resources to provide services, the poor will suffer more. People will thus lose faith in the political system.

Citizens of countries with widespread corruption according to the CPI have less faith in government (Della Porta, 2000; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Van der Meer, 2010; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012). Hakhverdian and Mayne (2012) show that when corruption is high according to the CPI, people in Europe are less likely to trust government, especially if they are highly educated. Grimes (Chapter 16) shows that there is a large literature linking procedural fairness (which is negatively linked to corruption) to political trust.

Unequal wealth leads people to feel less constrained about cheating others (Mauro, 1997; 1998, p. 12) and about evading taxes (Oswiak, 2003, p. 73; Uslaner, 2003). Where corruption is widespread, people lose faith that their future will be bright. In the World Values Survey waves 1–3 (1981, 1990, 1995–97), respondents who believed that corruption was widespread in their country were significantly less likely to believe that they could get ahead by hard work rather than by luck or having connections (Uslaner, 2011, p. 144).

Inequality breeds corruption by: (1) leading ordinary citizens to see the system as stacked against them (Uslaner, 2002, pp. 181–3); (2) creating a sense of dependency of ordinary citizens and a sense of pessimism for the future, which in turn undermines the moral dictates of treating your neighbors honestly; and (3) distorting the key institutions of fairness in society, notably the courts (Glaeser et al., 2003; Jong-sung and Khagram, 2005).

Economic inequality creates political leaders who make patronage a virtue rather than a vice. These leaders *help* their constituents, but more critically *they help themselves*.

Inequality breeds corruption – and a dependency of the poor on the political leaders. Inequality is also linked to a range of non-economic outcomes associated with greater disparities in wealth both within and across countries. They include higher rates of mental health problems, drug abuse, poorer health and lower life expectancy, obesity, lower educational performance, more teenage births, more violence, higher rates of imprisonment and more severe punishments, lower social mobility, higher rates of single parenting, less innovation, and even lower rates of recycling (Wilkinson and Pickett, 2009). Poor service delivery, high levels of corruption, and especially great inequality lead people to believe that the interests of the rulers are not those of the ruled. In the United States, as inequality rose from 1968 to 2008, people became between 5 and 10 percent less likely to say that government benefits everyone and that voting gives you a say in politics – and 40 percent more likely to believe that officials don't care about people like them (Uslaner, 2012, p. 16).

Political leaders spend more on projects that glorify their own rule (big statues), that reinforce their power (the military), or that they can milk to increase their own wealth ('the resource curse', Leite and Weidmann, 1999) – and less on projects that benefit ordinary people such as schools and social security. Service delivery is poor in corrupt regimes. Economic growth is slower (Gyimah-Brempong, 2002; Glaeser et al., 2004). Poor service delivery and lower growth both hurt the poor more than the rich.

Corruption and inequality reinforce low political trust. If officials are stealing from the public purse and getting rich, while ordinary people remain poor, it would hardly be surprising if people did not have faith in their leaders. People expect government to provide them with basic services. But service provision is lower when corruption is high (Uslaner, 2011). People in countries with high levels of malfeasance often find themselves confronted with 'petty corruption', small bribes to officials and private suppliers such as doctors (see below). What bothers people is not so much petty corruption as grand corruption – which involves big money and leads to even greater levels of inequality.

In countries that rank low on both corruption and inequality, confidence in political authorities ebbs and flows with the state of the economy. However, widespread dishonesty or high levels of inequality make people less likely to have faith in their political institutions. When inequality and corruption are both high, distrust is likely to be chronic.

The analyses presented below show the pervasiveness of the relationship between inequality, corruption, and political distrust across the globe.

CORRUPTION AND POLITICAL TRUST IN TRANSITION COUNTRIES

I begin with an analysis of political trust in the transition countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (as well as Mongolia). I examine survey data from the 2011 Life in Transition Survey 2 (LiTS 2) conducted in four Western countries, Turkey, and 29 transition countries by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the World Bank.⁴

There have been sharp increases in the historically low rates of inequality in the transition states since the fall of communism in 1989 and 1990. The Rosser et al. (2000) data on income distribution show an increase in economic inequality from 1989 to the mid-1990s

for every country save one (Slovakia). The more recent WIDER Gini estimates indicate an average increase of 78 percent from 1989 to 1999 – for each of the 21 countries.

Corruption was persistent under communism. The emergence of democratic governments did not curb dishonesty. In 2004, every transition country had a higher level of corruption than *any Western country*. Later scores from TI show marked gains for Estonia and Slovenia. Yet, all of the 11 formerly communist countries ranked by TI in 1998 had more corruption in 2004 (Uslaner, 2008, pp. 105–6, 270). The public in transition countries see corruption as a long-term, insoluble problem: in a 2005 survey, just 8 percent of Russians held that corruption can be eliminated ‘if dishonest leaders are replaced with honest ones’, while 26 percent hold that ‘Russia has always been characterized by bribery and embezzlement, and nothing can be done about it’ (Popov, 2006; cf. Karklins, 2005, p. 59 for a more general statement on transition countries). In the 29 transition countries (Central and Eastern Europe, the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia), only 20 percent held that there was less corruption in their country in 2011 than four years ago – and just 16 percent on average believed that corruption had declined, excluding the strong outliers of Georgia (78 percent) and Uzbekistan (59 percent).

Inequality is also a pressing issue in the former communist states. An average of 77 percent of the respondents said that government should reduce the income gap between the rich and the poor, ranging from 60 percent in Belarus (ironic, since it is still ruled by former communist leaders) and Azerbaijan to 91 percent in Georgia.

The rise in inequality surely accounts for much of the demand that governments reduce the income gap. The worries about corruption are hardly new – and together these syndromes should reduce support for the government. Under communism – and to this day – transition countries have relatively low levels of inequality by international standards. What has mattered most is the *change* in inequality: the demise of the communist economic system led to sharp rises in inequality in every transition state except Slovakia – and these increases are strongly connected to corruption levels that are even greater than under the Marxist regimes (Uslaner, 2008, pp. 106–12). While there is only modest evidence that *levels* of inequality are linked to corruption, there are clear links in how people perceive the roots of corruption. Romanians, Estonians, and Slovaks all perceive that corruption is a major factor shaping inequality (Uslaner, 2008, chs. 5, 6).

Not all corruption is the same. Day-to-day payments by ordinary citizens to get by in life don’t lead to mistrust in government (see Uslaner, 2008, pp. 123, 131–3, 141–7, 191–2 for results on Romania and Africa). People become inured to demands for small payments to doctors for prompt treatments, to clerks to obtain documents, or to schools to obtain admission (or better grades). The recipients don’t get rich from such ‘petty corruption’. The doctor who demands – or simply expects – an extra payment for services, or to advance in line, cannot charge too much. She will not be able to build large mansions or maintain accounts in the Cayman Islands. Instead, she can take her spouse out for a nice dinner.

The inequalities are not large and there is less moral opprobrium in doing what others would do under similar circumstances. So there is less reason to believe that making gift payments would lead to either perceptions of rising inequality or to a loss in faith in government since neither the payment nor the acceptance of a small ‘gift’ sets one apart from the larger community. Barely more than a third of Hungarians see a moral problem when

doctors demand ‘gratitude payments’ for medical services (Kornai, 2000, pp. 3, 7, 9). This system of ‘gift giving’ is so widespread that almost all doctors accept ‘gratitude money’; 62 percent of physicians’ total income came off the books. A majority of public officials in the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Ukraine in 1997–98 found it acceptable to receive extra payments from clients.

Between 11 and 39 percent of citizens of those countries (in that order) reported offering a ‘small present’ to officials and between 6 and 24 percent offered ‘money or an expensive present’ (Miller et al., 2001, pp. 217, 241).

Exceptions are having to pay the police or the courts, since justice, unlike other governmental institutions, is expected to be impartial (Rothstein, 2000). What leads to mistrust of government is corruption that makes some people rich – ‘grand corruption’ that makes business people and politicians wealthy at the expense of the public purse. While most Westerners believe that the path to wealth stems from hard work, 80 percent of Bulgarians, Hungarians, and Russians say that high incomes reflect dishonesty (Kluegel and Mason, 2000, p. 167).

This is the pattern we see in the countries in LiTS 2 (Table 19.1). This analysis includes

Table 19.1 Political trust, inequality, and corruption perceptions: LiTS 2 (2011)

	b	SE
Less corruption now than four years ago	0.269	0.015***
Improved position on economic ladder over four years	0.063	0.012***
Success in life due to connections or breaking law	-0.212	0.060***
Success in life due to hard work or intelligence	0.073	0.053
People are needy because of injustice	-0.231	0.030***
Gap between rich and poor should be reduced	-0.019	0.012
Need connections to resolve issues factor	-0.109	0.022***
Pay bribes for medical treatment	0.021	0.055
How often make payments for medical treatment	-0.048	0.020*
Pay bribes to road police	-0.102	0.051*
Pay bribes to obtain documents	0.001	0.074
Pay bribes at court	-0.120	0.072*
Pay bribes at children’s school	0.056	0.065
Pay bribes for vocational education	0.021	0.057
Pay bribes for unemployment benefits	-0.043	0.087
Pay bribes to collect social security	0.063	0.160
Satisfied with quality of medical services	0.034	0.010***
Satisfied with quality of schools	0.024	0.011*
<i>Constant</i>	<i>1.141</i>	<i>0.097***</i>

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; all tests one tailed except constant.

N: 15436; standard errors clustered by country.

R² = 0.240; S.E.E. = 0.826.

Political trust factor: president, cabinet, regional local parliament, courts, parties.

Need connections factor: need connections for government job, private job, to resolve dispute with neighbor, to obtain permits, to enter university.

Source: Life in Transition Survey 2 (2011).

both transition and the five Western countries; yet they hold if I exclude the latter. The dependent variable in this analysis, as in the others to come, is a factor score of trust in specific institutions (since no general political trust question is asked). Each of the tables describes the indices for political trust and other constructs.

Corruption leads to less political trust in these transition countries (see also Mishler and Rose, 2001; see also Chapter 26 by Závecz), but *only grand corruption*. Most petty corruption has no significant effects on confidence in institutions and leaders. Political trust does not decline if one pays bribes for medical treatment, to obtain public documents, at children's school or for vocational education, or to obtain unemployment or social security benefits. The exceptions are for making gift payments to the police or to the courts. And there is a small effect if one makes many payments to doctors. But there are much stronger effects for perceptions of increasing corruption over the past four years and whether people need connections to resolve problems of daily life such as dispute resolution, getting a government job, or even a private job. There is a small boost in confidence in government if you believe that success in life reflects your own abilities, but a much larger decrease if you say that it reflects the connections you need – or even breaking the law.

Inequality matters as well. There is a small effect for believing that government should reduce inequalities – this may not be the best question since it doesn't give an idea as to how well government *is doing*. However, believing that people are needy because of injustice sharply reduces confidence in government. When government delivers – with satisfactory delivery of education or medical services – people are more likely to trust it. And when people feel that they have advanced on an economic ladder in the past four years, they also have greater faith in the state.

CORRUPTION AND POLITICAL TRUST IN OTHER COUNTRIES

Arab Barometer

I turn next to the 2006 Arab Barometer, a survey conducted in Jordan, Palestine, Morocco, Algeria, Kuwait, and Yemen.⁵ Three of these countries have high levels of corruption on the TI CPI for 2005 ranging from 1 to 10 (with higher scores indicating less corruption): Yemen at 2.7 (tied for 104th), Algeria at 2.8 (tied for 99th of 169 countries), Morocco at 3.2 (tied for 79th). Jordan (5.7) and Kuwait (4.7) are 'relatively honest' (ranking tied for 37th and 45th). Four of the countries had relatively high levels of inequality in Solt's (2009) pre-redistribution Gini indices: Algeria (35.8), Yemen (37.6), Jordan (39.7), and Morocco (40.9). Palestine was not ranked on either index, nor was Kuwait on inequality.

The available measures in the Arab Barometer are limited, but they tell the same story as in the formerly Communist countries (Table 19.2). How well the government handles inequality is a powerful factor in shaping political trust. So are two measures of corruption: whether a country has fair elections and how widespread corruption is. Whether corruption is one of the two most important issues is not significant in shaping political trust overall. But this hides some differences within countries: the importance of corruption does lead to less trust in Algeria and Jordan, but not elsewhere – and it is unclear why.

Table 19.2 Regression of political trust from the Arab Barometer 2006

	b	SE
Corruption is widespread	-0.187	0.073*
Corruption is an important issue	-0.082	0.084
Government handles inequality well	0.227	0.044***
Easy to get help factor	0.257	0.040***
Country has fair elections	0.135	0.031***
<i>Constant</i>	<i>-0.179</i>	<i>0.326</i>

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; all tests one tailed except constant.

N: 2730; standard errors clustered by country.

R² = 0.327; S.E.E. = 0.733.

Political trust factor: prime minister, parliament, political parties, the courts, the police.

Easy to get help factor: ease of getting help from the police, for documents, registering in school, medical treatment, and complaining about rights.

Source: Arab Barometer (2006).

Service delivery seems to be at least as important as inequality in shaping political trust. How easy it is to get help for governmental services strongly shapes political trust.

Overall, there is a clear connection between corruption and inequality on the one hand, and political trust on the other. Fair elections are an important determinant of trust when most people believe that contests for office are rigged, most notably in Algeria. Since inequality is high in all countries for which there are data, it is not surprising that perceptions of how well the government is reducing inequities matters for political trust in every country except Kuwait. Getting help matters most also when inequality is greatest, in Algeria, Yemen, and to a slightly lesser extent Morocco. Overall, the inequality trap seems well established in Arab countries.

Afrobarometer

I next consider corruption in Africa, using the 2004 Afrobarometer.⁶ Africa is an ideal case study for the inequality trap thesis. The 37 African countries rated in the 2005 TI CPI had the lowest mean score (2.79) and the smallest standard deviation (0.88) of any region. The mean Gini index for 14 African nations for which there are data was 50.3, compared to 39.7 for non-African states. Sub-Saharan African nations had a mean score of 7.96 on the uneven economic development indicator of the Fragile States Index, compared to 6.56 for other countries. And trust is considerably lower in Africa, with a mean of 18.5 compared to 31.8 elsewhere.⁷

Many Africans see corruption everywhere in their society. They view it as troublesome, enriching the elite, and perpetuating economic, legal, and political inequality. Yet they also see it as unavoidable and ineradicable. The story of corruption as Africans express it and in the literature on corruption on the continent is very much that of the inequality trap.

Few people find themselves enmeshed in this economic and moral quicksand more than the Nigerians. Nigerians ‘view participation in politics as an investment, similar to

putting money in the bank or buying stock in a firm' and 'capturing an important political position is like winning the lottery: The new political office can be used to amass wealth for oneself and also reward one's supporters' (Mbaku, 1998, p. 59), even as the country's per capita income fell to US\$240 a year, making it one of the world's 20 poorest countries (Riley, 2000, p. 148).

In Kenya, income from sugar production was diverted to political leaders and their friends in the private sector. Over two-thirds of the civil service roster of Zaire (now once again the Democratic Republic of the Congo) in the late 1970s was said to be fictitious, yet comprising almost half of the country's annual budget (Mbaku, 1998, pp. 43, 61–2; Riley, 2000, p. 148).

Corruption in Africa, as elsewhere, has enriched the political elite, especially heads of state. Africans see corruption as tightly connected to inequality. Leaders such as Zaire's kleptocrat Mobutu Sese Seko amassed fortunes; Mobutu had mansions in Belgium, France, Morocco, Spain, and Switzerland (Riley, 2000, p. 149), while ordinary people saw their incomes plummet. African states had a score of 7.03 on the State Failure project's measure of sharp and severe economic decline compared to 4.86 for other countries. The Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali had among the highest scores (above 8.0), while citizens of Botswana and especially South Africa and Mauritius, with cleaner government, fared far better economically. Williams (1987, p. 130) argued: 'In the conditions of underdevelopment, with their attendant shortages and paucity of resources, corruption tends mostly to accentuate and aggravate the political and economic inequalities which have characterized so many African states for so long'. Elsewhere, Uslaner (2008, pp. 184–202) has shown strong connections between perceptions of inequality and corruption in Africa.

Perceptions of corruption and inequality strongly shape political trust in Africa (Table 19.3). Believing that it is better if everyone is treated equally has a powerful effect on political trust. So do perceptions of how well the government is handling corruption and how well the government is handling the economy. Although Africans *do not see* petty corruption as increasing inequality (Uslaner, 2008, pp. 191–3), paying these small bribes *does* lead to less political trust. If you need to pay bribes for services, and believe that police officers are corrupt, you will have less confidence in government. If you see teachers as corrupt, you will also trust government less, but this form of petty corruption is barely significant – most likely because petty corruption will not make teachers rich, but will bring substantial gains to the police. In the Afrobarometer, the police are considered to be the most corrupt public officials (Bratton et al., 2005, p. 233). The police in many African nations earn far more than many ordinary people even before extortion. Therefore, constant harassment of ordinary people for 'extra fees' may seem particularly offensive. Believing that the president is corrupt (grand corruption) has a more powerful effect on political trust than either measure of lesser corruption.

How well the government is managing the economy is a major factor in shaping political trust. So is the availability of consumer goods compared to the past. Hence, economic performance matters a lot, but not to the exclusion of concerns about fairness and honesty. Many Africans feel themselves caught in a never-ending inequality trap (Uslaner, 2008, pp. 184–9).

Table 19.3 Political trust, corruption, and inequality: Afrobarometer 2004

	b	SE
Government handles corruption well	0.102	0.022***
President is corrupt	-0.116	0.034***
Teachers are corrupt	-0.032	0.022
Police officers are corrupt	-0.041	0.020*
Pay bribes for services	-0.059	0.015***
How often people are treated unequally	-0.054	0.016***
Better if all are treated equally	0.124	0.021***
Goods are more available now than in the past	0.047	0.025*
Government manages economy well	0.216	0.035***
Education	-0.084	0.021***
Age	0.011	0.008
Constant	-1.228	0.379***

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; all tests one tailed except constant.

N: 11 725; standard errors clustered by country.

R² = 0.331; S.E.E. = 0.755.

Political trust factor: president, parliament, ruling party, the courts, the police.

Source: Afrobarometer (2004).

Global Barometer: Latin America and Asia

Finally, I examine the roots of political trust in Latin America and Asia using the 2007 Global Barometer, which is an amalgam of the Latinobarometer and the Asian Barometer (see note 2). The Global Barometer covers 26 Latin American and Asian countries, so there are considerable variations in corruption and inequality. Latin American countries are highly unequal, with the most equal countries in Solt's (2009) Gini data set being Venezuela (42.7) and Uruguay (42.8), ranking 89th and 91st of 133 countries. Four of the ten most unequal countries are in Latin America. Asian countries are not quite so unequal, but the lowest Gini indices are for Taiwan (30.9, 28th) and South Korea (32.5, 34th). Asian countries have varying degrees of corruption – Singapore and Japan rank 5th and 22nd on the 2005 index, but the Philippines rank 122nd. Chile ranks 22nd on corruption, but Bolivia, Ecuador, and Guatemala are tied for 125th. I estimate separate models, using the same measures, for Latin America and Asia in Tables 19.4 and 19.5. The common questions are somewhat different from what I examined in the Arab Barometer and Afrobarometers.

Political trust across both Latin America and Asia⁸ is shaped by the same forces, but to different extents. The most important factor for Latin America is whether the government is handling corruption well (see Chapter 24 by Bargsted, Somma and Castillo, for more nuanced results on Latin America), while this matters considerably less for Asian nations. Park (see also Chapter 28, this volume) also finds that the effects of corruption are less than that of the state of the economy for all East Asian countries he examines except for Singapore (but see Chang and Chu, 2006 for different results).

The most important factor in Asia was the belief that the government should reduce

Table 19.4 Political trust, corruption, and inequality: Global Barometer (Latin America, 2007)

	b	SE
Government effectively reducing corruption	0.142	0.010***
Government should reduce inequality	-0.072	0.011***
Courts punish guilty even if they are high ranking	0.073	0.012***
Current national economic conditions	0.106	0.012***
Past national economic conditions	0.038	0.007***
Future expected national economic conditions	0.110	0.014***
Education	-0.003	0.011
Age	0.001	0.001
<i>Constant</i>	<i>-1.579</i>	<i>0.120***</i>

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; all tests one tailed except constant.

N: 14405; standard errors clustered by country.

R² = 0.184; S.E.E. = 0.597.

Political trust factor: prime minister, courts, political parties, military, and the police.

Source: Global Barometer (Latin America, 2007).

Table 19.5 Political trust, corruption, and inequality: Global Barometer (Asia, 2007)

	b	SE
Government effectively reducing corruption	0.164	0.028***
Government should reduce inequality	-0.088	0.006***
Courts punish guilty even if they are high ranking	0.059	0.017***
Current national economic conditions	0.135	0.018***
Past national economic conditions	0.061	0.015***
Future expected national economic conditions	0.085	0.011***
Education	-0.049	0.005***
Age	0.0004	0.001
<i>Constant</i>	<i>-0.898</i>	<i>0.112***</i>

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$; all tests one tailed except constant.

N: 7537; standard errors clustered by country.

R² = 0.355; S.E.E. = 0.514.

Political trust factor: prime minister, courts, political parties, military, and the police.

Vietnam excluded because of extraordinarily high factor score for political trust.

Source: Global Barometer (Asia, 2007).

inequality, which is rather striking since Asian countries are not marked by inequities as great as we find elsewhere – and especially in Latin America. The effects of believing that government should reduce inequality are significant but not as large there (the negative sign reflects the coding of the variable). In both Latin America and Asia,

current and expected future economic prospects seem to matter more than past economic conditions – although the past still matters. Equal justice matters as well, more so for Latin America, where corruption is more widespread. People who believe that the courts will punish even high-ranking officials will be more likely to trust government. Age doesn't matter in either locale, while more highly educated people have less confidence in their political institutions in Asia.⁹

CONCLUSION

I have presented fairly simple models of political trust. Yet they are robust across a wide range of countries with different political systems, histories, and cultures. What people consistently seek in government is strong economic performance (see also Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). They also expect their leaders to be honest and not to enrich themselves from the public purse. And they believe that when there is a widespread inequality, leaders respond more to those with more resources. Governments have a responsibility to reduce, not increase, inequality to convince people that the rulers are ruling with their interests in mind.

These are findings that seem universal. Even as the variables differ somewhat across surveys, the results largely seem consistent. The problem for political trust, as with trust in other people, is that both corruption and inequality are sticky. They don't move much over time (Uslaner, 2008, pp. 26–7). Countries with high levels of corruption (inequality) at one point are likely to remain corrupt years later. And this makes it difficult to establish political trust, as it does trust in other people. So many countries may remain mired in an inequality trap of low political trust. Yet, unlike trust in people, the state of the current economy plays a large, perhaps even dominant role, in shaping confidence in government. So a regime that makes most people feel better off, even if it is seen as corrupt and even if inequality is rising, may have the support of its people. This is the story of China today. However, such support is fragile. Every economy has swings up and down. Perceiving leaders as honest and seeking to reduce inequality may provide a cushion of public confidence.

NOTES

- * The comments of Quinton Mayne, and participants at the Authors' Workshop, Goethe-University, Frankfurt, 14–18 May, 2014, are greatly appreciated.
- 1. See <http://www.quotecounterquote.com/2009/11/rich-are-different-famous-quote.html>.
- 2. The Global Barometer is a combined version of the Asian Barometer and the Latinobarometer, based upon questions common to both surveys. See <http://www.globalbarometer.net/>.
- 3. See 'Trust in Government Index 1958–2012', accessed 22 July 2016 at http://www.electionstudies.org/neguide/toptable/tab5a_5.htm.
- 4. See European Bank, 'Life in Transition Survey (LiTS)', accessed 25 July 2016 at <http://www.ebrd.com/what-we-do/economic-research-and-data/data/lits.html>.
- 5. See www.arabbarometer.org. According to the description, the Arab Barometer was developed in consultation with the Global Barometer (see below).
- 6. See <http://www.afrobarometer.org>.
- 7. The African data come from Bratton et al. (2005, p. 194). Non-African data come from imputed trust values.
- 8. I exclude Vietnam because it is an extreme outlier on trust in government (by far the highest factor score).

- When my wife and I visited Vietnam in the summer of 2013, we didn't meet *anyone* who said that he or she trusted the government.
9. Park (Chapter 28, this volume) only finds support for this negative relationship in Taiwan, Indonesia, and the Philippines.

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20. Immigration, ethnic diversity and political trust

Lauren McLaren

INTRODUCTION

Feelings of community and identity are central features of modern states. A great deal of the seminal research on the creation of modern nation-states highlights the somewhat artificial nature of nation-state construction around chosen vernaculars and myths of common culture and history (e.g., Gellner, 1983; Hobsbawm, 1983, 1990; Anderson, 1991), but some scholars have also argued that the spreading of national identity would not have been so successful if there were not already shared cultures and practices and people did not have a fundamental need for such identities (e.g., Smith, 1991). Research on the topic of national political systems contends that this affective, identity-based component of system support is also important for the creation and maintenance of stable democracy (Easton, 1957; Almond and Verba, 1989). Specifically, where state leaders have been successful in their endeavour to develop a sense of national identity, a reservoir of goodwill was created that should carry over into support for political institutions (Easton, 1957, 1965; Almond and Verba, 1989). Modern research also contends that national identity is a key component of state legitimacy (e.g., Dalton, 2004; Norris, 2011; see also Chapter 2 in this volume by Norris) and should help to increase trust in the institutions of the state (Miller, 1995). This research also implies that national identity requires some sense of national community and more precisely, a relatively high level of in-group, or generalized, trust for other members of the ‘imagined’ community.

This chapter discusses the effect that immigration and the diversity resulting from it may be having on perceptions of national political systems. One of the key arguments of the chapter is that ethnic diversity may be undermining political trust by weakening the above-mentioned sense of connection amongst citizens and more importantly, between citizens and political elites and institutions. The chapter also contends that in the modern age of immigration, national identities are likely to be relevant to understanding differences in levels of political trust and that not all types of national identity help to maintain positive perceptions of state institutions.

The first section of the chapter outlines the reasons that the diversity resulting from immigration may be having negative effects on perceptions of national political systems, arguing that *perceptions* of immigration are likely to be particularly relevant to perceptions of political systems, and especially political institutions and elites. This part of the chapter also examines the potentially moderating effects of experience with immigration and having a strong far-right party that may articulate the connection between immigration and political institutions and elites, thereby causing ordinary citizens to more clearly draw these linkages. The second section of the chapter considers the role of differing identity constructions in fostering or reducing trust in political institutions and elites in an age of mass immigration, and contends that the way individuals perceive newcomers to fit (or not) within their national identity constructions is relevant to political trust and

that official government policy regarding immigrant incorporation moderates the effect of national identity on political trust. The final section of the chapter addresses the topic of the political trust of immigrants themselves; immigrant-origin minorities comprise an increasing percentage of state populations and it is important to consider whether such individuals are themselves increasing or decreasing overall political trust. That is, are their levels of political trust likely to be similar to non-minorities, or are they more or less trusting of political institutions and elites than the latter? The chapter concludes by summarizing the key arguments and implications of the findings presented here before discussing potential avenues for future research on the topics discussed in the chapter.

IMMIGRATION AND TRUST

Immigration to Europe is not a new phenomenon. However, compared to earlier periods of immigration it seems that the context of migration has changed. Periods of immigration before the twentieth century occurred prior to much real construction of national identity and before the creation of fully representative European democracies. Now there is a more clearly articulated community, identity and system of values that newcomers may be perceived to be threatening. As noted above, one of the arguments of this chapter is that immigration may have negative implications for the sense of connectedness people in a democracy feel to one another and to their political institutions and elites. This section of the chapter outlines why this might be the case; develops propositions about the connection between immigration and political trust; and finally, tests these propositions using multilevel modelling that combines individual- and country-level data.

Research on social identities has long pointed to the conclusion that identities – even artificially constructed laboratory-based identities – are meaningful to individuals, because they contribute positively to self-esteem and self-image and because they help to provide clarity in a complex, confusing world (Tajfel, 1970; Turner, 1982, 1985; Turner et al., 1987, 1994). Long-established identities like national identities are likely to be even more relevant and powerful, no matter how artificial they may appear to the outside observer. Despite large-scale changes that many predicted would spell the end of nationalism, such as modernization, social mobility and increases in educational attainment, national identities are still relevant to European citizens in the modern day (Hooghe and Marks, 2009).

Immigrants pose clear threats to these identities by bringing with them seemingly different values and ways of life; they may also be perceived to threaten the economic resources of citizens. Particularly in European countries, where the main myths of identity have not tended to include the myth of being accepting of migrants (compared to the myths of identity in the United States, for instance), it may be unclear as to how to reconstruct identity to incorporate newcomers. Newcomers who may be perceived as holding extremely different values from those of natives – Muslim migrants with regard to a predominantly secular Europe, for instance – may be particularly difficult to reconcile with existing national identities.

The difficulty of coming to terms with new migrants, in turn, has potential implications for national political systems. Political systems are thought to be prone to failure if individuals in the system are not ‘sufficiently oriented toward one another’ and willing to

support the existence of a group of individuals who can negotiate and settle differences (Easton, 1957, p. 391). Moreover, Tyler (1998) contends that general orientations to the political system are partly based on ‘social trust’; that is, people’s orientations to the individuals leading the political system are likely to have been traditionally connected to a certain amount of goodwill stemming from identification with these individuals, and institutions are more difficult to run if they are dependent upon instrumental rather than social trust or feelings of connection. In Tyler’s view, identification with others in society and with political elites and institutions is important for governance (*ibid.*, p. 282).

Some research into social capital has come to the conclusion that immigration and multiculturalism may create problems for the sense of orientation toward one another required for the functioning of national political systems, although it must be noted that the evidence is mixed (see Alesina and La Ferrara, 2000a, 2000b; Costa and Kahn, 2003; Anderson and Paskeviciute, 2006; Putnam, 2007; Stolle et al., 2008; Letki, 2008; Hooghe et al., 2009; Sturgis et al., 2011; Pendakur and Mata, 2012; Van der Meer and Tolsma, 2014). Specifically, Robert Putnam raised the possibility that ethnic diversity serves to undermine social cohesion by causing people ‘to hunker down – that is, to pull in like a turtle’ (Putnam, 2007, p. 149), an idea that is now identified as constrict theory. This theory is usually applied to social trust rather than political trust, and there are currently very few studies of the direct connection between diversity or immigration and political trust (but see McLaren, 2012, 2015); however, constrict theory as applied in the social capital literature may be applicable to understanding political trust.

As noted by Van der Meer and Tolsma (2014), constrict theory implies two pathways by which diversity can reduce social cohesion. The first is related to conflict theory as discussed in research on intergroup relations; according to this pathway, diversity increases the sense of ethnic group competition over scarce resources, producing a general sense of distrust and a retreat from social life. From the perspective of this chapter’s focus, then, it could be argued that this retreat from social life produces a sense of disconnect with others in society, as well as with elites running the society’s political institutions, thereby reducing the general sense of trust in these elites. Alternatively, according to constrict theory, diversity may reduce social cohesion by affecting perceptions of shared societal norms and moral values. As discussed above, this sense of shared norms is thought to be crucial for the functioning of the nation-state, with political institutions built upon these foundations. Without such foundations, the basis for trust in political institutions is thus likely to collapse.

Investigations of constrict theory generally use indicators of diversity to try to predict social capital or social cohesion. Most of the empirical support for the theory comes from the United States, where long-term racial conflict may have created very different circumstances than is the case with the more recent immigrant-origin ethnic diversity in Europe (see Hooghe et al., 2009). Following on from these approaches, though, this chapter also includes a measure of diversity – the percentage of foreign born in the country (based on Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD – estimates) – to try to determine whether levels of diversity are affecting political cohesion, as measured by indicators of political trust.

However, I also argue that the way immigration is perceived is likely to be more important for understanding trust in politics than the actual numbers of foreign born. As noted above, it is clear that immigration creates widespread concern about political and

social community and about social identities (Sniderman et al., 2004; Sides and Citrin, 2007; McLaren, 2013). Moreover, under conceptualizations of national identity before mass immigration, the institutions through which elites governed the national polity were designed to govern and adjudicate between members of the national community. When individuals perceive that immigration has threatened that community the institutions that govern them are likely to be called into question. That is, those most attuned to the effects of immigration on the national community may question the extent to which national political institutions exist to represent a national citizenry. Moreover, it is likely that individuals specifically blame their political elites and institutions for allowing large-scale migration in the first place and thus hold these elites and institutions in contempt as a result (see McLaren, 2015 for further elaborations on this argument).

Concern About Immigration and Political Trust in Europe: Analysis and Initial Findings

I am not arguing that concern about immigration is necessarily currently affecting national identity or general support for the principles of democracy; instead the argument developed in this chapter pertains to perceptions of regime performance, confidence in the regime's institutions, and perceptions of the elites running those institutions. Specifically, those most concerned about the effects of immigration may perceive that the political system as a whole no longer adequately represents a national community (which is still valued by most individuals – see Dalton, 2004; Norris, 2011), and that the institutions and elites in the democracy are implicated in the creation of large groups of immigrant-origin ethnic minorities. If this is the case, I would expect concern about immigration to be negatively related to trust in national institutions and elites.

Most observers would probably not contest that there is likely to be a relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of national political systems, but critics may contend that this connection is spuriously driven by other factors, such as the joint mobilization of these sentiments by powerful far-right parties, general pessimism, economic pessimism, alienation, interpersonal (dis)trust, ideology, negative perceptions of the outputs of governments, and the actual functioning of the economy and government (e.g., corruption, weak rule of law, poor public service provision, inefficient bureaucracy and institutional instability). The analyses presented below account for as many of these potential explanations for the relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of political systems as possible. The analysis also includes a test of constrict theory as it is normally tested in literature on social capital/cohesion – that is, by investigating the effect of diversity on political trust.

The individual-level data set used in this section of the chapter is the European Social Survey (ESS), Rounds 1–4 (2002–08), including Western and Southern European countries;¹ aggregate-level data come from various sources, including the OECD, Eurostat and the World Bank. Measures of all variables investigated are provided in the Electronic Appendix to this chapter. I estimate a three-level model with the individual at level 1, variables that are measured at the country level and that vary across the four rounds of the ESS (country-round) at level 2 (this includes far-right popularity, level of spending on social protection and percentage of foreign born) and variables measured at the country level that do not vary across the four rounds at level 3 (long-term country of migration, governance quality, GDP per capita and unemployment rate).

Table 20.1 provides individual-level results from a multilevel model of trust in institutions and elites. These results confirm that even taking into account potential causes of spuriousness at the individual-level, there is a relationship between concern about the cultural and economic impacts of immigration and perceptions of national political systems.

Given that the results in Table 20.1 are similar for both indicators of concern about immigration and for the multiple indicators of political trust, Table 20.2 combines each of these sets of indicators and adds country-level indicators of the functioning of the economy and political system – including social welfare provision – as well as far-right popularity, percentage of foreign born and history with immigration (to be discussed further below). As shown in Table 20.2, taking into account these additional potential sources of spuriousness, concern about immigration continues to be related to political trust, with those most concerned about immigration being less trusting.² The results also indicate that actual levels of diversity, as measured by the percentage of foreign born, are *not* significantly related to political trust. This is not entirely surprising, given the wide array of divergent findings from tests of constrict theory (Van der Meer and Tolsma, 2014) and that actual immigrant numbers also seem to be unrelated to perceptions of immigration (e.g., Sides and Citrin, 2007). As noted by Hooghe and De Vroome (2015) *perceived* size of immigrant groups has a stronger impact on anti-immigrant sentiments, for instance, than the actual presence of ethnic minority groups. Similarly, this chapter argues that it is *perceptions* of immigration that are affecting political trust rather than variation in actual numbers.³

National Contexts: The Far-right and History of Immigration

There are two country-level contexts that are likely to moderate the relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of national political systems: (1) far-right mobilization and (2) history of experience with immigration. Far-right parties have been on the rise in Europe since the 1980s in great part because of anti-immigration sentiment. Ivarsflaten (2008), for instance, finds that the key factor uniting successful right-wing parties in Europe is mobilization against immigration. Many of these same parties also attempt to mobilize hostility to ‘the political class’. Thus, it is possible that the relationship between concern about immigration and distrust in politics may be moderated by the mobilizing ability of far-right parties.

Some may contend that the argument outlined here implies that levels of immigration should also be relevant. As discussed above, I argue that the phenomenon being discussed here is not necessarily connected to the actual numbers of immigrants but instead is about *perceptions* of the threat (or lack of threat) presented by immigration. All of the countries included in the analysis here have received millions of migrants since the end of World War II, and we know that perceptions of actual numbers are often incorrect (e.g., Taylor-Gooby and Hastie, 2002, p. 88; Sides and Citrin, 2007; Hooghe and De Vroome, 2015; on other recent perceptions gap research, see Laycock, 2009) and change very little in response to increased restrictions on immigration (Ford and Goodwin, 2010). History with immigration may, however, be relevant to understanding the relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of national political systems.

Historically, experience with immigration has been extremely varied, with Southern Europe and Ireland initially not being prime destinations for migrants. This began to

Table 20.1 Three-level model of perceptions of national political systems, individual-level variables only

	Parliament		Politicians		Legal System	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>						
Concern about cultural impact of immigration	-0.07	0.00***	-0.04	0.00***	-0.06	0.00***
Concern about economic impact of immigration	-0.08	0.00***	-0.06	0.00***	-0.06	0.00***
Happy	-0.02	0.00***	-0.02	0.00***	-0.00	0.00
Satisfied with life	0.01	0.00	-0.00	0.00	0.03	0.00**
Meet friends often	0.00	0.00	-0.01	0.00	-0.01	0.00
Interpersonal trust	0.19	0.00***	0.22	0.00***	0.20	0.00***
Satisfied with country's economy	0.24	0.00***	0.23	0.00***	0.16	0.00***
Dissatisfied with personal income	-0.07	0.01***	-0.07	0.01***	-0.05	0.01***
Satisfied with health system	0.12	0.00***	0.11	0.00***	0.13	0.00***
Satisfied with education system	0.11	0.00***	0.12	0.00***	0.15	0.00***
Loser effect	-0.39	0.01***	-0.31	0.01***	-0.10	0.01***
Voted for far-right party in last general election	-0.40	0.04***	-0.33	0.03***	-0.49	0.04***
Left-right scale	0.04	0.00***	0.04	0.00***	0.03	0.00***
HH income	0.01	0.00***	0.01	0.00*	0.02	0.00***
Age	-0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00	-0.00	0.00***
Education	0.10	0.00***	0.02	0.00***	0.11	0.00***
Female	-0.05	0.01***	0.10	0.01***	0.00	0.01
<i>Constant</i>	2.15	0.11***	1.03	0.11***	2.38	0.16***
<i>Variance components: no independent variables in model</i>						
Level 1	4.98		4.48		5.29	
Level 2	0.06***		0.05***		0.05***	
Level 3	0.43***		0.62***		0.69***	
<i>Variance components: with independent variables in model</i>						
Level 1	3.78		3.42		4.26	
Level 2	0.05***		0.04***		0.04***	
Level 3	0.11***		0.13***		0.31***	

*Notes:** $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 109 732.

N (level 2): 59.

N (level 3): 16.

Statistics were computed using HLM software.

Source: European Social Survey, Rounds 1–4 (2002–08).

Table 20.2 Three-level model of trust in politics, with country-level variables

	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>		
Concern about immigration	-0.15	0.00***
Happy	-0.01	0.00***
Satisfied with life	0.01	0.00***
Meet friends often	-0.00	0.00
Interpersonal trust	0.20	0.00***
Satisfied with country's economy	0.21	0.00***
Dissatisfied with personal income	-0.06	0.01***
Satisfied with health system	0.12	0.00***
Satisfied with education system	0.13	0.00***
Loser effect	-0.27	0.01***
Voted for far-right party in last general election	-0.39	0.03***
Left-right scale	0.04	0.00***
HH income	0.01	0.00***
Age	-0.00	0.00***
Education	0.07	0.00***
Female	0.02	0.01
<i>Country*wave level</i>		
Far-right party popularity	-0.01	0.01
Social protection expenditure	0.00	0.00
Percentage of foreign born	-0.02	0.02
Round 2	-0.30	0.06***
Round 3	-0.42	0.06***
Round 4	-0.27	0.06***
<i>Country level</i>		
Long-term country of immigration, post-World War II (dummy)	-0.22	0.33
World Bank Governance Indicators	-0.54	0.46
GDP/capita	-0.00	0.01
Unemployment	-0.02	0.06
<i>Constant</i>	3.20	1.16*
<i>Variance components</i>		
Level 1	2.39	
Level 2	0.04	
Level 3	0.10	

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 109 732.

N (level 2): 59.

N (level 3): 16.

Statistics were computed using HLM software.

Variance components with no independent variables in the model are as follows: level 1: 3.48; level 2: 0.04; level 3: 0.52.

Source: European Social Survey, Rounds 1–4 (2002–08).

change only in the 1980s and 1990s, with Spain, Portugal, Italy and Greece receiving large numbers of migrants from North Africa and, in the case of Greece, also from Central/Eastern Europe. In recent decades, Ireland, too, has become a key destination for immigrants (Geddes, 2003; Castles and Miller, 2009). Thus, ultimately, all the Western and Southern European nation-states now share the experience of large-scale mass immigration from outside of these regions, and all therefore confront the same difficulty of having to incorporate newcomers into the polity. This also means that all citizens of these countries are likely to have impressions about whether newcomers are detrimental or helpful to their national political and socioeconomic systems.

It is possible that the history of migration to the country will affect the relationship between concern about immigration and political trust. Why might this be? That there is an expected connection between concern about immigration and political trust reflects a process by which citizens are becoming disconnected from their state institutions, because of their growing belief that non-nationals are sharing in the state's spoils and will eventually have a voice in its political decisions – or already have a voice in these decisions. This is not likely to be a sudden transformation of perceptions, as, for instance, when individuals respond relatively rapidly to economic downturns. It is instead likely to be a gradual process, as generations of citizens come to terms with the implications of immigration for their states. In addition, in longer-term immigration countries, several generations of citizens have now had the opportunity to reflect on their perceptions of the impact of newcomers on their societies. This, in turn, is likely to reflect lengthier public debates about the effects of immigration in these countries, with citizens developing firmer views about whether immigrants are a plus or a minus for the country and about the implications of immigration for the political system as a whole (see McLaren, 2012 for further discussion).

Table 20.3 provides the coefficients for the models of political trust that include the interactions discussed in this section, and Figures 20.1 and 20.2 illustrate these interactions. The interactive hypotheses appear to be supported by the evidence displayed in Figures 20.1 and 20.2. Namely, the impact of concern about immigration on political trust (Figure 20.2) is stronger in the countries that have longer experiences with immigration in the post-war era. The effect of concern about immigration on political trust is also somewhat stronger in countries in which there is a stronger far-right presence (Figure 20.1), though there is still a relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of national political systems even where the far-right is weak. That is, anti-immigration and anti-system sentiments are present without a strong far-right party stoking these sentiments.

NATIONAL IDENTITY CONSTRUCTIONS AND POLITICAL TRUST IN AN AGE OF MIGRATION

As noted in the chapter's introduction, system affect, or national identity for our purposes, is thought to be important in bolstering support for political institutions and elites, in that institutions are more difficult to run if they are dependent on instrumental support (e.g., Tyler, 1998). However, this chapter contends that migration is an important factor in understanding the connection between national identity and political trust. Specifically,

Table 20.3 Three-level model of trust in politics: far-right and long-term country of immigration interactions

	Far-right Interaction		Long-term Country of Immigration Interaction	
	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>				
Concern about immigration	-0.13	0.00***	-0.08	0.00***
Happy	-0.01	0.00***	-0.01	0.00***
Satisfied with life	0.01	0.00**	0.01	0.00**
Meet friends often	-0.00	0.00	-0.00	0.00
Interpersonal trust	0.20	0.00***	0.20	0.00***
Satisfied with country's economy	0.21	0.00***	0.21	0.00***
Dissatisfied with personal income	-0.06	0.01***	-0.07	0.01***
Satisfied with health system	0.12	0.00***	0.12	0.00***
Satisfied with education system	0.13	0.00***	0.13	0.00***
Loser effect	-0.27	0.01***	-0.26	0.01***
Voted for far-right party in last general election	-0.37	0.03***	-0.37	0.03***
Left-right scale	0.04	0.00***	0.04	0.00***
HH income	0.01	0.00***	0.01	0.00***
Age	-0.00	0.00***	-0.00	0.00***
Education	0.07	0.00***	0.07	0.00***
Female	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.01
<i>Country*wave level</i>				
Far-right party popularity	-0.01	0.01	-0.02	0.01*
Far-right party popularity*Concern about immigration	-0.00	0.00***		
Social protection expenditure	0.00	0.00***	0.00	0.00***
Round 2	-0.30	0.05***	-0.30	0.05***
Round 3	-0.42	0.06***	-0.42	0.06***
Round 4	-0.27	0.06***	-0.27	0.06***
<i>Country level</i>				
Long-term country of immigration, post-World War II (dummy)	-0.26	0.25	0.15	0.23
Long-term country of immigration, post-World War II*Concern about immigration			-0.09	0.01***
World Bank Governance Indicators	-0.54	0.34	-0.52	0.32
GDP/capita	-0.01	0.01*	-0.01	0.01*
Unemployment	-0.01	0.04	-0.01	0.04
Constant	3.72	0.85**	3.44	0.79**
<i>Variance components</i>				
Level 1	2.39		2.38	
Level 2	0.02		0.02	
Level 3	0.05		0.04	

Table 20.3 (continued)

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 109 732.

N (level 2): 59.

N (level 3): 16.

Statistics were computed using HLM software.

Variance components with no independent variables in the model are as follows: level 1: 3.48; level 2: 0.04; level 3: 0.52.

Source: European Social Survey, Rounds 1–4 (2002–08).

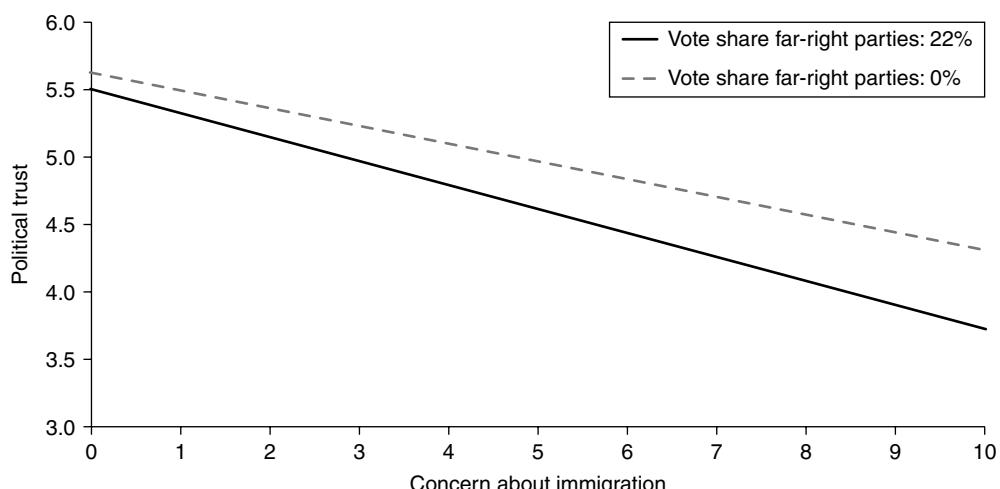


Figure 20.1 Far-right popularity, concern about immigration and political trust

this second section of the chapter examines the possibility that in the modern context of large-scale immigration, the way individuals see their national identities may ultimately impact on their perceptions of their political institutions and elites.

Some individuals perceive that shared ancestry, being born in a country and having long-term connections to the country are what ties fellow co-nationals together. Others see national identity in terms of shared language or culture. Still others see national identity in more voluntary terms, for instance that participation in a shared political system and community life or simply feeling like a country-national is what is important. These distinctions have been categorized and labelled in different ways by scholars of citizenship policy and national identity. For instance, the distinction made in early seminal work by Hans Kohn (1944) was between ethnic and civic national identities; others have added culture as another component of national identity that some individuals emphasize more than others (e.g., Shulman, 2002). Other researchers simply distinguish between ascriptive and non-ascriptive characteristics, for example, characteristics over which the individual has no control (place of birth, parentage, lengthy connections to the country, etc.) and

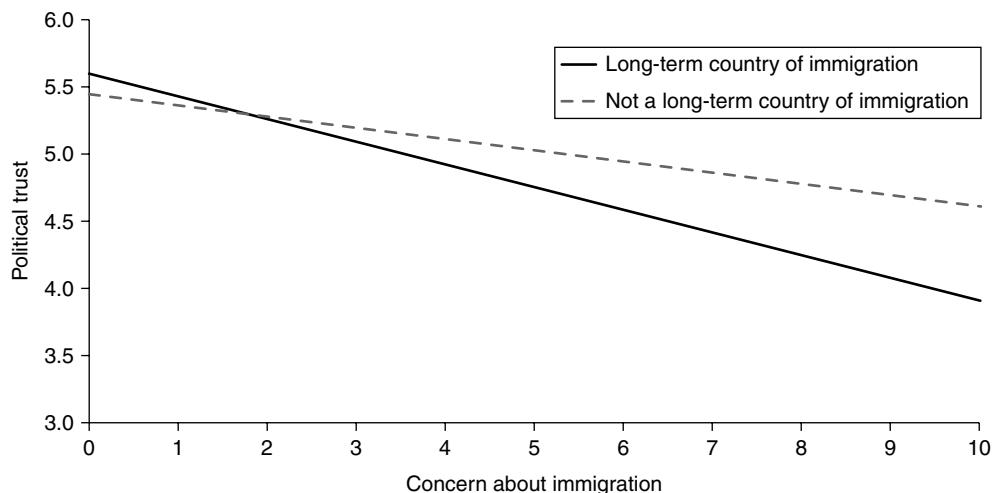


Figure 20.2 *Long-term country of immigration, concern about immigration and political trust*

those over which the individual does have control (participating in the political system and voluntary organizations, feeling like a country-national, obeying the country's laws, etc.) (see Tilley et al., 2004; Heath and Tilley, 2005).

These varying understandings of national identity are likely to have consequences for how individuals perceive their national political systems in the modern day of mass immigration. Specifically, individuals who see their national identities in non-ascriptive terms are likely to be more positive about their political systems than those who see national identity in ascriptive terms. Because of large-scale post-World War II migration to Western and then Southern Europe, the reality of many European nation-states is that they consist of some individuals who were born or raised in the country and share in the country's customs and traditions and a significant portion of individuals who were not born or raised in the country and do not necessarily share in these same traditions. As argued above, in the modern day all of Western and Southern Europe have received substantial numbers of immigrants and asylum seekers, and it is unlikely to be the actual numbers that matter anymore for public perceptions of immigration. Instead, the large presence of immigrants and the subsequent creation of minority populations that are often seen as culturally very different from the majority (Sniderman et al., 2004; Sides and Citrin, 2007) in all of Western and Southern Europe has presented substantial and variable challenges to these countries in terms of determining where newcomers and immigrant-origin minorities fit within the predominant national identity construction in the country. In the context of large-scale immigration and the resulting creation of minority populations, an emphasis on ethnicity, culture or non-ascriptive/civic characteristics takes on new meaning with regard to perceptions of the national political system. This is because the constructions of national identity differ in terms of their level of inclusiveness (Shulman, 2002): it is generally very difficult (or impossible) for outsiders or newcomers to meet the ethnic criteria in order to become country-nationals,

while learning the language and traditions are perhaps difficult but possible, and in some countries, the civic criterion of political participation is relatively easier for newcomers to adopt. Even this tripartite distinction can further be considered in terms of how easy it is to acquire various characteristics. For instance, learning the language and feeling like a country-national may be seen as more easily acquired than long-term sharing of customs and traditions (see Tilley et al., 2004; Heath and Tilley, 2005; Wright, 2011; Wright et al., 2012).

In the modern context, those who see their national identities in terms of factors that can be acquired – voting, participation and feeling national – are likely to be more positive about their national political systems than those who do not emphasize these characteristics. This is because these individuals are more likely to perceive the political system as capable of coping with newcomers, as these newcomers and their children can eventually acquire these key aspects of nationality. This construction of national identity does not imply that the national political system is exclusively for ethnic co-nationals, those who have lived in the country for a long time or those who share the country's traditions. Instead, newcomers can become nationals through, for instance, active participation in democratic institutions. Amongst those who see their national identities in civic/non-ascriptive terms, there should be more openness to the idea of the political system including non-co-ethnics and newcomers.

Immigration is more of a problem for individuals who emphasize ethnicity, being born in the country or having parents who are country-nationals. Outsiders cannot easily meet these constructions of national identity (or meet them at all). Indeed, it is likely that in the minds of many people who see national identity in this way, newcomers may never become country-nationals. However, the reality of Western and Southern Europe is that because of large-scale immigration by those who are perceived not to share heritage and traditions with country-nationals, newcomers and their descendants are eventually incorporated into these European political systems. For those who emphasize ethnicity, birthplace, lengthy ties to the country and cultural connections, this fails to meet the individual's expectations about the construction of the national political community. In turn, this may mean that those who emphasize these characteristics may not be very happy with their political systems precisely because these no longer exist exclusively for ethnic or cultural co-nationals.

Table 20.4 investigates these propositions using Eurobarometer 71.3 from June–July 2009 and a two-level model (see the Electronic Appendix to this chapter for the measurement of variables included in the model); the results indicate that those who emphasize more civic characteristics are more positive about their political systems while those who emphasize more ascriptive characteristics are more negative about their political systems.⁴ The effects of emphasis on language or culture are not statistically significant. The effects of emphasizing differing characteristics are likely to vary by context, however.

National Identity Constructions and Political Trust in an Age of Migration: The Effect of Multiculturalism Policies

Some governments design policies that make it relatively easy for immigrants and their descendants to live in the country, maintain connections to others from the same background and maintain their own cultures. Countries that adopt these sorts of policies are

Table 20.4 National identity and political trust

	b	SE
<i>Important to:</i>		
Have civic characteristics ^a	0.08	0.00***
Have ascriptive characteristics ^b	-0.04	0.02*
Share cultural traditions	0.02	0.12
Master the country's language	-0.01	0.03
<i>Control variables</i>		
Life satisfaction	0.11	0.01***
Perception of national economic situation	0.20	0.01***
Perception of personal job situation	-0.01	0.01
Perception of household financial situation	0.07	0.01***
Perception of country's employment situation	0.13	0.01***
Perception of environmental situation in country	0.14	0.01***
Expectations for life in general	-0.02	0.03
Expectations for the economic situation in the country	0.16	0.02***
Expectations for the financial situation of your household	0.03	0.03
Expectations for the employment situation in the country	0.08	0.02***
Expectations for personal job situation	-0.02	0.03
Left-right self-placement	0.03	0.01***
Education	0.01	0.00***
Age	0.00	0.00***
Female	-0.07	0.02**
Rural	-0.11	0.03**
Small town	-0.02	0.02
Social self-placement	0.05	0.01***
<i>Constant</i>	-0.35	0.12*
Level 1 variance	1.783	
Level 2 variance	0.074	
Level 1 variance explained (%)	13.9	
Level 2 variance explained (%)	74.5	

Notes:

- a. Exercise citizens' rights, participation, feel national.
 b. Have national parents or be born or raised in country.

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N (level 1): 12 858. Statistics were computed using HLM software.

Variance components with no variables in the models are as follows: level 1: 2.005; level 2: 0.325.

Source: Eurobarometer 71.3.

also generally the same ones that adopt other policies that make it easier for immigrants to become fully functioning members of society, such as short-term waiting periods before being eligible for naturalization. Other countries have not tended to adopt such policies, in many cases because the diversity of immigrant-minority culture is not something that is welcome (see Banting and Kymlicka, 2006). This may be because policy-makers' understandings of what it means to be a country-national emphasize the indigenous ethnicity or culture (e.g., Germany, Austria or Denmark), or because the image of what it means to be

a country-national is based on assimilationist understandings of the nation (e.g., France). While government policy may reflect the predominant understanding of what it means to be a country-national (see Weldon, 2006), there are likely to be substantial numbers of citizens who perceive national identity in very different ways from this predominant national identity construction.

When the individual perceives that what is important for being a country-national includes factors like being born in the country, lengthy residence and attachment to the country and long-term sharing of cultural traditions but government policy fails to reflect these preferences and instead privileges immigrants and immigrant-minority cultures (see note 5 for examples of these privileges) that individual is likely to be less positive about the political system as a whole because the latter fails to reflect his or her preferences regarding the treatment of immigrant-origin minorities. On the other hand, those who emphasize civic approaches to national identity are likely to buy into the notion that newcomers can become a part of the nation by participating in society and in politics, and by getting involved in their communities, and these individuals should be more positive about a political system that makes this possible than those who do not emphasize civic identity.

Table 20.5 provides the coefficients from an analysis that includes interactions between individual understanding of national identity and the privileging of immigrant-minority cultures, measured by Banting and Kymlicka's Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI).⁵ The results indicate that the effect of emphasis on differing components of national identity

Table 20.5 Multiculturalism policy, national identity and political trust

	MPI*Civic Characteristics Interaction		MPI*Ascriptive Characteristics Interaction	
	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Important to:</i>				
Have civic characteristics ^a	-0.05	0.03	0.08	0.02***
Have ascriptive characteristics ^b	-0.04	0.02*	0.04	0.03
Share cultural traditions	0.02	0.03	0.03	0.03
Master the country's language	-0.01	0.03	-0.01	0.03
Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI)	-0.11	0.05*	-0.04	0.05
MPI*Civic characteristics	0.05	0.01***		
MPI*Ascriptive characteristics			-0.03	0.01***
<i>Constant</i>	-0.08	0.16	-0.24	0.16
Level 1 variance	1.724		1.726	
Level 2 variance	0.072		0.073	

Notes:

a. Exercise citizens' rights, participation, feel national.

b. Have national parents or be born or raised in country.

The control variables from Table 20.4 were also included in these models. Their coefficients, standard errors and *p*-values were only marginally affected by the interaction terms.

Statistics were computed using HLM software.

p* < 0.05; *p* < 0.01; ****p* < 0.001.

N (level 1): 12858.

Source: Eurobarometer 71.3.

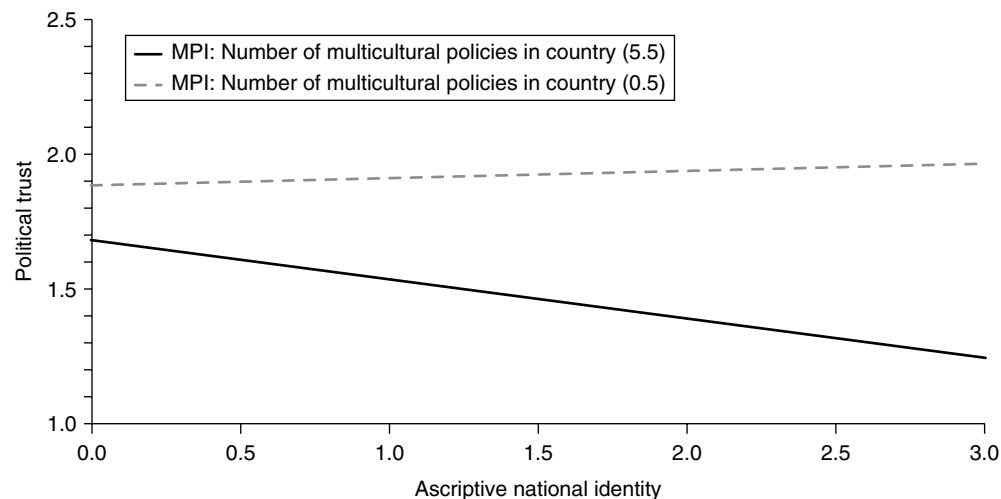


Figure 20.3 Interaction between emphasis on ascriptive characteristics and Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI)

is indeed moderated by government policy regarding immigrant-origin minorities. (The interactions between emphasis on culture and language were not statistically significant and so these have been omitted.) Figures 20.3 and 20.4 illustrate these effects.

Figure 20.3 shows that when the individual emphasizes more ascriptive characteristics – birthplace, parentage, where one is raised – and government policy privileges immigrant-minority cultures, political trust is indeed lower than when the individual lives in a similar context but does not emphasize these characteristics. Interestingly, the figure also illustrates that trust is higher in countries where there are very limited multiculturalism policies. Figure 20.4 illustrates that when the individual emphasizes more civic characteristics and government policy provides for greater multiculturalism policies, the level of trust is higher than when the individual does not emphasize these characteristics, and is even slightly higher than the case of individuals living in countries where there are limited multiculturalism policies. I discuss the implications of these findings in the concluding section of the chapter.

POLITICAL TRUST OF IMMIGRANTS

Thus far, this chapter's focus has been on the impact of immigration on the perceptions of political systems of natives (that is, non-immigrant-minority portions of national populations). However, given that immigrants and immigrant-origin minorities have come to constitute a significant portion of the electorate in Western democracies, they may themselves be having an impact on levels of political trust by bringing with them perspectives on political institutions that are very different to those of natives. This raises questions about what sorts of perspectives of political systems immigrants bring with them, and whether they are ultimately having a positive, negative or neutral

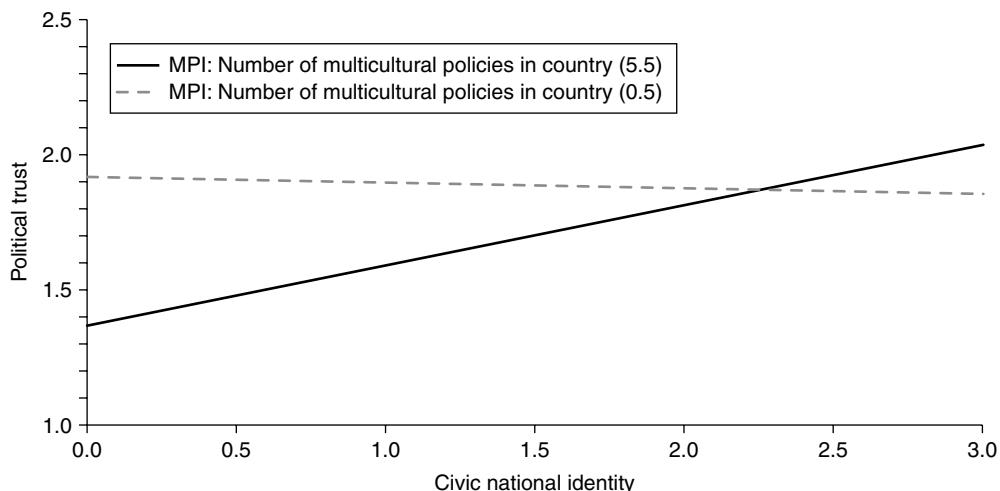


Figure 20.4 Interaction between emphasis on civic characteristics and Multiculturalism Policy Index (MPI)

effect on levels of political trust in the host country. It also raises questions about perceived legitimacy of the adoptive homeland's institutions. The evidence from existing research on levels of political trust amongst immigrant-origin minorities indicates that with a few notable exceptions there is perhaps little to worry about in this regard, in that immigrants tend to converge toward the levels of trust of those of native origin. This third and final section of the chapter reviews the key findings in this area of research.

Research in the specific area of the political trust of immigrant-origin minorities is still relatively new. However, the evidence from this body of work thus far indicates that there are higher levels of trust amongst immigrants than natives, and immigrants from authoritarian regimes tend to have more *positive* perceptions of the political systems and specifically higher levels of trust in their adoptive regimes in their adoptive homelands because these function in a more open manner than their home country institutions (see Maxwell, 2010; Strömbäck and Adman, 2010; Röder and Mühlau, 2012; Heath et al., 2014; see also Michelson, 2003; Weaver, 2003; Wenzel, 2006; but see Bilodeau et al., 2010; Bilodeau, 2014; Adman and Strömbäck, 2015). However, there also appears to be strong evidence of convergence between immigrants and natives in terms of political trust (Heath et al., 2014), particularly when socioeconomic status is taken into account (De Vroome et al., 2013; see also Adman and Strömbäck, 2015). In particular, political trust appears to decline with length of residence in the host country and declines significantly between first- and second-generation immigrants (Maxwell, 2010; Strömbäck and Adman, 2010; Röder and Mühlau, 2012), with second-generation migrants often converging toward the average level of trust amongst natives (Heath et al., 2014). Some contend that this is a result of 'acculturation', in which immigrants gradually develop attitudes and behaviours similar to those of natives (Adman and Strömbäck, 2015). Others claim that it is a matter of 'altering expectations' – that the hopes of immigrants are initially high but when these

individuals actually experience how institutions work, they become more critical and less trusting (see Reese, 2001; Menjivar and Bejarano, 2004).

Another possible explanation is that immigrant-origin minorities experience higher levels of discrimination in jobs and housing, for instance, and this may produce a sense of general dissatisfaction with the political systems in their new homelands (the so-called ‘barriers to integration’ approach – see Adman and Strömlad, 2015). Moreover, it is likely to be the second generation that is more aware of the discrimination and inequality in the host country and therefore more disaffected with the political system (Heath et al., 2014). According to Heath et al. (2014), for instance, British citizens of black Caribbean background and those of mixed white/black background are significantly more distrustful of British political institutions than are white British, and this appears to be connected to their perceptions of having been discriminated against. Evidence from Sweden also indicates that immigrants who report experiencing discriminatory behaviour tend to be less politically trusting (Adman and Strömlad, 2015).

CONCLUSION

This chapter examined three elements of the potential effects of immigration and the resulting ethnic diversity on political trust: the impact of concern about immigration, the impact of different national identity constructions in an age of mass immigration and the impact of the values of immigrants themselves on overall levels of political trust. Some of the findings presented here are rather worrying since they indicate that public concern about immigration appears to be reducing trust in politics, particularly in longer-term countries of immigration, and even where the far-right is not very powerful. Moreover, they indicate that political trust is higher where there are fewer multiculturalism policies and trust is relatively low when there are many multiculturalism policies but the individual sees her national identity in an ascriptive way – that is, lengthy ties to the country, birthplace and so on. The reason these findings are worrying is that the ethnic diversity that has resulted from post-war immigration is now a fact of life in these countries. The possibility that perceptions of this diversity and of immigration are not only simply negative in and of themselves but may also have implications for perceptions of national political systems appears to produce somewhat apocalyptic predictions for the future of European democracies, which will now continue to remain ethnically diverse.

Also potentially worrisome is that immigrant-origin minorities tend to become more distrustful over time, with some minority groups showing lower levels of trust than natives. Thus, immigration-related diversity may be reducing overall levels of political trust by contributing to a sense of weakened connection between natives and state elites and institutions *and* due to a reduced level of political trust amongst some immigrant-origin groups, which is presumably a result of their treatment by political authorities.

However, on the positive side, at least amongst natives, it appears that the combination of a national identity that emphasizes shared commitment to active participation in politics and voluntary organizations – and emphasizes simply voluntarily coming to feel oneself to be a country-national – combined with government policies that help minorities to maintain their distinct cultural connections, produces more positive perceptions of national political systems. I tentatively take this to mean that identity constructions that

are adapted to the reality of a modern Europe that is ethnically diverse and government policies that also accept and acknowledge this fact may help to generate more positive feelings about national political systems in the long term. One of the challenges in modern politics is likely to be to convince political elites that emphasizing such identity constructions may ultimately be good for them and for their political systems.

The ideas and findings presented in this chapter leave open a wide range of questions and avenues for future research. For instance, the relationship between concern about immigration and perceptions of national political systems was shown to be stronger in the longer-term countries of immigration and weaker, on average, in newer countries of immigration like Spain, Portugal and Ireland. Given that the latter have caught up to the older immigration countries and have received very large numbers of immigrants in the past two to three decades, it is possible that the process outlined here will increasingly apply to Southern Europe and Ireland. Thus, one potential research question is whether concern about immigration is likely to be undermining trust in institutions and elites as immigration becomes more prominent in these newer countries of immigration.

The findings also imply that government policies toward immigrants or immigrant-origin minorities are important for understanding how national identity constructions are related to political trust in the modern age of immigration. This raises the question of whether policy changes in this area have any effect on perceptions of national political systems. A follow-up research question could thus be: does political trust respond to changes in government policy regarding immigrant-origin minorities, or is this unlikely to affect such perceptions? Another follow-up question from this part of the chapter is: is it possible for political elites to successfully frame national identity in civic terms, and if so, which elites can do this?

The findings presented here further raise the question of whether generational change might have some bearing on the conclusions. Research by other scholars indicates that at least in some European countries, younger generations perceive immigrants and their descendants in very different ways than older generations (Ford, 2011). One question that could be asked therefore is: were previous youths equally positive about immigration (on average), and if so what are their attitudes to immigration now? In addition, do the attitudes of younger generations who have grown up with the existence of ethnic diversity in their countries change over time? Do they become like their parents and grandparents and thus start to worry about the impact of immigration on their societies and their political systems? Or is there evidence of a substantial value change, with younger generations being accustomed to a permanent immigrant-origin minority population, and with no sense that this population poses a threat to them or their societies?

Also of relevance is that there is research to indicate that older groups of immigrants come to be seen more positively over time (Simon, 1993). So, for instance, Afro-Caribbeans are seen in more positive terms than Asian immigrants in Britain (Ford, 2011), which may simply be because the former arrived earlier than the latter. What is not known, however, is whether migrants from countries that may be perceived to have fundamentally different values such as Muslims from Asian or Middle Eastern countries will also come to be seen more positively. Thus, follow-up research questions could be: how have perceptions of migrants from Muslim countries and the Middle East changed? Also, is it concern about particular migrant groups that is leading to distrust in political institutions and elites?

Another potentially confounding factor here is government social welfare policy and

income equality. Stronger social protection measures tend to be associated with more positive perceptions of government institutions and elites (e.g., Table 20.2 in this chapter). Different types of welfare provision are also related to perceptions of immigrants (Crepaz and Damron, 2009), with strong social welfare being connected to more positive perceptions of the latter. This implies that such measures may help to reduce the sense of threat and the feelings of competition posed by immigrants. It is possible that the income inequality–threat dynamic may feed back into perceptions of the political system in ways that are currently unknown and unexplored. A specific question that could be answered therefore is: how do income inequality and social welfare provision moderate the effect of concern about immigration on political trust?

In addition, Eric Uslaner's recent research (2012) serves as a reminder that segregation of and lack of personal contact with minorities presents a major challenge to social cohesion. The same difficulties are likely to apply to the arguments and findings presented in this chapter. Thus, a key question to be answered is: does segregation have any effect on perceptions of political institutions; either directly, or indirectly through factors like interpersonal trust and sense of community? Thus, there are still many important questions to be answered within the topic of ethnic diversity and political trust.

NOTES

1. The arguments of this chapter are limited to European countries that have been large-scale immigrant-receiving countries since the end of World War II. The countries that we generally consider to be within Western and Southern Europe are the ones that have received relatively large numbers of immigrants in the past 70 years. Thus, the analysis excludes the newer democracies of Central and Eastern Europe (CEE) because I do not necessarily expect the relationships discussed in this chapter to hold for these countries, which are much newer countries of immigration and thus far have not received immigrants in the large numbers experienced by the rest of Europe. These countries are also not included because it is likely that the survey questions about immigration used in this book capture a very different phenomenon in these countries than in Western Europe, particularly attitudes to co-nationals coming from neighbouring countries as a result of historical border changes. That is, the immigration dynamic in this region is very different than that in Western and Southern Europe and so I limit my analysis to this latter set of countries (see Wallace, 2002, pp. 607–9). Finally, it is unclear as to whether the arguments outlined here should apply to traditional immigrant-receiving countries (the USA, Canada, Australia), and investigating this possibility is complicated due to lack of data that are strictly comparable to the data used here.
2. I have also used an instrumental variables approach on Round 1 of the ESS and used panel data from the UK to further investigate whether concern about immigration is likely to be a *cause* of distrust in politics and the results confirm that this is indeed the case (see McLaren, 2015).
3. Note that I have investigated this relationship with percentage of foreign born as the only variable in the model and the relationship between the latter and political trust is insignificant. I have also examined the relationship between percentage of foreign born and concern about immigration and this relationship was not statistically significant. Because of its collinearity with other country-level indicators, percentage of foreign born will not be included in the remaining models below.
4. Note that I have also investigated these relationships using the European Values Study of 2008, where the indicators of ascriptive and non-ascriptive identity are quite different from those used here and the results are similar to those presented here.
5. See <http://www.queensu.ca/mcp/immigrant.html>, accessed 17 July 2014; measures from 2000 were used since these came before the individual-level data used here. The MPI uses the following indicators of multiculturalism policy: (1) constitutional, legislative or parliamentary affirmation of multiculturalism; (2) the adoption of multiculturalism in school curriculum; (3) the inclusion of ethnic representation/sensitivity in the mandate of public media or media licensing; (4) exemptions from dress codes, Sunday-closing legislation etc.; (5) allowing dual citizenship; (6) the funding of ethnic group organizations to support cultural activities; (7) the funding of bilingual education or mother-tongue instruction; (8) affirmative action for disadvantaged immigrant groups. Each country is given a score ranging from 0 to 1 for each dimension,

and these scores are summated to form an overall Multiculturalism Policy Index; all items are thus weighted equally. Note that I have also investigated the interactions shown here using the EU's Migrant Integration Policy Index (MIPEX) and the results are virtually identical to those shown here.

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21. Social capital, civic culture and political trust

Christopher Liu and Dietlind Stolle

INTRODUCTION

Political trust has for a long time been understood as closely intertwined with civic culture¹ and people's social interactions. In Almond and Verba's *The Civic Culture* (1963) political trust is an important part of the concept of political culture and related to its various indicators. However, several new questions have emerged in this research arena – for example, whether and how social trust and political trust are related. While the dominant perspective is that political trust has some sort of social roots and is anchored in how society is connected, the causal flow remains contested. Many scholars claim that society shapes politics; others argue that the political system sets the tone for how people relate. The question is how the newest empirical evidence lives up to these models.

It appears to be extremely difficult to draw any final conclusions from the literature as it stands. All the typical problems of social science research seem to apply in this research arena: (1) measurement problems, (2) establishing causality, and (3) replicating the findings across different cultures. The most important challenge seems to be the measurement of not only political trust but also its civic roots. Both social capital and political trust are multidimensional in ways that complicate drawing firm general conclusions based on existing empirical evidence. Moreover, most studies are of a cross-sectional character and thus seem plagued with causality issues. While causal mechanism explanations exist for both causal flows, they are rarely tested in detail, and so believing in the dominance of society or of politics seems to be mostly in the eye of the beholder.

This chapter reviews the state of research on the relationship between civic culture, social capital and political trust. The focus is on various aspects of this research agenda: (1) the history of the study of the civic roots of political trust, (2) the strength of the relationship between civic culture/social capital and political trust, (3) the causal flow of the relationship between the two variables, as well as (4) the causal mechanisms. Of course, attention will be paid to the dimensions of political trust that are driving the relationships. Moreover, a distinction should be made between various aspects of civic culture and social capital, which are very multifaceted concepts.

In short, Almond and Verba (1963) highlighted civic culture as a select aspect of political culture that facilitates democracy (see also Chapter 14 by Gabriel). This idea has been picked up by Robert Putnam (1993), who discussed various aspects of what he calls 'civic community' and showed how they are related to institutional performance and economic development. In their essential form, civic community or civic culture do not encompass all aspects of social relations and trust, but both are selective concepts that highlight the societally beneficial aspects of culture that are closely intertwined with democracy. For example, in Putnam's notion of the concept of civic community, he wants to distinguish generalized trust from group-related or in-group trust, horizontal associational membership from hierarchical relations, and generalized reciprocity from the narrow approach

of tit-for-tat and so on (1993, 2000). Some other measures of civic community or civic culture include generalized or social trust,² generalized norms of reciprocity, as well as structural aspects such as the size, composition, strength and even purposes of selected (not all types of) social networks and voluntary associations. Not everyone agrees that we can measure civic community or culture based on its positive function and traits. Some scholars take a broader approach and distinguish themselves from these narrower uses of the concepts of civic culture. These critics claim that the origins of the social capital approach according to Coleman and Bourdieu dictate that any social networks have value disregarding their benefit for the larger community or democracy (Portes, 1998; Woolcock, 1998). Their amendment would be that we should not necessarily measure just civic aspects of our community, but all social and interpersonal aspects. For example, close friendship ties might not seem as relevant for the wider democracy, but they might help people to feel more integrated in society. Bonding ties with a very homogeneous group of people might set demarcation lines and nurture exclusiveness, but they should also be considered as social capital. In this sense we make a distinction here between the narrower concept of civic culture and the broader approach of social capital, and in line with this we will use the term ‘civic culture’ to denote the narrower aspects of political culture, and ‘social capital’ to reflect the wider and more open usage for any type of social interaction.

THE ROLE OF VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS

Research examining the civic roots of political life can be traced back to Alexis de Tocqueville (1835), who observed a close and complementary relationship between vibrant civic associations and American democracy. While Tocqueville discusses at length the relationship between associational activity and both political participation and democracy, more nuanced interpretation is required to excavate the implications of his arguments for political trust.

At the aggregate level, Tocqueville discerns a relationship between civic associations and political trust that is mediated by government performance and civic virtues. Associations primarily lead to political trust by improving the quality of democracy. First, associations shoulder responsibilities and burdens that the state is unable to address. As Tocqueville puts it, ‘what political power would ever be able to be sufficient for the innumerable multitude of small enterprises that the American citizens carry out every day with the aid of the association?’ (1835 [2010], p. 900). Thus voluntary associations are seen as a complement to government activity and as important problem solvers in their own right. Second, associations help to bundle and represent the ideas of citizens with regard to the state by combining the voices of ‘isolated men [sic]’ into a ‘power that speaks and to which you listen’ (p. 901). Associations provide a necessary link between citizens and state institutions, which influences how government services are carried out. By improving the quality of American democracy, associations also bolster the trustworthiness of political institutions.

At the individual level, however, the implication of Tocqueville’s writings for political trust is more difficult to ascertain. On the one hand, Tocqueville hypothesizes that associations habitualize individual citizens into political participation. Members of an

association learn how to work together with others toward a common goal. As a result, 'when it becomes necessary to associate for a political end, they feel more inclined to attempt it and more capable of succeeding in doing so' (p. 912). On the other hand, Tocqueville also recognizes that political participation can in turn habitualize individuals into associational activity. For Tocqueville, 'politics generalizes the taste and habit of association; it brings about the desire to unite and teaches the art of associating to a host of men [sic] who would have always lived alone' (p. 913). The complication for political trust arises when one recognizes that political participation is not necessarily related to political trust – particularly since political *distrust* and lack of confidence in existing state apparatuses can also provide an impetus for participation in politics (see also Chapter 14 by Gabriel). This ambiguity in *Democracy in America* concerning the relationship between associating and political trust at the individual level has led to different interpretations by contemporary scholars: While most believe Tocqueville has hypothesized a positive relationship between associational activity and political trust (Levi and Stoker, 2000), others have interpreted Tocqueville as expecting a negative relationship between the two variables (Brehm and Rahn, 1997).

The role of civic culture for politics and particularly political trust is also highlighted in other major works on political culture. Almond and Verba (1963), for example, discuss the importance of civic culture for the level and endurance of democracy. They, like Tocqueville, pay significant attention to associational life and claim that members of associations are more politically active, more informed about politics, more sanguine about their ability to affect political life, and more supportive of democratic norms (see also Olsen, 1972; Verba and Nie, 1972; Hanks and Eckland, 1978). In later research, Verba and colleagues found that members of voluntary associations learn self-respect, group identity and public skills (e.g., Verba et al., 1995; Dekker et al., 1997). Presumably, civic traditions and culture teach people to be better democratic citizens who also relate to political institutions and government more positively. While the causal mechanism remains unclear, a healthy political culture is the basis for a healthy democracy.

The revival of the concept of social capital through Robert Putnam has made this claim even more forceful. In his comparison of Italian regions, he attempts to show that regional governmental performance depends on levels of regional social capital. Putnam explicitly states that Tocqueville is right: 'Democratic government is strengthened not weakened when it faces a vigorous civil society'³ (Putnam, 1993, p. 182). While Putnam does not directly evoke or measure the concept of political trust, he believes that membership in voluntary associations is important for political life. On the one hand, associations teach their members how to cooperate and trust each other, which tends to be generalized to the society as a whole (Boix and Posner, 1998; Stolle, 2001); thus political trust is also a potential beneficiary from high levels of social capital and high levels of in-group trust. On the other hand, this relationship works through interest aggregation and articulation (Putnam, 1993, pp. 89ff). Associations help to bundle support towards a communal goal, and lead to better institutional performance, which presumably shapes political trust (see more below). The problem with this account is that the causal arrow remains unclear. Given Putnam's (1993) logic from social capital to institutional performance to confidence in politicians, we do not know whether civic people create better service performance and better local politicians who are more responsive. Or could it be that responsive institutions create political trust, which in turn shapes social trust and social interactions?

While the direction of causality will be reviewed below, it is clear that the empirical evidence for the causal relationship between membership in voluntary associations and political trust is fairly thin, however. Several studies have largely failed to find significant effects of associational activity on political trust (Dekker et al., 1997; Rahn and Rudolph, 2005; Zmerli et al., 2007; Mangum, 2011) or have found the effects of associations to be significantly weaker than those of social trust (Bäck and Kestilä, 2009; Newton and Zmerli, 2011), indicating that not all dimensions of social capital matter equally. In addition, there is some evidence that different types of associations may carry different implications for political trust (Damico et al., 2000; but see Maloney et al., 2008).

Evidence concerning more informal social networks is even sparser. Gibson (2001) finds that the degree of political discussion in a respondent's social network is strongly associated with political trust, while Settle et al. (2011) conclude that the extent to which a respondent and her friendship network is socially integrated also has similarly strong relations with trust in local political institutions. These two studies do not include measures of social capital beyond associationalism, however. Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck (2002) find that the level of disagreement in a respondent's social network has moderate effects on political trust.

In sum, many important scholars and thinkers have focused on how voluntary associations might shape politics and trust in political institutions. While there is a lot of theoretical focus on the importance of membership in voluntary associations, the empirical evidence on this relationship is weak, suggesting that this dimension of social capital is less related to political trust. Putnam states himself that voluntary associations are only one measurement of social capital that is used for its availability, and the essence of the civic spirit is social trust. We thus pay special attention to the research on the relationship between social trust and political trust.

SOCIAL AND POLITICAL TRUST – HOW STRONGLY ARE THEY RELATED?

In the study of the relationship between social capital or civic culture on the one hand and political trust on the other, social trust has received by far the most attention (see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). Political trust and social trust are often seen as 'different sides of the same coin' (Newton, 1999, p. 179) and as mutually dependent. Often the assumption is that the trust between people is transferred to the political sphere.

Many earlier studies do succeed in finding positive relationships between political and social trust. Hall (1999), for example, indicates that political and generalized social trust are correlated in Britain. Yet, these studies also find a bifurcation in the strength of this relationship between the aggregate and individual level (Newton and Norris, 2000). Kenneth Newton observes that countries scoring highest on social trust also exhibit high levels of political trust (Newton, 2001, 2006; but see Gabriel and Walter-Rogg, 2008), while Keele (2007) finds a strong positive relationship between the two types of trust in the aggregate American population over time. Yet, a host of studies have found social trust to exert only weak effects on political trust at the individual level. Kaase (1999) finds consistently positive but weak correlations between the two types of trust in cross-national survey samples (see also Newton, 1999). Both Owen and Dennis (2001) and Rahn and Rudolph

(2005) confirm a weak positive relationship between the two types of trust in the USA, the former looking at trust in national governments, with the latter investigating local political trust among a sample of people in American cities. Similarly, weak relationships have been observed in Germany (Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck, 2002), and in Bolivia (Mendoza-Botelho, 2013), while no relationship between the two was found in a sample of post-communist societies (Mishler and Rose, 2001). Many scholars took those latter results to mean that political trust has not much to do with society, or that societal factors are trumped by other more important ones in the political realm.

However, and for reasons that are not really clear at first sight, a second cohort of such analyses insists that the relationship between the two types of trust at the individual level is stronger than originally assumed. Zmerli and Newton (2008), for example, claim significant and fairly strong correlations between social trust and confidence in political institutions in 23 European countries and the United States. These relationships seem to hold at both the individual and aggregate levels (Zmerli et al., 2007) and were found in two different cross-national data sets.⁴ Schyns and Koop (2010) point to relatively strong correlations in a smaller sample of countries, while Newton and Zmerli (2011) find additional evidence of a strong, positive association using updated World Values Survey data. The latter authors also find evidence for the ‘rainmaker effect’ hypothesized by the social capital literature (Van der Meer, 2003), whereby aggregate social trust in the societies or regions investigated were seen to have large impacts on individual-level trust, both social and political.

The difference between the two types of studies with these divergent findings on the strength of the relationship between social and political trust is not easy to detect. One explanation advanced by Zmerli and Newton (2008; see also Jagodzinski and Manabe, 2004) is the use of more precisely measured batteries of political and social trust questions and 7- or 11-point rating scales (Freitag, 2003; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). The authors additionally show how recoding the 11-point measures as 4-point or dichotomous variables reduces the strength of the observed relationship. More recently, Eric Uslaner has questioned whether the use of scales with more points can truly ‘buy’ more information (2012), showing that responses tend to ‘clump’ in the mid-point of the 11-point scales (in the values of 4 to 6) in a ‘psychological regression to the mean’ (2010). Though he rules out clumping as the cause of the stronger correlations between social and political trust found by Zmerli and Newton (2008) he does find that among ‘clumpers’ the relationship between social and political trust is so weak as to appear random (2010). In addition, other studies have confirmed a strong, individual-level relationship between social and political trust without resorting to 11-point scales (Schyns and Koop, 2010; Newton and Zmerli, 2011; Sonderskov and Dinesen, 2014). These findings together problematize the ‘better measures’ explanation for the stronger correlation between the two types of trust more recently observed.

As a result, we suggest two additional – though complementary – explanations for this phenomenon. At first sight, it appears that weaker relationships are caused by highly controlled models that use powerful measures related to economic performance, which weaken the effect of social trust. For example, studies that find weak or no associations between social and political trust incorporate economic performance as controls in their regression analyses, usually measured as the respondent’s perceptions (Rohrschneider and

Schmitt-Beck, 2002; Rahn and Rudolph, 2005; Bäck and Kestilä, 2009; Oskarsson, 2010), though some studies also add aggregate measures of performance (Mishler and Rose, 2001). Conversely, studies that find strong relationships between social and political trust (Zmerli et al., 2007; Zmerli and Newton, 2008; Schyns and Koop, 2010), do not include measures of economic performance directly into the models, although they feature a wide variety of other individual control variables.

The inclusion of performance in models that attempt to discern the relationship between social and political trust raises methodological concerns that rest on theoretical grounds. If one expects social and political trust to be ‘two sides of the same coin’, then performance would not be expected to have any mediating role. On the other hand, social trust may exert an indirect effect on political trust via perceptions of performance. This would be the case if high-trusting individuals systematically overestimate the health of the economy, and if this overestimation translates into on average higher trust in a country’s political institutions. In this scenario, regression analyses that control for both social trust and performance will provide attenuated estimates for the coefficient of social trust. Specifically, it will estimate the conditional effect of social trust to be minimal, even in cases where the total effect, exercised through performance, may be substantial (Achen, 2005). This important consequence of including economic performance is most clearly seen in Oskarsson (2010), who demonstrates that the coefficient for social trust on political trust increases by 30–50 per cent when variables capturing performance are dropped (see also Gabriel and Walter-Rogg, 2008). We will return to the idea and potential importance of including economic performance in the analysis below.

In addition to the possible confounding role played by the inclusion of performance, we also found a time dependence for the strength of the correlations. Table 21.1 shows the relationship between time period of the data source used and the strength of the relationship between social and political trust at the individual level. Stronger correlations are predominantly detected in data collected after 2000, whereas weaker or zero correlations result mostly from data before or around the year 2000. This time dependency was hinted at in Kaase (1999), when he shows that the correlation coefficients between social and political trust, though weak in general, are stronger in the mid-1990s compared to the 1980s. The correlation between social and political trust, therefore, appears to have strengthened over time.

While this time dependence overlaps with the increasing use of finer survey instruments to measure social trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2008), it is worth noting that this trend is also consistent with a theory of the relationship between social trust, performance and political trust expressed by Newton (2001) who speculated that there may be a *prima facie* relationship between social and political trust that can be broken by poor institutional performance. Potentially then the weak relationships between social and political trust observed prior to 2000 may be a result of weak institutional performance in the countries studied, whereas stronger performance in the post-2000 period may allow for a ‘restoration’ of the equilibrium state, where social and political trust are more strongly associated. One problem with this explanation is the lack of a distinct cross-national disjuncture in institutional performance pre- and post-2000, although Sonderskov and Dinesen (2014) observe in Denmark a marked increase in both the quality of political institutions and political trust following the new millennium. On the other hand, such a theory allows for easily testable hypotheses. In particular, if it is the case that poor

Table 21.1 Political and social trust relationship at the individual level: analysis of recent studies on the relationship between political and social trust

Time period of data analyzed	Weak effect	Moderate effect	Strong effect
Year ≤ 2000	Hall, 1999 Newton, 1999 Kaase, 1999 Newton and Norris, 2000 Mishler and Rose, 2001 ^b Owen and Dennis, 2001 ^b Rahn and Rudolph, 2005 ^b Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck, 2002 ^b Rossteutscher, 2010	Uslaner, 2001 ^b	Brehm and Rahn, 1997 ^a
Year > 2000	Bäck and Kestilä, 2009 ^b Oskarsson, 2010 ^b Gabriel and Walter-Rogg, 2008 ^b	Zmerli and Newton, 2008 Zmerli et al., 2007 Schyns and Koop, 2010 Newton and Zmerli, 2011 Sonderskov and Dinesen, 2014 ^{a c}	Mishler and Rose, 2005 ^a Zmerli and Newton, 2008 Zmerli et al., 2007 Schyns and Koop, 2010 Newton and Zmerli, 2011 Sonderskov and Dinesen, 2014 ^{a c}

Notes:

- a. Studies find social trust to exert weak effects on political trust, but strong effects from political to social trust.
- b. Studies control for economic performance.
- c. Study uses political trust data from the post-2000 period, while social trust is measured before 2000.

performance can break an otherwise strong relationship between social and political trust, we may expect this relationship to significantly weaken following the global financial crisis in 2008. Of the studies that we were able to find, the newest (Oskarsson, 2010; Schyns and Koop, 2010; Zmerli and Newton, 2011) use data from the mid-2000s, prior to 2008. Consequently, there is an opportunity for future research to ascertain the strength of the relationship between social and political trust post-2008 in order to test the possibility that weak institutional performance can potentially break a strong *prima facie* relationship between political and social trust (but see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton).

In sum, existing scholarship on the relationship between social trust and political trust offers ambiguous evidence concerning the strength of this relationship. While early works fail to find a strong association between the two, later scholars have had greater success in uncovering a strong relationship between social and political trust. In addition to the possible influence of better survey instruments (Zmerli and Newton, 2008; but see Uslaner, 2012), two other possible explanations are highlighted here. First, studies that find a weak relationship between the two types of trust seem to have included performance as another regressor or control variable in their analyses. If social trust exerts an indirect effect on political trust through performance, then including both performance and social trust will result in attenuated estimates for the total effect of social trust. Second,

the strength of the association between social and political trust appears to increase over time. We tentatively suggest that this change over time may be due to over-time variation in institutional performance ‘breaking’ a *prima facie* relationship between the two types of trust. How performance affects the relationship between social and political trust at the individual level – whether the effect of social on political trust is mediated by more optimistic perceptions of performance among high trusters, or whether a direct relationship between the two types of trust exists but can be broken by a period of poor institutional performance – remains an outstanding area for future research.

CAUSALITY AND CAUSAL MECHANISM

Social Trust as a Predictor

In addition to concerns regarding the strength of the correlation between social and political trust, causal interpretations also vary. Several authors, who acknowledge the correlations, see social trust mostly as an explanatory variable or predictor of political trust, whereas others assume that the reverse causal relationship is true. Yet others are agnostic and believe in the strong interdependence of various types of trust (for some aspects of these approaches see Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). The first approach is by far the most widespread in the political trust literature.

For example, Lipset and Schneider (1983) claim that in the United States, what they call the ‘personal characteristic of trust in others’ might explain developments in public confidence: ‘A general feeling of confidence in institutions seems to derive from a personal outlook of optimism, satisfaction and trust’ (pp. 120ff). Newton and Norris (2000) elaborate this causal flow when they find a strong positive correlation at the aggregate level in the analysis of the World Values Surveys in 17 trilateral democracies. They interpret their findings as evidence that social capital ‘can help build effective social and political institutions, which can help governments perform effectively, and this in turn encourages confidence in civic institutions’ (Newton and Norris, 2000, p. 72). By performing a statistical causality test, Keele (2007) finds empirical evidence for such a theorized one-way causality of social to political trust in American time series data.

Zmerli and Newton (2008) underline their findings with the assumption that social trust sustains a cooperative social climate, facilitates collective behaviour and encourages regard for the public interest. Social trust makes it easier, less risky and more rewarding for citizens to participate in community and civic affairs, which causes governments to be more responsive. Good government in turn may reinforce conditions in which both social and political trust can flourish.

All these ideas, of course, also confirm the logic of Putnam’s argument about the causal dominance of civic traditions that in turn shape political outcomes. While the original and theoretical idea is about the importance of social trust for politics, he has to resort to measuring associational memberships in order to tap social capital, mostly for lack of available data on social trust over time. Again, Putnam assumes that the membership in cultural and social associations creates a cooperative and civic spirit, as well as between-member trust that spills over to other realms of the members’ lives (1993). Although the exact causal mechanism is not clearly explained in the book, it seems that citizens with higher levels of

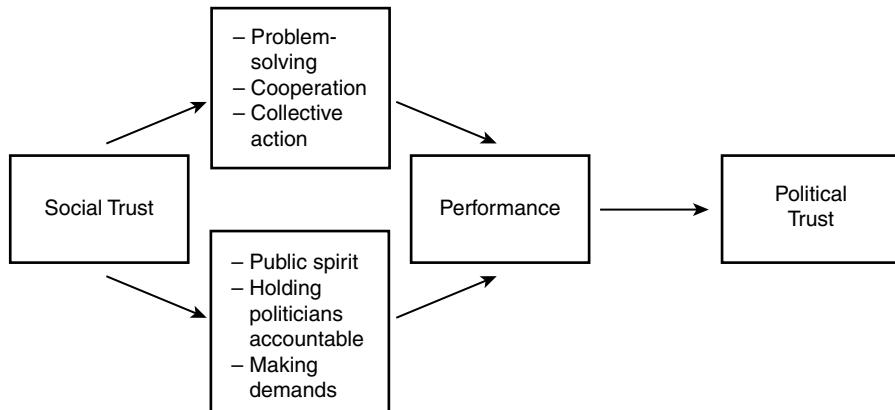


Figure 21.1 Prominent causal mechanism of the relationship from social to political trust

social capital and generalized trust are better able to communicate their needs to politicians, and hold them better accountable, and thus push them into better and more responsive performance. This performance then leads to higher levels of political trust (see Figure 21.1).

The Direction of Causality and Other Qualifiers

The institutional school of social capital research has turned around the argument that social networks and relationships are important for politics. They argue that for social capital to flourish it needs to be embedded in and linked to the political context as well as to formal political and legal institutions (Tarrow, 1996; Berman, 1997; Levi, 1998; Hall, 1999; Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Encarnación, 2006; Rothstein and Stolle, 2008). According to this group of scholars, government institutions and policies and resulting political trust create, channel and influence social capital, not the other way around. There are two main types of institutional arguments in relation to social capital: An *attitudinal* approach (focused on the relationship between political and social trust in reverse causal order) and an *institutional-structural* approach.

The latter approach centres on the role of the state as a *source* of social capital generation (Tarrow, 1996, p. 395). States, for example, enable the establishment of reliable contracts between citizens in that they provide information and monitor legislation about contracts, and enforce rights and rules that sanction lawbreakers, protect minorities and actively support the integration and participation of citizens (Levi, 1998, pp. 85ff). Certain types of institutions, such as those that deal with lawbreakers, are also emphasized as important safeguards for the development of generalized trust. Indeed, as Rothstein and Stolle (2008) argue, the study of political trust should not collapse all kinds of institutions under one label. While citizens do not expect the parliament or government to act in a completely unbiased manner because of their political background, the neutrality and fairness of institutions such as courts, police, schools and health system is much more important. That is, if these institutions show impartial behaviour, then people will emulate the relationships that the state displays for developing their sense of their fellow citizens.

If, for example, police officers or judges do not act in a fair manner, seem corrupt and are biased, then why could one trust other fellow people (see Rothstein and Stolle, 2008)? In sum, this view has two important implications. First, it does not question the relationship between social and political trust but the assumed causal arrow. Second, this critique suggests that this research should make distinctions between trust in different types of political institutions. Does further empirical evidence suggest that these insights are correct?

While there is plenty of correlational evidence for this relationship, the empirical evidence for any causal direction is still weak. Sonderskov and Dinesen (2014) find that lagged values of political trust are associated with present values of social trust at the individual level, which the authors interpret causally. An experimental study examined causality more closely with vignettes about travel advisories and the description of police and citizen behaviour in a case of corruption (Rothstein and Eek, 2009), and found that the corrupt behaviour of police had the most detrimental effects on trust in other citizens. Mishler and Rose (2005) and Brehm and Rahn (1997) both use structural equation modelling to disentangle reciprocal effects between social and political trust, and both studies find stronger evidence of the latter exerting an effect on the former. In addition, Tao et al. (2014) find evidence for a causal effect of political trust on social trust within an instrumental variable regression framework. Surely, more causal evidence and ideas about the causal mechanism need to be established before any final conclusions can be drawn.

In addition, what role – if any – economic and social performance plays within this causal link remains ambiguous. Institutional-structural approaches, seeing the state as a generator of social capital, emphasize the importance of trustworthy political institutions that perform in impartial and well-functioning ways. Presumably, then, performance can be a partial mediator of this relationship. Others may suspect performance to drive a spurious relationship between social and political trust. This, however, is not entirely consistent with evidence that the two types of trust still share a relationship (albeit weakened) even after controlling for performance in regression analyses. At the end of the day, the causality in the relationship between civic roots and political trust – as well as the role of performance within this relationship – is still up for discussion.

A similar argument about the differentiation between political institutions is made by Richardson et al. (2001), who support the view that social trust is prior, and find that the relationship between social trust and political trust varies greatly depending on the branch of American government that respondents are asked to evaluate. A strong positive association is consistently seen when evaluating officials of the judiciary, whereas mixed and sporadic evidence is found when evaluating the executive, and no relationship could be ascertained between social trust and the trustworthiness of the members of Congress. In addition, Owen and Dennis (2001) find evidence that the relationship between social and political trust may be stronger when respondents are asked to evaluate the trustworthiness of specific political officials rather than abstract political institutions. This view makes sense if social and political trust tap a general positive or negative attitude towards all kinds of people, including those in government. Both accounts confirm that it is important to further distinguish trust in political institutions.

Unfortunately, few other studies have attempted to further investigate or even replicate these findings, leaving the robustness of these results an open question. This points to a trade-off when combining different survey questions capturing confidence in various political objects into a single political trust index – a popular strategy for studies that

investigate the determinants of political trust. While an index of measures may indeed tap the fundamental architecture of attitudes structuring political trust, as argued by Zmerli and Newton (2008), the widespread use of such indices also masks the possible existence of divergent strength of relations between social trust and trust in different political institutions or political officials.

Not only is the arrow of causality questioned in this relationship, another complication to the finding of a positive relationship between social capital and political trust is the existence of (a few) studies that find a negative relationship. At the aggregate level, Kong (2013) finds that regions of Asia with high social trust exhibited lower trust in government than regions of low social trust. At the individual level, Kim (2005) finds that both social trust and civic engagement have negative associations with political trust in South Korea, while Brehm and Rahn (1997) find that associational activity was negatively associated with political trust in the USA (though the relationship between social and political trust was positive). Nevertheless, these three studies form the small minority against an otherwise robust result of positive and reciprocal effects between social capital and political trust. Kim (2005) uses contextualized survey questions as indicators of social trust – ones that make it difficult to directly compare his results with other studies. The negative findings of Kim (2005) and Kong (2013) may also be related to the newly democratic status of the societies investigated – a grouping that has been found to harbour especially weak evidence for any relationship between social and political trust in prior research (Mishler and Rose, 2001; see also Chapter 28 by Park).

CONCLUSION

Since Tocqueville, scholars have been fascinated by the relationship between civic culture, social capital and political trust. A large literature has developed that seeks to better understand this relationship, building on the premise that social capital has political consequences. The goal of this chapter is to summarize the state of current research as well as to point to potential avenues for theoretical and empirical development.

There are several conclusions from our systematic reading of the literature. That a positive relationship between social capital and political trust exists is, for the most part, taken for granted. Early studies have consistently found a strong correlation between social and political trust at the country level, but also a significantly weaker individual-level association (Newton and Norris, 2000). Later studies, however, succeeded in finding evidence of strong individual-level relationships, with one posited explanation being the use of more fine-grained survey instruments to measure social trust (Zmerli and Newton, 2008).

Given the concerns raised by Uslaner (2010, 2012), in addition to the existence of studies that find strong individual-level correlations between social and political trust without using new, 11-point survey instruments (Schyns and Koop, 2010; Newton and Zmerli, 2011), this change from weak to strong individual-level associations remains a puzzle. Institutional performance, particularly economic performance, may play a key role. One possibility is that social trust exerts indirect effects on political trust through performance. A second is that a direct relationship between the two types of trust exists, but it can be broken into periods of poor performance. The potentially mediating or moderating role of performance (economic and political) therefore needs to be explored further.

A second area for future research is to better identify the causal relations between social capital and political trust. For Tocqueville and Putnam, social capital leads to better functioning and more efficient democracy, which in turn improves the trustworthiness of political institutions. For the institutional school of social capital research, trustworthy political institutions are themselves generators of social capital. Yet, the existing body of work largely relies on cross-sectional, observational data that are poorly suited to isolating causal effects. Ideas need to be generated as to how to better tap the causal flow in this relationship. While experiments are a good beginning, they may miss the complex long-term influence of political and societal factors. Such experiments need to be replicated in several arenas and need to be complemented potentially by historical studies of how existing levels of social capital might have influenced the design of political institutions or vice versa. Furthermore, the so-called ‘free fall’ of political trust could be exploited so that we understand whether such developments also lead to a decline in social capital or not. Generally, political evaluations and political trust are more malleable than societal relations and generalized trust, which might give some evidence that the causal flow from political factors to society relations is stronger than the other way around.

Last, there is tentative evidence that disaggregating the measures of both social capital and political trust may reveal differences in how consistent and robust this association is empirically. On the one hand, the relationship between social capital and political trust may be stronger for certain branches of government (Richardson et al., 2001; Rothstein and Stolle, 2008) or for trust in political officials versus abstract political institutions (Owen and Dennis, 2001). On the other hand, of the various dimensions of social capital, social trust has received by far the most empirical scholarly attention. The role of associational activity and social networks, by comparison, has been understudied, despite some evidence suggesting that being part of certain social networks may be strongly associated with political trust (Rohrschneider and Schmitt-Beck, 2002), while membership in voluntary associations may only be weakly related (Bäck and Kestilä, 2009; Newton and Zmerli, 2011). Thus specific research designs that take on these challenges will be needed to ascertain the civic roots or correlates of political trust.

NOTES

1. We use the term ‘civic culture’ here as an important variant of political culture generally and as introduced by Almond and Verba in 1963. Based on this research, civic culture is closely intertwined with democracy and democratic outcomes (*ibid.*). It is a concept close to what Putnam called ‘civic community’ (1993) and should be distinguished from the concept of social capital, for example, which takes a much broader approach and includes all aspects of social interaction whether they are inclusive or exclusive, democratic or undemocratic (Coleman, 1990); see more below. In addition, this chapter does not focus on the broader term of ‘civil society’, which is a concept that goes beyond cultural elements to include political actors and organizations and examines their social autonomy and power with regard to the state, government and market.
2. Although the Putnam-based social capital literature uses the term generalized trust in order to denote its all-encompassing and abstract character, we will use social trust from now on in order to allow for a unifying language in the book. It should be clear though that by social trust we mean generalized trust.
3. Here civil society is used to refer to Tocqueville although Putnam’s book, which contains this citation, develops the term civic community.
4. The European Social Survey (ESS) and the Citizenship, Involvement, Democracy (CID) Survey.

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22. Political trust and the mass media

Ken Newton

INTRODUCTION

Two questions are central to the subject of the news media and trust, one concerning public trust in news sources, the other the trust or distrust generated by the news media in the public. Each is linked closely with the other and both are important in theory and practice. On the one hand, democracies require trustworthy sources of comprehensive, accurate and impartial news to inform the general public (Coleman, 2012). On the other, the more a news source is trusted the more it is likely to be believed and taken seriously, and the more effective it will be in informing citizens and helping them to make their own political decisions (Hovland et al., 1959; McGuire, 1985, 1986; Zaller, 1992, p. 205; Eagly and Chaiken, 1993; McGraw and Hubbard, 1996; Lupia and McCubbins, 1998; Miller and Krosnick, 2000; Mickiewicz, 2008, pp. 183–90). At the same time, however, the contemporary Western media are thought to play a major part in undermining democratic government and politics, either because they are biased or because they are sensational, superficial, inaccurate and concentrate on bad news.

Therefore, this chapter is divided into two main parts: the first examines patterns of trust and distrust in the media and their probable causes in Western societies; the second examines the extent to which the media *induce distrust* in their audiences and the probable consequences of this. The main focus is on political trust and the news media, but an adequate understanding of the political effects of the media must also take account of the media in general and especially its entertainment content. It has long been recognized that the entertainment media can have an important political significance, perhaps by distracting the population from its civic duties but also by helping to create a culture and society that is un conducive to democratic attitudes and behaviour (Holtz-Bacha, 1990; Bennett et al., 1999; Putnam, 2000; Norris, 2000a, pp. 221–46; Hooghe, 2002). It is also now known that social and political trust are closely interconnected and mutually interdependent (Freitag, 2003; Glanville and Paxton, 2007; Zmerli and Newton, 2008; Freitag and Bühlmann, 2009; Newton and Zmerli, 2011; see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton and Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle). And so the chapter will also consider the role of the non-political media for political trust. Last, the chapter deals only with established democracies. What happens in authoritarian and totalitarian societies is a different matter requiring a separate chapter of its own, although a study of how Russians view their TV news suggests that they are not as different from Western TV audiences as one might think (Mickiewicz, 2008).

TRUST IN THE MEDIA

Low, Declining and Mixed Patterns

General distrust of the news media is nothing new (Sternheimer, 2003, pp. 7–11) but a small flood of literature about it has appeared in recent times, much of it based on survey research. This shows a mixed and complex pattern of attitudes towards different media at different times in different countries. It is unwise to place much confidence in the exact figures for country comparisons because survey results vary according to methods, time and place. The questions asked also vary greatly in specifying trust, confidence, bias, accuracy or reliability of the news, press or the media, or in journalists, papers/newspapers or reporters. Even the term ‘news’ is ambiguous, and can elicit very different responses, as we will see later. This is a major problem in trying to pin down levels and trends in news media trust.

Nevertheless, six patterns seem to emerge from the data (see Tables 22.1–22.5). First, in spite of substantial variations the general impression is of substantial to rather high levels of distrust (Table 22.1).

Second, trust in the media is often declining. Polling reports in the USA and the UK are full of references to high and rising levels of distrust (e.g., Gallup, 12 July 2012; Gallup, 21 September 2012; Gallup, 7 December 2012; YouGov UK, 14 November 2010; Pew Research Center, 16 August 2012). Gallup polls show a fall in the USA from 72 per cent

Table 22.1 Trust in the media (%), 2015

	%
Netherlands	62
France	51
Italy	48
Canada	47
Spain	47
Germany	45
Russia	44
Australia	43
USA	43
Poland	42
UK	38
Ireland	34
Sweden	34
Japan	31

Notes:

Question: ‘Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right using a nine-point scale where 1 means that you do not trust them at all and 9 means that you trust them a great deal’. Scale 1 (no trust) to 9 (highest trust).

Percentage shares of those responding 6–9.

Source: 2015 Edelman Trust Barometer – Global Results, accessed 7 December 2015 at <http://www.slideshare.net/EdelmanInsights/2015-edelman-trust-barometer-global-results>.

in 1972 to 40 per cent in 2012 for trust in the 'old' media, and a decline in TV news from 46 per cent in 1993 to 27 per cent in 2012 (see also Ladd, 2010, p. 569). For newspapers the figures were 40 per cent in 1974 to 23 per cent in 2013 (Gallup, 13 August 2010, 10 July 2011 and 19 September 2011). A Pew Research Center survey in September 2011 found an increase in people believing that press reports are inaccurate from 34 to 66 per cent in the period from 1985 to 2011. In the same period, the belief that the press tends to favour one side rose from 53 to 77 per cent, and the idea that it is open to influence by powerful people and organizations rose from 55 to 80 per cent. As Sanford puts it (1999, p. 11), 'a canyon of disbelief and distrust has developed in the USA between the public and the news media'.

In the UK, trust in BBC journalists to tell the truth fell by 37 percentage points between 2003 and 2012 (Table 22.2). For ITV journalists the fall was 41 percentage points, for 'upmarket journalists' 27 percentage points, mid-market journalists 18 percentage points, and for tabloid journalists 4 percentage points.¹ Since only one in seven tabloid journalists enjoyed the trust of the public in 2003 there was little room for further decline.²

Third, there are differences between media types. The Standard Eurobarometer 78 (autumn 2012) shows that across the EU, radio is the most trusted (54 per cent in 2012), TV the next (48 per cent), and newspapers third (40 per cent). Internet trust at 35 per cent in 2012 is lower than the 'old' media. There are also substantial variations in this rank ordering from one country to another. In Spain and France, for example, the press, usually a poor third in the trust tables, is more highly regarded than TV, and in Belgium TV outranks radio. In Sweden, 80 per cent trust their radio, but in Turkey only 24 per cent do so and both TV and the Internet are more trusted than the radio.³

Fourth, further disaggregation shows substantial variations within media types. In the UK, for example, an Open Road and Populus survey in May 2012 found that the most widely read newspaper, the *Sun*, is the least trusted (9 per cent) compared with the other tabloids (13 to 22 per cent) and the five broadsheets (37 to 48 per cent). There is less

Table 22.2 Trust in different groups to tell the truth (%), UK 2003–12

	2003	2012	Change
Family doctors	93	82	-11
School teachers	88	70	-18
BBC news journalists	81	44	-37
ITV news journalists	82	41	-41
Broadsheet journalists	65	38	-27
Local MP	44	37	-7
Senior civil servants	26	21	-5
Mid-market journalists	36	18	-18
Tabloid journalists	14	10	-4

Notes:

Question: 'How much do you trust the following to tell the truth?'

Percentages reporting trust 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.

Source: YouGov UK, accessed 18 February 2012 at http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/syrrhatyofp/Trust_trends_Nov_2012.pdf.

Table 22.3 Trust in institutions (%), 2014

	Media	Business	Government	NGOs
Netherlands	60	54	60	67
Italy	40	49	24	62
Canada	58	62	51	67
Poland	30	45	19	47
Spain	40	38	18	59
USA	47	58	37	61
Australia	48	59	56	70
Germany	54	57	49	69
France	45	43	32	64
Sweden	41	51	63	47
UK	41	56	42	67
Japan	40	53	45	37
Ireland	37	41	21	58
Russia	35	45	27	41

Notes:

Question: 'Below is a list of institutions. For each one, please indicate how much you trust that institution to do what is right using a nine-point scale where 1 means that you do not trust them at all and 9 means that you trust them a great deal'. Scale 1 (no trust) to 9 (highest trust).

Percentage shares of those responding 6–9.

Source: 2015 Edelman Trust Barometer – Global Results, accessed 19 February 2015 at <http://www.edelman.com/insights/intellectual-property/2014-edelman-trust-barometer/trust-around-the-world/>.

difference between newspapers in the USA but the credibility ratings of local and cable news show a gap of up to 17 percentage points, with local TV news ahead of cable.⁴

Fifth, trust levels in the media and journalists are generally similar to those of many other major institutions and occupations. By and large media trust in Europe is generally higher than the ratings for government institutions but lower than the army, police and voluntary organizations (see Table 22.2 for the UK and Table 22.3 for other countries). However, other comparative data such as the European Values Study put confidence in the press very close to confidence in parliament and/or government, or in the case of established democracies even a bit lower. A GfK Verein survey of trust in 32 professions in 25 countries across the globe in 2014 finds that journalists rank in the bottom third of the table with an average of 61 per cent trusting in them. This compares with figures of 88 per cent or more for firefighters, nurses, doctors, teachers, but is still well above the figure of 31 per cent for insurance agents and politicians.⁵

Public Service and Commercial News Programmes

The sixth generalization about trust in the media concerns public service and commercial news sources. Evidence is thin and patchy because interest in the topic is relatively new and there are only a few cross-national comparative studies, but there are indications that public service TV and radio news elicit more trust than their commercial equivalents. A clear distinction between the two is difficult to draw because both influence each

other and many countries mix different proportions of public and private media. Mixed systems, unlike pure commercial ones, often use both content and market regulation of the news media in the public interest, and there may also be a degree of back door commercialization of the public sector in mixed systems because of the need to maintain audience figures. And, it must be said, the evidence is limited and the difference between the sectors is sometimes small. Nevertheless, there is evidence that BBC news in the UK has a higher trust rating (73 per cent) than the commercial channels (61 per cent), and much higher than the wholly commercial press (9 to 41 per cent).⁶ In Germany, public radio is the most trusted source of news (83 per cent). Trust in TV is higher in the mixed systems of Germany and the UK (59 per cent and 54 per cent respectively), where there is a large public service sector, than in the USA (22 per cent) where the commercial sector has 98 per cent of the market.⁷

Further evidence is found in a survey conducted in ten countries in 2006 that asked respondents, without prompting, to name the specific news sources they most trust.⁸ Most mentioned public service TV news in countries where there is a significant public service presence. In Germany, ARD (22 per cent of those who responded) and ZDF (7 per cent) topped the list and in the UK it was BBC news (32 per cent) with ITV second (8 per cent). In the USA, Fox, CNN and ABC were mentioned most without prompting, but their figures of 11, 11 and 4 per cent respectively were far below public service TV in Germany and the UK. Public Broadcasting Service of the USA in 2011 was rated for the seventh successive year as the most trustworthy institution among its national organizations.⁹

Even so, historical and political factors can undermine trust in the public service media, especially in states that were until recently totalitarian or authoritarian, where suspicion of state institutions is deep seated and trust in the new electronic media is sometimes comparatively high (Aleknonis, 2013; Cuvalo, 2013). Nor should it be forgotten that different media elicit different levels of trust in different sections of the population. In Estonia, the Estonian speaking population trusts the public service but Russian speakers do not (Kouts et al., 2013).

What Explains Low Trust in the Media?

The figures in Table 22.4, drawn from six surveys in the UK and USA between 2006 and 2011, indicate why media trust is low and declining. A majority in both countries, sometimes large majorities, believe their media are open to influence by powerful individuals and organizations, are biased, tend to lie, are too critical, inaccurate and contain too much bad news, and that government interferes with them too much. Large minorities believe that there is too much foreign influence. The same reasons emerge across a study of ten diverse countries where the same complaints are made about press inaccuracy concerning bias, too much government and foreign influence and too much bad news (Table 22.5).

This long and serious list of complaints strikes at the heart of fair, impartial and comprehensive news reporting, but nonetheless there are good reasons for claiming that the media alone are not at fault. The Western media generally reflect a wider pattern of low and declining trust in many occupational groups and key institutions in society, suggesting that media-specific and single-country explanations are not enough to explain low and declining trust in journalism. A case in point is the increasingly dismal view of the British media, which is often explained in terms of a long series of media controversies,

Table 22.4 Evaluations of the news media (%), USA and UK (2006–13)

	%
Often influenced by powerful people and organizations (USA)	80
Tend to favour one side (USA)	77
Sometimes/frequently lie (USA)	74
Tell lies sometimes/frequently/always (UK)	73
Try to cover up mistakes (USA)	72
Out of touch with average Americans (USA)	70
Report celebrities too much/too critically (UK)	70
Report politicians too much/too critically (UK)	69
Too many bad news stories (USA)	68
Often inaccurate (UK)	66
Don't care about people (USA)	63
Too many bad news stories (UK)	63
Dependent on powerful people and organizations (UK)	59
Government interferes too much (UK)	58
Often inaccurate (USA)	56
Dumbed down in recent years (UK)	55
Government interferes too much (USA)	52
Too much foreign influence (UK)	48
National media too liberal (USA)	45
Immoral (USA)	42
Too much foreign influence (USA)	42
Hurt democracy (USA)	42
Tell the truth some of the time/hardly ever (UK)	40

Note: The figures are drawn from the surveys below that cover single years from 2006 to 2013.

Sources: Globescan (2006), 'BBC/Reuters/Media Center poll: Trust in the media', http://www.globescan.com/news_archives/bbcrcut.html; Pew Research Center (2007), 'Internet news audience highly critical of news organizations', <http://people-press.org/report/348/internet-news-audience-highly-critical-of-news-organizations/>; Gallup (2011), 'Majority of Britons distrusted media before hacking scandal', <http://www.gallup.com/poll/148679/Majority-Britons-Distrusted-Media-Hacking-Scandal.aspx>; YouGov UK (2011), 'YouGov survey results', http://cdn.yougov.com/cumulus_uploads/document/77v8hckg2e/PBS%20Trust%20Report%20US%20tables%20formatted-HT_Embargoed%20to%2014111.pdf; PollingReport.com (2013), 'Journalism', <http://www.pollingreport.com/media.htm>; Populus/Open Road (2013), 'Power, principles and the press', www.theopen-road.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Power-principles-and-the-press-Open-Road-and-Populus.pdf. All accessed 18 February 2015.

including misreporting, chequebook journalism, abuse of individual privacy and rights, sensationalism, phone tapping, conflict with governments, and a series of headline-hitting scandals. But such events cannot be the whole or even the main part of the story because other institutions in the UK, and in other countries, have also fallen in a trough of distrust. Put this way, dissatisfaction with the media may tell us as much about other institutions as it does about the faults of journalism and the press.

Table 22.5 Attitudes towards the media (%), 2006

	Brazil	Egypt	Germany	India	Indonesia	Nigeria	Russia	South Korea	United Kingdom	USA
The media reports the news accurately	51	73	58	76	92	76	54	64	51	51
The media reports all sides of a story	49	59	41	69	88	63	64	48	32	29
There is too much foreign influence in the media in our country	77	48	34	58	53	46	30	71	48	42
The government interferes too much in the media in our country	64	49	32	56	59	75	49	71	58	52
The media covers too many bad news stories	80	59	62	55	44	30	58	69	63	68
Journalists are able to report the news freely, without interference from owners	48	41	33	42	69	47	25	33	45	38
The media is too critical of government and business leaders in our country	62	52	24	51	68	56	16	58	48	48
I trust the international media more than the national media in our country	30	43	19	35	20	41	9	33	47	55
I value the growing opportunity to get the news and information I want using the latest Internet and wireless technology	44	40	15	28	17	27	10	39	29	32

Notes:

Question: 'Please tell me if you strongly agree, somewhat agree, somewhat disagree or strongly disagree with each of the following statements'. Percentages reporting 'strongly agree' or 'somewhat agree'.

Source: Globescan (2006), 'BBC/Reuters/Media Center poll: Trust in the media', accessed 18 February 2015 at http://www.globescan.com/news_archives/bbereut.html.

The Hostile Media Effect

One media-specific explanation of media distrust that seems to carry weight is the hostile media effect, referring to the tendency of those with strong beliefs to regard news reports as critical of their own views. A study of the 1992 US presidential election found that many Republicans believed their paper favoured Clinton, but Democrats believed it favoured Bush (Dalton et al., 1998, p. 120). In neither case was there a close alignment between what readers believed and what the papers actually said, as shown by content analysis. Another much quoted study presented pro-Palestinian and pro-Israeli students with the same video report of a massacre of Palestinian refugees (Vallone et al., 1985). Both sides thought the report was loaded against their own views. The hostile media effect has been detected in studies of international events, domestic affairs and sport (Vallone et al., 1985; Giner-Sorolla and Chaiken, 1993; Gunther and Mughan, 2000; Christen et al., 2002; Coe et al., 2008; Gunther et al., 2009).

Although the hostile media effect seems to be a media-specific phenomenon, it may also be a particular example of something more general. It is not uncommon for people to see the tax system as biased against them, to believe the law discriminates against their perfectly reasonable behaviour, to claim that welfare rules are unfair to them, to be convinced that they benefit less than others from public services, to hold that they are victims while others are exploiters, to believe that they are in the right and others in the wrong and to protest that immigrants and minorities are unjustly privileged. The hostile media effect is much the same as the referee's decisions that caused your team to lose Saturday's game, or the police officer who picked on your (minor) traffic violation, ignoring all the (major) ones around you.

Why Do People Watch and Read News Sources They Do Not Trust?

At around 14 per cent, trust in the UK's *Sun* could barely be lower but the paper sells around 2.3 million copies a day, the largest in Europe after the German tabloid *Bild*. This is consistent with Tsafati and Cappella (2005) finding a weak association between distrust and consumption of the news media, which leads them to ask 'Why do people watch news they do not trust?' The answer, they say, is that people watch TV news for a host of different reasons, one of which is a liking for thought, discussion and argument. This 'need for cognition' (NFC) interacts with other variables to influence news watching habits. Their research finds that those with NFC are relatively unaffected by their low trust in the news media and consume comparatively large doses of it. In fact among those with extremely high cognitive needs, news consumption increases with distrust of the media. The result is that low trust does not necessarily lead to abandoning the news media.

Whatever its origins and causes, distrust of the media may have consequences for the strength of its influence over public opinion and behaviour. If confidence in a source of information is a necessary condition for it being taken seriously, absorbed and acted upon then what does low and declining trust tell us about the claim that the media in general, and the news media in particular, have a powerful influence over the attitudes and behaviour of the population? This leads to the second part of the chapter.

DO THE MEDIA UNDERMINE POLITICAL TRUST?

The Difficulties of Media Effects Research

Before plunging into the highly controversial literature on media effects a few words of caution are necessary to explain why research results on this topic are mixed and inconclusive, not to say confusing. Perhaps the first point to make is that grand generalizations about ‘the media’ or ‘the news media’ are always likely to be misleading or wrong. Quality newspapers may have one set of effects, the tabloid press another; soap operas may have a different impact compared with TV news; and each may have different audiences and different effects on people in them. In this sense there is no such thing as ‘the media’ and ‘media effects’, only different media with different effects on different people.

Another acute difficulty is that of establishing causes and effects (Zaller, 1996, p. 17). Individuals self-select the media they attend to and the media seek out audiences with particular needs and values, so which is chicken and which is egg? In the best of all possible worlds, control groups, time series, multilevel and panel studies would be used to unravel cause-and-effect relationships, but until comparatively recently cross-sectional, single-country, individual-level studies have made up a large proportion of research. The problem is made more difficult by the fact that television, still the most important single medium, permeates the whole of Western society, with 95 to 99 per cent household saturation; so a sizeable control group of people who shun TV is all but impossible to assemble.

There is also a problem with survey data on news watching. Markus Prior (2009a, 2009b) compares the results of survey-based, self-reported exposure to national network news in the USA (the National Annenberg Election Survey of 2004) with Nielsen Media Research ratings based on people meters attached to the TV sets of a random sample of 5000 US households. Nielsen ratings avoid the worst survey problems of memory error and over-estimation and Prior reports that between 30 and 35 million watch the weekday evening news according to them, compared with Annenberg’s 85–110 million. Prior concludes there is doubt about studies of media effects based on self-reported survey data.

Another problem is how respondents interpret questions about the ‘news’. One US survey asks what type of news respondents follow ‘very closely’ and finds that the weather tops the list (52 per cent), followed by crime (28 per cent), sport (26 per cent) and health (23 per cent). Local government comes sixth (21 per cent), with politics and Washington news seventh (17 per cent) and international news tenth (14 per cent). If the non-political topics of ‘news’ are added together they come to four times the total of political ones.¹⁰ When asked the general and vague question where they get their news, 25 per cent of American adults state they regularly or sometimes get it from social network sites,¹¹ but when they were asked specifically about the 2012 presidential campaign the figures fell to 6 per cent for Facebook, 3 per cent for YouTube and 2 per cent for Twitter. Political scientists assume ‘the news’ is about politics, but most others, it seems, think it is about the weather, crime, sport and celebrity gossip.

Experimental Research

Given the problems of sorting out cause and effect where the media are involved, there is a lot to be said for starting with experimental research (see also Chapter 8 by Wilson

and Eckel). From the point of view of the present concern with trust, experimental work makes two points of great importance. First, investigations of what is variously termed heuristics, cognitive bias or motivated reasoning show that many of us – perhaps most, or even all of us – have an elaborate set of mental mechanisms we deploy to preserve our opinions, attitudes and values in the face of evidence to the contrary. This conclusion is based on large volume of published work accumulated over the past 40 years and is excellently summarized and documented in Cordelia Fine's (2006) book *A Mind of its Own: How Your Brain Distorts and Deceives*. The result of our ability to preserve our beliefs, even in the face of overwhelming counter-evidence, is that the power of the media to inform, mould or change public opinion can be limited by powerful psychological forces.

The second and closely related observation is that individuals can react differently to the same message from the same source, depending on their knowledge and preformed opinions about it. An example in the case of political trust is the theory that uncivil, 'in-your-face' politics and journalism has the effect of increasing political distrust (Mutz and Reeves, 2005; Mutz, 2015). But incivility in television interviews depends on viewers' expectations, so that what is uncivil for some is appropriate for others. Besides, interviews thought to be 'too civil' can also reduce trust (Ben-Porath, 2010). Similarly Jackson's (2010) study of the impact of strategic news finds no evidence of a spiral of cynicism, only of a spiral of cynicism for those who are less engaged and knowledgeable. How people react to high-conflict news and incivility in political discussion is dependent upon the moderating influence of their own ideology and partisanship (Forgette and Morris, 2006; De Vreese and Elenbaas, 2008). Experimental results such as these are confirmed by evidence from the wider world. For example, using panel studies Avery (2009) concludes that the distrusting do not become more distrusting as a result of exposure to the news, but the trusting do so, but only for newspaper, not television news.

It does not follow that the news media have no effect on trust, only that their effects are contingent on the moderating and mediating characteristics of their audiences and that, in turn, the effect on these variables is contingent on the source and content of the message. This makes it difficult to generalize broadly about the effects of the media on trust, and suggests that it is easy to exaggerate and oversimplify their impact. Nor should it be assumed that media-induced attitudes are necessarily translated into political behaviour. The cynical and distrustful are no less likely to vote than others (Valentino et al., 2001; De Vreese and Semetko, 2002).

Such conclusions are stock-in-trade of experimental psychology but they do not sit comfortably with a very large literature on media malaise.

Media Malaise

In spite of the difficulties at the heart of media effects research there is a widely held belief that the mass media cause, among many other things, a general sense of distrust in society, not least in politicians, politics, governments and democracy itself. Seven main factors are said to be responsible for media-induced malaise. First, a long string of publications dating back 50 years claims that concentration on bad news produces the 'mean world effect', which results in a mood of distrust, fear, cynicism, alienation and low subjective competence (Lang and Lang, 1969; Robinson, 1975, 1976; Ranney, 1983; Gerbner et al.,

1984; Sabato, 1991; Patterson, 1994; Schudson, 1995; Cappella and Jamieson, 1996; Morgan and Shanahan, 1996; Fallows, 1997; Kalb, 1998; Dautrich and Hartley, 1999; Moy and Pfau, 2000). Second, this is compounded by negative election campaigning and uncivil behaviour on the part of politicians (Mutz and Reeves, 2005; Lau et al., 2007). Third, periodic 'feeding frenzies of attack journalism' create an unhealthy cynicism and distrust of political leaders and democratic institutions (Ranney, 1983, pp. 147–50; Hallin, 1991, p. 64; Patterson, 1994, pp. 147–74; Meyrowitz, 1995, p. 133). Fourth, by pulling people out of the community and its voluntary associations and isolating them in their living rooms, television erodes civic engagement and the values of reciprocity, cooperation and trust (Patterson, 1994; Franklin, 1994, pp. 131, 151; Maarek, 1995, p. 225; Putnam, 1995; Schudson, 1995; Entmann, 1995, p. 153; Pfetsch, 1996; Fallows, 1997). Fifth, driven by fierce competition for audiences and by the ethos of the giant multinational, multimedia corporations, the mass media concentrate on a type of entertainment that, together with the ceaseless flow of advertising, promotes individualism, materialism, as well as a 'wannabe' culture of wealth, narcissism and mindless celebrity that undermines a civic culture of cooperation and trust (Hachten, 1998). Sixth, Postman (1985) claims that television, by virtue of its very nature as a series of colourful, moving images, is condemned to do nothing but amuse and entertain. Seventh, television and political marketing techniques have turned politics into show business that broadcasts bogus public discourse in a superficial, sensational and often inaccurate way (Habermas, 1979; Hart, 1994; Franklin, 1994; Dahlgren, 1995; Maarek, 1995; Gabler, 1998; Winter, 2007).

Malaise theory covers all forms of media, new and old, but its strongest form is reserved for television, making the case that both its form and content are responsible for the erosion of both social and political trust.

News and Entertainment Media

A few social scientists disagree with malaise theory and find little evidence to support it. Norris (1996) fails to find an empirical link between TV and low social and political trust, a conclusion she confirms in a more wide-ranging comparative study of Europe and the USA (Norris, 2000a, pp. 233–53, 288–9; 2000b). Instead of low trust, she finds evidence for a virtuous circle in which attention to election campaign communications and individual feelings of political trust are mutually reinforcing.

The same conclusion emerges from a British study of media use (newspapers and television) and trust in public officials (Newton, 1999). The results show no statistically significant association between watching TV news and political distrust or cynicism, while reading a broadsheet paper is strongly associated with political trust and also more weakly but significantly associated with low political cynicism (see also Lee et al., 2003). Nor is there evidence in this study of videomalaise among those who might be thought to fall into the news. On the contrary, tabloid readers who are less well educated and less well informed about politics than quality newspaper readers show no signs of distrust or political cynicism, even though they watch more TV news than *Guardian* readers, who have the highest educational qualifications of newspaper readers in the UK. Several other studies fail to find an association between news media consumption and indicators of political and social malaise (Shah, 1998; Bennett et al., 1999; Gruber, 2001; Kouts et al., 2013; Cuvalo, 2013).

This, however, does not let TV off the malaise hook, for others have uncovered a link, albeit a rather weak and patchy statistical association, between low trust and watching a lot of TV and especially watching a lot of entertainment TV. Since those who watch a lot of TV also watch a lot of entertainment TV, the two are closely connected, though it seems from some research that it is entertainment TV that does the damage (Holtz-Bacha, 1990; Bennett et al., 1999; Norris, 2000a; Holtz-Bacha and Norris, 2001; Hooghe, 2002; Schmitt-Beck and Wolsing, 2010).

Overall, therefore, we have a complex and confusing set of research findings: watching a lot of TV and a lot of entertainment TV seems to be modestly associated with low political and social trust; watching a lot of TV news is rather more strongly associated with high political trust; reading a serious newspaper is also associated with higher political trust; those who watch a lot of TV also tend to watch a lot of TV news but do not seem to suffer from the media malaise that Robinson claims for those who fall into the news. In most cases, however, research finds a rather weak link between any form of media consumption and social and political trust. That is, even where TV seems to have an effect it is generally a rather small one compared to more powerful influences such as education, class, interest in politics, partisanship and party identification, all of which seem to be more powerful drivers of social and political attitudes.

Postman (1985) argues strongly that TV is like a child's toy, catching the eye and holding attention because it is a moving, brightly coloured image that can only entertain and never educate. The argument is appealing but the evidence suggests that TV news can inform and educate and does raise the level of political information and trust. However, the evidence also suggests that Postman is right to claim that the printed news has a stronger effect than TV news, at least insofar as those who read a serious newspaper are more politically trusting and much better informed than those who read no paper at all. TV news seems to have a weak effect on knowledge and trust for the large number of TV watchers, whereas serious newspapers have a stronger effect on a much smaller number of people. Therefore, it is both media form (TV and print) and media content (news or entertainment) that matter.

All these findings try to take account of the social and political variables that are commonly associated with both media exposure and social and political attitudes. Nonetheless, there are problems here for social science methodology and statistical analysis. Controlling for all the many facets and effects of class, income, ethnicity and education is not easy. They are powerful forces with many diverse effects and even the most watertight research design cannot guarantee that controls for them cut off every aspect of their influence.

The finding that entertainment TV is associated with political distrust presents us with a further puzzle. In one of the very few close examinations of different kinds of TV programmes, Hooghe's (2002) Belgian study throws light on this question. He identifies 14 different types of programmes labelled sport, news and current affairs, talk shows, movies, soaps, quizzes, dating programmes, comedy, hospital series, crime, science fiction, cartoons, modern music and classical music. Principal component analysis reveals three main factors, the first labelled 'soaps', which loads heavily on soap operas, quizzes, dating programmes, and comedy and hospital series. The second, 'movies', loads on science fiction, movies and cartoons, and the third, 'news', covers news, current affairs and classical music. There is a significant association between the 'soap' factor and what Hooghe

terms ‘a mean world syndrome’ of insecurity or threat. This is not social trust exactly, but closely related to it, and the interesting thing is that the ‘soap’ factor is the only one significantly associated with it. Neither the time spent watching TV nor the ‘movie’ nor ‘news’ factors have a significant association with mean world attitudes.

It is not difficult to imagine that bad news and murder, crime, horror and disaster movies might create a mood of insecurity and threat, but soaps, quizzes, dating programmes and comedies? Hooghe suggests that either the habitual watchers of soap operas become isolated and alienated from real life or else that people who are afraid of crime in their neighbourhood prefer to stay in the safety of their home and watch TV. But in this case, why do those who spend a lot of time watching movies, crime series, science fiction and cartoons not develop feelings of threat and insecurity because they are removed from the real world, and why do those who are already afraid of crime choose to stay at home and watch soap operas rather than movies or sport? One answer might be that those who are already given to fears, insecurity and feelings of threat choose the safety of their own living rooms to avoid the crime-infested streets of their neighbourhood. They escape from the world with the comforting domestic dramas of soap operas, rather than crime, horror and disaster movies that would feed their fears. In which case, it is not TV that induces fear and insecurity but rather the fearful and insecure who use TV to escape their worries. Perhaps it is no coincidence that Brazil, with a murder rate 35 times that of Switzerland has one of the largest per capita soap opera audiences in the world?

Having made this point about channels and programmes, it should also be noted that the impact of media variables in much media effects research appears to be comparatively small even when statistically significant. In Hooghe’s regressions on ‘individualism’ (defending one’s own interests rather than the need for solidarity and cooperation), a group of four individual socioeconomic variables explains 24 per cent of the variance, while three of his four media variables (time watching television, soaps, movies and news factors) account for only an additional 3 per cent.

Priming, Framing and Agenda Setting

Miller and Krosnick (2000) also find that media trust plays a crucial role in priming, framing and agenda setting. Standard theory on these processes is that if, for example, the news is full of reports about unemployment or corruption then these matters will be most accessible in people’s minds and in the forefront of their memories when they evaluate government performance (Iyengar and Kinder, 1987). Miller and Krosnick (2000, p. 302) point out that the ‘accessibility hypothesis’ has important implications for media power because it assumes that individuals make political judgements not by conscious choice but in an automatic fashion according to what the media implant in their minds. Miller and Krosnick suggest a different process – inference based upon trust. Those who trust a news source are likely to take note of what it claims to be politically important, and the distrusting are less likely to follow its lead. However, trust alone is not enough. To be able to follow the media agenda, it is also necessary to understand the news, to store its content and implications and retrieve this information at a later time. Therefore, a combination of trust and political knowledge and understanding could be a powerful mixture.

Miller and Krosnick’s experimental evidence finds little support for the accessibility hypothesis. Instead their results point to a combination of trust and political knowledge

that facilitates priming: knowledge is important for understanding and information retrieval; trust makes news more persuasive and is a cue for sorting out the complexities of political debate. Their study suggests that both trust and knowledge determine who responds to priming, framing and agenda setting and why they do so. This puts media power in a different perspective, suggesting that individuals are not victims of what the media place in their minds, but make conscious choices about what to trust and distrust. They use news sources that they trust and they select what they trust based on a foundation of political knowledge. This is an example of heuristics and the use of mental shortcuts, but heuristics with conscious and informed intent (see also Chapter 12 by Rudolph).

Trust and Partisanship

The greater the mistrust in the news media the more likely voters are to fall back on their partisan predispositions when evaluating political events and opinions. Consequently, growing distrust of the media is likely to increase the already strong influence of partisanship. The problem is that media distrust is part of a growing distrust of a wide range of other institutions, including parties, in which case declining trust in parties, politicians and the media leaves the average voters without directions to help guide them through the political maze. Nor is it clear what the political consequences of this will be, perhaps political disillusionment, confusion and withdrawal, perhaps a rise of visceral conviction and beliefs (creationism, racism, prejudice), perhaps subjectivism of the 'I only know what I believe' kind, or perhaps the rise of other institutions and cultural cues that replace parties and the media to help guide individuals through the political maze?

Public Service, Commercial and Mixed Media Systems

Most research on media effects concentrates on what might be called the demand side of the equation – that is, on the audiences receiving media messages, the way in which they self-select the news content they prefer, and the way in which they absorb these messages according to priming, framing and agenda-setting theories. Until recently, research has largely overlooked the supply side of the equation – the agencies that supply news and political opinion, particularly the differences between public service, commercial and mixed news broadcasting.

In general, public service TV channels and radio stations devote proportionately more time to news and political discussion, are more likely to broadcast these at peak viewing times, and are more likely to concentrate on hard and international news (Blumler and Gurevitch, 1995, pp. 169–71; Humphreys, 1996, pp. 116–22; Pfetsch, 1996; Brants and Siune, 1998; Norris, 2000a, pp. 104–11; Hooghe, 2002). This may account for Dimock and Popkin's (1997) evidence that Germany and the UK have comparatively well-informed populations because they have a quality press and public service news stations. The same conclusion emerges from Swedish and Belgian studies (Hooghe, 2002, p. 85) and all four countries contrast with the USA and its poorly informed population, poor local press and poor commercial TV and radio.

In the last decade or so, cross-national comparative research has found that not only is trust in public service news greater than its commercial counterpart, but also that public service broadcasting is associated with higher levels of social trust, political knowledge,

voting turnout and civic awareness (Curran et al., 2009; Iyengar et al., 2010; Gunther and Mughan, 2000). It also finds that public service broadcasting has a positive ‘rainmaker’ effect on social trust (Schmitt-Beck and Wolsing, 2010), which opens up the question of whether it has the same effect on political trust.

This adds a new and important dimension to media effects research on the supply side of the equation that is not much explored. Not all public service systems are the same, however, and it may be that the positive political effects of their news programmes vary according to whether they are broadcast at peak viewing hours, the proportion of their income coming from the public purse, their independence from government and the size of their audiences. Future research might look at whether these sorts of variables are associated with the trust vested in public service news and whether this has a feedback effect on trust in politicians and the institutions of government.

The Fox News Effect and Political Polarization

One aspect of the supply of news that has caught attention is the way in which the new electronic media have fragmented news media systems. Once Europeans tuned into public service stations as their main or only sources of TV and radio news, or relied on the three main terrestrial news channels (ABC, NBC, CBS) in the USA. Now they can access hundreds of cable news channels, radio stations, newspapers and desktop publications, in addition to millions of political websites. This, it is argued, allows political partisans to confine themselves to sources of news and opinion that echo their own opinions. Fox News in the USA is usually picked out as the prime example of how partisan cable news channels allow individuals to self-select their news in order to cocoon themselves in an echo chamber of their own opinions. This gives rise to the worry that partisan cable news channels will reinforce distrust of mainstream politics and politicians and lead to a polarization of the electorate.

Once again, the best evidence we have suggests otherwise. In his essay on the topic, Prior (2013) points out that, a small body of partisans apart, the American electorate has not polarized in recent times. He observes that media persuasion does not happen easily, and that partisan political messages can have effects other than polarization. In any case, audiences for partisan cable news channels are relatively small and most of those who watch them also get news from other partisan and non-partisan sources. Heavy users of Fox News are selective, it is true, but they constitute about 5 per cent of the adult population. The other 95 per cent is either moderate in its politics or bored by them. Prior suggests that partisan sources of news have not caused polarization, rather they have caught up with the polarization that already existed.

CONCLUSION

It has long been known that trust in a source of information is a crucial determinant of its capacity to influence opinions and behaviour. This raises important empirical and theoretical questions about public trust in the news media as a necessary element in democratic government, and about whether the modern media undermine trust in democratic government. It has proved exceedingly difficult to answer some of these questions

not least because the media and their audience are engaged in a set of complicated and interdependent relationships that involve an equally complicated and confusing array of causes and effects. What we do know, however, is that some of the many claims of the power of the mass media to inform and mould public opinion and behaviour, including a sense of political trust and confidence, does not sit easily with the conclusion of a huge weight of experimental social psychology on communications effects. This shows that most individuals with strong values and beliefs are not easily persuaded to change them, even in the face of overwhelming counter-evidence and argument.

Nevertheless, there are important but untouched areas of research that are amenable to empirical investigation. We know that the media cover and dramatize a lot of bad news because it sells, but we also know that crime, death, war, ethnic cleansing, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, corruption, government failures and nuclear accidents are features of the real world. What we do not know is whether distrust and insecurity is caused mainly by the real world or by the way the media dwell on and present the bad news about it. We also know that the better educated and politically knowledgeable often select the most trustworthy sources of news and opinion, and it is not difficult to imagine why they do so, but we have little knowledge about the mindset of millions of tabloid readers and how they judge and evaluate the contents of their papers and of tabloid television news. It is remarkable that millions regularly read a low-quality, tabloid paper every day, but apart from a few demographic characteristics, we know little about them – why they choose their paper, what they attend to in it, and how this might affect them consciously, unconsciously or subconsciously. We know that many individuals regularly gather news and opinion from newspapers, TV, radio and increasingly from the web, but we know little about whether these combine to provide a balanced diet of comprehensive, accurate and impartial news, or whether it results in an inaccurate, partial and biased account of events, short on hard news about national and international developments, perhaps long on gossip, prejudice, assumptions and conventional wisdom. There are important questions about the pluralism of news sources available in the modern world and the pluralist news-gathering behaviour of media audiences that would not be too difficult to tackle with empirical methods and data available.

For that matter, there is ample survey evidence about who regularly uses broad categories of news sources (radio, TV, papers, weeklies and journals, the web) but we do not know what respondents have in mind by the word ‘news’ – news about politics seems to come well down the list after sport, the weather, gossip, crime and health. We know from recent research that public service broadcasting with its hard and international news content is often associated with higher levels of trust and political knowledge, but we do not yet have a clear understanding of why public services have these effects and why they vary in their strength from one country to another. We also know that there is slight and patchy evidence connecting commercial and entertainment media with low trust, among other symptoms of media malaise, but we do not know which of the many different kinds of entertainment – sport, comedy, soap operas, reality shows, nature programmes, drama, crime series, horror movies, and so on – are most strongly associated with malaise and why. The finding that soap operas appear to do the damage simply throws up the question of cause and effect.

And last, we know that the quality of a large portion of the news and entertainment media is poor, sometimes appallingly low, but is it right to assume that this has a

correspondingly damaging effect on individual citizens and the collective culture? The fact that the *Sun* is the least trusted national daily paper in Britain might suggest that it has little impact on its readers' political opinions, a suggestion supported by the persistent failure of research to find that it has much, if any, effect on its readers' voting patterns. Possibly the *Sun* has a larger impact on attitudes than behaviour, but that too waits on further research.

It is, of course, eminently plausible to claim that the media are a cause, if not the prime cause, of a great many ailments in modern society, but it is equally difficult to show that they are or are not responsible for such things. It is certainly tempting to shoot the messenger, especially when the messenger presents the worst possible news in the worst possible way, and no less tempting to speculate, assume and assert when hard evidence is scarce and theoretical and methodological problems are legion, and developments in digital technology outpace research. In the meantime, it seems that there is a fair way to go before we have a hard-headed and convincing appraisal of media effects on social and political trust.

NOTES

1. ITV is the main commercial TV channel in the UK but its news programmes and those of the BBC are regulated in the public interest in the same way, which is why they are comparable in this respect.
2. 'Upmarket' refers mainly to the broadsheet papers (*Times*, *Telegraph*, *Guardian*, *Independent* and *Financial Times*), 'mid-market' to the *Mail* and *Express*, and 'tabloid' to the *Sun* and *Mirror*.
3. The table on which this paragraph is based covers ten institutions and 15 countries and is too large to present here, but can be found at http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/eb/eb78/eb78_en.htm, accessed 7 December 2015.
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PART III

POLITICAL TRUST ACROSS THE GLOBE

23. Political trust in North America*

Russell J. Dalton

INTRODUCTION

Citizens of the United States of America have always had a love–hate relationship with their government. The nation was formed through a revolution, and deep-seated skepticism of government has been an enduring part of the political culture (Lipset, 1996; Citrin, 2008). Anthony King, for instance, wrote of ‘Americans’ long-standing and well-known proneness to be suspicious of government. Americans are almost certainly suspicious of government today because Americans have always been suspicious of government’ (1999, p. 78). At the same time, there is a well-developed belief about the United States as an exceptionally blessed nation, beginning with John Winthrop’s sermon in 1630 describing America as a shining city on a hill, and down to the present in the rhetoric of contemporary politicians. This contrast is perhaps no better illustrated than by President Ronald Reagan, who castigated government as the source of the nation’s problems in one speech while harking back to the shining city imagery in another speech.

Although this tension has been a continuing feature throughout American history, the dominant view in the mid-twentieth century was that distinctly positive opinions toward government were an important feature of America’s political culture. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba (1963) argued that such trustful, allegiant political norms were essential to a stable, effective democracy (also Stokes, 1962). Lacking such trust, political cooperation and democratic compromise might fail, as seen in the fascist reactions to the Great Depression in Germany and Italy.

Thus, the first evidence of declining political trust in the USA during the last third of the twentieth century created considerable academic and political concern (Crozier et al., 1975). Occurring in parallel with the crises and political scandals of the 1960s and 1970s – Vietnam, urban unrest, and Watergate – Americans’ trust in their politicians sank steadily lower. Trust fluctuated over subsequent administrations, but was generally eroding with the passage of time. Even the end of the Cold War and the dramatic economic gains of the late 1990s saw only marginal increases in public evaluations of government. Today, several indicators of trust in government and confidence in political institutions stand at historic low points. These trends have stimulated a chorus of voices claiming that American democracy is at risk.

Canada has followed a similar downward trajectory despite its different political history and social circumstances (Kanji, 2002). A variety of indicators from the Canadian Election Study (CES) track a decline in political trust since the 1960s. By the summer of 2014 roughly a third of Canadians had pride in their political system and only a fifth expressed respect for political institutions (EnviroNomics Institute, 2014, p. 21). This same study concludes that Canadians ‘think much less of the political system and institutions, with trust in both Parliament and the Prime Minister more negative than positive’ (*ibid.*, p. 4).

Declining trust in government has spread across almost all advanced industrial democracies since the 1960s/1970s (also see Dalton, 2004, 2012; Norris, 2011). Regardless of political history, electoral system, or style of government, most contemporary publics are less trustful of government than they were in the era of their grandparents. This suggests that the sources of political change are not unique to any one nation's history or circumstances, but a general feature of these societies. And since this volume has stressed the importance of political trust for the democratic process, understanding this trend is important to understanding the role of political trust in the political process.

Having realized that distrust is spreading across affluent democracies, many political analysts express concerns about the fate of democracy. For example, the editor of *The Economist*'s forecast for 2015 recounted this evidence of spreading political distrust. Then he boldly stated 'the West's malaise is dangerous. The failure of democracy to get things done will lead to questions about other features of an open society, such as freedom of the press, free markets, and relatively open borders' (Micklethwait, 2014, p. 20). Academic researchers have echoed this same pessimism (Macedo et al., 2005; Wolfe, 2006). Is the future so dark?

This chapter has three objectives. I begin by summarizing the evidence from public opinion polls showing that trust in government is decreasing in the United States and Canada. Second, I discuss the range of theories and research that have attempted to explain the declining trust in politicians, parties, and political institutions. Third, I examine the present-day distribution of political trust among citizens in both nations. The chapter concludes with a brief discussion of these implications of the trends for these two nations.

THE TRENDS OVER TIME

The first step in this chapter is to describe the trends in political trust over time. There are multiple levels of political support, and the time trends can differ across levels (for a discussion of the different dimensions of political support see Easton, 1975; Norris, 1999; Klingemann, 1999; Dalton, 2004; Chapter 2 by Norris in this volume). Like others in this volume I focus on trust in politicians, government, and political institutions. If democratic politics is a social contract between citizens and their government, then such a contract builds upon the citizens' implicit trust that elites will represent their interests. In addition, as trust in politicians and government began to erode, this raised the question of whether dissatisfaction would generalize to the institutions and norms of democratic governance as well. Distrust in institutions is seen as a sign of a more fundamental dissatisfaction not just with the incumbents of office, but with the institutions themselves. Thus, trust in politicians, government, and political institutions has been at the center of research on political support.¹

Another important issue is the time frame for comparison. Political reporting in the media often focuses on the most recent opinion polls or the most novel findings. Because trust is so fundamental to the discourse on the political culture of democracies, this chapter takes a longer-term perspective. To the extent possible, I track political trust over decades to put the present into a larger context. Moreover, it is widely argued that the 1950s and 1960s were a halcyon time of satisfied and supportive publics in the United States and Britain (and Canada), which provided a solid foundation for democratic

politics (Almond and Verba, 1963). I can only tell if this pattern has changed by taking a long-term perspective. Furthermore, the changes in political trust do not follow a straight line. They are notable because there are large declines over an extended period of time, and so I track these opinions to the present. Examining only recent shorter time series can miss the larger reality of how political cultures are changing.

Trust in Government

The most extensive evidence on political trust comes from the United States with its long series of the American National Election Studies (ANES) (Figure 23.1). While the items in this long time series have become the conventional measures of trust in government in the United States, they differ somewhat from the approach set out in this Handbook (see Chapter 2 by Norris). Below, I will also focus on trust in various institutions. The early readings in the 1950s and early 1960s described a largely supportive public. In 1958, most Americans believed that officials care what people think (71 percent) and that one can trust the government to do what is right (71 percent). These positive feelings remained relatively unchanged until the mid-1960s.

Beginning at about the time of the crises and political scandals of the 1960s and 1970s – Vietnam, urban unrest, and Watergate – Americans' trust in their politicians sank steadily lower. In 1979, President Jimmy Carter warned that declining public confidence 'was a fundamental threat to American democracy'. The upbeat presidency of Ronald Reagan temporarily improved Americans' image of politics. By the end of the Reagan–Bush era, however, trust in government was as low as it had been in 1980. These indicators hit historic lows in 1994 during the Clinton administration, and then partially improved by 2000. Yet even with the unprecedented economic growth of the 1990s and the consolidation of democracy around the globe, Americans' political trust rebounded only to the levels of Reagan's first administration. Political trust briefly spiked upward after the September 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States but soon faded. By the

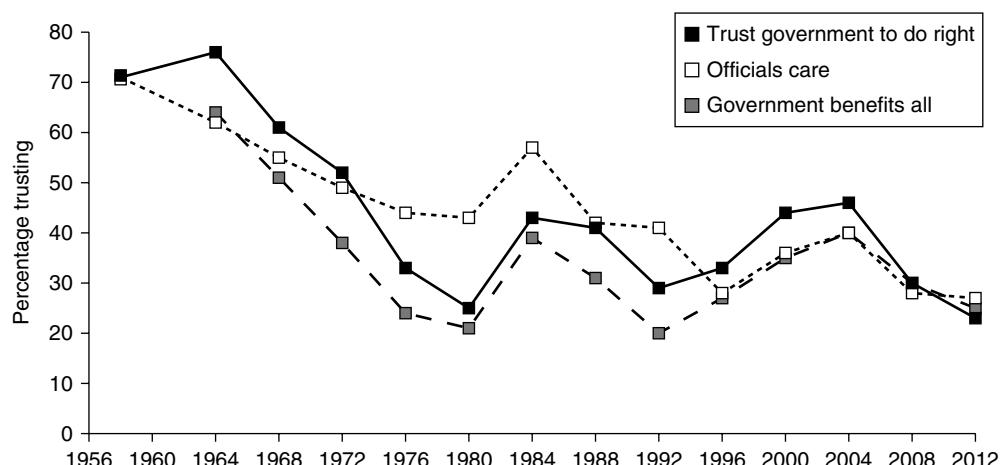


Figure 23.1 Declining trust in government in the United States

2008 elections, trust had decreased to the levels of the early 1990s, and it declined to a new low point in 2012.

Virtually all long-term public opinion series show similar downward trends (Nye et al., 1997; Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). For example, since 1966 the Harris Poll asked, 'The people running the country don't really care what happens to you'. In 1966, only 29 percent shared this opinion; in 2013, a full 85 percent thought politicians didn't care. The Pew Research Center (2010) studied attitudes toward government in 2010 and concluded, 'By almost every conceivable measure Americans are less positive and more critical of government these days'. Polls by *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* follow the same trajectory. The trustful American public of the 1950s and 1960s has been replaced by a citizenry who is skeptical of political elites and the government.

American politics scholars see these trends and often explain them in terms of the specific and unique events of American history over this period. Certainly the 1960s' conflict over civil rights, the war in Vietnam, and the Watergate scandal played a role in reshaping Americans' views of their government. However, Americans' doubts about their politicians and political institutions have parallels with their neighbors to the north.

Canada did not suffer through the conflicts over Vietnam and race that divided Americans in the 1960s, and was obviously untouched by Watergate and the scandals of the Nixon administration. Although there were occasional scandals involving Canadian politicians over the past several decades, there was not the long series ranging from Watergate to Monica Lewinsky and impeachment charges against Bill Clinton. And many of the supposed institutional ills of American government – divided government, the imperial presidency, weak political parties, and campaign finance excesses – do not apply to the Canadian case.

Despite these cross-national differences, Canadians' political trust has followed the same downward trend over the past half-century (Kanji, 2002). Figure 23.2 shows that in 1965 a majority of Canadians felt that the government cared what people thought, and 40 percent rejected the view that MPs soon lose touch with the public. After a slow downward trend, trust dropped off noticeably during the 1990s.² The collapse of the

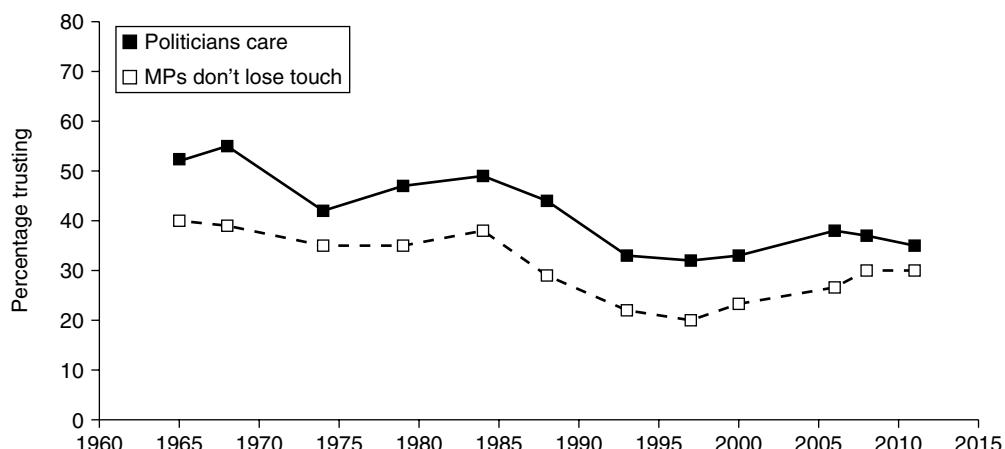


Figure 23.2 Declining trust in government in Canada

Conservative Party reflected the public's unprecedented rejection of the status quo in Ottawa, a weak economy, the struggle between nationalism and provincialism, and a backlash to the introduction of VAT. The dramatic growth of the Bloc Québécois and Reform Party was another sign of this disenchantment. The Liberal Party government then strained to manage these issues, failing to pass a reform referendum in 1992 and suffering at the polls in 1997. This decline in trust was paralleled by a sharp drop in election turnout during the 1990s. Political support has rebounded slightly since 2000, but not back to the initially high levels of the 1960s.³ As in the United States, the climate of the times is for about two-thirds of Canadians to express some distrust of politicians.

By expanding the cross-national and cross-temporal breadth of the empirical data, there is now clear evidence of a general erosion in support for politicians and government in most advanced industrial democracies (Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Dalton, 2004, 2012; Dalton and Welzel, 2015). The major variation across nations is in the timing and pace of decline, rather than the direction of the change. While Pippa Norris (2011) has questioned whether trust is really declining based on recent polls, this observation arises largely because she focuses on recent trends – and the greatest declines often pre-date the time series she presents. Even US trends would be less obvious if one began tracking opinions in 1980, but the evidence of declining trust since the 1950s and 1960s is clear-cut.⁴ Moreover, it was the pattern of a supportive public in the 1950s and 1960s that generated the theoretical argument that political support is essential to stable and effective democratic government.

Trust in Institutions

Empirical research on the first dips in political trust in the United States debated the significance of these trends. Experts worried that if distrust generalized to the institutions and procedures of a political system, it might erode the foundations of democracy. For example, Neil Nevitte and Mebs Kanji (2002) warned that 'the worry is that dissatisfaction with particular governments might turn into dissatisfaction with the workings of democracy more generally'. So I next ask whether distrust of political elites has spread to attitudes toward the institutions and structure of government.

A common set of survey questions taps public confidence in the people running major social, economic, and political organizations. Figure 23.3 shows that confidence in the leadership of virtually every US institution has tumbled downward. In the 1960s many Americans expressed a fair amount of confidence in the Executive Branch (41 percent) and Congress (42 percent), but these positive evaluations dropped substantially over time. In 2014 only 11 percent of Americans had confidence in the Executive Branch, and Congress fared even worse (6 percent). The Supreme Court fares better, but it has also seen its confidence level drop from 50 percent in 1966 to 24 percent in 2014. Norris (2011, pp. 67–8) discounts this evidence because she begins with the General Social Survey (GSS) in 1972 and excludes the earlier Harris Polls because they came from a different source. However, the complete trends from the Harris Poll also show that confidence in institutions dropped from the high points in the 1960s to 6 percent for Congress in 2012 and 22 percent for the Executive.

Some observers have noted that these questions ask about the people running each institution, so they might be tapping confidence in individuals rather than the institutions

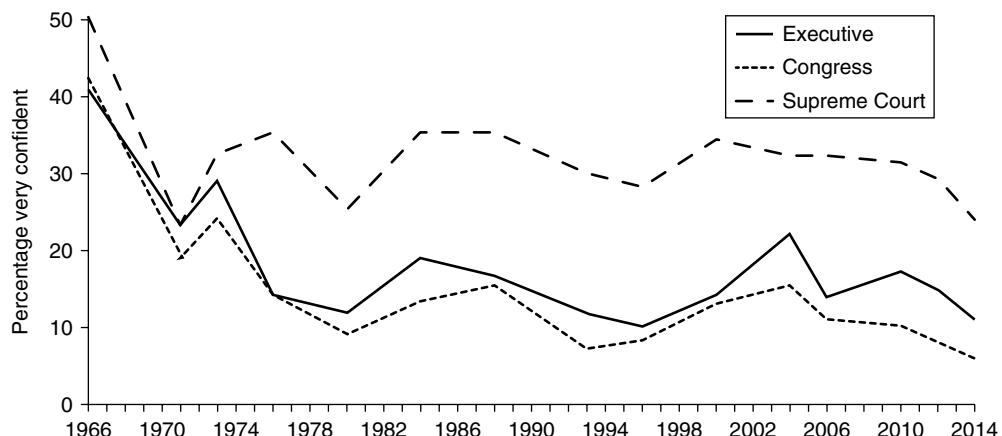


Figure 23.3 Declining confidence in political institutions

per se. However, other survey series focus explicitly on the institutions. The Gallup Polls, for example, found that confidence in Congress has dropped from 43 percent in 1973 to only 13 percent in 2013. Confidence in the presidency dropped from 52 percent in 1975 to 36 percent in 2013. Gallup released the 2013 poll results with the headline proclaiming that 'Americans' confidence in Congress falls to lowest on record' and noted that Congress scored last among the 16 institutions included in the survey.⁵

Evidence on Canadians' trust in parliament is less systematic. A time series from Gallup Canada conducted by the Canadian Institute of Public Opinion (CIPO) found a marked decrease in confidence in the House of Commons between 1979 and 1999 (Dalton, 2004, p. 37). More recently (and using a different question), the AmericasBarometer study maintained that trust in parliament dropped between 2006 and 2014 (Envirionics Institute, 2014).⁶ In 2014, only 16 percent of Canadians said they trusted parliament. The same study reported a drop in Canadians' confidence in the political system between 2006 and 2014.

Another key element of democracy is political parties. They often bind people to the polity, structure public opinion, and mobilize citizens to participate. One might argue that parties are the central institutions of representative democracy in organizing elections, selecting candidates to run for office, and organizing the affairs of government.

Contemporary publics in both nations are more skeptical of political parties in general.⁷ For instance, Gallup Canada found that only 30 percent of Canadians expressed quite a lot of confidence in political parties in 1979 – already a fairly low level of support – and this dropped to only 11 percent by 1999 (Carty, 2002; also see Gidengil et al., 2002). The ANES found that in the 1960s about 40 percent of Americans thought parties were responsive to public interests; this decreased to about 30 percent in the 1970s and 20 percent in the 1980s (the question has not been repeated since then). Perhaps even more insightful, the World Values Survey asked about public confidence in 15 social and political institutions (Figure 23.4). Political parties ranked last on this list, with only 13

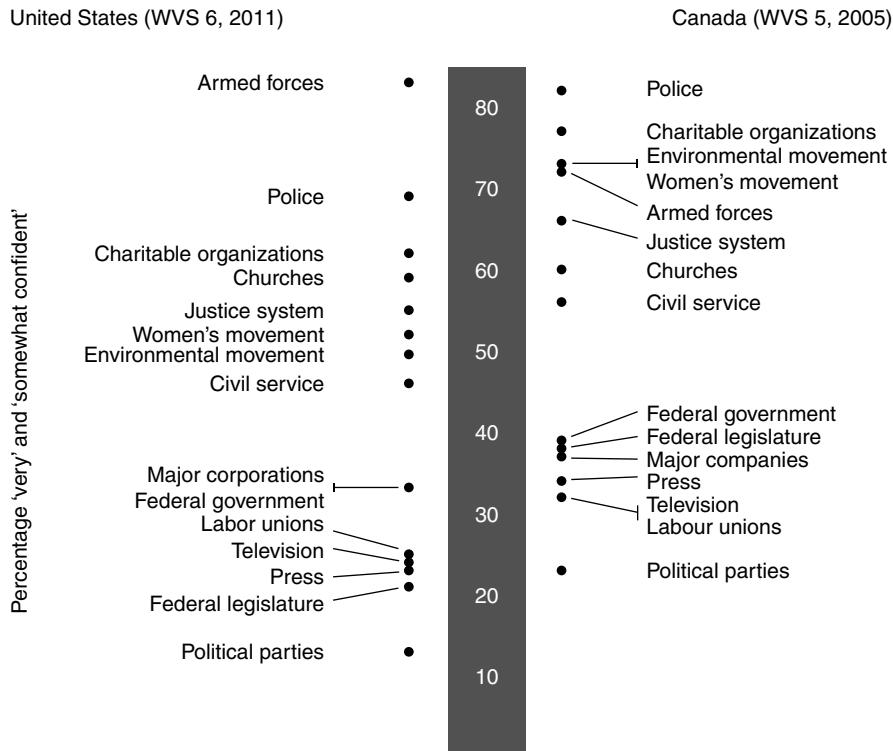


Figure 23.4 Confidence in political and social institutions

percent of Americans and 23 percent of Canadians expressing confidence. Other political institutions – national legislature, federal government, civil service, and the justice system – evoke significantly higher levels of confidence, even though most institutions have also trended downward over time. The negativity toward the branches of government is even more apparent in comparison to other groups. Institutions that guarantee social order – the armed forces and police – evoke widespread confidence. By contrast to the political institutions, business and labor groups and especially social movements also garner more support.⁸ Canadians generally express more confidence in these institutions than Americans, although the rankings of groups are relatively similar.

Thus, the United States and Canada are first characterized empirically by a wide-scale erosion of trust in government and political institutions during the latter part of the twentieth century. While their citizens once expressed allegiance and support for their democratic governments, skepticism and distrust have become the *Zeitgeist* of the contemporary age.

Dissatisfied, but Democrats

At the same time that people have become less trustful of government, other opinion surveys show continued and widespread attachment to democracy and its ideals, which

even may have strengthened in recent decades (Norris, 2011; Dalton and Welzel, 2015). This mix of attitudes toward government and democracy represents an important change in the political norms of contemporary publics.

Significantly, *declining trust in government does not represent alienation from the democratic process* – as it often signified in the mid-twentieth century when fascist and communist ideologies challenged democracy. Instead, we see a new pattern of ‘dissatisfied democrats’; that is, people who distrust government and political institutions but are supportive of democratic principles (Klingemann, 1999, 2015; Norris, 1999). In many established democracies these dissatisfied democrats now represent a majority of the public, with a growing share over time. Their adherence to democratic values may reshape the sources and consequences of declining political trust as I discuss below.

RESEARCH ON WHY TRUST HAS DECLINED

To understand the significance of decreasing political trust, one needs to identify the cause. Even though national experts vary in the factors they cite as potential causes of the decline, the downward trend is similar across nations. This common pattern tends to discount explanations that are linked to the unique history or policy performance of the nation. For instance, Canadians discuss the tensions over nationality and Quebec, and Americans point to a series of visible scandals and the peculiar structure of government in the United States. In every nation there are unique explanations for the drop in trust in government. But a simultaneous decline of trust in affluent democracies during the late twentieth century for purely coincidental reasons seems unlikely. Thus, I review the major explanations for the decline of political trust and judge them against the available evidence. No single factor is sufficient to explain a trend that has occurred across nations, but with different timing and intensity many factors are converging to produce these changes in public sentiments.

Performance and Trust

Democratic politics is first of all a social contract whereby government performs certain functions in exchange for popular support. David Easton (1975, p. 436), for example, notes that:

[. . .]leadership assumes the responsibilities for tending to the problems of societies. In return the leadership gains the power to enable it to make and implement binding decisions, a power that it loses to an alternative set of leaders if it is unable to supply some average level of satisfaction to its supporters.

If governmental performance falls below expectations, specific support for political authorities may suffer as a consequence. If these patterns continue for an extended period of time, the decline of trust may generalize to broader evaluations of political institutions and the regime. Indeed, many accounts of declining political trust in the USA, Canada and other nations cite examples of poor government performance to explain the decline.

Economic performance

One of the complications of the performance-based approach is that many different aspects of government performance might affect citizen evaluations (see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). The narrowest approach focuses on economic performance. Often the research literature links declining trust to negative economic conditions. For instance, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC)-induced worldwide recessions in the late 1970s and early 1980s is tied to growing public concerns that government could not address economic needs and other policy demands (Alesina and Wacziarg, 2000). The end of the post-war growth decades supposedly marked a new cynicism (or realism) about the limits of government. Indeed, this economic tale is repeated in the research literature of many nations. This theme re-emerged with the Great Recession of 2008 and ensuing economic crises in Europe (Armington and Guthmann, 2014).

One version of the economic performance thesis suggests that individual-level perceptions of economic conditions may influence citizens' images of government. If citizens are pessimistic (or optimistic) about the economy or their personal economic situation, then these perceptions may affect feelings of political support. There is modest empirical support for this version of the performance hypothesis. Several studies of American public opinion found a correlation between perceptions of economic conditions and measures of political support (Lawrence, 1997; Anderson and Guillory, 1997; Orren, 1997). Similar patterns have been identified among Canadians (Kornberg and Clarke, 1992, ch. 4; Crête et al., 2006). Cross-national studies demonstrated that perceptions of economic performance are significantly related to political trust across established democracies (e.g., McAllister, 1999).

This still leaves the important question of whether these correlations are evidence of causal influences. First, to explain the long-term decline in political support, citizens' perceptions of economic performance would have to trend downward over time, which would then lower support. But perceptions of economic performance fluctuate over time without a consistent downward trend. Second, the two trends would have to be closely related.

Longitudinal analyses provide limited support for economic explanations. Economic cycles have varied across the USA and Canada and the fit to trends in political trust is ambiguous. For instance, after comparing US economic statistics with levels of political support, Nye and Zelikow (1997) discount economic factors as a major explanation for the long-term trend in the United States. Americans experienced exceptional prosperity and low employment during the late 1990s, yet simultaneously they were cynical about the governing institutions that presided over this prosperity. Dalton (2004, ch. 6) tested the relationship between consumer confidence and political trust, and found weak longitudinal correlations in the United States and most other nations, but a significant relationship in Canada. Similarly, Clarke et al. (1993) found only a modest empirical relationship between economic conditions and satisfaction with the functioning of the democratic process for several European nations. In short, growing public skepticism about politicians, parties, and parliaments does not match the general economic trends in these nations.

Performance on other issues

Other theories maintain that performance evaluations of government should extend beyond the economic realm (King, 1997). Contemporary governments address a broad range of policy areas, and some of these non-economic domains may generate the public's declining political trust (Inglehart, 1990; Hardin, 2013).

Again, there is only mixed evidence that objective conditions track the aggregate declines in political support. In many areas, if not most, advanced industrial democracies have made considerable progress in improving the welfare of their citizens over the same period as support has decreased. For example, Derek Bok (1998) concludes that the American condition in most policy areas has improved in absolute terms during the post-war period, and even relative to other Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) nations. Canada's record of policy performance is generally stronger. Indeed, the record of advancing incomes, spreading social security, improving civil rights, and other policy advances fits the post-war history of most advanced industrial democracies. A pure performance-based explanation would argue that a systematic decrease in trust across the advanced industrial democracies would occur if all these political systems are worse off than a generation ago. Some pessimists might claim this is so, but the empirical evidence in support of this proposition is very uncertain, especially as a general pattern for all advanced industrial democracies.

The expansion of the government's policy role may affect political trust in another way, however. The multiplication or fragmentation of political interests makes it difficult for government to be equally responsive to all interests, and thus satisfy most people most of the time – as was more likely when the structure of politics was simpler. In a multidimensional policy world, there is no single mix of government actions that satisfies most of the people most of the time. Broadening issue agendas thus may be creating new challenges for democracy to balance the tensions inherent in complex societies with fragmented interests. Dissatisfaction with the political process may signal that the current processes are not seen as equal to this challenge. But this hypothesis has not been fully demonstrated in the research literature.

Scandals

Perhaps the most obvious explanation for the decline in political trust is that politicians no longer deserve our trust because of the mounting number of scandals and poor behavior in office (Craig, 1993). There is a long and inglorious record of poor behavior by political elites in the United States just in the two decades starting with Nixon's impeachment. In Canada, during PM Brian Mulroney's term, scandals forced a number of cabinet members from office, culminating in Mulroney being implicated in the Airbus kickback scandal in 1995.⁹ Since then there has been an apparently increasing number of exposés on the failures and illegal actions of Canadian political elites at the federal and provincial levels.

I do not doubt that scandals will diminish people's trust in government. Perhaps it is analogous to a friend or spouse who betrays one's trust, making it harder to trust them again as a result. Keele's (2007) longitudinal study of trust in the USA provided some empirical evidence. But two factors give me pause. When political leaders and governments change, trust has not rebounded. When Jimmy Carter followed the Nixon/Ford

administrations and tried to restore public trust in government, he faced a public that remained distrustful. Similarly, when Canadians voted out the Mulroney administration in 1993, trust in government did not return to its previous level. Changing political friends (governments) does not recreate a trusting public. In addition, it is unclear whether the increasing visibility of political scandals represents the deteriorating behavior of political elites, or a more skeptical public (and media) that are willing to discuss elite transgressions. We are no longer as deferential to elites as in the past, at least in public discourse. John F. Kennedy's affairs went unreported, while today nothing in politicians' personal lives appears to be off-limits.

The Media and Trust

The mass media, especially the rise of television, are often cited as a major factor in reshaping contemporary politics and promoting distrust (see the review in Norris, 2000b; see Chapter 22 by Newton). From one perspective, the media focus on scandals and gossip that would not have entered the political discourse a generation ago. This ranges from illegal behavior to the private affairs of politicians. Attack journalism appears to be a new standard, in the American press at least, accompanied by changing journalistic norms about the role of the media. Longitudinal studies of media content in the USA suggest that the news has become increasingly critical of politicians and the political process (Patterson, 1993). Nye and Zelikow (1997, pp. 268–9) see media effects as a likely explanation for decreasing trust in government.

A less malevolent, but equally negative, interpretation of media effects is that the modern media simply violate Bismarck's quip that laws are like sausages, it is better not to see them being made. Many experts assert that the expansion of news coverage has focused public attention on the conflictual parts of politics that alienate many people (Hibbing and Theiss-Morse, 2002). Similarly, a rancorous question hour in the Canadian House of Commons or hostile political debate on television may be accepted as normal political sport by parliamentarians, but it may generate political cynicism by the average viewer.

Other scholars argue that the media are a relatively neutral transmission belt for information about politics.¹⁰ If the news is critical of politicians, it is not because the media are negative but because they are reporting on events as they occur and reflecting a changing public mood – not creating it (Garment, 1991). After Watergate, it seemed that every journalism student wanted to be Woodward or Bernstein; today, US journalism students see Jon Stewart¹¹ as a role model. In other words, media content may be both a cause and a consequence of the public's changing political orientations.

Most previous studies found weak or insignificant correlations between mass media usage and lower trust in government (Newton, 1997; Norris, 2000b).¹² Pippa Norris (2011, pp. 180–86) used short time series of the media's coverage of politics to predict political trust in the USA and Britain, which yielded scant evidence of causality. Furthermore, the decline in trust occurs across nations regardless of the structure of the media (public or private) or the nature of political commentary about politicians in the nation, which suggests that the media climate is not a cross-nationally consistent factor. These results echo Pippa Norris's (2000a, p. 250) conclusion that 'we need to look elsewhere than television news for the source of our political ills'.

Social Capital and Trust

Another theory for declining trust is the supposed erosion of social capital in affluent societies. Social mobility, geographic mobility, and other forces of modernization have supposedly weakened the ties between individuals and social communities. Robert Putnam (2000) provocatively argued that social capital is decreasing as a result of these societal trends. He further argues that the decline in social capital erodes political participation, interpersonal trust, and political trust.

Putnam's 'bowling alone' thesis generated substantial attention in the political community. Researchers found a positive correlation between social capital measures and political trust (Newton, 1999; Newton and Norris, 2000; Dalton, 2004, ch. 3). However, it is unclear whether social capital is broadly decreasing cross-nationally, and if these trends can explain the decline in political trust (see also Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle; Putnam, 2002). Keele (2007) found a relationship between social capital and trust measures in the United States. But the timing of both trends does not seem to be temporally matched, especially when one looks across advanced industrial democracies. It appears that the distribution of social capital at any point in time might be linked to political trust; those with higher levels of social capital tend to be more trusting of government. But it is unclear whether this is a cause of the decline in political trust (Nye and Zelikow, 1997).

Globalization and Trust

Globalization has affected economic systems and been an impediment to increasing standards of living among working and middle-class employees in advanced industrial democracies (Alesina and Wacziarg, 2000). Globalization can also restrict the power of governments to direct the society and economy. Multinational businesses are difficult to regulate, economies are increasingly shaped by international forces rather than domestic policy, and even political movements are transnational. These patterns are even strong among member states of the European Union (EU), where EU policy and institutions can take precedence over national policy.

This situation has prompted some scholars to argue that the restrictions that globalization has placed on national government significantly contribute to the erosion in trust because policies are shaped by forces beyond the nation's control (Lawrence, 1997; Katzenstein, 2000; Hardin, 2013). While the statements in the previous paragraph may hold, the impact of these forces on political trust is unclear. Nye and Zelikow (1997) noted that the nature of the causal connection is indirect at best. How does one measure globalization in a way relevant to trust? And more important, the timing of globalization forces and the decline of trust do not clearly coincide. Globalization processes accelerated in the United States in the late 1980s and 1990s, but trust suffered its major decline in the 1960s and 1970s. In Canada, the largest drop in trust occurred in the 1980s; the pacing of decreasing trust is equally varied across EU member states. Thus Nye and Zelikow (1997) largely discount globalization as a major factor explaining the decrease in political trust in the United States. Discontented politicians and citizens may use globalization to illustrate their dissatisfaction with government or mobilize those already skeptical of government; but if so, my impression is that it is just one of many such issues that are regularly part of the political debate.

Value Change and Trust

Another explanation for the decline in political trust focuses on changing citizen values and expectations of the political process (see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakhverdian). With spreading affluence, education levels, and other features of social modernization, Ronald Inglehart (1990) showed that public priorities are broadening to include new postmaterial values that stress autonomy, self-actualization, and a more assertive political style. Postmaterial values also have a libertarian component that leads individuals to question authority, and these values seem antithetical to a deferential model of citizenship (Nevitte, 1996, 2002). This may lead postmaterialists to be less trustful of politicians and political institutions such as parliaments and political parties. This interpretation is supported by evidence that some of the groups most vocal in their criticisms of government – the young and better educated – also tend to be postmaterialists. In addition, this process of value change is occurring across affluent societies as a consequence of social modernization, and thus might explain a general cross-national pattern of decreasing political trust.

Several cross-national studies have shown that postmaterialists express less confidence in most institutions of government (Inglehart, 1990; Dalton and Welzel, 2015). Neil Nevitte (2015) recently demonstrated that postmaterialists tend to be less deferential to political institutions and hierarchic authority in general. Nye and Zelikow (1997) evaluated this value change hypothesis as a highly likely cause of decreasing political trust. In addition, Dalton's (2009) study of Americans' norms of citizenship shows that traditional 'duty-based citizens' think of the nation as that shining city on the hill that conservative political figures describe. They are more trustful of government, more deferential to elites, and more enthusiastic in their national pride. In contrast, 'engaged citizens' (who are conceptually equivalent to postmaterialists) are less trustful of politicians and political institutions, even controlling for other potential correlates of trust. Engaged citizenship also stimulates support for democratic values, especially an emphasis on equality and the protection of minority rights and expression. Consistent with their self-definition of citizenship, engaged citizens expect more of the government than social order and allegiance. In short, postmaterialists tend to typify the new style of dissatisfied democrats who are an increasing share of contemporary publics.

EXPLAINING COMMON BUT UNIQUE TRENDS

This chapter and other contributions to this Handbook have offered a long list of suspects for why citizens are less trustful of their governments. Each has some merit. But the commonality of this pattern across nations with different political histories and institutions prods us to look for common forces that transcend unique national conditions. Explanations based on 'proper nouns' – such as the Watergate scandal in the United States or the national identity conflicts in Canada – seem to be post hoc interpretations of these trends, and the fundamental causal forces lie elsewhere.

My own view from this literature is that two broad forces are at play. First, there is often a precipitating factor that makes people begin to question government in a new way: an egregious scandal, a sharp economic downturn, or other policy crisis. This is what draws

the attention of political analysts when trends first turn dramatically downward. But when conditions improve – a new government is elected or the policy issue is resolved – trust does not return to its previously higher level. Thus a second set of factors comes into play. One major influence is a change in citizen expectations of government, partially conditioned by the process of postmaterial values change. Having seen the failures of government, people are less likely to trust again, and they favor a change in the relationship between citizens and their government. These changes are reinforced by supportive social forces. The mass media sense the change in the political climate, and become less deferential to political elites in their reporting. More information on government's shortfalls is available. The proliferation of public interest groups challenges the government on a range of policies and challenge the way that representative democracy functions. In short, a significant portion of the citizenry shifts from allegiant to assertive norms of citizenship, so the trustful deferential public of the past fades over time even if government performance improves (Dalton and Welzel, 2015).

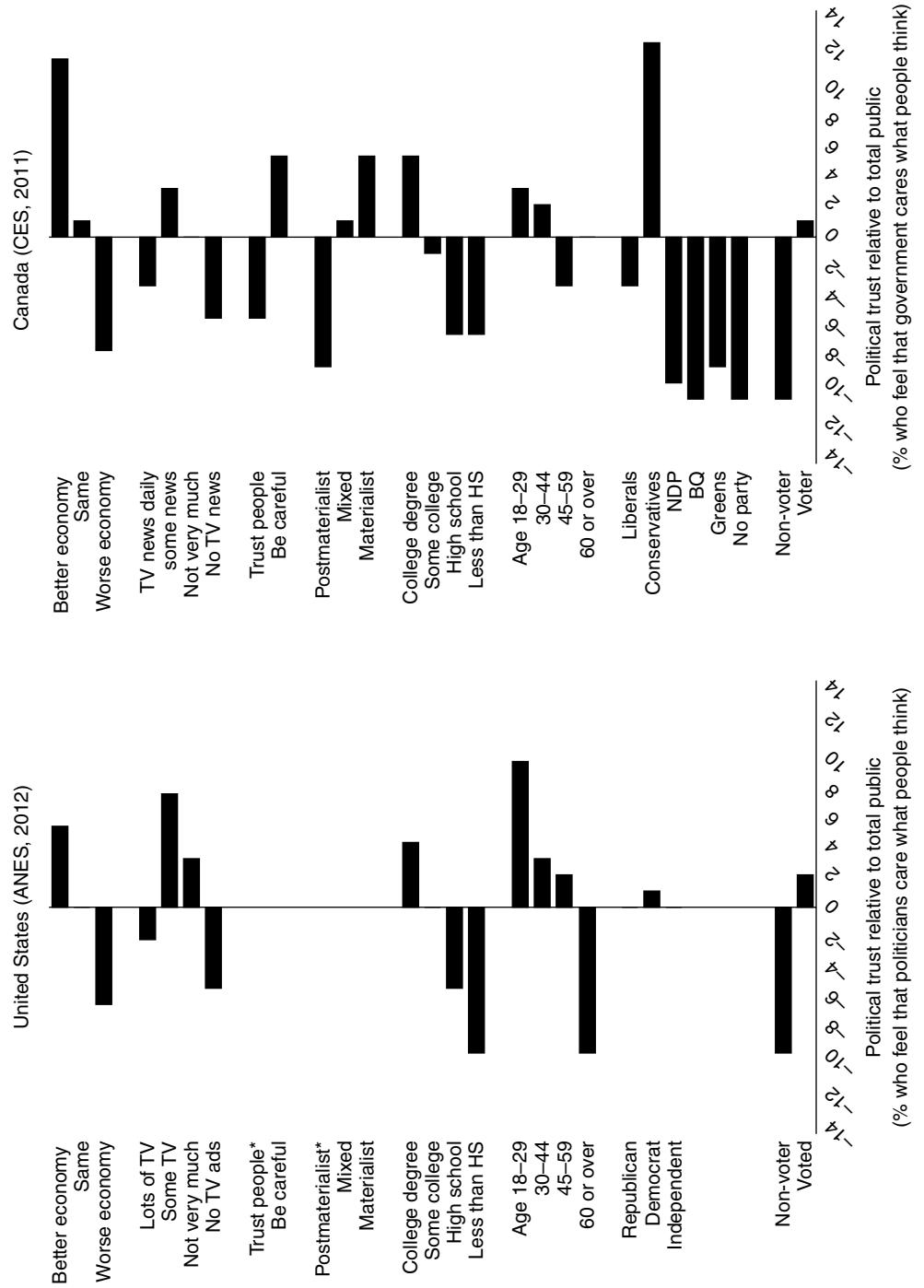
Who Trusts Government?

This section describes how various social and political groups vary in their levels of political trust among American and Canadian publics. It is important to note that the current correlates of trust do not necessarily indicate the sources of decreasing trust – they are relationships at one point in time rather than evidence of longitudinal change. Most analyses of political trust in both nations find that trust has decreased across virtually all social and political groups, although the rate of change varies (Nye et al., 1997; Dalton, 2005). If a trait is positively related to trust and all categories decreased by roughly the same amount over time, then a correlation today does not signify a causal process over time. Thus, I describe who trusts and distrusts government today rather than how they may have changed over time.

The descriptions of trust are more specific than elsewhere in this Handbook, based on the question of whether politicians/government cares what people think. These data are taken from the 2012 ANES and the 2011 CES. Figure 23.5 describes the levels of political trust across social and political groups that are tied to the theorized causes of trust presented in the last section. Since the questions and response categories differed slightly between nations, the figure displays the trust of each group in comparison to trust for the public overall.

The top panel of Figure 23.5 shows that political trust is strongly related to current perceptions of the national economy in both nations – reflecting the economic performance theory. In the 2011 CES, for example, there is a 10 percentage point gap between those who thought the economy had improved over the previous year versus those who thought it had worsened. Perceptions of the individual's own financial situation display a similar pattern (data not shown). To some extent, economic perceptions and trust may reflect a single trait – evaluations of the status quo. Those who trust the government are likely to be more optimistic about the economy, and vice versa, rather than a simple causal relationship. In addition, this economic relationship is fairly constant across time. In other words, perceptions of economic performance describe the distribution of trust at any one point in time, but do not explain the trend of eroding trust (Dalton, 2004, ch. 6).

The relationship between media usage and political trust is also somewhat tenuous. In



Note: asterisk means the question was not asked.

Figure 23.5 *Levels of political trust relative to total public*

both nations, those who watch the most about politics on television news and those who watch the least are less trusting; those with moderate television are slightly more trusting. These relationships are fairly weak, however. Additional analyses of the 2011 CES showed that none of the items on usage of various mass media has a substantial correlation with trust (Pearson r above 0.10). This ambiguous pattern is what has generated doubts about media effects shaping political trust (Norris, 2011).

As a partial test of the social capital thesis, the 2011 CES included the standard question on social trust that is at the heart of Putnam's discussion of declining social capital in America. The figure shows a 10 percent gap in political trust across categories of social trust. These two traits do tend to overlap in a cross-section, even if we discount the social capital theory as an explanation of decreasing political trust.

The most direct measure of the value change thesis is the postmaterialist values index developed by Inglehart (1990), which was included in the 2011 CES. Consistent with previous studies, postmaterialists in Canada are about 5 percent below the national average in their trust, while materialists are 8 percentage points more trustful.¹³ In addition, value priorities in both nations have shifted in the postmaterialist direction over time, so value change may contribute to the decrease in trust.

The figure also presents several other traits that might identify the social location of political trust. For example, in the halcyon days of the 1950s–1960s, better-educated Americans were more trustful of government. Between 1952 and 2000 the trust levels of the better educated decreased at a steeper rate than for the less educated (Dalton, 2005). This reinforces the notion that changing expectations, rather than changing performance, is eroding political trust. In both current surveys, however, the less educated remain less trustful of government. This social status pattern has probably narrowed over time – but this gap is still apparent in current public opinion (see also Chapter 11 by Mayne and Hakverdian).¹⁴

Generational change is another factor linked to political trust. In the quieter days of the early 1960s, the young began their political experiences with a positive orientation toward government that gradually faded with time (and presumably with the accumulation of less than idealistic political experiences). Events since then highlighted the political cynicism of successive generations. The faces of the young were prominent in the emergence of the student movement, the environmental movement, women's groups, and other new social movements in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the Occupy movements of this decade. However, Figure 23.5 shows that those under age 30 are more trustful in both nations. The pattern is more apparent in the United States, and this may be a reaction to youth's embrace of the Obama administration and the rejection of Obama by older Americans. Until Obama's election in 2008, younger Americans had become relatively more distrustful of government. A similar, albeit much weaker relationship, exists in Canada as well.

Finally, I considered two political variables: party identification and voter turnout in the election. Especially after the election of a Conservative government in 2011, Conservative Party identifiers were 12 percent more trustful than the average citizen, while all other parties were less trustful. The differences in the USA are more muted in 2012, but were quite sharp in 2008 before Obama won the election. These patterns highlight how trust in government has a short-term component that reflects how one's political values match the incumbent government. The final panel in the figure shows that voters are more trustful than non-voters in both nations. Elections are partially an act of allegiance and support

for the political system, and thus there is a tendency for the trustful to vote, and the less trustful to turn to other forms of political action.

CONCLUSION: THE EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE ON POLITICAL TRUST

The evidence presented here may change prevailing images of trust in government in two major ways. First, many scholars attribute the decline of political trust to the unique political history of a nation. My findings demonstrate that cynicism is spreading in the United States, Canada, and most other advanced industrial democracies. Rather than coincidental events occurring simultaneously cross-nationally, some common force seems to be affecting these nations.

Second, the implications of this new skepticism depend on why public opinion is changing. I argued that decreasing trust in affluent societies seems to be linked to a process of social modernization and value change. The changing values and skills of Western publics encourage a new type of assertive or engaged citizen who is skeptical about political elites and the institutions of representative democracy (Dalton and Welzel, 2015; Klingemann, 2015). Such cynicism may also generate a dynamic where additional scandals or negative news about government reinforce these impressions, while positive news about government is discounted. In the end, this process could produce the enduring negativism about government, even when economic and political conditions are positive. Indeed, it seems that one feature of contemporary democratic processes is that they teach citizens to be critical of government.

These public criticisms of government can have beneficial effects. For example, they have stimulated various proposals to reform the institutions of democratic governance, and thereby renew trust in government. Dissatisfaction with partisan politics has led to calls for reform of the electoral system across Canada. In the United States it fueled the term-limits movement of the 1990s and current calls for electoral reform by both Democrats and Republicans (albeit of different substantive basis). Other experts lament the failures of the US Congress, arguing that legislative reforms in how Congress operates will improve trust. The same scenario could be played out for most other advanced industrial democracies. Assertive citizens will also press government to be more accountable to the public.

Certainly democratic institutions should adapt and explore alternative forms. Partially prompted by popular dissatisfaction with the governing process, contemporary democracies have implemented reforms to expand access, increase transparency, and improve the accountability of government (Cain et al., 2003; Smith, 2009). These reforms are expanding citizen access in significant ways and transforming the democratic process. Yet, such reforms should be judged by their ability to improve the democratic process, not to change citizens' negative images of government. I believe that we have entered a new period when governments must confront a public skeptical of their motivations, doubtful about the institutions of representative democracy, and willing to challenge political elites. Yet these same dissatisfied citizens support the democratic ideal and want to strengthen democracy. The 'new civic culture' of advanced industrial democracies is thus fundamentally different from the cultural model of the past.

NOTES

- * The data analyzed in this chapter were provided by the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research and the archives of the Canadian Election Study. I am indebted to the national election study teams for collecting these data and making it available for secondary analysis. I would also like to thank André Blais, Elisabeth Gidengil, Neil Nevitte, and Steve Weldon for their comments on these analyses.
1. There is a rich ongoing debate on the theoretical and empirical meaning of political trust, and the relationship of these items to other dimensions of political support (see other chapters in this Handbook and Norris, 1999).
 2. Two other questions from the CES (whether politicians are honest; whether government wastes a lot of tax money) both follow the same downward trend (Kanji, 2002).
 3. Although definitive data are not available, the 2014 shootings at parliament may produce a spike in political support and national attachments, but prior research suggests this could be a short-lived phenomenon.
 4. One common limitation of these surveys is their short length for many nations. If the American series had only started in 1976, for example, the marked drop in political trust would be less evident (or even invisible).
 5. Gallup (2013), 'Americans' confidence in Congress falls to lowest on record', 13 June, accessed 7 August 2016 at <http://www.gallup.com/poll/163052/americans-confidence-congress-falls-lowest-record.aspx>.
 6. AmericasBarometer (2012), *Canada 2012 Final Report*, accessed 7 August 2016 at <http://www.vanderbilt.edu/lapop/canada/Canada-2012-Report.pdf>.
 7. Party attachments and support for political parties has also declined in the USA, Canada, and other advanced industrial democracies (also see Dalton, 2012, ch. 9).
 8. Business, labor, higher education, organized religion, the press, and other social organizations have suffered similar declines in confidence over time over the past four decades (Lipset and Schneider, 1983; Nye et al., 1997).
 9. CBC News (2005), 'Up the skirt or in the till: Top ten scandals in Canadian political history', 10 February, accessed 7 August 2016 at <http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cdn-government/scandals.html>.
 10. Few experts claim that media coverage increases public trust in government. However, some research stresses the media's role in providing political information; newspaper readership, for example, is often related to greater political interest, high information levels, and greater political involvement (Norris, 2000b).
 11. Between 1999 and 2015 Jon Stewart was the host of *The Daily Show*, which satirically discusses daily political affairs as well as news media coverage itself.
 12. There is also some evidence that media attention is positively related to support for the democratic process (Norris, 2011, ch. 9).
 13. This is based on the simple four-item values measure (Inglehart, 1990). The more robust 12-item index typically displays even stronger relationships, but this was not asked in either election study.
 14. Education levels have obviously increased markedly in both nations over time, but the interaction of education and trust makes it complicated to estimate the impact of rising education on political trust. Estimates for the USA since 1958 suggest that educational effects explain about a fifth of the decline in political trust (see Dalton, 2005).

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24. Political trust in Latin America

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INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores how political trust has evolved among Latin American countries between 1996 and 2011. We probe how much political trust there is in Latin America, whether it has increased or decreased across time, and try to understand variations looking at both individual and contextual (i.e., country-level) factors.

Latin America is an interesting setting for studying political trust for three reasons. First, Latin America has lower levels of political trust than other regions of the world (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006; Mainwaring, 2006; Segovia, 2008). For instance, Segovia (2008) shows that average levels of trust in parliament and the civil service in Latin America are significantly and substantially lower than in industrialized European countries. Latin America thus provides regional variation in a topic that has been most intensely studied within the more industrialized countries.

Second, most Latin American democracies seem to be on the path of consolidation after decades of authoritarianism or continuous reversals between democracy and dictatorships. Political trust may not operate in the same ways in such a context as in the more consolidated democracies. For instance, Mainwaring (2006) suggests that low political trust in Latin America (and especially in the Andean countries) derives not from the usual suspects (such as generational value change or social capital decline) but from the systematic underprovision of public goods by national states.

Finally, Latin American politics have been presumably shaped by populism and client–patron networks to a greater extent than other regions of the world. This carries complex implications for political trust: while particularistic politics may strengthen trust to leaders, it may erode trust in institutions. A focus on Latin America can advance our knowledge of the dynamics of political trust in such settings.

We also advance a novel analytical perspective. While most existing studies explain cross-sectional variations in political trust *between* countries, we also study how political trust has evolved *within* countries across time. We examine how both individual and contextual characteristics have triggered changes in political trust among the population. We employ the Latinobarometer dataset, which contains relevant measures of political trust since 1996 onwards. Among the contextual factors we include not only commonly used variables such as corruption and economic development (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Uslaner, 2011) but also consider the possible impact of a regional specific trend, namely, the so-called ‘left turn’. Specifically, we consider whether changes in the ideological orientation of governments are associated with changes in political trust at the aggregate as well as the individual level. With this in mind, the specific questions that guide our explanatory effort are: To what extent are individual political

orientations related to political trust? Are left governments characterized by an increase or a decrease of political trust?

The chapter begins with a historical overview of Latin America. We develop two broad claims. First, since their independence Latin American nations faced chronic challenges for building efficient and stable – and therefore trustworthy – political institutions. Second, there are reasons to believe that this situation may have been changing in the last two decades as democracies consolidate, economies grow, and authorities become more responsive to people's needs. Followed by our historical assessment, we describe the major trends in political trust occurring in the region since 1996. In the data analysis, we employ ordinal probit and linear multilevel models to assess the main correlates of overall levels and changes in political trust among Latin American countries between 2002 and 2011.

HISTORICAL CHALLENGES TO POLITICAL TRUST IN LATIN AMERICA

Democratic Developments: Unequal, Contradictory, and Discontinuous

For understanding the reasons behind low political trust in Latin America we first look at the process of political institution building. This process has been contradictory and discontinuous, and took place amidst great socioeconomic inequalities.

First, the building of Latin American political institutions was shaped by contradictions – which, we claim, had implications for political trust. Most present-day Latin American republics were born in the 1820s, after four centuries of Spanish domination. Independence leaders rejected the monarchical model. They were propelled by the novel ideals of democratic constitutionalism heralded by Great Britain, France, and the United States. They wanted to create free nations where the people would rule through elected representatives. They wrote constitutions and electoral laws, gathered friends and followers around electoral pacts, celebrated elections for national and regional authorities, and created public spheres where newspapers, street-level discourses, and salon discussions abounded (Posada Carbó, 1996, 1998; Valenzuela, 2006). Long periods without elections or with completely farcical ones were relatively rare, and they belong to the most well-known experiences of nineteenth-century authoritarianism (such as that of Juan Manuel de Rosas in Argentina).

The contradiction comes from the fact that these democratic developments were shaped by agents who often resorted to anti-democratic practices – at least by Dahlian (1971) standards. Specifically, contenders and especially incumbents soon developed a repertoire of techniques for manipulating electoral outcomes. These ranged from adulterating electoral registries and jailing members of electoral colleges during the election day to stuffing the ballot boxes (Posada Carbó, 2000). Aware of fraud, disgruntled challengers often resorted to armed insurgencies for reaching power – and countries such as Mexico, Colombia, and Uruguay excel in their record of insurgencies during the nineteenth century (Valenzuela, 2006). Important for our purposes, this combination of profuse and usually respected electoral calendars with recurrent electoral fraud created the widespread feeling among Latin Americans that their governments, and the institutions they represented, merited little trust.

Second, the development of democratic institutions was not only contradictory but also discontinuous. After the first, turbulent century of independent life, the twentieth century seemed more auspicious for cultivating democracy and political trust in the region. During the 1920s and 1930s, lower-class Latin American males were enfranchised, and women followed suit by mid-century. Under populist regimes electoral turnout increased notably, raising hopes for the strengthening of a *sui generis* type of paternalistic mass democracy – although populist leaders were rarely genuine democrats. Yet after the Great Depression many countries faced authoritarian reversals. And although democracy blossomed in the 1950s, a new wave of military coups spread during the 1960s and deepened in the 1970s – to the point that by 1978 only Colombia, Venezuela, and Costa Rica had democratic regimes (Mainwaring and Pérez-Liñán, 2005).

By the early 1990s, most Latin American countries had recovered democratic institutions, but the frequent alternations between authoritarianism, democracy, and semi-democracies in previous decades created uncertain prospects for the building of solid political trust. In particular, after experiencing harsh military dictatorships, many people acquired an instinctive distrust towards the military and intelligence police units. Overall, the discontinuities of Latin American regimes stand in sharp contrast with Western developed nations, who enjoyed uninterrupted democracies for decades (Germany, France) or centuries (Britain, the United States).

Finally, it is important to note that Latin American political developments took place in the midst of intense socioeconomic inequalities. By 2008, the region as a whole had a Gini index of 48.3, far above high-income countries (30.9) and above all other regions of the world, including Sub-Saharan Africa (44.2) (Ortiz and Cummins, 2011, p. 26). These staggering inequalities are not new. They can be traced to the concentration of huge land extensions in the hands of a few families since colonial times. This had political implications. While it was sometimes the case that individuals from popular-class backgrounds and indigenous ancestry reached the presidency (like Benito Juárez in nineteenth-century Mexico or Evo Morales in current Bolivia), top-level officers and congressmen typically came from the upper classes and were white; differences in political power became intertwined with class and racial inequalities. These inequalities could not be justified by resorting to a feudal past (like in Europe) or a religious doctrine (like Hinduism). Large and (perceived as) illegitimate inequalities provided a constant source of distrust toward the political and economic elites and the institutions they represented (Zmerli and Castillo, 2015).

Weak States and Political Personalism

Political distrust in Latin America can also be traced to the chronic difficulties for building strong, far-reaching, and efficient states. According to Centeno (2003), the paucity of international wars after independence created few incentives to Latin American state-makers for improving the methods of taxation and administration that were the crucibles of solid state building in Europe. This had consequences for our time. Compared to the developed West, Latin American states have been traditionally unable to provide decent education, health services, or retirement pensions to large segments of their populations (Chile, Costa Rica, and Uruguay are partial exceptions). Ill-designed or underfunded state programs do little for protecting the labor force – a large portion of which having informal jobs – from economic shocks. And during the 1990s the spread of policies that

deregulated labor markets did not help. State institutions unable to protect people elicit little trust. According to Mainwaring (2006), bad state performance is the main explanation of low political trust in the Andes.

Additionally, in a region containing some of the most violent countries of the world like Honduras, El Salvador or Venezuela (UNODC, 2011), states have been unable to protect their people from organized crime and gangs. Even worse, poor civilian populations – from the Guatemalan jungles to the Brazilian *favelas* – have often been victims of brutal state repression carried out under the banner of fighting guerrillas or crime (Goodwin, 2001). Law systems often work biasedly, with the poor, women, peasants, and those of darker skin color receiving unfair treatment. According to O'Donnell (2001, p. 607), sometimes ‘laws. . .are not more than a piece of paper’. And in some regions, enriched networks of organized crime bribe underfunded police agents to impose their law (Altman and Luna, 2012). Occasionally this is linked to insufficient state territorial penetration – drug cartels sometimes control considerable regions, as happens today in Colombia or Mexico. Private security firms have proliferated recently to protect those who can pay (Eaton, 2012), thus undermining even more the concentration of coercive capacity in the state apparatus.¹

Latin American societies crafted two complementary responses to chronic state deficiencies. The first one was the creation of functional equivalents of the state by civilian populations. Thus, in parts of Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, Peru, and Guatemala, populations residing in areas located outside of the state's reach have resorted to indigenous law and other informal practices for solving disputes and providing security. These include, for instance, Peruvian community patrols (*rondas campesinas*) and Bolivian neighborhood meetings (*juntas vecinales*) (Helmke and Levitsky, 2006). Likewise, in the Mexican state of Guerrero, communities organize patrols for limiting the actions of abusive state police forces (Eaton, 2012).

A second response was ‘political personalism’. It consists of leaders that take care of people’s unmet needs in particularistic ways, often in exchange for political favors. Sometimes rising to the status of messiahs (as noted in O'Donnell's 1994 notion of delegative democracies), the origins of these leaders can be traced to the turbulent days of independence wars, when destitute populations needed protection from wandering armies and bandits. These leaders may range from local brokers that help people to obtain health assistance or a phone line (Eisenstadt and Roniger, 1984), to mythical national-level figures such as Domingo Perón in Argentina or Hugo Chávez in Venezuela. Formally, they represent political institutions. But due to their charisma and supposedly exceptional abilities, they go beyond institutions – when they disappear, institutions may crumble, or so many believe.

The relationship between personalism and political trust is ambiguous. It may be negative: as people get used to solving their problems thanks to the willingness of a leader, trust goes to the leader, not to the institutions he or she is supposed to represent. Criminal variations of personalism also erode institutional trust. Consider the Colombian drug czar Pablo Escobar, who provided food, popular housing, and soccer fields to poor communities. In some regions he became way more trusted and loved than the Colombian state. But the relationship may be positive: trust in an exceptional leader may be transferred to institutions or his followers under certain conditions.

Intimately related to state weakness is the problem of corruption (see Chapter 19 by

Uslaner). Perceived corruption, especially among political elites, decreases public trust in political institutions because authorities are supposed to protect public interests rather than their own. Also, corruption diverts public resources away from public goods, which harms the quality of public policies and decreases trust. Recent Latin American history is peppered with corruption accusations towards top political figures, from Carlos Menem in Argentina and Lula's congressmen in Brazil to Alberto Fujimori in Peru and Hugo Chávez in Venezuela. And consistent with the international literature, comparative cross-sectional studies in Latin America by Segovia (2008) and Morris (2004) indicate that more corrupt countries elicit lower political trust among their citizens. Still, many Latin Americans do not consider corruption to be the worst of sins, and messianic or charismatic leaders may be highly popular despite solid corruption charges against them. Therefore it may not be surprising if the negative relationship between corruption and trust is not as strong as expected.

A MORE AUSPICIOUS SCENARIO FOR POLITICAL TRUST IN LATIN AMERICA?

We argued above that Latin American history does not provide a fertile ground for high political trust. However, a series of interrelated trends taking place during the last one or two decades suggest a different, more favorable scenario.

First, Latin American economies have been growing fast since 2003. The average growth of per capita gross domestic product between 2003 and 2012 was 3.3 percent, way more than the 1.4 percent of the 1991–2002 period and of course than the 'lost decade' of 1980–90 (−0.4 percent). During the 2003–12 period all country averages were positive, and four countries (Argentina, Panama, Peru, and Uruguay) had averages above 5 percent. Only three countries – El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico – had an average growth lower than 2 percent.²

Economic growth helped to fight poverty, which decreased in the region as a whole from 43.9 percent of the population in 2002 to 28.8 percent in 2012 (indigence almost halved, going from 19.3 percent to 11.4 percent in the same period; ECLAC, 2012). Other socioeconomic indicators improved too. While there is no automatic link between socioeconomic progress and political trust, better living conditions may promote among broad sectors of the population the belief that politicians and political institutions are using public resources effectively for addressing popular demands in areas such as education, health, and housing.

A second trend, presumably positive for political trust, is that Latin American states have also strengthened in other dimensions beyond their capacity of delivering socio-economic goods. For instance, during the last two decades some of them have regained control over territories that were hitherto in the hands of non-state actors. In the early 1990s the Peruvian government defeated the Shining Path and the government of El Salvador deactivated guerrilla movements. The same happened in Guatemala in 1996. Nowadays (late 2014) the Colombian government seems closer than ever to reach a peace agreement with the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia), which has seriously undermined Colombian stateness since the 1960s.

Third, the consolidation of Latin American democracies after the transitions from

authoritarianism during the 1980s and 1990s is another important trend with potential implications for political trust. While democracy was far from granted a few decades ago, in the last two decades most Latin American countries established democratic or semi-democratic regimes that proved resistant to economic shocks and other national crises. By late 2014, only Cuba is clearly non-democratic. According to the Polity score, the mean level of democracy in the region (variable *polity2*, which ranges from -10 = strong autocracy to 10 = strong democracy) increased dramatically, from -0.8 in 1980 to 7.5 and over in the 2000s.³ Likewise, the chances that popularly elected governments be overthrown by force are much lower nowadays than was the case, say, in the 1960s.

But the links between democracy and political trust are complex. Presumably, in the long run, democracy is important to political trust because democratic governments are supposed to better address people's demands, and because democracy fosters transparency and accountability. In the short run, however, new democracies may have to deal with disproportionate expectations from civil societies damaged after harsh authoritarianisms. Democratic disenchantment may promote 'critical citizens' (Norris, 1999) that trust little in institutions and embark in violent protests, which in turn may destabilize democracy – as almost happened in Argentina in late 2001.

Fourth, we consider the implications of the so-called 'left turn' for political trust. The 'left turn' refers to a regional trend of repeated electoral success of leftist governments. It began with the election of socialist Hugo Chávez in Venezuela in 1999 (although Chile might be classified as a pioneer given the 1990 triumph of the center-left Concertación). Venezuela was followed by leftist ascensions in Brazil (2002), Argentina (2003), Uruguay (2004), Bolivia (2006), Ecuador and Nicaragua (2007) and Paraguay (2008). With the exception of Paraguay and Chile, all these countries have since then (and up to late 2014) been ruled by left or center-left governments.

We claim that 'left turns' in Latin America may be propitious for political trust, in the short term at least, for several reasons. First, these governments typically favor (in discourse and often in practice) more inclusive social programs and greater social spending. By doing so, leftist governments try to move away from the neoliberal policies and conservative governments that are associated with the 'lost decade' of the 1980s and the feeble progress of the 1990s. In a highly unequal continent, this appearance of heightened awareness to social inequalities and demands may improve political trust. Second, leftist governments have often attempted to mobilize communities in self-government practices. This ranged from participative budgets (following Brazil's pioneer experience in 1989, which soon spread to other countries) to Chávez's social programs like the Misiones Bolivarianas, which created strong emotional links between the government and the beneficiaries (Handlin, 2012). Grassroots mobilization nurtures the belief that political institutions are open to people's competences and skills. And governments trusting the people may be reciprocated.

Finally, some leftist governments (such as those in Bolivia, Ecuador, and Venezuela) promoted new constitutions through their corresponding constitutional assemblies (Cameron, 2009). These new legal frameworks included and recognized typically underprivileged ethnic groups as well as women (Ellner, 2012). This may have also created the impression of more open and responsive governments, which in turn should foster trust.

TRENDS IN POLITICAL TRUST

In this section we provide a brief descriptive glance at the aggregate level and evolution of trust in Latin American countries. We employ survey data from the Latinobarómetro Corporation (Latinobarometer), a survey project that has been applying yearly surveys since 1996 to national samples of the adult population in 17 Latin American countries.⁴ Our analysis considers trust in three political institutions: the national Congress, political parties, and the government. Focusing first on country differences, Figures 24.1 and 24.2 show the average trust in the three political institutions – the former as an index, the latter separately – according to country-aggregated data from 1996 to 2011. Countries are sorted in the figures from the lowest (Ecuador) to the highest (Uruguay) average. Interestingly, for all countries the institutions with lowest trust are political parties, whereas the institution with higher trust is the government, with the exception of Mexico and Honduras where Congress depicts a slightly higher level of trust. Furthermore, this rank order also corresponds to the variability of each measure, being for the government the institution with the largest variability ($sd = 0.97$) and for political parties the institution with the lowest variability ($sd = 0.85$) at individual level. Figure 24.2 also shows that countries with lower trust (Peru, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua) seem to display smaller differences between institutions, while the opposite tends to occur among countries with higher levels of political trust. This last pattern is particularly remarkable in the cases such as of Colombia and Chile.

Figure 24.3 offers a broad view of political trust trends between 1996 and 2011 for the entire region. There is a u-type trend in which trust in all three political institutions decays

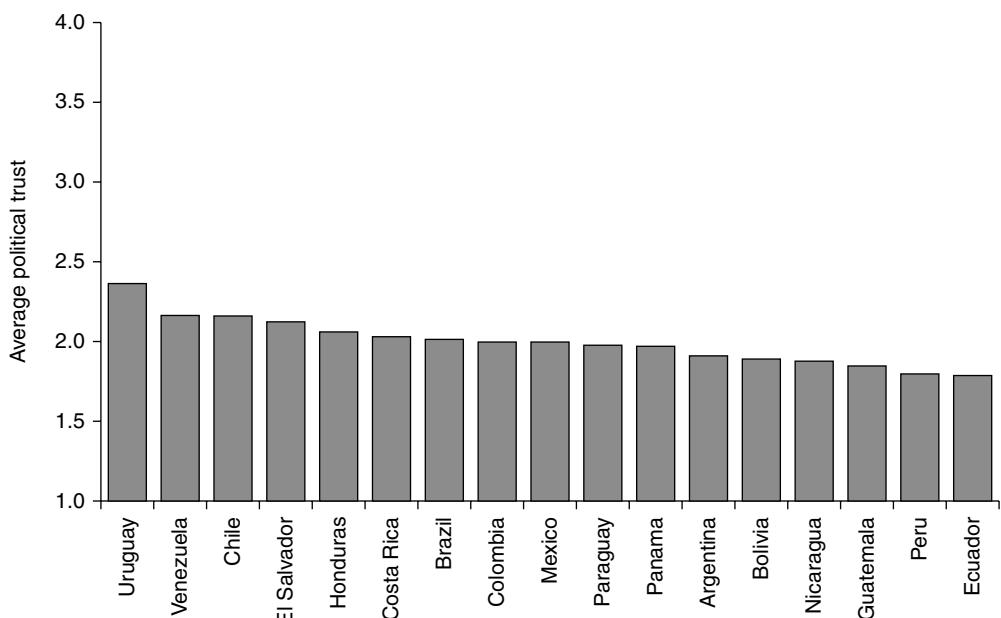


Figure 24.1 Trust in political institutions by country in Latin America (average from 1996 to 2011)

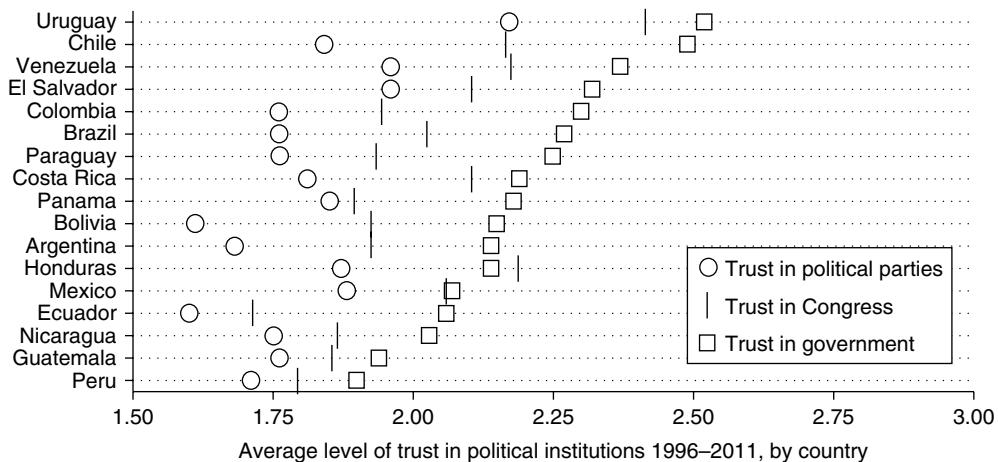


Figure 24.2 *Trust in government, Congress, and political parties by country in Latin America (average from 1996 to 2011)*

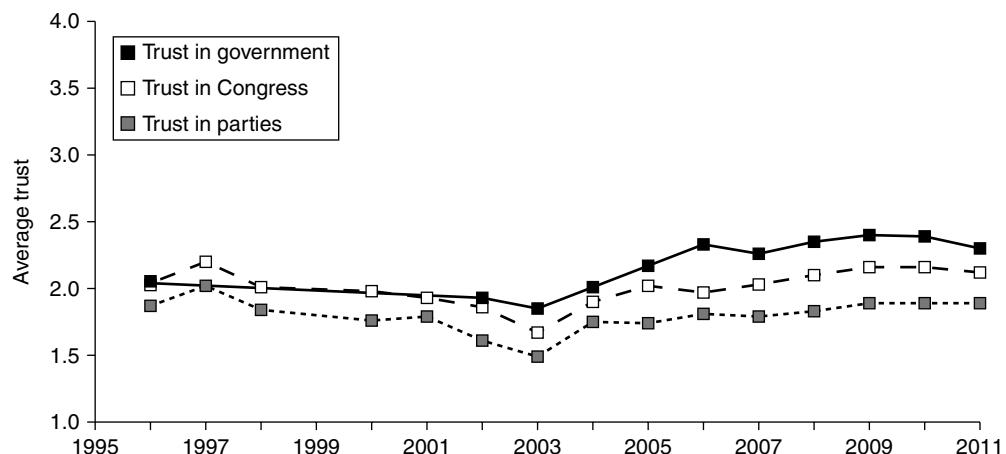


Figure 24.3 *Evolution of political trust in different institutions*

between 1996 and 2003, but recovers up to its original levels around 2011. The timing of these trends may not be accidental: above we saw that, during the last decade, several important socioeconomic and political changes took place in the region. They might be pushing trust upwards.

Figure 24.4 shows the evolution of political trust by country in the three political institutions. In many countries it is possible to observe a systematic increase in trust levels between 2000 and 2010. However, the increases are far from linear. Ups and downs for different institutions seem to be related. All in all, the institutions that display the largest changes in trust are governments. Some particularly sharp changes in governmental

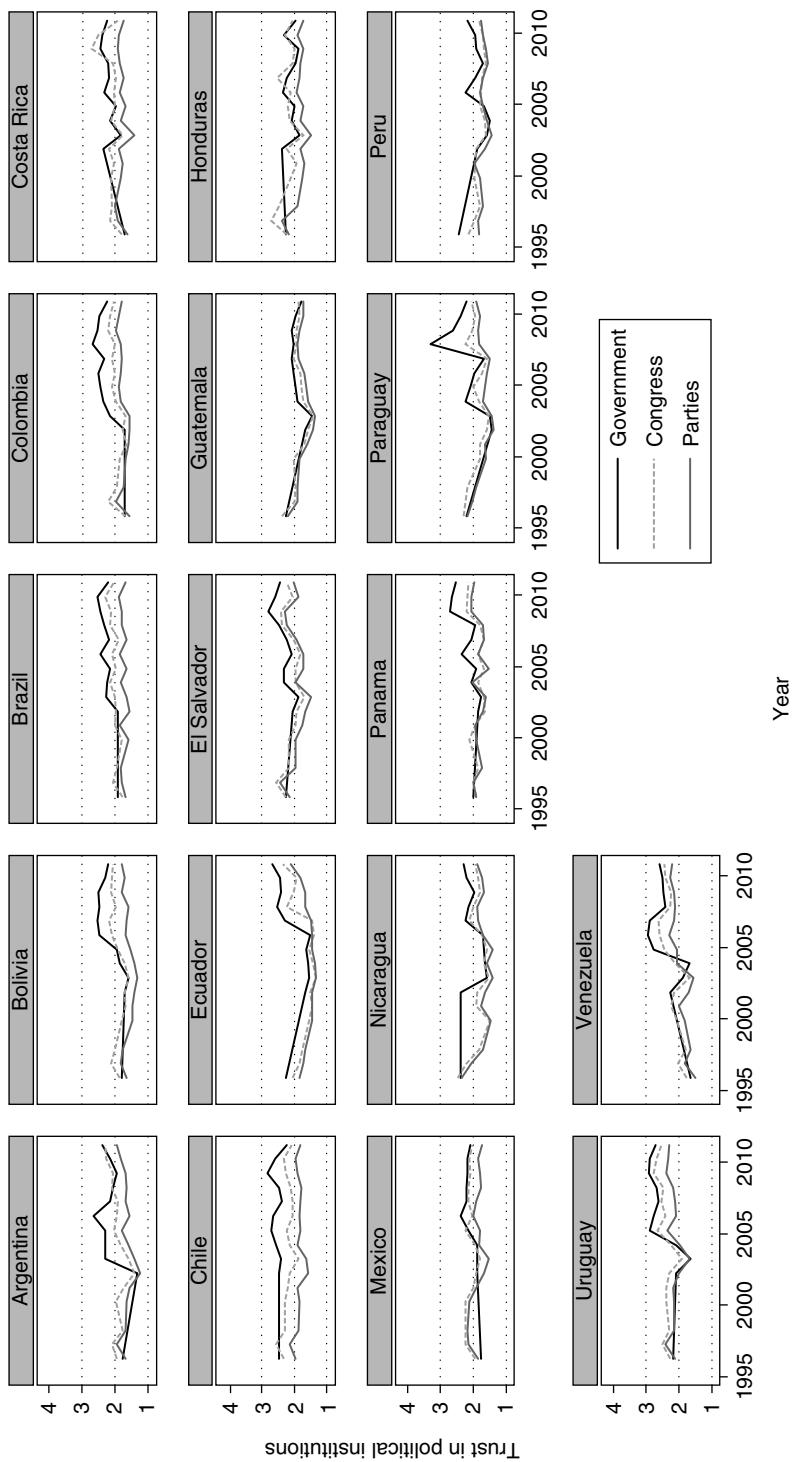


Figure 24.4 Evolution of trust in political institutions in Latin American countries

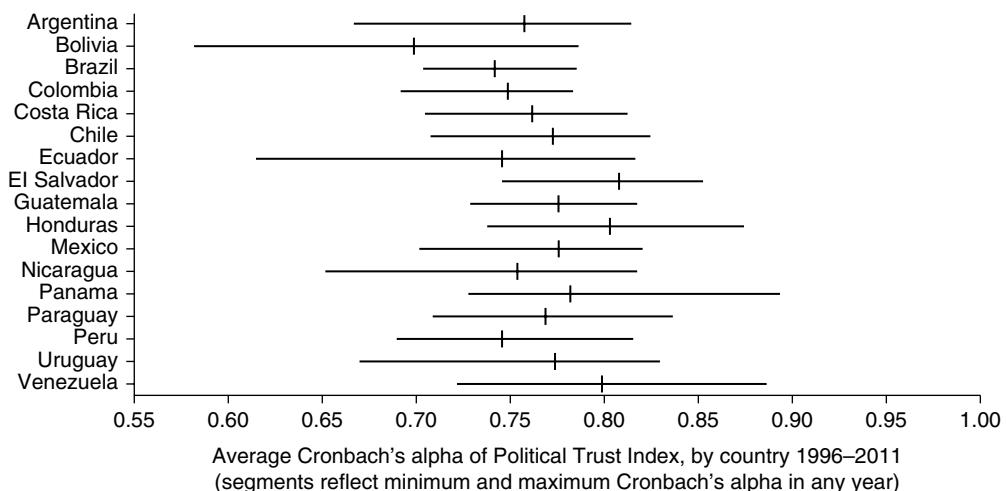


Figure 24.5 *Average Cronbach's alpha of political trust index by country, 1996–2011*

trust coincide with presidential elections (e.g., Uruguay in 2004, Ecuador in 2006, and Paraguay in 2008).

The previous figures show that the trends of trust in each of the institutions we consider tend to covary strongly. For example, average correlation between the trends of confidence in Congress and political parties for the 17 countries is 0.93. Even more interesting, the strong covariation between the different confidence items is also visible at the individual level. Indeed, the level of internal consistency between respondents' answers to each of the three institutions is quite high across countries and time. Figure 24.5 shows for each country the average Cronbach's alpha for the three trust items for the entire period (1996–2011) (see also Chapter 6 by Marien). Additionally, the segments at the sides of each average point indicate the minimum and maximum score that was observed in any single year during the period under consideration. As can be seen, the results indicate fairly high levels of internal consistency. For all countries, the average Cronbach's alpha was higher than 0.70 (with the exception of Bolivia that scores 0.69). The pooled Cronbach's alpha considering all countries and all years simultaneously is 0.73.

Last, an important feature highlighted in Figure 24.4 is the relatively high level of variation in aggregate levels of trust within each country. While trust in government is certainly the most visible case, trust in Congress and political parties also show sizable changes across time. In some cases the trends are positive such as in Bolivia and Venezuela, while in others the evolution of trust seems more trendless (such as in El Salvador and Honduras). Results from Table 24.1 corroborate this intuition more formally. It shows the estimates from three-level hierarchical Anova models that estimate the proportion of all variation in trust attributable to variation within each country (within-country variation) and to variation across countries (between-country variation) for each institution separately, and for a combined index that averages responses to the three institutions.

Results indicate that trust in Congress, political parties, government, and for the

Table 24.1 Anova models for trust in political institutions and political trust index

	Congress		Parties		Government		Average Index	
	Ordinal probit		Ordinal probit		Ordinal probit		Linear model	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Threshold 1	-0.431	0.052***	-0.148	0.044***	-0.597	0.049***		
Threshold 2	0.584	0.052***	0.859	0.044***	0.372	0.049***		
Threshold 3	1.629	0.052***	1.877	0.044***	1.365	0.049***		
Intercept							1.989	0.037***
Sigma ² survey	0.082		0.072		0.163		0.055	
Sigma ² country	0.041		0.028		0.026		0.018	
Sigma ² residual	—		—		—		0.463	
N cases	268413		272420		205107		204576	
N surveys	255		255		187		187	
N countries	17		17		17		17	

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Sigma² survey (within country); sigma² country (between country).

Source: Latinobarometer (2002–11).

combined index is more variable within countries than between countries. More simply, political trust for these three institutions tends to vary, on average, more within a single country across time, than across countries. In fact, estimates for the average trust index indicate that there is three times more variability within countries than across countries. We will exploit this within-country variation later, when we statistically model political trust among Latin Americans.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND MEASUREMENT

Before turning to the statistical modeling of the evolution of trust in political institutions, we detail the survey data we will use. Although the Latinobarometer surveys have been applied since 1996, some key questions were not asked in every year, so we restrict our analysis from 2002 onwards. In total, our analysis includes 161 surveys from 17 countries during a time span of nine years, all of which totals more than 175 000 respondents.

The questions employed to measure trust in political institutions, as well as their four-point response categories, have been exactly the same for all countries during all applications.⁵ All surveys were applied in Spanish, save in Brazil where interviews took place in Portuguese. Needless to say, this high degree of methodological consistency assures us that changes in the level of political trust reflect actual changes in the evaluations of Latin American citizens, and not changes in the survey instrument.

Our analysis considers both individual- and aggregate-level variables. Among the former, we include a series of socio-demographic variables, which include gender (dummy variable), birth cohorts (five ten-year age groups), education (dummy variables representing primary, secondary, and tertiary levels), and religious affiliation (dummies for Catholics, and Evangelicals and other religion, with non-affiliated individuals as reference category). Following the literature we also incorporate indicators related to respondents' perception of the performance of government (presidential approval) and evaluations of the national economy (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Mainwaring, 2006; Segovia, 2008; Rose and Mishler, 2011; Van der Meer and Dekker, 2011). We expect that favorable assessments of both are associated with more confidence in political institutions. Last, we incorporate a left-right 11-point self-location scale in order to control for ideological preferences.⁶ Although the specific meaning of this last variable might change from country to country (see Kitschelt et al., 2010), there is increasing evidence about its widespread usage as a heuristic device across Latin American societies (Carreras and Castañeda-Angarita, 2013). We do not have any specific expectations about the relationship of this variable and political trust, but it is an important individual-level control given the contextual variables we incorporate into the statistical models, which are detailed below.⁷

At the country level we incorporate four variables: (1) level of control of corruption as measured by the World Bank Governance Indicators project; (2) per capita income, using GDP per capita adjusted by purchase power parity (taken from the World Bank Development Indicators);⁸ (3) level of economic inequality among the population of each country as measured by the Gini index; and (4) the ideological platform of governments (or governmental ideology).⁹ While the first two variables are commonly employed in empirical analysis predicting trust in political institutions (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Segovia, 2008; Van der Meer and Dekker, 2011), the latter two require further elaboration.

The ideological platform of government variable classifies in terms of left-right ideological inclinations the economic policies implemented by each government during its tenure in office. This variable was originally measured by Murillo et al. (2010), who rely on previous datasets and the expert judgments of more than 30 scholars. An important feature of this measure is that it was coded considering the economic policies that presidents effectively implemented during their tenure in office, as opposed to the platform he or she might have campaigned on. The original dataset covers the period 1976–2007. We thus had to code some more recent governments following the guidelines contained in the codebook of Murillo et al. (2010).¹⁰ This variable scores government's ideological platform on a five-point scale, where 1 is left, 2 is center-left, 3 is center, 4 is center-right, and 5 is right. According to the authors a left-wing position applies 'to political actors who seek, as a central programmatic objective, to reduce social and economic inequalities' (*ibid.*). Through this variable we attempt to capture whether the 'left turn' that several Latin American countries have experienced had any consequences over Latin Americans' level of trust in political institutions.

Last, we include in our statistical models the Gini index. We expect that increases in the aggregate level of economic inequality promote distrust toward political institutions. Indeed, following Zmerli and Castillo (2015), we argue that rising levels of inequality erode citizens' perceptions of the level of fairness and trustworthiness of the country's political institutions, and therefore, their level of trust.¹¹

STATISTICAL MODELING

Given that the Latinobarometer surveys are applied annually, when the data is pooled we obtain a repeated (or time-series) cross-sectional design, with respondents nested in yearly surveys, and these nested within countries. With this type of data it is not only possible to estimate the association between individual and contextual factors, and political trust, as in a common multilevel research design. But more interestingly, we can analyze how changes in contextual factors within a single country across time are associated with alterations in the level of political trust. In other words, we can model simultaneously between-country and within-country variation. Now, given that our main objective is to assess how political trust has evolved among Latin Americans, we concentrate our modeling efforts into capturing the latter type of variance. In fact, we incorporate in our statistical models country-level fixed effects in order to 'absorb' all between-country variability, so that all stable features of the countries in our sample – such as electoral systems or levels of ethnic and religious diversity among many others – are held constant in the empirical analysis (see Duch and Stevenson, 2008 and Fairbrother, 2013 for similar research designs). This implies that the coefficients of the aggregate-level variables can be interpreted in our models as the average change of the dependent variable within a country associated with a unit change of the contextual variable.¹²

We estimate five random-intercept regression models in which the dependent variable is an additive index of respondents' level of trust in political parties, Congress and government.¹³ As shown in the descriptive section, responses to the political trust questions tend to covary highly at the individual level, which justifies our decision to model political trust as a single construct. The first four models include, one by one, four

survey-level independent variables, while the final model includes all of them simultaneously. Individual-level observations are grouped by the country-year in which respondents were interviewed.

Following Van der Meer and Dekker (2011), we incorporate the left-right self-location scale to assure that, if the presidential ideology has a significant effect, it is not due to possible compositional effects of the public that live in countries that experience ideological turns in their political system. Similarly, we incorporate economic evaluations not only because some authors claim that political trust is conditioned by performance evaluations (Mishler and Rose, 2005; Mainwaring, 2006), but also to assure that, if we find significant effects associated with GDP per capita, it is not attributable to some specific configuration of economic evaluations within the populations included in our sample (for a further discussion of the effect of economic performance and perceptions thereof, see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). We should note, however, that this strategy risks minimizing the influence of aggregate economic outcomes to the extent that they condition political trust indirectly through their effect over respondents' economic evaluations.

EMPIRICAL RESULTS

Table 24.2 shows the parameter estimates for the linear random intercept models. At the individual level we find several variables with significant and very stable estimates across the different model specifications. Perhaps most interesting, respondents' religious affiliation shows some strong and positive effects. Specifically, self-declared Evangelicals and Catholics, compared to non-religious individuals, report higher levels of political trust. This may result from the role of religion, in particular of Catholicism, in connecting people with public issues in many Latin American countries (Levine and Mainwaring, 1989), or from the intuition among believers that political institutions protect their moral values on religiously charged issues such as homosexual rights and abortion. While the coefficients of both groups are highly significant (p value < 0.001), the estimates from the full model (model 5) suggest that being Catholic increases the level of trust by about 0.06 points, which corresponds approximately to 8 percent of a standard deviation of the dependent variable. The estimate for Evangelicals corresponds to a 7 percent change.

On average, birth cohorts and, to a lesser extent, educational level also affect trust in political institutions. The coefficients of the cohort variables indicate that younger people often trust less. Notice though that the negative estimates of birth cohorts decrease monotonically up to the youngest cohort, which still shows lower levels of trust than the reference cohort (those born before 1941), but trust more than the preceding cohort. On the other hand, the coefficients for education also show a non-linear pattern: groups with completed secondary education show significantly lower levels of trust than the reference group (who are those with primary education only), while people with technical and college education do not differentiate themselves from the least educated group.

When we consider respondents' economic and political evaluations we find much stronger results. With respect to the former, all statistical models indicate that a better assessment of the national economy is strongly related to higher levels of political trust, as measured by our additive index. The coefficient of the evaluation of the national economy indicates that, on average, a one-unit change in the perception of the economy

(out of a five-point ordinal scale) increases by 0.178 points the level of the political trust index. This change corresponds to 24 percent of a standard deviation of the dependent variable. Moreover, a change from the lowest to the highest response category indicates a cumulative change of 0.712 points, which is larger than an entire standard deviation of the dependent variable. As one can expect, a more favorable assessment of the president is also strongly associated with more political trust. Indeed, those who mention approval of the president, while holding all other variables constant, score 0.409 points higher on the political trust index.

The estimate for the left-right self-identification scale shows that higher values, which indicate a more right-wing position, are associated with more confidence in political institutions. However, the size of the coefficient indicates that the associations are relatively modest. For example, an increase of five points in the left-right scale increases the political trust index by only about 0.035 points. On the other hand, those who did not mention a political position on the scale have significantly lower levels of trust than those who did mention it.

Among the contextual variables we find several interesting patterns. In the first place, if we compare the models that include a single system-level predictor with model 5 (which incorporates all four aggregate level predictors), we observe important changes in the magnitude of the coefficients. In all cases they reduce their size by about half their original size.

The most dramatic reduction occurs for the coefficient of the World Bank Control of Corruption indicator. When the effect of this variable is estimated without system-level controls, it is significant ($p < 0.05$), but once we control for all predictors it reduces its size to less than a third and is statistically undistinguishable from 0. This is a very interesting result that contrasts sharply with results from many cross-sectional studies, which find strong negative and highly significant associations (Segovia, 2008; Uslaner, 2011; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012). Previously we speculated that more lenient views of corruption among Latin Americans might weaken the expected relationship between corruption and trust in within-country analyses like ours (also see Chapter 19 by Uslaner). But there could be two additional reasons for explaining this lack of significance. First, Latin American publics might be slow learners, such that collective levels of political trust do not react immediately to changes in corruption. It might take some time for the public to react to corruption events. Second, yearly changes in political corruption tend to be very small; they may be too small to produce a statistically detectable change in political trust. Clearly, this point merits further research.

Our variable about government's ideological platform (governmental ideology in short) contains statistically significant estimates when it is entered as the only system-level variable (model 2), as well as when we control for the other system-level predictors, though the size of the coefficient decreases almost by half (from -0.062 to -0.034). The negative signs of the coefficients indicate that when governmental ideology moves to the right, political trust decreases within a country. The full model indicates a marginal effect of -0.034, which implies that, within a given country, a change from a deliberately left-wing government (such as the current government of Morales in Bolivia or Correa in Ecuador) to a right-wing government (such as the one of Bolaños Geyer in Nicaragua) leads to a decrease in the level of trust of 0.136 points. This corresponds to 19 percent of a standard deviation of the dependent variable.¹⁴ Among many possible implications, this result

Table 24.2 Linear mixed model for political trust index (restricted maximum likelihood estimates)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>										
Gender (male = 1)	0.009	0.003**	0.009	0.003**	0.009	0.009**	0.009	0.003**	0.009	0.003**
Cohort 1941–50	-0.027	0.007***	-0.027	0.007***	-0.027	0.007***	-0.027	0.007***	-0.027	0.007***
Cohort 1951–60	-0.032	0.007***	-0.032	0.007***	-0.033	0.007***	-0.033	0.007***	-0.033	0.007***
Cohort 1961–70	-0.044	0.006***	-0.043	0.006***	-0.044	0.006***	-0.044	0.006***	-0.044	0.006***
Cohort 1971–80	-0.056	0.006***	-0.056	0.006***	-0.056	0.006***	-0.056	0.006***	-0.056	0.006***
Cohort 1980 or after	-0.032	0.006***	-0.031	0.006***	-0.032	0.006***	-0.032	0.006***	-0.032	0.006***
Secondary education	-0.015	0.004***	-0.015	0.004***	-0.015	0.004***	-0.015	0.004***	-0.015	0.004***
Technical education	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.007
College education	0.005	0.005	0.004	0.005	0.004	0.004	0.004	0.005	0.005	0.005
Catholic	0.059	0.005***	0.059	0.005***	0.059	0.005***	0.059	0.005***	0.059	0.005***
Evangelical	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***
Other religion	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.008	0.008
Evaluation national economy	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***
Presidential approval (yes = 1)	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.003***
Left-right scale	0.007	0.001***	0.007	0.001***	0.007	0.007***	0.007	0.001***	0.007	0.001***
Doesn't mention left-right position (dummy)	-0.112	0.004***	-0.112	0.004***	-0.112	-0.112***	-0.112	0.004***	-0.112	0.004***

<i>Country level</i>							
Presidential party economic ideology	-0.062	0.012***					-0.034 0.012**
Control of corruption			0.193	0.085*			
Log GNI per capita (ppp)				0.370	0.056***		
Gini index					-2.269	-2.269***	
<i>Constant</i>	1.323	0.051***	1.280	0.062***		2.485	0.206***
Deviance	333973.449	333989.547	333957.377	333963.971			333959.183
N cases	176769	176769	176769	176769			176769
N surveys	161	161	161	161			161
Sigma ² intercept	0.017	0.020	0.016	0.016			0.014
Sigma ² residual	0.385	0.385	0.385	0.385			0.385

Notes:

* p < 0.05; ** p < 0.01; *** p < 0.001.

All regression models control for country-level fixed effects.

Source: Latinobarometer (2002-11).

indicates that political elites can influence directly the level of trust that citizens confer to their political institutions. They also suggest that the ‘left turn’ discussed at the beginning of this chapter may have boosted political trust. Finally, the negative signs of the coefficients of this variable also contrast directly with the positive signs of the left-right ideological scale (which is coded in the same direction). Therefore, while a more right-wing ideological position at the individual level is associated with higher political trust, changes towards the right in the position of governments reduce political trust.

Our results also show positive and significant effects for changes in the average income level of countries. As indicated by the full model, a one-unit increase in the logarithm of the per capita gross domestic product, which could be represented as a change from the 20th to the 80th percentile of the average income, leads to an increase of 0.37 in the dependent variable. This corresponds to half of a standard deviation of the dependent variable. Therefore, as societies become wealthier, and perhaps states are able to provide better public services and assure better living conditions to the population, a more fertile ground for political trust is created (also see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). This is consistent with the fact that, as noted above, from 2003 onwards both economic growth and political trust grew in tandem (see Figure 24.3). Still, this presumed effect should not be immediate. Further tests of different time lags in the independent variable are needed.

Last, our models also account for the level of income inequality each country experiences at different points in time. Similarly to the other cases, once we introduce this variable in conjunction with the other system-level variables, the effect of the Gini index drops to about half its size. Nonetheless, the estimate remains significant even in the most demanding specification. The negative sign indicates that as the Gini index increases from one year to another, and therefore the level of inequality increases, the average level of political trust decreases. This is entirely consistent with our initial expectations, as well as with the work of Zmerli and Castillo (2015), who argue that rising levels of inequality erode citizens’ level of trust. In more substantive terms, a yearly change from the 25th percentile level of inequality to the 75th observed level of inequality would add up to a change equivalent to 0.012 of a standard deviation. Considering that such a change is very large and unlikely to be observed empirically, we consider the effect of this variable as relatively small.

CONCLUSION

In this chapter we have analyzed political trust in Latin America. Our historical perspective has stressed the political context from which trust judgments emerge. We have also described, and tried to explain, the evolution of such changes during the last decade.

Our analysis of the Latinobarometer survey data suggests interesting patterns regarding how much and why Latin Americans trust their national political institutions (specifically, Congress, political parties, and the national government). First, trust in these political institutions does not only vary across countries, but tends to do so even more within countries across time. Political trust in Latin America is not static. Rather, it seems to be sensitive to the ups and downs of political events. Moreover, this aggregate variation does not seem trendless, but quite the contrary: there is a modest increase in the aggregate level of political trust in most Latin American countries beginning around 2003–04.

Second, and consistent with previous research, we find that individual-level performance evaluations, as well as survey respondents' political inclinations, significantly affect trust in political institutions. Those who perceive that the national economy is doing well and those who approve the work of the president, trust at much higher rates than those with more negative opinions towards these political objects.

Third, we find that within-country variation in political trust across time is strongly influenced by changes in per capita income and the ideological orientation of governments. Our repeated cross-sectional design shows that annual increases in per capita income – which could be interpreted as variation in economic performance – boost the aggregate level of political trust within a country. Our estimates also indicate a positive relationship between left-wing changes in government policy and political trust. These results confirm our initial suspicion about how the so-called 'left turn' may have boosted political trust. Above, we speculated that this association might result from the propensity of recent Latin American leftist governments to create more inclusive social programs and legal frameworks, as well as their emphasis on organizing and mobilizing the popular classes. Moreover, the effect of government ideology was significant even after controlling for the changes in the level of income inequality and average income, which suggests that the mechanism by which this effect takes place not only occurs through changes in the economic conditions of the population, but also through attitudinal changes triggered by the presence of left-wing political actors. Last, our estimates also indicate that within-country variation in political trust responds, though in a more moderate fashion, to changes in the level of inequality.

We believe these results have interesting implications. On the one hand, our finding that within-country changes across time substantially affect political trust should move us away from any rigid path-dependence perspective emphasizing the 'trust traps' of Latin American societies. Moreover, the combination of economic development, democratic consolidation, and (modest) increases in political trust across time suggests that Latin America may be becoming more similar to the more established Western democracies. The notion of a closing gap is also consistent with the economic recession in Europe and the United States after 2008 and the ensuing reservations about and challenges of their political institutions by the citizenry, which may eventually erode their political trust levels.

On the other hand, some deeply ingrained features of Latin American politics – such as the gravitation toward populist leaderships and the particularistic distribution of benefits – create quite unique situations. For instance, the association between 'left turns' and increases in political trust may be specific to the region's current conjuncture, in which leftist forces are seen as the saviors of excluded groups (women, indigenous groups, and the poor) deeply hurt by neoliberalism. Given the more sober style of European social-democrat and socialist parties, a 'left turn' in Europe may not boost political trust to such an extent. Likewise, the finding that political corruption does not decrease trust as massively as expected may not be surprising if we consider that in many Latin American countries moderate levels of corruption are normal – and may even act as a lubricant for arriving at binding political decisions.

In this chapter we have considered only the marginal effects of both individual and contextual variables. Further research may explore the eventual presence of heterogeneous effects through cross-level interactions between individuals' partisan and ideological allegiances, and contextual variables. For example, one could hypothesize that the positive

effect over trust of changes towards the left in government ideology should be stronger among individuals who approve of the current government. Indeed, the positive effect of changes towards the left should reinforce the opinions of individuals who are already supportive of a left-wing government. Similarly, the positive effect of changes towards the left should be larger among individuals who locate themselves on the left side of the ideological scale than among those on the right side. By contrast, it should be very interesting to identify whether the effect of changes towards the left on government ideology extends to those who do not necessarily sympathize with the changes in the ideological platforms of their current government. In a similar fashion it would be interesting to uncover whether a positive interaction effect between government ideology and political inclinations also emerges for political parties and Congress. In case of a positive finding, it would indicate that the influence of government ideology would somehow spread to other political institutions.

Expectations of the same nature could apply in reference to individuals' evaluation of the economy and positive changes in economic performance: the positive association between respondents' opinion of the economy and political trust could be magnified when national income increases from one year to another.

We believe that future research should not only address questions about moderation, but should also consider questions about mediation. For example, how do individual-level variables mediate the contextual effects on political trust? For instance, is the positive effect of 'left turns' mediated by the acquisition of tangible benefits and the reception of social programs provided by the government? Or is it mediated through cross-level mechanisms such as participation in government-sponsored grassroots activities, or by stronger political efficacy feelings? Likewise, is the positive effect of aggregate economic performance mediated by citizens' evaluation of the economy? If so, we could potentially find that the effect of changes in economic performance could affect political trust directly as a contextual force, as well as indirectly, through the positive effect that economic evaluation has over political trust.

Additionally, our empirical analysis was performed under the simplifying assumption that the contextual factors have a concurrent effect over respondents' level of political trust. However, the relationship between these variables might have a more complex temporal structure. For example, the effect of economic and political changes might take some time in order to condition mass-level opinions. Consequently, we suggest that further research taking advantage of repeated cross-sectional designs, such as ours, should also evaluate whether a temporal lag of level 2 variables yields a better model fit.

In general, the possibilities for future research in relation to political trust, and more broadly to public opinion, in Latin America are many. With the growing amount of cross-national public opinion datasets such as the Latinobarometer and the Latin American Public Opinion Project (LAPOP), the avenues of future research that we have suggested, as well as many others, can start to be addressed by the academic community.

NOTES

1. However, it would be too much to speak about state collapse or failure for Latin America – even in Colombia (Rotberg, 2002) states do work. Instead, Mainwaring (2006) suggests the term ‘state deficiencies’ for Latin America.
2. Analyses based on data from the World Development Indicators, World Bank, accessed 11 December 2013 at <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/home.aspx>.
3. Based on the Polity IV dataset, accessed 8 January 2014 at <http://www.systemicpeace.org/polity/polity4.htm>.
4. The Latinobarómetro Corporation surveyed annually each of the countries included in our study (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela). The samples are about 1200 cases per country every year. Each year the study realizes about 19 000 face-to-face interviews of adult population, representing more than 400 million Latin American inhabitants (www.latinobarometro.org).
5. The employed question is: ‘Please look at this card and tell me, how much trust you have in each of the following groups, institutions or persons: A lot, some, a little, or no trust?’
6. To capture individuals’ ideological inclinations we actually introduce two variables. Following work from Jackson et al. (2010), we introduce the left-right position of all survey respondents who explicitly mentioned a position, while those who didn’t (which represent roughly 23 percent of the sample) are assigned the country-year survey mean. We distinguish these respondents from the rest with an additional dummy variable in which they receive a value of 1.
7. Political trust is also commonly associated with interpersonal trust and institutional fairness (Grimes, 2006; Segovia, 2008; see also Chapter 16 by Grimes). Several authors (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Mainwaring, 2006) claim that the relationship with interpersonal trust is endogenous, because of which we do not incorporate this variable in the analysis. So far we haven’t found a variable capturing institutional fairness that has been applied across all (or at least most) years in the Latinobarometer surveys.
8. The World Bank DataBank indicators do not report income per capita data for Argentina from 2005 onwards. Therefore we complement this data source for the missing years with data provided by the website <http://www.economywatch.com/>.
9. We omit an indicator that qualifies the level of democracy of each country (i.e., Freedom Score) given that for the period covered in our analysis there is very little variation. For example, using the Freedom Score there are five countries that do not change their score any year and six that change only one point during one year. Therefore, any results from this variable would be driven primarily by the few countries that indeed experience more change on this variable. An alternative that we will explore in the future is the age of the democratic regime of each country. This variable can be considered as an indicator of democratic consolidation, and indeed varies significantly across our sample.
10. Specifically we coded Piñera’s (Chile) government initiated in 2010 as centrist (code 3), Morales’s government after the 2009 election as left-wing (code 1), Funes’s government in El Salvador since 2009 as center-left (code 2), Lobos’s government in Honduras since 2009 as center-right (code 4), and Mujica’s government in Uruguay since 2009 as center-left (code 2).
11. Given that there is no single data source that provides the Gini index for all Latin American countries for every year between 2002 and 2011, we ended up employing the information provided by both the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the World Bank DataBank. However, both sources combined did not cover all the required years. Therefore, we linearly interpolated the Gini index for a total of 31 country-years. Out of these, in 17 cases the interpolation was between adjacent years, while in 14 cases we had to fill in the data for countries that missed three of four consecutive years of data. We deliberately avoided extrapolating this measure to years that were not covered among the data series. This implies dropping 13 country-years (surveys) from the analysis.
12. Additionally, if we had included a country-level random effect we would add to our model the potentially unwarranted parametric assumption of a normally distributed country-level random effect. This assumption will hardly occur given that the sample includes only 17 countries. Stegmüller (2013) finds that hierarchical models with few countries can have several problems.
13. We included in the analysis the average response to the trust items of all respondents who answered at least two items. This implied dropping from the analysis 1.8 percent of the sample.
14. In addition to the current linear specification of this variable in the regression models, we also treated it as a categorical factor with each level as an independent variable. Results strongly suggested that a linear specification adequately captured the association with political trust. Fit statistics BIC and AIC favored the linear specification in all instances.

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25. Political trust in Western and Southern Europe

Mariano Torcal

INTRODUCTION

Cross-national differences in levels of political trust in Europe are rather consistent and stable over time (Dogan, 2005a, 2005b; Van der Meer, 2010; Marien, 2011; Norris, 2011). Trust rates are highest in the Nordic countries, and lowest in Southern European countries, with the countries from Western Continental Europe and the British Isles in the middle. These persisting cross-national differences in political trust in this region have predominantly been attributed to cultural or attitudinal differences or distinctive institutional settings, giving a much more secondary role to citizens' evaluations of their system's performance. However, more recently, an increasing number of scholars have argued that such cross-national differences reflect different evaluations of the performance of those same institutions (Norris, 1999, 2011; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Luhiste, 2006; Hetherington and Rudolph, 2008), introducing a debate about which criteria citizens use to evaluate their political system. Concurrently, recent declines in political trust in the face of the Great Recession and the subsequent austerity measures since 2008 (cf. Polavieja, 2013; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016) reinforced the view of the role played by economic and social outputs in explaining political trust.

However, Hakhverdian and Mayne (2012, p. 741) propose rivalling explanations. Political trust can be influenced either by the performance of resulting policies (output), or by the evaluation of the functioning and performance of the democratic processes (input). In the Iberian countries (Torcal, 2014) – but possibly also in countries such as Cyprus, Italy, and Greece – increasing political distrust may not just be the result of the direct effect of the Great Recession, but also of a perceived lack of political responsiveness to its severe consequences: the negative effect of a lack of political or governmental responsiveness on political trust worsens in situations of economic crisis (*ibid.*).

The established democracies of Western and Southern Europe are an excellent region to study a range of trust questions. What is the role of evaluation of the recent economic and social conditions in the decline in political trust in this region? What is the relative importance of evaluation of the democratic process? What are the most important objective factors explaining cross-national and time variation in political trust in these countries? Are basic cultural factors still important? Western and Southern Europe constitute a relevant region to the field of political trust for four reasons. First, most of the empirical and theoretical arguments in the literature on political trust have been based on comparative or case studies on countries in this region. Second, this part of the world contains a diverse set of democracies with a variety of political and social conditions, including both countries with long-lasting democratic traditions and more recent democracies with an authoritarian past. Third, most of the countries in this region are integrated in a supranational organization (the EU), which might have influenced citizens' perceptions

of a lack of responsiveness by national institutions and authorities (see also Chapter 5 by Muñoz). Finally and not least, this region has been strongly but differentially exposed to the Great Recession since 2008.

In the first two sections, after a brief theoretical presentation of the current debate, I will provide a descriptive analysis of the current situation of political trust in the region, followed by a presentation of my argument that all of the above-mentioned explanations of political trust are equally relevant, at least at the individual level. Yet, their effects are not the same for all countries. The effect of the overall evaluation of democracy on political trust is greater for those countries suffering the worst consequences of the Great Recession.

Subsequently, in the last two sections of this chapter, I will complement the argument by demonstrating that the effect of the Great Recession and its social consequences is only part of the story when it comes to explaining the recent asymmetrical decline in political trust observed in some of the countries of the region. This phenomenon is also significantly related to citizens' evaluation of the functioning of democracy. This is especially true in those countries greatly affected by the economic and fiscal crises, where they have acted as a 'stress test' for representative mechanisms, increasing citizens' awareness of and concern about the functioning of democracy. This, in turn, leads to a perception that the actual functioning of the democratic system is defective, resulting in increasing political distrust.

The analysis presented here is primarily based on the European Social Survey (ESS) dataset, and all the explanatory factors are only tested at the individual level. The indirect or conditional effects of aggregate objective measures of economic and political performance in explaining cross-national differences are explored elsewhere in this Handbook (see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer).

FROM 'BOTTOM-UP' TO SYSTEM PERFORMANCE (‘TOP-DOWN’) MODELS OF POLITICAL TRUST IN WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE

Country rankings in terms of political trust also seem to be remarkably steady. Political trust tends to be higher in Western industrialized societies, with Northern European countries consistently having the highest levels, followed by other Western European countries, with Southern and Eastern European polities at the bottom of this group (Dogan, 2005a; Criado and Herreros, 2007; Marien, 2011; Norris, 2011). Neither the general social and political modernization over the last three decades, nor the Great Recession after 2008 substantially altered these cross-national rankings.

These stable cross-national differences have given empirical support to the culturalist or bottom-up approach to the study of political trust, which attributes these enduring differences to some sort of cultural legacy that is transmitted through early socialization (Mishler and Rose, 2001, 2007; Torcal, 2006; Hooghe and Zmerli, 2011; Hooghe et al., 2015). This approach has become the dominant narrative to explain persistently low levels of political trust in Southern Europe. For instance, discussions about Italian political culture have long been pervaded by assumptions of a general prevalence of attitudinal syndromes of political alienation, clientelism, particularism, discontent and distrust. In

fact, Italy has surely been ‘the country par excellence in which to study negative attitudes towards politics which seems to be culturally rooted’ (Segatti, 2006, p. 270). The cases of Spain, Portugal and (more recently) Greece have been the object of similar assessments by a myriad of studies, especially regarding their mass publics’ low levels of confidence in political institutions, strong anti-party feelings and a perceived lack of responsiveness on the part of public office-holders (Bruneau and Macleod, 1986, pp. 152–5; Montero and Torcal, 1990, p. 134; Mendrinou and Nicolacopoulos, 1997, pp. 22–9; Magalhães, 2005; Torcal and Magalhães, 2010). From this, it is only a relatively small step to conclude that there is a ‘Mediterranean’ or ‘Southern European’ political culture, deeply rooted in particular and stable ways of life, and characterized by traditionalism and fatalism, elitism and charismatic leadership, distance from politics and low participation (Barnes and Sani, 1974; Mamadouh, 1999; Bruneau et al., 2001).

However, although these kinds of cultural explanations are fairly relevant to explaining cross-national variation, they are completely inadequate in explaining cross-time variation and some of the current trends observed in Europe. Moreover, there have been other explanations related to the context of economic and social conditions, and of political processes and representation.

The discussion about the potentially endogenous nature of political trust (away from culture-deterministic explanations) gave way to studies focusing on the effect of certain institutional features, such as the presence of consensual democratic settings (Newton and Norris, 2000; Criado and Herreros, 2007; Norris, 2011), a proportional electoral system (Van der Meer, 2010) or the level of political inclusion of the democratic system (Katzenstein, 2000, pp. 143–4). Contextual institutional factors appear to be significant in explaining some of the cross-national variation in political trust (Norris, 1999, 2011) and could also help to explain some of the variations at specific moments in time (Morlino and Tarchi, 1996; Katzenstein, 2000), but are certainly not valid explanations of the longitudinal trends observed in many countries (Van der Meer, 2010, p. 531). These must depend much more on citizen evaluations of aspects related to the performance (both political and economic) of these democracies.

More recently, scholars have argued that such cross-national differences are more a reflection of evaluations of the political performance of institutions (Norris, 2011), particularly in Europe (Harteveld et al., 2013). This constitutes more of a top-down (rational-culturalist) explanation, which, as explained in preceding chapters in this Handbook, also signals the importance of some political factors as the main *explananda* of individual and cross-national differences. This line of thought argues that political trust varies according to individuals’ evaluations of economic and social conditions, and thus political trust ultimately depends upon the institutional capacity to meet and represent citizens’ socioeconomic interests and demands. Thus, economic stewardship is typically identified as a leading driver of political trust: when citizens are dissatisfied with economic performance, distrust in government ensues, while the reverse effect is produced when economic prosperity abounds (Clarke et al., 1993; Hetherington, 1998; Citrin and Luks, 2001; Listhaug, 2006). Additionally, the recent decline in political trust in some countries, especially in Southern Europe, is fostering a lively new debate among European scholars about whether the increasing cross-national differences in political trust can be attributed primarily to the crisis and the subsequent austerity measures (Polavieja, 2013; Van Erkel and Van der Meer, 2016).

Other theoretical developments and empirical research indicate that the origins of and change in cross-national differences in political trust may not be so apolitical and purely instrumental. The perceived poor quality of the democratic processes of national polities is an increasingly important problem in today's democracies, where global economies with multilevel governance and supranational and international organizations such as the EU, IMF or the World Bank are likely to cause citizens to perceive that the power of government is far away from their national representative institutions (Katzenstein, 2000; Armingeon and Guthmann, 2013). Additionally, these negative perceptions could also be exacerbated by the problem of citizens' increasing awareness of political corruption (Della Porta, 2000; Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Van der Meer, 2010; Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012; Van der Meer and Hakhverdian, 2016; Torcal and Bargsted, 2015) and a perceived lack of fairness to all interests in society in the political process (political impartiality) (Rohrschneider, 2005; see also Chapter 16 by Grimes).

A final political suspect in the current decline in political trust is directly related to party system supply and the electoral conflict (Norris, 2011). Some scholars link political trust to the outcome of electoral competition: winners tend to have higher levels of political trust (Anderson et al., 2005). Following the logic of the potential effect of the electoral outcome on political trust, it could also be argued that the latter may also be affected by an absence of a comprehensive and diverse party supply (the political and policy proposals by the main existing parties), so that when citizens dislike the dominant ideological content of this supply, they also tend to distrust the institutions of representation more (Anderson and Singer, 2008; see also Chapter 15 by Bélanger).

CROSS-NATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL TRUST IN WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE IN 2012

The first problem we face when trying to study political trust in Western and Southern Europe is that the data necessary to make a rigorous comparative longitudinal analysis are somewhat difficult to come by. One of the most important potential sources, the World Values Survey/European Values Study (WVS/EVS), poses immediate challenges for our purposes.¹ On the one hand, the list of Western European democracies included in each wave varies a great deal. Some countries have no data points (such as Austria, Ireland and Luxembourg) and some have only one or two data points (Finland and Germany). With regard to the Southern European countries, Greece was only included in 1999. Even for Italy, Spain and Portugal (all included in both the 1989–93 and the 1994–99 waves), the comparable data in the various WVS/EVS waves only cover trust in parliament rather than the whole gamut of political institutions and actors – namely, parliament, parties and politicians (Zmerli and Newton, 2011).

The Eurobarometer data contain a more complete time series of data on political trust, but only in three institutions (government, parliament and political parties) and using a dichotomous category.

Finally, data from the ESS for 2002–12 allow us to expand our time span to include a greater number of waves, more recent data, and with more institutions included, although they pose a new problem regarding comparison: in these surveys, trust in parliaments was measured on an 11-point scale (from 0, 'no trust at all', to 10, 'complete trust') rather than

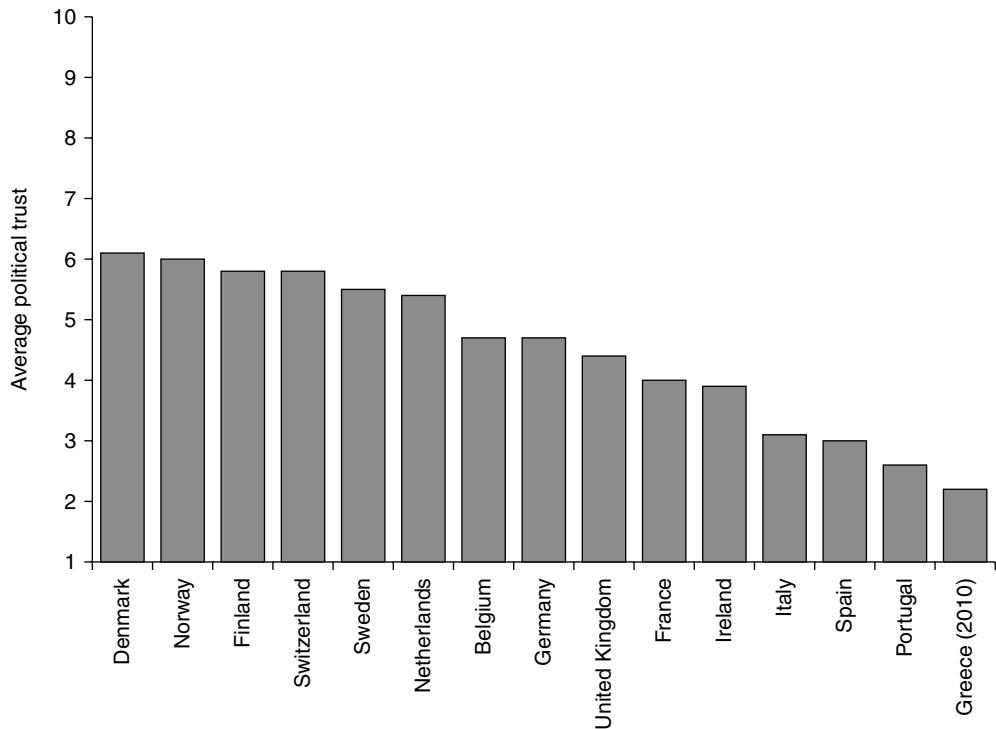


Figure 25.1 *Average levels of political trust in 15 Western and Southern European countries in 2012*

the four-point scale used in the WVS/EVS surveys, and not all the countries are included in every wave. This chapter will look at two survey datasets: the WVS and the ESS.

Figure 25.1 and Table 25.1 display the most recent comparative data on political trust (2012) using the ESS. The table presents average trust in parliament, political parties, politicians and the legal system. The figure contains a general index of political trust, which is the average of the level of trust in these four institutions. The countries are ordered according to this figure. These data confirm that political trust is comparatively high in the usual suspects, the Nordic countries (Denmark, Norway, Finland and Sweden) and the Netherlands (Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Dogan, 2005a, 2005b; Criado and Herreros, 2007; Norris, 2011). Switzerland can also be included in this group of countries, where the average trust ranges between 5.4 and 6.1 on a 0 to 10 scale. Below these, comes a group formed by countries in Continental Europe (Belgium, Germany and France), the United Kingdom and Ireland. The average levels of political trust in these countries are between 3.9 and 4.7. Finally, the lowest levels of trust are found in Southern Europe, with averages around 3.0 for Italy and Spain, and 2.6 and 2.2 for Portugal and Greece respectively. These 2012 data on political trust point once more in support of some ‘Southern European exceptionalism’ (Barnes and Sani, 1974; Mamadouh, 1999; Bruneau et al., 2001). It is clear that the levels of political trust in these countries are very low in absolute and comparative terms. However, this is far from a confirmatory presence of a defining ‘attitudinal

Table 25.1 Levels of political trust (0–10) in 15 Western and Southern European countries in 2012^a

Country	Parliament	Politicians	Political Parties	Legal System	Average
Denmark	6.1	5.2	5.3	7.8	6.1
Norway	6.3	5.1	5.2	7.2	6.0
Finland	5.9	4.8	4.9	7.6	5.8
Switzerland	6.1	5.2	5.0	6.8	5.8
Sweden	5.9	4.7	4.9	6.5	5.5
Netherlands	5.3	5.1	5.1	6.2	5.4
Belgium	5.0	4.3	4.2	5.5	4.7
Germany	4.9	3.8	3.8	6.4	4.7
United Kingdom	4.3	3.7	3.7	6.1	4.4
France	4.1	3.2	3.1	5.5	4.0
Ireland	3.6	3.1	3.0	5.9	3.9
Italy	3.2	1.9	2.0	5.3	3.1
Spain	3.4	1.9	1.9	4.8	3.0
Portugal	2.5	1.8	1.8	4.4	2.6
Greece ^b	2.4	2.5	1.4	2.7	2.2

Notes:

- a. Countries ranked according to the average level of political trust (last column).
 b. Data from Greece is for 2010.

Source: European Social Survey (2010, 2012).

syndrome' specific to these democracies. Lower levels of political trust have also been found in Central and Eastern Europe (Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Dogan 2005a, 2005b; also see Chapter 26 by Závecz) and in Latin America (Torcal, 2006; Ross and Escobar-Lemmon, 2011; Torcal and Bargsted, 2015; see also Chapter 24 by Bargsted, Somma and Castillo). It seems that, instead, we are consistently observing an unusual 'Northern and Scandinavian exceptionalism' with high levels of political trust.

Other findings emerging from this initial comparative analysis of political trust in 2012 is that there is a consistent rank order in the level of trust in each separate institution. Political parties and politicians, the two main actors of representation, are consistently distrusted the most in all the countries. Following these two institutions are parliaments, which are the institutions most essential to political representation. Finally, the most trusted are consistently the legal system and the police, regardless of the general level of political trust in each country. This finding confirms that trust in various political institutions is highly correlated (Marien, 2011; see Chapter 6 by Marien) but also that there is a systematic substantive difference in the levels of trust each institution garners from citizens, with institutions of the state (Denters et al., 2007) or impartial institutions coming out on top (see Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton). This pattern is even more clearly defined in Southern Europe, where, as will be shown, there has been a recent strong decline in political trust since 2008, but primarily concentrated in the institutions and actors of political representation.

CROSS-NATIONAL TRENDS IN POLITICAL TRUST IN WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPE

Concentrating our attention on the last 12 years, we can observe the evolution of political trust over time (Table 25.2).² I begin with a longitudinal analysis of trust in national parliaments in all the Western and Southern European democracies in which both WVS/EVS and ESS surveys were conducted and where questions about trust in parliament were posed between 1990 and 2012. For the WVS/EVS data, I present the percentage of respondents per country and survey that answered that they had ‘a lot’ or ‘a great deal’ of trust in their national parliament in the waves for 1990–2008 (few Western and Southern European countries were included in the following waves). For the ESS data, I present the percentage of respondents who placed their confidence in the national parliament in the upper part of the scale (6–10).

We should be particularly careful in inferring any trends of increasing or decreasing confidence in parliament in any particular country: there are only three observations per country in the WVS, and the WVS/EVS and ESS results are not directly comparable. Nonetheless, a first important conclusion emerges from these results. The cross-national

Table 25.2 Trust in parliament (%), Europe (1990–2012)

Country	WVS/EVS 1990	WVS/EVS 1999	WVS/EVS 2008	ESS 2002	ESS 2004	ESS 2006	ESS 2008	ESS 2010	ESS 2012
Austria	40	39	30	41	34	38	36	NA	NA
Belgium	42	34	43	43	36	42	34	33	44
Cyprus	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	53	51	33	18
Denmark	41	47	70	62	63	66	67	55	63
Finland	33	43	44	59	63	63	63	51	61
France	43	39	51	29	26	27	31	24	26
Germany	47	36	37	32	28	27	33	28	39
Greece	NA	24	31	40	36	NA	21	7	NA
Iceland	53	71	39	NA	58	NA	NA	NA	30
Ireland	50	31	49	32	35	36	23	20	21
Italy	33	28	35	40	35	NA	NA	NA	18
Luxembourg	NA	63	68	49	48	NA	NA	NA	NA
Netherlands	53	55	49	50	38	52	59	54	52
Norway	59	69	64	53	49	54	54	61	66
Portugal	33	44	41	29	19	21	17	12	9
Spain	42	43	49	38	41	40	38	29	21
Sweden	46	50	60	58	47	52	56	65	60
Switzerland	NA	44	64	54	45	51	54	54	63
United Kingdom	46	34	23	36	29	28	31	29	31

Notes:

WVS/EVS: % ‘a great deal’ + ‘a lot’; ESS: % 6–10 on scale.

NA = not available.

Full country samples, weighted.

Sources: World Values Survey/European Values Study (1990, 1999, 2008); European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

differences in trust in national parliaments already observed in the preceding section for 2012 thus seem to be a long-lasting feature, and not the result of more recent events. On the one hand, trust in the national parliament has historically been high in Northern European countries, the Netherlands and Switzerland. On the other hand, trust in national parliaments in some of the Southern European democracies has been below the average of the remaining Western European democracies.

A second observation is that the supposed decline in trust in national parliaments has not been a general phenomenon, even after the Great Recession since 2008. As Norris has argued (2011, p. 73), longitudinal trends in political trust vary in direction and size by country without showing a general, structural decline. Only few countries witnessed a decline in trust in parliament since 2008. Some of these belong to the group of Southern European countries, such as Greece, Spain, Portugal and (departing from higher levels of trust) Cyprus, but to a lesser degree also Ireland, which has also been a protagonist in the crises. At the same time, trust in national parliaments presents trendless fluctuations amongst countries with mostly stable levels of trust, such as Denmark, Finland and the Netherlands, as happened during the preceding decades (Newton and Norris, 2000, p. 71; Van der Meer, 2010, p. 525; Norris, 2011, p. 73). Political trust even increased in Belgium, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Switzerland.

Therefore, the trends since 2008 resulted in an increasing gap between the levels in Southern European countries and the others in the region. The notion that there is a specifically 'Southern European' syndrome of low confidence in political institutions finds greater support since 2008. However, the decline in trust in parliament has also been present in countries such as Ireland and Iceland, although to a lesser degree. Moreover, despite the decline in Southern Europe, the current levels of trust in parliament in these countries seem comparable or even higher than those observed in Central and Eastern Europe and Latin America.

Based on geography, trust levels and trends during the 2000s, the countries covered in this chapter can be organized into four different groups (Figure 25.2). The Nordic

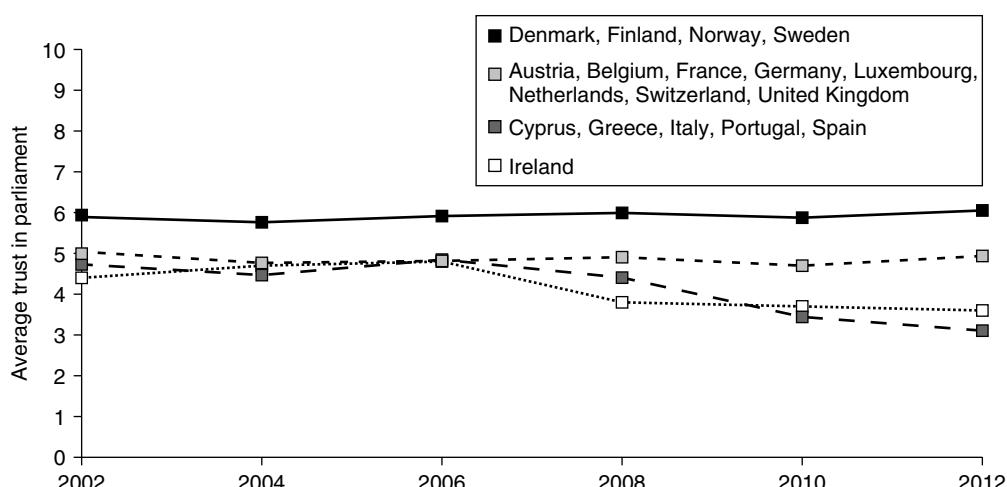


Figure 25.2 Evolution of trust in parliament in Europe 2002–12 by group of countries

countries (Denmark, Finland, Sweden and Norway) have the highest levels of political trust, a trend that has remained very stable over the years. The second group consists of the Continental European countries (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and Switzerland) and the UK, which have lower levels of trust in their national parliaments than the preceding group (although there are some cross-national differences among them) and remained very stable, including the last years of the 2000s. Next, we have the countries in Southern Europe (Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal and Spain), which (except Cyprus) not only display lower levels of political trust but also suffered a sizable decline since 2008. Finally, Ireland seems to stand alone, with relatively high levels of political trust but, at the same time, suffering a decline since 2008, although less sharp than that seen in Southern Europe. As the ESS only includes two time points for Iceland, it is not included in the figures. All in all, supranational integration and its consequences do not seem to have produced a uniform and general decline in the levels of trust in the institutions of representation.

Something similar can be seen when we analyse trust in the main actors in political representation, that is, politicians and political parties. Since the WVS does not provide a proper framework for comparison for confidence in political actors – as questions about political parties pertain to the 1997 wave, in which few Western European countries participated – we focus exclusively on ESS data in Table 25.3. This table displays the percentage of respondents in each country that placed their confidence in politicians and political parties in the upper half of the 0–10 scale (from 6–10). First, we can observe that in all the countries the level of trust in actors of representation is lower than trust in national parliaments (Listhaug, 1995), confirming once more the hierarchical order of political trust based on the type of institution (Denters et al., 2007). All Southern European countries (Portugal in particular) rank below the average of the other Western European countries, and the significant decline in political trust after 2008 mostly affects the Southern European countries including Cyprus, as well as Ireland and Iceland. If we analyse this type of trust using the same country groups as above (see Figure 25.3), we can observe the same cross-group differences and the exact time pattern we displayed in the preceding Figure 25.2 for trust in parliament.

Finally, Table 25.4 reports the levels of trust in the institutions of the state (i.e., the impartial institutions). It is important to notice two features. First, in all the countries trust in impartial institutions is higher than that in representative institutions, while the decrease in political trust in some countries is limited to the institutions and actors of representation but does not encompass the impartial institutions. Second, the decline since 2008 is significantly smaller, and even non-existent in some of the countries (Figure 25.4). This confirms that even though levels of trust in different institutions are highly related and form part of the same unique covariate dimension (Marien, 2011; see also Chapter 6 by Marien), from a different perspective trust in these different institutions has distinct levels in all the countries, shows varying trends over time since 2008, and responds to different factors.

Table 25.3 Trust in actors of representation (%), Europe (2004–12)

Country	2004			2006			2008			2010			2012		
	Political parties	Politicians	Parties												
Austria	15	15	16	15	18	19	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Belgium	30	30	32	30	24	26	23	24	29	29	29	31	31	31	31
Cyprus	NA	NA	30	31	29	33	18	18	9	9	9	8	8	8	8
Denmark	51	51	53	54	54	53	42	42	48	48	48	47	47	47	47
Finland	43	42	44	44	43	42	35	34	41	41	41	41	41	41	41
France	13	16	12	12	12	15	10	13	12	12	12	13	13	13	13
Germany	12	14	14	16	14	16	14	15	15	15	18	20	20	20	20
Greece	18	19	NA	NA	8	8	3	4	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Iceland	36	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	18	23	23	23	23
Ireland	22	22	22	23	23	14	14	11	12	12	13	15	15	15	15
Italy	16	17	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	6	7	7	7	7
Luxembourg	32	37	NA	NA	NA	NA									
Netherlands	41	39	47	46	46	51	51	52	52	47	47	50	50	50	50
Norway	25	26	29	29	34	33	36	38	43	43	44	44	44	44	44
Portugal	4	4	7	7	6	6	5	5	5	5	4	4	4	4	4
Spain	20	19	16	17	14	15	10	11	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Sweden	29	28	33	31	35	34	42	40	38	38	38	38	38	38	38
Switzerland	28	33	32	38	31	39	34	41	41	41	45	45	45	45	45
United Kingdom	18	19	15	16	18	17	18	18	19	19	21	21	21	21	21

Notes:

% 6–10 on scale.
NA = not available.

Source: European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

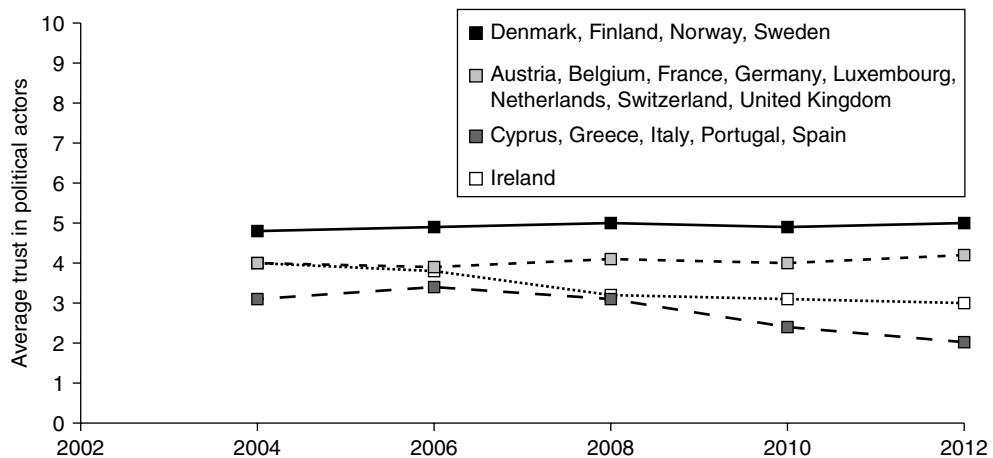


Figure 25.3 *Evolution of trust in the actors of representation (political parties and politicians) in Europe 2004–12 by group of countries*

Table 25.4 *Trust in the legal system (%), Europe (2002–12)*

Country	ESS 2002	ESS 2004	ESS 2006	ESS 2008	ESS 2010	ESS 2012
Austria	64	59	61	NA	NA	NA
Belgium	41	47	49	49	49	53
Cyprus	NA	NA	55	60	51	42
Denmark	86	85	87	84	87	90
Finland	84	85	87	87	87	87
France	53	85	46	48	44	50
Germany	63	44	62	65	64	68
Greece	64	59	NA	38	31	NA
Iceland	NA	51	NA	NA	NA	75
Ireland	55	74	51	54	53	57
Italy	61	57	NA	NA	NA	47
Luxembourg	64	52	NA	NA	NA	NA
Netherlands	53	63	63	66	65	70
Norway	72	58	77	77	81	83
Portugal	27	74	29	29	23	27
Spain	34	25	49	39	45	34
Sweden	67	44	66	67	75	69
Switzerland	71	63	71	73	73	75
United Kingdom	49	70	49	53	55	61

Notes:

% 6–10 on scale.

NA = not available.

Source: European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

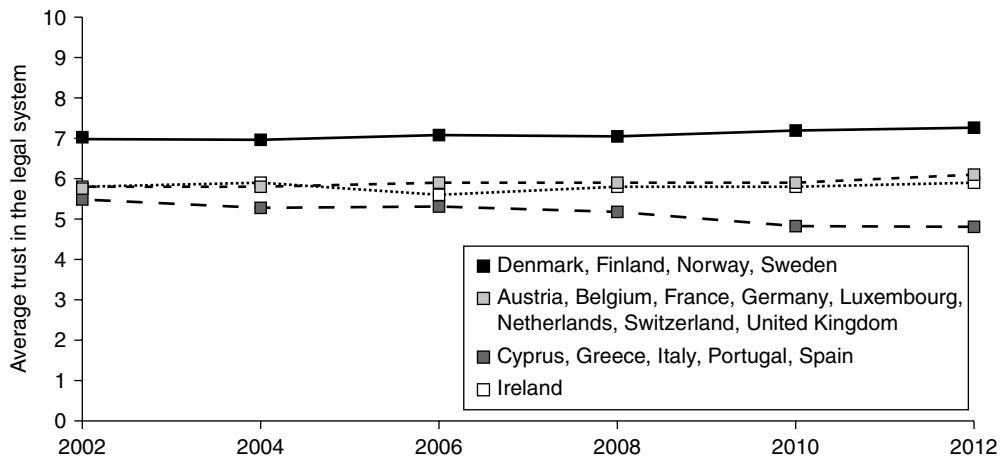


Figure 25.4 *Evolution of trust in the legal system in Europe 2002–12 by group of countries*

EXPLAINING CROSS-NATIONAL DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL TRUST IN 2012

In order to test the plausibility of three sets of factors – culture, evaluation of output performance and evaluation of the democratic process to explain political trust – I estimate three individual-level models; one for each of the three dependent variables: trust in parliament, actors of representation and institutions of the state or impartial institutions. To estimate the effect of the cultural factor at the individual level, I include social trust and political interest.³ The evaluation of output performance is measured by sociotropic satisfaction with the current economic situation, evaluation of the current situation of the health and education system, and subjective feelings of social discrimination. Electoral and ideological competition is covered by a set of three variables: support for the incumbent, party supply (measured by party identification) and ideological conflict (measured on a left-right scale). Finally, I include evaluation of the overall performance of the democratic processes.⁴ More detailed information on these variables is available in Electronic Appendix Table A25.1.

As control variables, I add the impact of television exposure measured by the number of hours watching political news. As is well known, some literature has attributed the increasing levels of political distrust in many democracies to a negative influence of the media (Norris, 2000; Newton, 2007). I also include traditional sociological individual-level control variables explaining individual political trust, such as education (Hakhverdian and Mayne, 2012; Hooghe et al., 2015) and income⁵ (Uslaner, 2011) as well as other measures of relative individual and family well-being.

To obtain efficient robust parameters, the models are estimated using a multilevel hierarchical model, which produces more robust and efficient estimators for clustered data. All the parameters are fixed except the intercept and two of the most relevant performance evaluations: satisfaction with the economic situation and overall evaluation of democracy.

Table 25.5 contains the parameters resulting from the estimation of the three models, one for each dependent variable.⁶ These results show that there is not one exclusive or dominant factor explaining political trust at the individual level. The cultural factors and policy performance evaluations have a consistent impact on all institutions. The effect of economic evaluations tends to have a stronger effect than evaluations of other domains,

Table 25.5 Individual predictors of political trust in 2012 (multilevel analysis, centring within cluster)

	Representative Institutions (Parliament)		Actors of Representation (Politicians and Political Parties)		Institutions of the State (Legal System)	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Electoral and ideological dimension</i>						
Party identification	0.12	0.02**	0.27	0.07**	0.00	0.02
Winners/losers	0.30	0.08**	0.11	0.03**	0.06	0.04 †
Left-right scale	-0.01	0.02	-0.03	0.02	-0.01	0.03
<i>Social and political input and output</i>						
Social discrimination	-0.17	0.04**	-0.22	0.08**	-0.32	0.03**
Satisfaction with health system	0.03	0.02†	0.05	0.02**	0.10	0.01**
Satisfaction with education system	0.10	0.01**	0.11	0.01**	0.07	0.02**
Satisfaction with economy	0.26	0.03**	0.23	0.03**	0.10	0.01**
Evaluation of democracy	0.31	0.03**	0.23	0.03**	0.26	0.01**
<i>Cultural factors</i>						
Interpersonal trust	0.32	0.05**	0.30	0.03**	0.08	0.03**
Interest in politics	0.03	0.01**	0.03	0.01**	0.01	0.03
<i>Control variables</i>						
Watching politics TV	-0.07	0.04†	-0.22	0.02**	-0.09	0.04*
Gender (male)	0.09	0.02**	0.08	0.03**	0.03	0.01*
Religiosity	-0.01	0.00**	-0.01	0.00**	-0.00	0.00
Age	0.02	0.01*	-0.01	0.01*	0.01	0.01*
Education	0.00	0.01	-0.01	0.00**	0.03	0.01*
Income	0.07	0.04†	0.22	0.02**	0.09	0.04*
Constant	4.65	0.30**	3.75	0.31**	6.14	0.25**
Residual (α)	1.33	*	1.42	*	0.89	*
Residual random satisfaction economy	0.005	*	0.008	*	0.001	*
Residual random evaluation democracy	0.009	*	0.009	*	0.001	*
Total residual (ϵ)	3.47		2.58		2.80	
ICC (α)	0.001		0.003		0.003	
ICC satisfaction economy	0.002		0.004		0.003	
ICC evaluation democracy	0.28		0.35		0.13	
-log pseudolikelihood	-46 181.4		-42 865.9		-43 752.4	
Observations	20 315		20 333		20 312	
Number of groups	16		16		16	

Note: † $0.05 < p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

that is, individual satisfaction with the functioning of the national health and education systems. Incumbent support and (to a lesser degree) party identification matter as well, but only as determinants of trust in the institutions and actors of representation, showing once more the different nature of the trust given to institutions of the state. Yet, the most relevant finding is the significant, strong, and consistent effect of the variable measuring the overall evaluation of democracy, underscoring the importance of this factor in explaining political trust.

Additional analyses suggest that the strength of the effects of the performance variables (economic situation and overall evaluation of democracy) differs between countries. Economic evaluations tend to be more important for countries most strongly affected by the Great Recession such as Portugal, Ireland and Italy (cf. Electronic Appendix Table A25.4). By contrast, the evaluation of democracy tends to have stronger effects in countries less affected by the Great Recession. In the latter group, political trust seems to depend more on the political input, although, as I will show below, these are distinctive evaluations that produce their respective effects on political trust.

EXPLAINING RECENT DECLINING TRENDS IN POLITICAL TRUST IN SOME WESTERN AND SOUTHERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

The ESS revealed an important decrease in political trust in some countries in especially Southern Europe since 2008 that was not observed in preceding years (Van der Meer, 2010; Norris, 2011). The most recurrent and dominant explanation of this rests on a top-down explanation related to evaluation of the output performance of democracies. However, this preliminary conclusion might be too simplistic, ignoring a more complex underlying argument. Rather, the decline might also be related to the overall evaluation of democracy and its functioning (input). The recent crises might in fact exacerbate this effect of the political process by placing democratic institutions under pressure as the result of austerity measures and retrenchment of the welfare state. Democratic institutions are supposed to respond to social and political conflicts fairly and inclusively. Cross-national variations in political trust are not ‘simply gauged by material standards or economic conditions. Citizens also expect the government to follow procedures that are unbiased, and produce outcomes that neither advantage nor disadvantage particular groups unfairly’ (Van der Meer, 2010, p. 531; see also Alesina and Wacziarg, 2000, p. 169). In other words, the responsiveness of the system to citizens’ demands may not only be an explanatory factor in itself, but it could also interact with sociotropic evaluations of the output.

The Great Recession might not only affect the aggregate levels of political trust in some Western and Southern European democracies, but also change the micro-level factors explaining individual political trust and its cross-national variations. It is likely that both economic and political evaluations have become increasingly important determinants of political trust as a consequence of the crisis. This does not challenge the importance of other long-term explanations. Rather, the argument here is a relative one: citizens’ satisfaction with the economic situation and their overall assessments of democracy may have increased in their respective relative importance in predicting individuals’ trust in

the institutions and the actors of representation compared to the cultural or attitudinal explanations.

In order to test this argument, I estimate the same three individual-level models from the preceding section for 2006, just before the crisis started, and compare it to results for 2012. I substitute the variable measuring the overall evaluation of democracy (only present for the 2012 ESS wave) with satisfaction with the functioning of democracy. There are many controversies regarding this item (some discussed by the editors and authors of this volume). However, satisfaction with the functioning of democracy clearly taps important elements related to the overall evaluation of a country's democracy, as demonstrated by its strong correlation with the overall evaluation of democracy in 2012 (0.59 for all of Western and Southern Europe).

I first estimate these models for 2006 and 2012 separately. The results (displayed in Electronic Appendix Table A25.3) confirm once more that satisfaction with the functioning of democracy and satisfaction with the economy are qualitatively important and significant in both 2006 and 2012, with exactly the same results for the two years. The parameter for trust in national parliaments is 0.01 ($t = 3.65; p = 0.000$) in 2006 and 0.01 ($t = 2.58; p = 0.01$) in 2012. Those for trust in the actors of representation are also 0.01 ($t = 3.44; p = 0.001$) and 0.01 ($t = 4.24; p = 0.000$) respectively. These results show that the arguments about the effect of subjective evaluation of the economy and those defending the importance of evaluation of democratic functioning are complementary (see Holmberg, 1999; Listhaug, 2006).

The effects of these evaluation variables are not only complementary, but also mutually reinforcing: the effect of satisfaction with democracy increases with satisfaction with the economic situation. Figure 25.5 represents this marginal effect of satisfaction with democracy on trust in parliament by the evaluation of the economy, but only for 2012 and

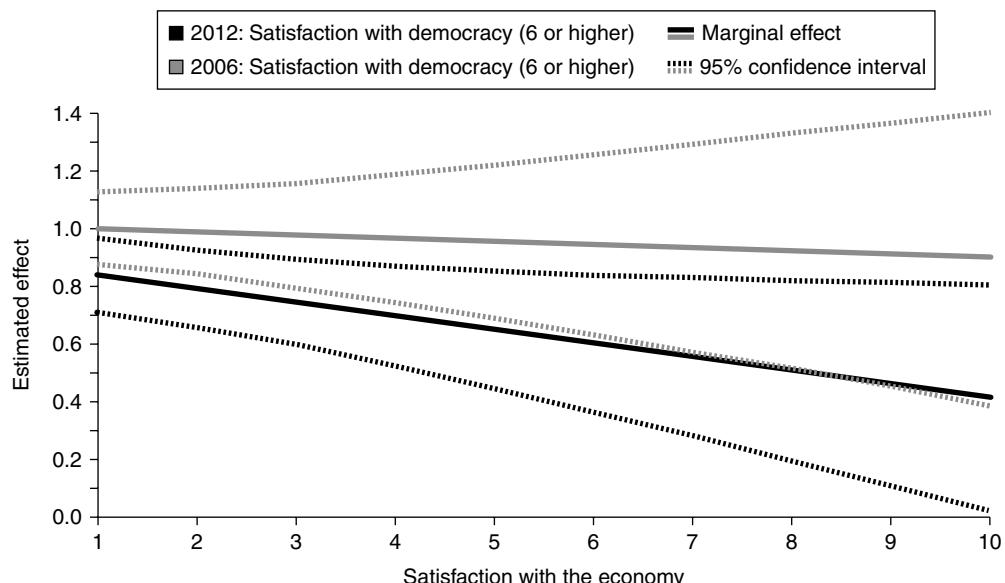


Figure 25.5 *Marginal effects on trust in the parliament of satisfaction with democracy, by satisfaction with the economy, 2006 and 2012*

not for 2006. The same interaction mechanism affects trust in political actors, but – once more – not trust in the institutions of the state (results not in figure). Nevertheless, the interaction effects on trust in parliament and political actors in 2012 offer a suggestion why we witness a decline in political trust in some European countries: the worsening of economic and social conditions also exacerbates the impact of dissatisfaction with the functioning of democracy.

However, the results for the two years cannot be compared directly since the parameters are estimated using different samples. In order to compare the relative importance of these factors in 2006 and 2012, we need to merge the two samples and perform a pooled analysis using a dummy variable to measure if the respondent belongs to the 2006 (0) or the 2012 (1) sample. To estimate the relative increase or decrease in the size of the parameters of interest, I add to the preceding model an interactive term between this dummy variable and the four variables of interest: satisfaction with the economy, satisfaction with the functioning of democracy, social trust and political interest. Following the logic above, an increase should be expected in the relative importance of the first two variables compared to the latter. In addition to the model with all the cases included, I estimate the same models for those countries that suffered the most from the crisis and the resulting austerity measures (Cyprus, Greece,⁷ Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Portugal and Spain), and another one for the rest of the Western European countries.

Table 25.6 only displays the interactive terms of the four relevant variables and the dummy variable for 2012, and only for the group of countries not suffering the most dramatic effects of the fiscal crisis. Satisfaction with the economy and satisfaction with democracy generally do not have greater effects in 2012 on trust in parliament or in the actors of representation, with one exception: the effect of satisfaction with democracy on trust in parliament was slightly stronger in 2012. Surprisingly, the effects of those variables on trust in the impartial institutions were significantly stronger in 2012. Social trust and interest in politics have a decrease in their relative impact on trust in parliament.

However, in the countries that the Great Recession hit hardest, the argument finds stronger support (see Electronic Appendix Table A25.4). The impact of the evaluative

Table 25.6 Interactive terms for 2012 in the countries with a less important fiscal and economic crisis: Nordic countries, Continental Europe and UK

	Representative Institutions (Parliament)		Actors of Representation (Politicians and Political Parties)		Institutions of the State (Legal System)	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Satisfaction with democracy*2012	0.03	0.02†	0.00	0.01	0.03	0.02†
Satisfaction with the economy*2012	0.03	0.02	0.04	0.05	0.02	0.01*
Interest in politics*2012	-0.05	0.02**	-0.01	0.04	0.03	0.02
Social Trust*2012	0.10	0.05†	0.09	0.06	0.13	0.02

Note: † $0.05 < p < 0.10$; * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

Source: European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

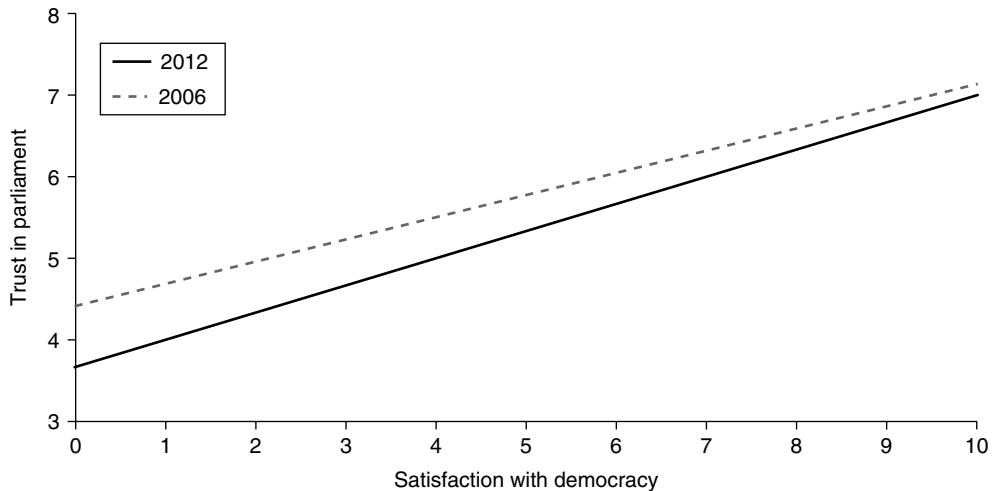


Figure 25.6 Satisfaction with democracy and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012

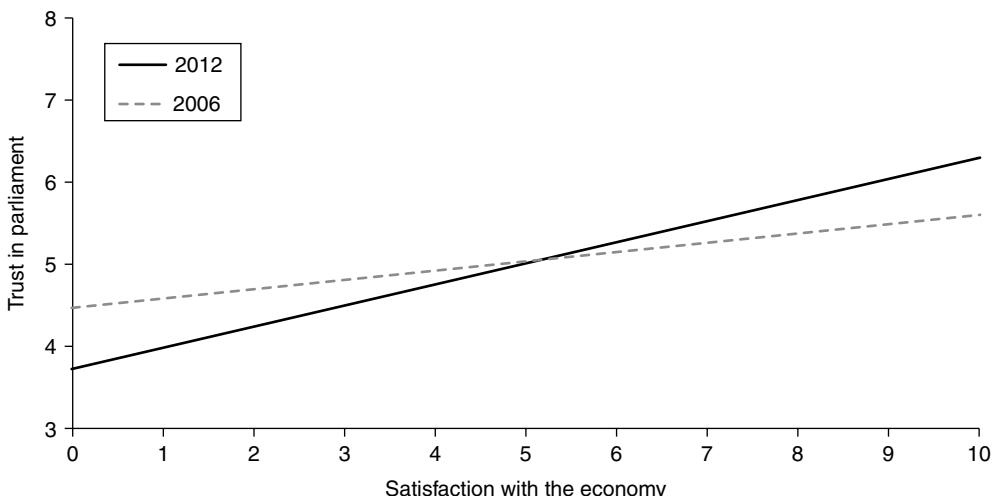


Figure 25.7 Economic satisfaction and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012

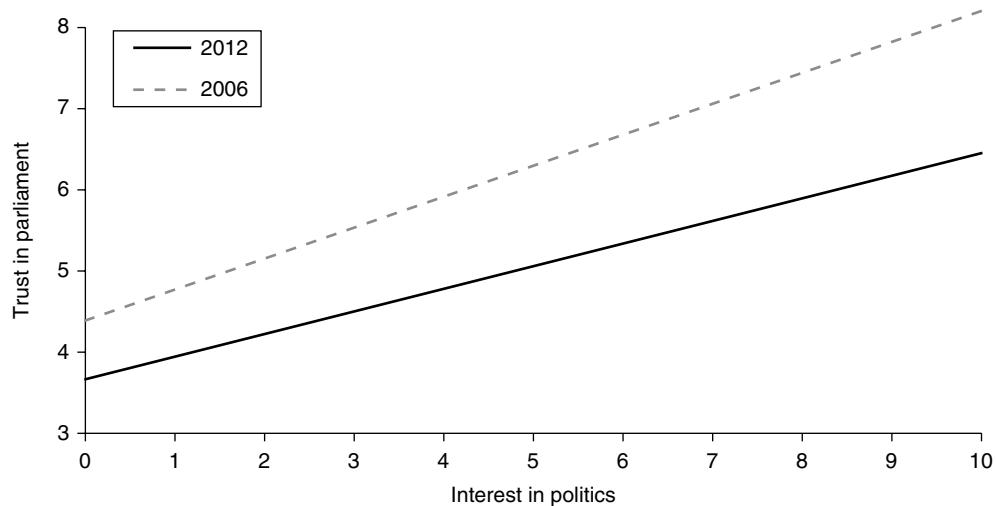


Figure 25.8 Interest in politics and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012

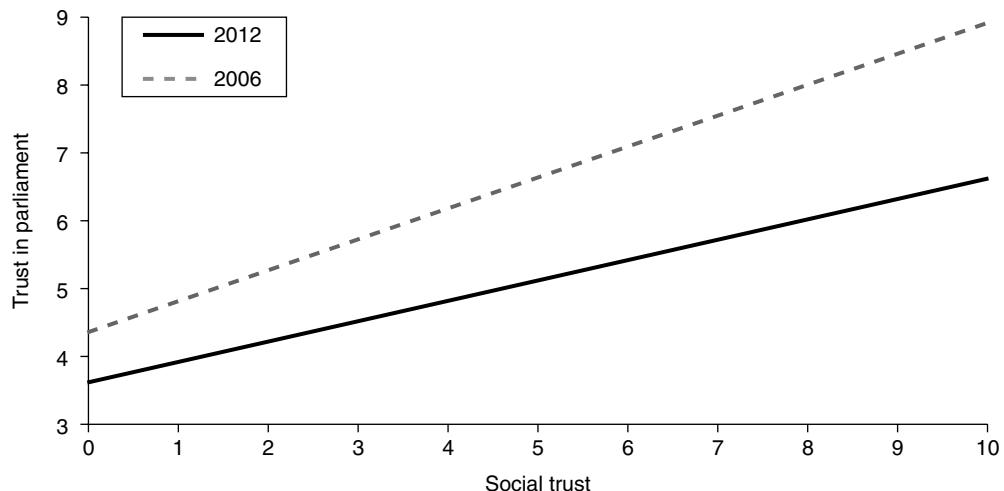


Figure 25.9 Social trust and trust in actors of representation in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012

variables (satisfaction with functioning of democracy and satisfaction with the economy) on trust in parliament and in the actors of representation increases dramatically. Concurrently, the relative impact of social trust and interest in politics clearly decreases over time. We can observe and interpret these results more substantively by looking at Figures 25.6 to 25.9. The first two figures show how the slopes of the evaluative variables are much steeper for 2012 than for 2006. The opposite trend is also conspicuous on examination of the figures for interest in politics (Figure 25.8) and social trust (Figure 25.9).

CONCLUSION

Western and Southern Europe are characterized by large and stable cross-national differences in political trust rates, with the Nordic countries at the top of the ranking and the Southern European ones at the bottom. These cross-national differences respond to a set of four important groups of factors at the individual level: culture; political attitudes (such as interest); evaluation of policy output (most notably of the economy); and political evaluation (such as the overall evaluation of democracy and electoral competition). Multilevel governance and the Great Recession that hit Europe in 2008 challenged representative institutions and made sociotropic economic evaluations more salient. In addition, citizens' increasing awareness of politics in general, and of elite decision-making processes and elite responsiveness to citizen demands specifically, is becoming an increasingly relevant *explanation* of citizens' political trust.

The current crises functioned as a 'stress test' for representative democracies in Western Europe in general, but much more so for the countries suffering their most severe effects. This test seems to produce varying citizen evaluations in different countries, resulting in a deterioration of political trust, particularly in Southern Europe. The number of critical citizens (Norris, 1999, 2011) is increasing in Western Europe, especially in those countries that suffer the most from the Great Recession and its political aftermath (Torcal, 2014). Their frustration with the perceived lack of responsiveness of the political system has resulted in increasing levels of political distrust.

However, all these results should be interpreted cautiously. First, the effect of the political process has mostly been measured with individual satisfaction with democracy, which is not only a problematic indicator, but more importantly does not inform about the concrete aspects of the political process which are responsible for this more critical view. It may cover lack of responsiveness of political authorities or institutions, perception of political corruption, perceived lack of political impartiality, or a poor party system supply.

Second, we do not know whether the current trends reflect a temporary process (resulting from the severity of the Great Recession) or a long-lasting feature that will increasingly influence the dynamics of political trust. Consequently, the consequences of these processes are unclear. As Kriesi (2012) recently argued, many citizens of Western and Southern European democracies exposed to a variety of grievances raised their voice by using traditional mechanisms of political representation and voting for 'anti-party' options. Are the attitudinal consequences of these grievances the main factor explaining support for these new parties? What is the connection with increasing acts of political protest?

NOTES

1. The terminology for some institutions varies from wave to wave. This is the case of trust in the courts, with different wordings such as 'legal system', 'courts' and 'justice system'.
2. For the evolution of trust in these institutions during the preceding decades, but only using Eurobarometer data, see Norris (2011, pp. 70–77).
3. Political interest is a very stable attitude, mostly resulting from political socialization (Prior, 2010).
4. In the sixth wave of the ESS (2012) a variable was included (B18e) to measure the overall evaluation of democracy. The exact wording of this question was the following: 'How democratic do you think [country] is overall? Choose your answer from this card where 0 is not at all democratic and 10 is completely democratic'. This variable correlates strongly with many of the indicators for the evaluation of different aspects of democracy included in the 'democratic values' module included in that particular wave. These correlations are particularly strong for the liberal dimensions: fair elections (0.45), alternative party options (0.31), courts are fair (0.44); and for the equalitarian dimension: governing acting against poverty (0.38), acting against income inequality (0.38), minority rights (0.35). The correlations with the participatory dimension are substantially weaker.
5. Due to the important number of cases I lose with the inclusion of this variable, I re-estimate the model substituting this variable with the variable measuring 'feeling about household income'. These new models include about 3250 additional cases. Except for the effects of the control variables this substitution hardly influences the direction and size of the other variables' effects (see Electronic Appendix A25.2 to this chapter).
6. All the models are estimated after the variables are centred within clusters (CWC), which seems to be advisable when the predictors of interest are level 1 predictors (Enders and Tofighi, 2007, pp. 128–30).
7. For Greece I rely on data from 2010.

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For the electronic appendix, see www.e-elgar.com/handbook-on-political-trust-companion-site.

26. Post-communist societies of Central and Eastern Europe

Gergő Závecz

INTRODUCTION

The functions political trust and distrust play in different political regime types have been discussed in other parts of this Handbook (see Chapter 3 by Warren, Chapter 4 by Rivetti and Cavatorta and Chapter 28 by Park). However, post-communist societies¹ may have faced a special need for political trust during and after the transition period.²

As discussed by some authors (most notably Offe, 1991, 1995), post-communist societies experienced a very different path of democratization compared to those of established democracies. The triple transition was something not experienced earlier: the shifts toward democracy (from communism), market economy (from planned economy), and full stateness (from being satellite states) were undertaken simultaneously. This unorthodox sequence and rapid change could have easily led to failed public expectations about the newly built institutions. High levels of public support and political trust are needed to overcome this problem in the long run, thus trust can be regarded as a necessary condition for the democratization process (Rose, 1994; Mishler and Rose, 1996, 2001). However, it is not a one-way relationship: trust is needed for democratization, but transition to democracy has to help in building and deepening trust as well (Lovell, 2001). Even at later stages of the transition period, during the consolidation, political trust is essential to reduce the uncertainty of democratic rules and methods (Diamond, 1996), to achieve social justice (Kuzio, 2001), and to make sure that citizens have attitudes that imply that democracy is ‘the only game in town’ (Fuchs and Roller, 2006).

Trust in political institutions in post-communist societies is not solely relevant for domestic political reasons, but it may help to achieve a lower budget deficit (Győrffy, 2007), to facilitate business relations and thus lead to faster economic growth (Rose-Ackerman, 2001), or to assure foreign powers that the newly elected leaders are legitimate and reliable (Rose, 1994).

Although most authors share the opinion that political trust matters,³ the empirical literature focusing on trust in post-communist societies varies in many aspects – in the trends they identify, in the explanations they provide for the differing levels, and in how they conceptualize and operationalize political trust. This chapter mainly aims to summarize post-communist trends in political trust along these lines.

AFTER THE TRANSITION

Post-communist countries have been facing a low level of trust since the former regime collapsed. The past two decades may be divided into two main periods: the period right

after the transition and the longer consolidation. For the first period most empirical studies show that citizens were rather skeptical about the new institutions. Political trust was close to but slightly below the neutral level (e.g., Rose and Mishler, 2011). In fact, generally, political trust rates were only slightly lower in post-communist societies than in established democracies (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006) or than in the more recently democratized Southern European countries (Braun, 2012). All in all, at the outset there was a tendency towards distrust.

Many explanations exist for the early distrust in political institutions in post-communist countries. The first group of explanations regards distrust as a legacy of the communist system. There was no complete *tabula rasa* after the transition. Rather, the remaining legacies have been the ‘patterns (scenarios) of behavior or thought that are transmitted from the past and enacted in the present’ (Kubik, 2003, p. 318). According to this theory, attitudes towards communist institutions persist to some extent even after the transition, since after decades of disappointing experience with the old institutions there was skepticism regarding the newly formed ones (Jowitt, 1992; Howard, 2002; for examples about political parties see Rose, 1994; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2011). In other words, the new democracies inherited all the negative attitudes towards the institutions of the former regime (Rose-Ackerman, 2001).

The second group of explanations, institutional theories, emphasizes the importance of citizens’ experience with the new institutions. In this particular case, as the argument goes, the new institutions were not tested at all and thus may have come with performance deficits in the beginning that led to lower levels of political trust (Mishler and Rose, 2001).

Implications of these theories are important for the trends of political trust (see Laporte and Lussier, 2011). However, this differentiation may be overemphasized, since they may be seen sequentially as parts of one process: first legacies of the old institutions and then experience with the newly established organizations drive political trust (for further details, see Kitschelt et al., 1999; for a three-stage sequencing with spillover effects, see Chiru and Gherghina, 2012).

Although the transition period may be characterized by distrust in general, it is worth analyzing cross-country and cross-institutional differences.⁴ Following the legacy explanations, Tóth (2009) argues that in countries where the communist system was not that repressive towards the end, such as in Hungary, citizens may have experienced the state as provider and were frustrated by the (economic) change associated with the transition.⁵ Similarly, in more repressive countries, higher political trust may have been expected after the transition. For instance, Romania was the sole post-communist country in Central and Eastern Europe to experience an almost sultanistic dictatorship and a violent transition (Elster et al., 1998). In some respects, Poland is a similar case since it had a ‘tradition of an ineffective and non-credible state’ (Kochanowicz, 2004, p. 79) that was inherited from pre-communist and communist times, right before the 1989 elections provided a new beginning with the victory of Solidarity (Solidarność). In contrast (but still building on the principle of legacies), Mishler and Rose (1997) argue that in Hungary (and in Czechoslovakia) where the repression was lower, a lower level of distrust is to be expected and is seen after the transition as a legacy of the previous regime – and countries with high repression during the communist era, such as Bulgaria and Romania, show a higher level of distrust.

Shortly after the transition there were also differences in trust rates between institutions. Catterberg and Moreno (2006) report a lower level of trust in the civil service than in

parliament. Braun (2012) shows that trust in the police was lower than trust in parliament. According to her, citizens faced the newly organized parliaments with high expectations but with no personal experience right after the regime change. This led to a higher trust – described as the so-called ‘honeymoon effect’. Conversely, the police had a bad reputation due to the experience citizens had had before the transition – which can be regarded as a legacy of the previous regime (but which can be easily overcome with positive experience over time – and the trends presented by her pointed in that direction). Her argument thus builds both on the experience-based institutional and the legacy arguments.

In contrast, other authors (Miller et al., 1998, 2004) show that distrust in both civic institutions (media, churches, and trade unions) and coercive institutions (police, security services, and the army) was lower than distrust in more politicized or state-related ones.

DURING THE CONSOLIDATION

During the 1990s and 2000s, political trust in post-communist societies was characterized by three trends. First, trust rates were decreasing in most cases in a phenomenon called the ‘post-honeymoon effect’ (e.g., Catterberg and Moreno, 2006). Second, trust rates were lower than in established democracies (e.g., Catterberg and Moreno, 2006; Marien, 2011a) or in Southern European countries (Braun, 2012). Third, trust rates were volatile (Marien, 2011a). Although most studies do not cover a long time period, the conclusion has been that ‘in CEE, a stabilization of trust did not occur 15 years after the transition to democracy, in the majority of cases’ (Braun, 2012, p. 17).

What might drive this constant change in the region? First of all, legacies may still play a role: in post-communist societies it takes more time to stabilize trust levels than in post-authoritarian Southern European countries because authoritarian regimes affected the economy and civil society less than totalitarian regimes (Braun, 2012). However, if the role of legacies weakened, trust rates would likely be driven increasingly by factors that are also decisive in established democracies (Chiru and Gherghina, 2012). In the case of trust in parties, Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011) show that the initial distrust in parties started to vanish among younger generations, implying that legacies can be overcome gradually.⁶

National political culture, which is to some extent related to the legacy explanations, may influence the levels of political trust. Mishler and Rose (2001) and Rose and Mishler (2011) theorize that a high level of interpersonal trust, as part of and as an indicator of the national culture, may lead to strong cooperation among citizens, which in turn can build trust in institutions. However, their empirical analyses suggest that this factor does not play a role in influencing trust in post-communist societies (for the relationship in general see also Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton or Chapter 21 by Liu and Stolle in this Handbook).

Economic and political performance of institutions and citizens’ experiences are the focal point of institutional theory. Performance matters, and it would matter more as the democratic transition moves further away. Whereas many authors highlight economic performance as an important determinant of political trust in new democracies, Mishler and Rose (2001) and Rose and Mishler (2011) claim that political performance also matters after a long period of repression. They show that the level of inflation, economic growth (economic performance), electoral rules, freedom from the state (political performance),

and corruption⁷ all play a role in the level of political trust. However, the impact of political and economic performance should not be considered apart from expectations and perceptions (see Rose and Mishler, 2011; Boda and Medve-Bálint, 2014): highly exaggerated expectations may downplay achievements. Besides the success of the transition, citizens' extremely high initial expectations were not met because of certain problems of the consolidation (as high unemployment and social inequalities), which ultimately contributed to political distrust (Kornai, 2005a).

Cross-country differences can be observed in the development of political trust over time. The majority of countries show a decrease in trust. Exceptions are Hungary, Slovenia, Slovakia, and Ukraine, which display no change or even an increase in trust in some studies (e.g., Catterberg and Moreno, 2006; Marien, 2011a; Rose and Mishler, 2011). These differential patterns may relate to cross-national variation in legacies, culture, performance, and expectations.⁸

Trends also differ across institutions. The democratic transition witnessed rising trust in relatively depoliticized institutions (Kornai, 2005b). They have been trusted more than those that are easily linked to political parties (Husz, 1998; Lovell, 2001). However, as the transition moved further into the past, the hidden partisanship in these depoliticized institutions and their lack of accountability undermine their trust levels (Sajó, 2004). The scope of the institutions matters as well: trust in local government started from a higher initial level and was hurt less than national ones over time due to its proximity to the citizens (Lovell, 2001, also see Chapter 5 by Muñoz).

Trust rates in political institutions (government, parliament, political parties) were more variable (Miller et al., 1998). According to Braun (2012) trust in these political institutions (such as parliament or parties) stabilizes more slowly than trust in other institutions (such as the police), because cultural legacies affect these representative institutions more than individual experience (with their performance). Lovell (2001) argues that trust in politicians and governments decreased more quickly than trust in other institutions due to the perception of low political efficacy.

EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF LEVELS AND TRENDS

Concept and Measurement of Political Trust

The empirical literature on political trust in post-communist countries mainly relies on two distinct operationalizations of the concept. Surveys tend to measure political trust either as personal trust in different institutions as done in the New Democracies Barometer (e.g., Rose, 1994; Mishler and Rose, 1996, 1997, 2001), in the New Europe Barometer (NEB) (e.g., Rose and Mishler, 2011), in the European Social Survey (ESS) (e.g., Marien, 2011a; Boda and Medve-Bálint, 2014; Medve-Bálint and Boda, 2014), and in the Standard Eurobarometers (Chiru and Gherghina, 2012), or as confidence in political organizations as done in the European Values Study and in the World Values Survey (e.g., Catterberg and Moreno, 2006; Braun, 2012) or in Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990–2001 (Braun, 2012).

Concerns regarding these constructs are usually raised not only in the context of post-communist countries but also in general terms: whether trust means the same thing across

countries in the surveys (e.g., Levi and Stoker, 2000) and whether trust in an institution or trust in the incumbents of that institution is measured (Marien, 2011a). Authors disagree whether trust in institutions can be regarded as one variable or should be analyzed for each institution separately (Fisher et al., 2010; Hooghe, 2011). Marien addresses these problems in Chapter 6 of this Handbook.

The general debate on operationalization translates into the empirical post-communist literature with more specific arguments as well. One side claims that although citizens may be capable of differentiating between the new institutions, it is harder for them than for the citizens of established democracies given their lack of experience (e.g., Mishler and Rose, 1997, 2001). Hence, trust in various institutions can be treated as one concept. Others, however, theorize that some of the institutions had some continuity from the past while some others did not, and that citizens therefore do differentiate (e.g., Braun, 2012). Besides, trust in different kinds of institutions implies different kinds of trusts – trusting loyalty or competence may vary across institutions (Macek and Markova, 2004).

Empirically, although trust in various institutions can be regarded as a one-dimensional concept according to various principal component and factor analyses, they also show that a second or a third dimension may be identified. Representative institutions tend to make up a first factor, while the other identified dimensions are institutions related to civil society (Mishler and Rose, 2001) and to the state (Marien, 2011a; Chiru and Gherghina, 2012). Based on these results some authors treat trust as a one-dimensional construct by combining trust in all the institutions of interest (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006 in their explanatory analysis; Marien, 2011a; Rose and Mishler, 2011; Medve-Bálint and Boda, 2014) or by explicitly omitting some institutions (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Chiru and Gherghina, 2012). Others treat institutions as separate groups, distinguishing between trust in representative institutions, in civil society, and in regulatory institutions (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006 in their descriptive analysis; Braun, 2012); or between trust in elected officials, in civic institutions, and in coercive institutions (Miller et al., 2004).

The empirical analyses in this chapter do not rely on any integrated index of political trust (for the reasons discussed). Rather, trust in parliament is the prime empirical focus to illustrate trends in political trust, as it is often used for such purposes (in this region see, e.g., Catterberg, 2013). However, trust in other institutions will also be discussed.

Data

None of the many data sources for political trust in the post-communist region has a complete coverage of nations during a broad time span. While the surveys have been aggregated (after recoding the variables) and this may be justified to some extent (e.g., Braun, 2012), there are serious risks involved because of differences in sampling procedures, concepts, and wording of both questions and answer categories. Therefore, this chapter only studies two data sources.

Given the huge coverage both in terms of countries and institutions, the Eurobarometer (and its predecessor, the Candidate countries Eurobarometer) was one of the surveys selected. In order to add data from the time period before 2001 (when Eurobarometer data were first collected in this region), the European Values Study (EVS) has been selected as a complementary source for two reasons. The EVS was undertaken twice in the 1990s in most of the post-communist countries. In addition, using its 2008 version, its trust levels

can be compared to those of the Eurobarometer to assess similarities in trust rates across countries and institutions.⁹

For Candidate countries Eurobarometer and for Eurobarometer the data were collected from the GESIS – Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences website.¹⁰ The question used was: ‘I would like to ask you a question about how much trust you have in certain institutions. For each of the following institutions, please tell me if you tend to trust it or tend not to trust it?’. The original coding of the survey was tend to trust (1) and tend not to trust (2). Data were collected between 2001 and 2013. The EVS posed the question: ‘Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them: Is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all?’. The original coding of the survey was a great deal (1), quite a lot (2), not very much (3), none at all (4). Data were collected after the transition (in 1990, 1991, 1992, or 1993 depending on the country) and in 1999. From both datasets, this chapter predominantly focuses on trust in parliament. In addition, it discusses trust in some other institutions: army, the Church, European Union, national government, justice system, NATO, national parliament, police, political parties, and United Nations.¹¹

Aggregated (and weighted) means for each country and year were computed from the individual level data (missing individual cases were deleted). The mean scores on all items were modified to get a 0–1 scale where 1 means maximum level of trust, while 0 means no trust in the given institution.¹²

Each survey wave was similarly dated across countries (despite small cross-national differences in actual collection dates), save one. As the first wave of the EVS showed huge differences across countries, we considered the exact year of data collection for each country separately. When aggregating the following rules were applied. In country years in which only one survey was available, the mean trust levels from that given survey were considered, while in country years with multiple survey data (i.e., with two Eurobarometers), an average of those means for the given institutions were used. The 2008 edition of EVS was used only for cross-checking purposes and was not integrated in the dataset.

LEVELS OF POLITICAL TRUST – A CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARISON

Political trust in post-communist countries can be regarded as low for at least two reasons. First of all, the mean level is below 0.5 for all the countries – and below 0.4 for all countries but (the non-country) East Germany (see Figure 26.1). Second, political trust levels were lower in 2013 than either after the transition (in 1990, 1991, 1992, or 1993) or around the mid-point of the transition period (in 2001) in all of the countries (see Figure 26.2 below).

However, a comparison with the mean of the EU-15 countries¹³ reveals that low and decreasing levels of political trust are not limited to the post-communist societies. Hungary, Estonia, and East Germany all have a higher rate of trust than the mean of the EU-15, while Slovakia has a similar trust rate. However, most post-communist countries have a lower level of political trust than the Western European average, as Figure 26.1 reveals substantial cross-national differences.

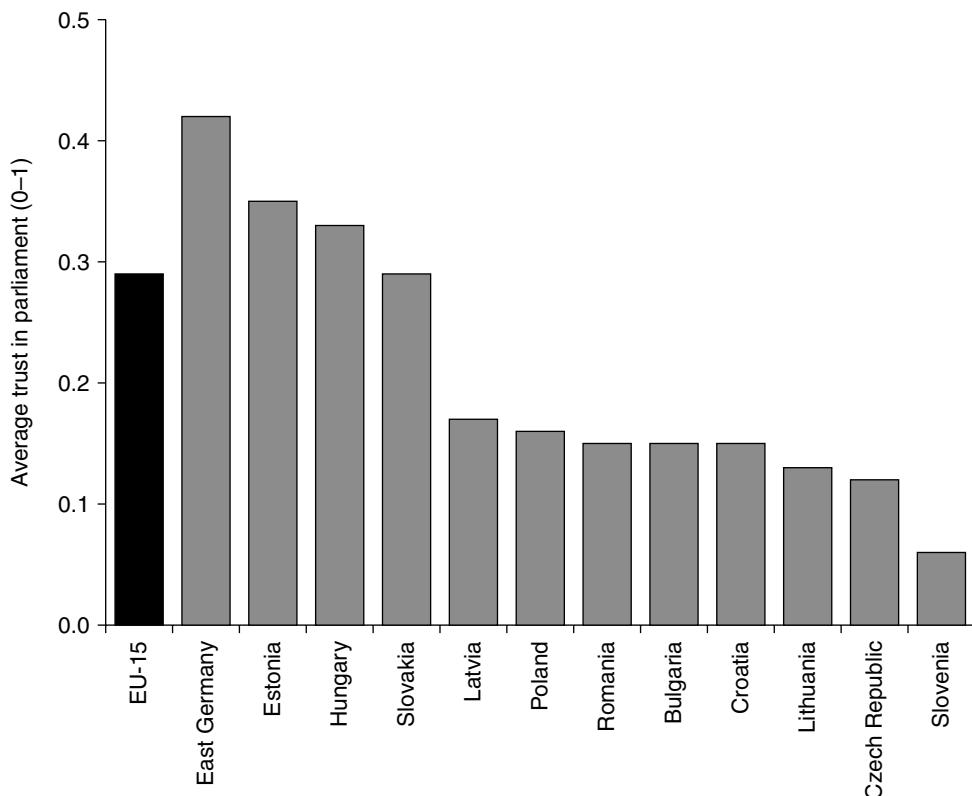


Figure 26.1 Level of political trust in post-communist countries in 2013

TRENDS OF POLITICAL TRUST OVER TIME

The second empirical study is about trends in political trust over time since the transition until now.

Figure 26.2 shows that at the start of the democratic transition the level of political trust was relatively high in at least two aspects, even though (in line with earlier studies) trust rates were below the scale mid-point (i.e., the neutral dividing line) in most countries. First, in most countries trust rates were very similar to those in Western Europe.¹⁴ The trust rate was statistically significantly higher in Poland ($md = 0.15, p < 0.001$) and in Bulgaria ($md = 0.04, p < 0.001$) than in the EU-15. While trust was lower in Romania ($md = -0.15, p < 0.001$) and in Slovakia ($md = -0.07, p < 0.001$), the other countries had trust levels that were statistically indistinguishable from the EU-15. Second, these levels later decreased over time. Thus, the honeymoon (and later the post-honeymoon) effect seems to hold for post-communist countries to some extent.

Let us highlight some individual countries. Hungary's trajectory may be contingent on earlier experiences: because of a relatively higher content with the previous regime, there was more skepticism towards the new institutions than in some other countries of

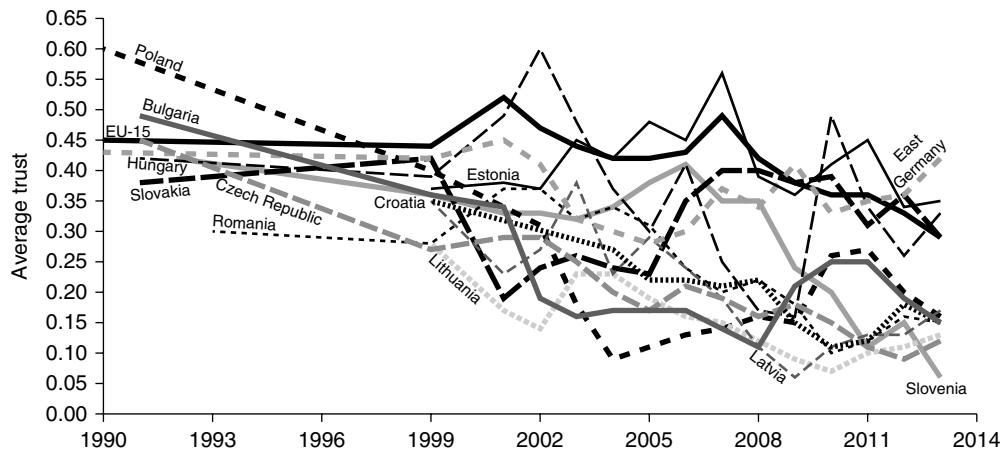


Figure 26.2 Level of political trust in post-communist countries over time

the region. Similarly, the high level of trust in Poland may be due to the contrast with the previous regime (as proposed by Tóth, 2009). What would have been expected based on the contrast to the previous regime is not what we see in Romania where the trust level was relatively low. Thus the legacy explanation by Mishler and Rose (1997) seems to hold in this case. However, EVS data from Romania are exceptionally late (from 1993). Indeed, the Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990–2001 dataset shows that trust in parliament was the highest in Romania in 1990–91 out of all the post-communist countries.

The level of political trust decreased in most of the countries both in a 10- and in a 20-year time span. These trends are not linear (see, e.g., East Germany, Estonia, Hungary, Slovakia, and Romania), but generally point in the same direction, namely to the existence of the post-honeymoon effect. Moreover, with few exceptions (East Germany, and in some waves Estonia, Hungary, and Slovakia) no country reached a level of political trust higher than the EU-15 countries.

INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCES

This section expands on the trends in trust in parliament by showing both similar and diverging trends in trust in other institutions.

In the initial years out of the 68 separate trust means (in different institutions in different countries between 1991 and 1993 as seen in Table 26.1), 45 were below 0.5, 2 were equal to 0.5, and 21 were above 0.5. In almost all countries, trust in a majority of institutions was below 0.5, with the exception of Hungary in 1991 and Poland in 1990. On average, only trust in the EU and in the Church were higher than 0.5 shortly after the transition.

Figure 26.3 shows how trust levels (averaged across countries) in institutions changed over time. As anticipated, trends are different across institutions, thus it would be justified to discuss them separately. Representative institutions (with elected officials) such as

Table 26.1 Change in the level of political trust

Country	Year	Government	Parliament	Parties	EU	UN	NATO	Justice System	Police	Army	Church
Bulgaria	1990–93	NA	0.49	NA	0.49	NA	0.35	0.48	0.48	0.61	0.34
	2001	0.52	0.34	0.12	0.86	0.78	0.59	0.28	0.42	0.71	0.61
	2010	0.43	0.25	0.15	0.74	0.70	0.63	0.18	0.46	0.60	0.50
Croatia	1990–93	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2001	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	2010	0.11	0.11	0.07	0.40	0.49	0.47	0.21	0.45	0.59	0.53
Czech Republic	1990–93	NA	0.45	NA	0.58	NA	0.42	0.50	0.46	0.46	0.34
	2001	0.39	0.29	0.14	0.73	0.86	0.73	0.40	0.56	0.56	0.36
	2010	0.29	0.15	0.12	0.53	0.65	0.63	0.35	0.47	0.63	0.33
Estonia	1990–93	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.41	0.31	0.28
	2001	0.44	0.38	0.16	0.62	0.77	0.63	0.45	0.39	0.67	0.69
	2010	0.56	0.41	0.21	0.74	0.78	0.75	0.59	0.76	0.88	0.38
East Germany	1990–93	NA	0.43	NA	0.59	NA	0.28	0.46	0.45	0.24	0.47
	2001	0.44	0.45	0.17	0.47	0.54	NA	0.51	0.71	0.67	0.32
	2010	0.27	0.33	0.15	0.36	0.51	0.38	0.57	0.73	0.70	0.28
Hungary	1990–93	NA	0.42	NA	0.56	NA	0.42	0.55	0.50	0.51	0.54
	2001	0.52	0.49	0.22	0.85	0.88	0.83	0.51	0.53	0.62	0.54
	2010	0.50	0.49	0.28	0.66	0.69	0.63	0.55	0.62	0.67	0.58
Latvia	1990–93	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.42	0.31	0.28
	2001	0.35	0.23	0.08	0.64	0.73	0.64	0.33	0.37	0.47	0.72
	2010	0.17	0.11	0.05	0.49	0.61	0.58	0.40	0.48	0.76	0.48

Lithuania	1990–93	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.45	0.40	0.31	0.62
	2001	0.27	0.17	0.08	0.72	0.78	0.66	0.25	0.29	0.50
	2010	0.15	0.07	0.07	0.68	0.70	0.63	0.24	0.48	0.73
Poland	1990–93	NA	0.60	NA	0.54	NA	0.41	0.54	0.42	0.61
	2001	0.36	0.34	0.17	0.73	0.85	0.84	0.35	0.49	0.70
	2010	0.31	0.26	0.14	0.64	0.67	0.65	0.42	0.59	0.81
Romania	1990–93	NA	0.30	NA	0.48	NA	0.47	0.50	0.47	0.72
	2001	0.47	0.37	0.16	0.89	0.88	0.84	0.33	0.39	0.81
	2010	0.13	0.10	0.08	0.62	0.59	0.68	0.26	0.39	0.66
Slovakia	1990–93	NA	0.38	NA	0.45	NA	0.30	0.49	0.45	0.52
	2001	0.20	0.19	0.07	0.78	0.75	0.50	0.17	0.30	0.61
	2010	0.39	0.39	0.22	0.72	0.70	0.56	0.33	0.47	0.75
Slovenia	1990–93	NA	0.42	NA	0.48	NA	0.34	0.51	0.50	0.45
	2001	0.43	0.33	0.14	0.66	0.76	0.63	0.38	0.53	0.55
	2010	0.23	0.20	0.09	0.50	0.46	0.41	0.22	0.49	0.59
Average	1990–93		0.44		0.52		0.37	0.48	0.43	0.45
	2001		0.33		0.14		0.72	0.69	0.36	0.45
	2010		0.24		0.14		0.59	0.63	0.58	0.53

Note: Means of trust in different institutions in different countries after the transition (1990–93), in 2001, and 2010. Data for the recent level of trust in NATO are from 2009 due to data availability.

Sources: Candidate countries Eurobarometer, Eurobarometer, European Values Study.

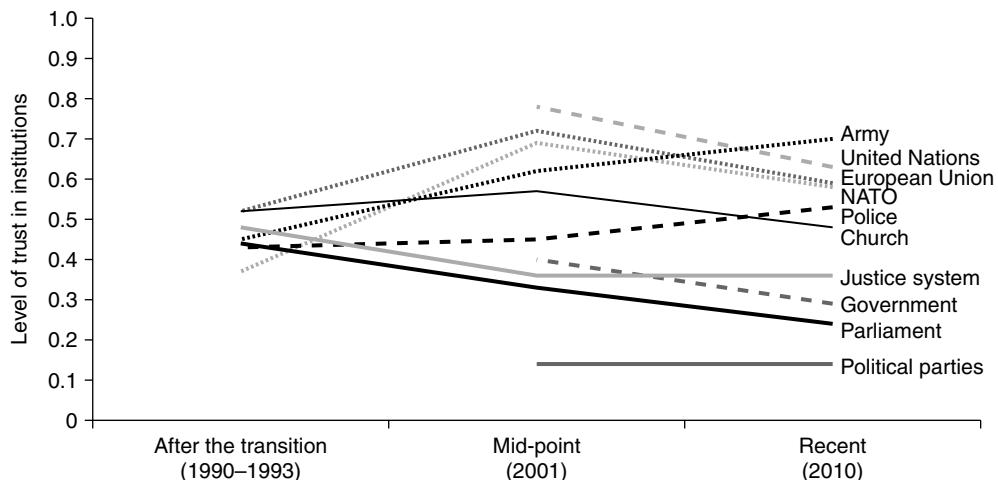


Figure 26.3 *Level of trust in institutions after the transition, at the mid-point of the time period since the transition, and recently in post-communist countries*

parliaments, parties, and governments were among the least trusted ones in 2001 and were the three least trusted ones in 2010. Although there are differences by country, the general trends point in the same decreasing direction. However, it is more difficult to analyze trust in parties and government than it is to analyze trust in parliament, as the 1990–93 EVS data do not cover them.¹⁵

Trust in international institutions started at different levels (high for EU and low for NATO) but similarly increased in almost all the countries after 1990. However, both decreased between 2001 and 2010. The whole process may be described by the externalization of trust: turning away from local politicians towards idealized foreign objects of trust who all operate at a greater distance (Sztompka, 2003) in the period after the transition. However, the accession to these institutions in most of the countries under investigation may have internalized them for the public. In addition, after the accession citizens of new member states may have realized that their expectations about the advantages of EU accession were unrealistic (Tufis, 2008). A third explanation for the decrease between 2001 and 2010 may be that citizens extrapolated their trust in national institutions, which was decreasing in the post-communist countries in that time period, to the EU (Harteveld et al., 2013). Obviously it does not necessarily mean that these institutions have become highly distrusted – they are still in a relatively good position in most of the countries, as they rank well compared to other institutions – they just have become less trusted compared to the beginning of 2000s.

Trust in regulatory (or coercive) institutions such as the army, the police, and the justice system, do not show a uniform pattern. Regarding the army, most of the countries started out with a level of trust that is rather neutral (around 0.5), except for the Baltic states and East Germany where it was very low (around or below 0.3). The explanation may be that the army was probably regarded as not the countries' own army since Russian troops stayed in these countries for a relatively long time after the transition – they left both Estonia (Dressler, 2004) and East Germany in 1994. The level of trust in the army

increased in most countries. If the Baltic countries are omitted, one may find a 0.10 (until 2001) and 0.11 (until 2010) increase. Trust in police shows a similar path to that of the army, with a slow but steady increase over time.

By contrast, trust in the justice system decreased a lot between the transition and 2001 and then remained more or less stable up to 2010. Trust in the justice system had started out at a higher initial level than trust in the army or in the police. The reasons behind these diverging trends are hard to unmask. A more recent analysis of ESS shows that although citizens perceived both judges and the police to be corrupt in most of the post-communist countries in 2010, perceived corruption of judges seems to be a bit higher in this region than expected based on the perceived corruption of the police, at least in comparison to the relationship between the two within the EU as a whole (ESS, n.d., Figure 7).

Trust in civic institutions is illustrated by the Church. The Church is a traditional institution that is highly trusted in post-communist societies, maybe because it is seen symbolically as a physical and spiritual protector of citizens (Tufis, 2008). Sztompka (2003) argues that in a society lacking trust, there is a belief that providentialism may occur. The initial high level of trust in the Church may be the result of such a public turn towards transcendence during communism. Since the transition, levels of trust in the Church have generally stayed in the same range, while declining only recently. Obviously, both the initial level of trust in the Church and later trends differed across countries – with Poland experiencing the highest trust rates in the beginning. However, the most puzzling case is Romania where an initial high level of trust in the Church increased much further between 1990 and 2001 and remained high up to 2010. Tufis (2008) explains this change as due to the traditional values present in Romanian society.

In general, when institutions are compared, this empirical analysis mainly supports the claims made before in the literature: trust in representative institutions started from the middle or lower rankings but decreased a lot to become the least trusted institutions.

The mean standard deviations over time in Figure 26.4 show that trust in the international organizations (NATO, EU, and UN), in parliaments, in governments, and in the army were most volatile. However, the latter disappears when we disregard the Baltic countries. As discussed earlier, externalization and later internalization of trust may explain this change for international institutions. Regarding parliaments and governments, as it has been argued, stabilization has been slow, besides especially in the case of the latter, changing party preferences may matter a lot in the constant fluctuation.

EXPLAINING LEVELS OF POLITICAL TRUST

Finally, this section discusses various country-level explanations of political trust. Analyzing all types of trust would exceed the scope of this chapter, as many institutions have their own explanatory variables. Thus, we return to trust in parliament.

Based on the general literature on explanations of political trust (see multiple chapters in this Handbook), as well as on those accentuated in the post-communist literature (as summarized in the previous sections of this chapter), we focus on legacies, and economic and political performances as possible contributing factors. Both literatures identify a huge number of possible explanatory variables. However, limited by the number of cases, only some of them can be used in these models.¹⁶

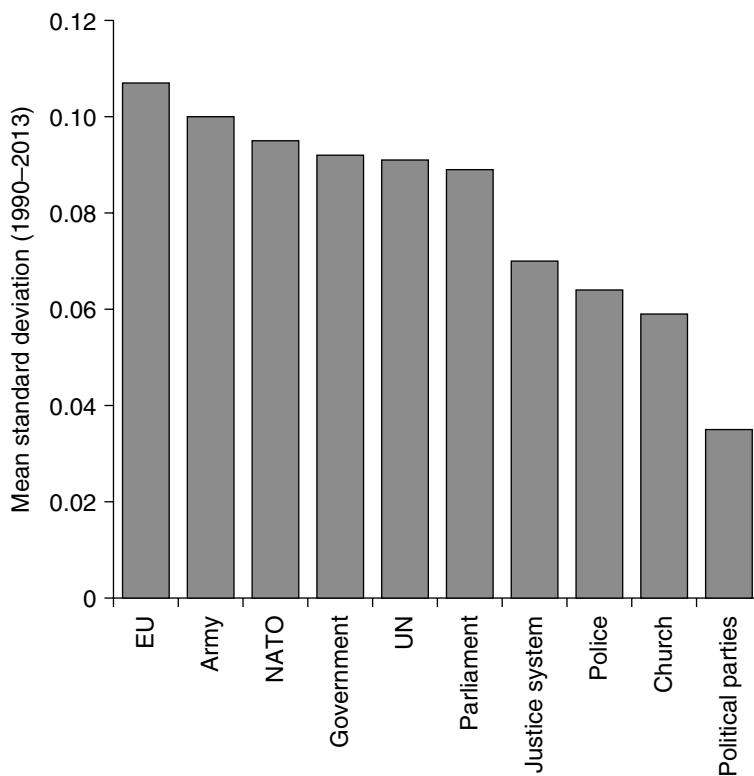


Figure 26.4 Mean standard deviation of levels of trust in institutions between 1990 and 2013

Legacy is usually measured in large-scale cross-country analyses with the main and interaction effects of a post-communist country dummy (e.g., Van der Meer, 2010; Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2011; Babos, 2013; Medve-Bálint and Boda, 2014). However, since here only post-communist countries are analyzed, the number of years after democratization is included as a proxy (cf. Rose and Mishler, 2011; see also Anderson and Tverdova, 2003).¹⁷ These data are derived from the Quality of Government Cross-Section Dataset (Teorell et al., 2015).¹⁸

Economic performance is measured by GDP per capita, unemployment, and inflation:¹⁹ better economic performances are expected to go together with higher trust (e.g., Mayne, 2007; Van der Meer, 2010; Rose and Mishler, 2011; see also Marien, 2011b; for an overview see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). All the economic data are derived from the World Bank and Quality of Government Time-Series Dataset (Teorell et al., 2015).

Political performance is measured by level of democracy and electoral system variables – mean district magnitude and the type of electoral system. More democratic and more proportional systems are expected to have higher levels of political trust (e.g., Rose and Mishler, 2011; see also Anderson and Tverdova, 2003; Marien, 2011b; for an overview see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). Sources of the political performance data are Database of Political Institutions, Freedom House and the Polity Project as compiled by the Quality of Government Time-Series Dataset (Teorell et al., 2015).

Additional controls, such as corruption, a key correlate of trust, is also added to the model – in general, higher corruption is expected to go together with lower levels of trust (Uslaner and Badescu, 2005; for an overview see Chapter 19 by Uslaner). Corruption is measured as the reversed scale of TI's CPI. Vote share of the incumbent government at the previous election is also included – with vote share expected to positively correlate with levels of trust (Tvinnereim, 2004). Finally, whether there was a legislative election in a given year in a given country or not is also taken into account in the model. In years of election the level of trust in parliament is expected to be higher as its seat share may be closer to citizens' preferences (for a somewhat related argument see Hix and Marsh, 2007). Data on both of these control variables are derived from the Quality of Government Time-Series Dataset.

Besides these possible explanatory factors we also include dummy variables in two of the models to distinguish country groups within the post-communist region: the Visegrád Group (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia), Baltic countries (Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania), member states joining the EU in 2007 (Bulgaria and Romania), Western Balkan EU states (Croatia, Slovenia) and East Germany (data for all the explanatory variables are the ones for Germany except for years since the transition).²⁰ The aim of these dummies is twofold: to see the unexplained differences among sub-regions of the post-communist countries and to see whether the effect of corruption on trust may differ across these country groups as suggested by authors cited in the literature review. One model without regional dummies (Model 1) is included as well to keep much of the cross-sectional variation.

Since the dataset is time-series cross-sectional in structure and the cases are not independent from each other, Prais-Winsten regression with panel-corrected standard errors assuming AR1 autocorrelation structure is used for all the three models (Hoechle, 2007; Reed and Ye, 2011).²¹ The results are summarized in Table 26.2.²² Three models were run: one without regional dummies (Model 1), one with them (Model 2), and one with the indicated interaction of regional dummies and corruption levels (Model 3).²³

The outcomes suggest that political performance matters more than economic performance in post-communist countries in forming the level of political trust. Disproportional electoral systems are related to lower levels of trust. Elections tend to boost political trust levels in that year. However, the level of democracy and mean district magnitude have no significant effects. Corruption also relates to lower levels of trust. However, as we discuss below, this does not hold similarly in all countries.

None of the economic performance variables has a statistically significant relationship with political trust. This is not necessarily surprising: cross-sectional studies in both established democracies and in post-communist countries derive similar findings (non-significant or insubstantial relationships). Indeed, perception of economy matters more (Rose and Mishler, 2011; see also Dincer and Uslaner, 2010; Babos, 2013; for an overview see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer). All in all, initial expectations that economic prosperity leads to higher levels of trust in parliament (Hibbing and Patterson, 1994) are not supported by these findings.

Length of democratic rule is a both substantively and statistically significant explanatory variable. As time goes by, political distrust grows, even when many other explanatory factors are accounted for. Thus, although performance-based explanations are relevant

Table 26.2 Explanatory models of political trust (trust in parliament)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
Age of democracy	-0.077	0.018***	-0.087	0.025***	-0.075	0.025**
GDP (per capita)	-0.002	0.021	0.008	0.041	-0.021	0.040
Unemployment	-0.011	0.012	-0.008	0.014	-0.014	0.014
Inflation	0.090	0.135	0.067	0.147	-0.037	0.140
Corruption	-0.045	0.019*	-0.055	0.020**	-0.078	0.038*
Level of democracy	-0.019	0.018	-0.028	0.018	-0.035	0.020
Mean district magnitude	0.015	0.011	0.011	0.014	0.018	0.012
Electoral system (ref: proportional)						
Plurality	-0.089	0.028**	-0.082	0.028**	-0.061	0.028*
Government vote share	0.005	0.011	0.004	0.011	0.003	0.011
Legislative election that year (ref: No)						
Yes	0.035	0.008***	0.034	0.009***	0.036	0.009***
Region (ref: Visegrád Group)						
Baltic countries			-0.042	0.042	-0.052	0.039
2007 members of the EU			0.006	0.057	-0.119	0.069
Western Balkans			-0.054	0.039	-0.050	0.035
East Germany			-0.054	0.095	0.300	0.187
Region–corruption interaction (ref: Visegrád Group)						
Baltic countries*Corruption level					-0.030	0.048
2007 members of the EU*Corruption level					0.125	0.053*
Western Balkans*Corruption level					0.006	0.045
East Germany*Corruption level					0.154	0.079
Constant	0.354	0.029***	0.377	0.048***	0.356	0.046***
R ²	0.590		0.600		0.622	

*Notes:** $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

N: 144.

Panel-corrected standard errors.

Sources: Candidate countries Eurobarometer, Eurobarometer, European Values Study.

determinants of political trust in the post-communist region, there is still variance over time that is unaccounted for.

The non-significant regional dummies suggest there is no unexplained cross-regional variance left once performance indicators and age of democracy were included. While trust rates in East Germany were generally higher than in all other countries, there are no significant regional differences in trust levels after controlling for all the performance indicators and age.

The second model introduces an interaction term between corruption and region. The interaction terms are in line with the claim made by Uslaner and Badescu (2005): the effect

of corruption on political trust differs between countries. In Bulgaria and Romania there is even a positive significant interaction effect of corruption on political trust. Citizens may be more accepting to some forms of corruption in these countries, so that it does not hurt political trust.

CONCLUSION

Most papers on political trust in post-communist societies either start or conclude with pointing out low initial levels of trust and mainly downward trends that up to this point have not yet stabilized. The analysis in this chapter underlines this general claim: moderate initial levels, decreasing trust rates, and high volatility are all to be supported by the data gathered. However, we should acknowledge that there are substantive deviations from these general trends across countries in initial levels (Bulgaria, Poland), in trajectories of political trust (Estonia, Hungary, and to some extent Romania, Slovakia) as well as in its correlates (Bulgaria and Romania). Different institutions experience diverging trends, with the most political institutions (parliament, parties, and government) being hurt the most over time.

In general, neither stability nor a high level in political trust have been reached in the post-communist region. But empirical analyses show that there is still a lot unexplained and thus a lot to be understood about political trust. Future research should focus on many topics in this regard.

First, a continuous monitoring and analysis of political trust levels is essential to see whether the latest trends point in the direction of stability. Trust in certain institutions has been showing a post-honeymoon effect. However, both the trends in the last couple of years (after 2010) in some countries and the experience of other transitions suggest that this period may be over in the future (e.g., Marien, 2011a; Braun, 2012) – even if the lack of trust is currently an EU-wide phenomenon. Although there is some understanding of the reasons behind huge volatility in political trust in the region, more elaborate knowledge is needed. Moreover, regional differences within post-communist countries should be discussed in more detail – both in terms of why and how.

Second, the literature suggests that changing societies and their changing social structure may play a huge role in formulating levels of trust. For instance, younger generations (especially those born after 1990) have a different perception of the political system that may influence how they evaluate its institutions (Pop-Eleches and Tucker, 2011). This analysis and logic may be continued and also extended to other subgroups of post-communist societies.

Third, a growing part of the literature argues that different explanations (and correlates) may play a role in formulating levels of trust. The logic behind why people trust political institutions is likely to have changed over time: legacies and contrast to the previous regime, performance of the institutions, and spillover from trust in other institutions may all play a different role in different periods (Kitschelt et al., 1999; Chiru and Gherghina, 2012). The sequencing of these plausible explanations should be tested in more detail in later analyses.

Fourth, although this chapter has not focused on individual-level explanations, further research on them and especially their interactions with country-level variables is a fruitful

path, as illustrated by the growing number of multilevel studies (see, e.g., Rose and Mishler, 2011; Babos, 2013; Medve-Bálint and Boda, 2014).

All in all, post-communist Europe suffers from lack of political trust. Although trust in certain impartial institutions is relatively high, political trust is also part of a viable political system (see Chapter 3 by Warren). Various chapters in this Handbook address the consequences of distrust; symptoms presented there can be identified in the political culture of post-communist countries – such as relatively lower rates of turnout at national elections (as Eurostat (n.d.) data suggest), and weakness of civil society (see, e.g., Howard, 2002). Given how perceptions of political and economic systems are interrelated in this region (see, e.g., Simon, 1995 or Pew Research Center, 2009 data), lack of political trust can lead to disappointment in both the economic and the political system (e.g., Markova, 2004; Cichocka and Jost, 2014). Thus, rising levels of trust – caused by generational change, better political performance, a fight against corruption (as suggested by the models), or simply by time – would be an important advancement.

NOTES

1. When discussing post-communist societies, we follow the literature in the country selection: Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia are included. As an exception (non-country), East Germany was also added to all of the analyses. In the empirical part, the data availability posed some limitations on the country selection process – this is why Ukraine was dropped from the analysis. Also in the empirical part, some countries are mentioned with recent names, even in the early years (for instance, Czech Republic and Slovakia in 1991 although Czechoslovakia dissolved on 1 January 1993).
2. Other forms of trust are also important for democratization in post-communist societies (e.g., Badescu, 2003; Letki and Evans, 2005).
3. However, increasing levels of trust may be harmful, for instance if institutions are corrupt (Uslaner and Badescu, 2005).
4. The book edited by Markova (2004) offers in-depth analyses for many post-communist countries.
5. The differences among communist trajectories are discussed by many authors (e.g., Linz and Stepan, 1996; Elster et al., 1998).
6. In contrast, although Catterberg (2013) shows that political trust is lower among younger generations in newly democratized countries, she also shows that this difference almost totally disappears over time.
7. On the other hand, the relationship between the perception of corruption and trust in political institutions (i.e., the justice system) is stronger mainly in countries with low levels of corruption – while there is no strong relationship in the case of Romania, for instance (Uslaner and Badescu, 2005; see also Chapter 19 by Uslaner).
8. While this study mainly focuses on aggregate trends in political trust in post-communist societies, within-country, individual-level differences have also been focal points in various studies (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Rose and Mishler, 2011). Many studies on the region use multilevel models to account for both levels of explanations (see, e.g., Babos, 2013; Rose and Mishler, 2011; Medve-Bálint and Boda, 2014).
9. Using institutions in countries as units of analysis, there is a statistically significant strong positive correlation between Eurobarometer 69.2 and the 2008 wave of EVS ($r = 0.869, p < 0.001$) and Eurobarometer 70.1 and the 2008 wave of EVS ($r = 0.909, p < 0.001$). Using the same units of analysis, a one-way ANOVA shows that one cannot reject the null hypothesis that the means of Eurobarometer 69.2 and the 2008 wave of EVS ($md = -0.016, p = 0.793$) and of Eurobarometer 70.1 and the 2008 wave of EVS ($md = 0.019, p = 0.724$) are the same. A two-way full factorial ANOVA shows (country being the other variable) that neither the data source nor its interaction with the country variable affect trust levels (but country has an effect). Levels of trust are very similar in these two main data sources in a given year both in general and in given countries.
10. The studies used are: Candidate countries Eurobarometer 2001.1, 2002.2, 2003.2, 2003.4, 2004.1 and Eurobarometers 55.1, 56.2, 57.1, 59.1, 60.1, 61, 62.0, 63.4, 64.2, 65.2, 66.1, 67.2, 68.1, 69.2, 70.1, 71.3, 72.4, 73.4, 74.2, 75.3, 76.3, 77.3, 78.1, 79.3, 80.1. The selection of surveys was based on the inclusion of trust in national and international institutions (according to the GESIS webpage). From each year two surveys

- were chosen. If there were more in a given year, the ones with the most trust items were selected from both halves of the year.
11. Mainly political institutions have been selected in accordance with other parts of the book. However, other institutions are also presented to show the diverging trends of different types of trust. Despite some slight modifications of wording over time within surveys, the items predominantly remained the same.
 12. In the case of Eurobarometer mean scores were subtracted from 2, while in the case of EVS mean values were subtracted from 4 and divided by 3.
 13. For a more detailed discussion of Western European trends see Chapter 25 by Torcal in this Handbook.
 14. Data on Baltic countries are not available from the EVS in this particular trust item. However, the Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990–2001 data (which are not integrated in this chapter for reasons discussed earlier) show that Lithuania experienced the second highest level, while Estonia had the lowest level of trust in parliament in 1991 out of all post-communist countries.
 15. It may be useful to do just a simple comparison of trust levels in government and political parties over time using the Consolidation of Democracy in Central and Eastern Europe 1990–2001 dataset. In the ten countries used in both waves in the 1990–91 time period mean trust in government was 0.46, mean trust in parties was 0.30, while in the 1999–2001 time period it was 0.32 and 0.23 respectively. Trust in government decreased in eight countries and remained the same in two, while trust in parties decreased in seven, remained the same in two and increased in one. Trust in parties was the lowest out of all the institutions, trust in government was in the middle of the ranking.
 16. For instance, Hibbing and Patterson (1994) use trust in politicians and government to explain trust in parliament in post-communist countries, but it is not done in these models due to the peril of tautology.
 17. This variable also captures the unobserved time-variant variables to some extent (but starting points slightly differ across countries).
 18. The questions, sources, and codings are presented in Electronic Appendix Table A26.1. Continuous explanatory variables are included in the models in standardized forms. For continuous variables higher values mean higher levels in that given variable, for categorical variables the categories are separately presented in Table 26.2.
 19. To check for multicollinearity issues, we dropped each of these three determinants. This did not change the sign or strength of the economic variables.
 20. One may argue that Slovenia is not a Western Balkan state. The two models with regional dummies were run with a different country grouping as well in which Slovenia is part of the Visegrád Group (with which it has multiple official connections) and Croatia is part of the new member states – the only difference is that in the second model East Germany has a significantly higher trust than the Visegrád Group.
 21. The cases are not independent from each other, since they correlate within countries (in different time points) and within years (in different countries). This biases coefficients and standard errors. The assumption of autocorrelation is tested with the serial correlation test. The *p*-values in the models show that the null hypothesis of no autocorrelation can be rejected (Beck and Katz, 1995; Mikhaylov and Marsh, 2009). For an example of this method with regional dummies in comparative politics see Brinks and Coppedge (2006).
 22. A super-population of countries is assumed in this case (and this is the sample of this super-population) in order to make statistical significance more meaningful. The analysis was done in Stata with the xtce command. The time range of the analysis is between 1990 and 2012 only (with many gaps due to lack of data) since data for many explanatory variables were missing from 2013. Based on the Wald tests all three models fit the data. Based on the R²'s presented, the first model explains 58.97 percent, the second model with regional dummies explains 60.02 percent, while the third model with the interaction explains 62.19 percent of the variance of trust in parliament.
 23. A (not presented) fixed effects regression was also conducted to exploit the full potential of the panel data and to see the longitudinal changes within countries. With fixed effects regression one includes the countries as their own controls in the models and thus one controls for the omitted time-invariant characteristics of them (Allison, 2009). The results are very similar to those of Model 1, the only difference in statistical significance is with unemployment and corruption. Change in unemployment over time reduces levels of political trust within a country. Change in corruption levels does not affect political trust – although one should read the latter results carefully as within country variation of corruption is limited.

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For the electronic appendix, see www.e-elgar.com/handbook-on-political-trust-companion-site.

27. Political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region

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INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we examine political trust in two similar but distinct regions of the developing world: Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region. We detail the trends in political trust in these regions cross-nationally and over time, focusing on unique regional challenges. The constituent roles of the state, institutions, and threat environment create regional contexts influencing levels of individual trust in formal political institutions. We use multilevel modeling to demonstrate how country-level (macro-level) factors shape overall trust levels within countries and account for much of the observed cross-national variation within regions. These insights reveal much about the important factors influencing trust in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region and may apply more broadly to the developing world.

Countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region share a host of challenges that, in turn, strongly influence observed patterns of trust in government. Both regions have distinctive features that shape political trust in divergent ways. It is precisely this mixture of similarity and contrast that makes these regions interesting cases to study and important to improving our understanding of political trust and state–society relations. We use these regions to address several intriguing puzzles about political trust in this chapter.

Both regions are strong candidates to evaluate the impact of different state-level factors on individual political trust. Political trust is largely learned (Ridley, 1997; Newton, 2007). Demographic characteristics are demonstrated to have minimal influence while some individual attitudinal dispositions exert stronger effects on political trust (Abramson, 1983; Newton, 2001, 2007; Hetherington, 2005). Bratton et al. (2005) and others consistently show that, at the individual level, the antecedents associated with greater trust in government are virtually identical among Sub-Saharan Africans as compared to advanced industrial countries (also see Hutchison, 2011a; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011). Respondents from the Arab region also demonstrate similarity to other regions in individual-level antecedents of political trust. Yet, the patterns of political trust levels in these regions are substantially different from those found in other regions. Previous research focused on political trust in Africa contends that differences are due to state-level factors rather than simply artifacts of composition effects. We build on earlier research demonstrating how contextual factors exert a strong influence on individual political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa and extend this analysis to the Arab region.

Unlike more economically advanced countries where citizen expectations of government performance tend to focus on issues like procedural fairness, we are able to assess individual political trust in regions where expectations center on more rudimentary functions of the state, namely institutional capacity and external security. Examining

these two regions in conjunction provides us with an opportunity to estimate how the legacy of state development and institutional capacity influence political trust. Given the paucity of interstate conflict in advanced industrial countries over the last two decades, we are able to evaluate the effect that salient external threats have on domestic political trust in regions experiencing a host of events.

These puzzles drive our approach in understanding political trust patterns and their antecedents in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region. Two primary state-level factors influence political trust: state institutional capacity and salient external threat. Although state institutional capacity strongly influences political trust, the direction of this effect is contingent on whether the nature of the institutional structure is extractive or distributive. Higher institutional capacity in states with extractive institutional structures (where institutions are designed to extract taxes and redistribute resources) are associated with increased political trust as those governments are inherently more reliant on and responsive to domestic populations. In distributive structures (where institutions simply allocate or distribute resources derived from resource rents or aid paid directly to the state), higher capacity is associated with lower political trust because resources are not reliant on domestic populations allowing governments to function almost independently. Not coincidentally, patterns of state development have left Sub-Saharan Africa predominately comprised of extractive states while the Arab region is dominated by distributive states. Second, we propose that salient external threats in the form of territorial disputes reduce individual political trust because they indicate a failure by the state to fulfill one of its basic functions to its citizenry.

We begin this chapter by detailing the historical challenges to political trust, focusing on patterns of state development and external conflict. We follow with an examination of the overall trends in political trust in noting the variance between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region. In our analysis section, we use multilevel modeling to test our expectations of these state-level factors by drawing on data from the Afrobarometer and the Arab Barometer survey projects from 1999 to 2011. Finally, we conclude with reflections on the analyses and thoughts on future directions for research on political trust.

HISTORICAL CHALLENGES TO TRUST IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE ARAB REGION

Regime legitimacy is identified across disciplines as a critical contributing factor to political stability, economic growth, effective policy implementation, overcoming development challenges, and successful democratization and democratic consolidation. Factors that result in individuals ascribing legitimacy to the state lie at the heart of state-society scholarship – historical, demographic, political, and economic influences. Within the political behavior literature, political trust comprises the most critical indicator of regime legitimacy (Mishler and Rose, 2001; Hetherington, 2005; Newton, 2007). Political trust directly reflects societal confidence in political institutions and the distribution of political authority within the state (Newton, 2007). Newton (2007) observes that, conceptually, political trust is so close to the notion of legitimacy that it reflects more than trust in individuals or particular political leaders or even the current administration.

Regime legitimacy is at the heart of current challenges and events in Sub-Saharan

Africa and the Arab region, as instability and civil conflict is rife throughout Sub-Saharan Africa, and the Arab region continues to deal with the aftermath of the domestic and international challenges following the Arab Spring. As regions, Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region share significant commonalities and points of departure. In each, sovereign state boundaries were determined by colonial powers. Each experienced a lengthy period of time, ranging from decades to centuries, of political and economic control by European powers. Neither established institutions without significant colonial influence. Sub-Saharan African institutions were established under the influence of external actors and further shaped to reflect failures to establish sufficiently large economic productivity to cope with massive demands of development and large debt burdens. Decades of debt, bailouts, and adjustment programs have resulted in the creation of extractive institutions, at least by design, that acquire legitimacy through the redistribution of tax revenues/individual resource transfers. These institutions are nascent, as the tax base is limited, yet enjoy higher levels of political trust than their much wealthier counterparts in the Arab region.

Two factors influencing institutional development and guiding state–society relations present key differences. The first is the creation of institutions that functioned to distribute state-controlled resources, often from resource wealth, along patronage or kinship lines. Decades of affluence and resource rents have resulted in governments that can fiscally function independently of the population and in essence pay for legitimacy. In the Arab region, this evolved in an environment where external threat, from neighbors and as a region at the center of geopolitical interests, was endemic. A consequence was institutional development focused on distribution of revenues and investment in the military. These trends are detailed in specific sections on each region, however they support the relationships between factors such as government accountability and responsiveness examined by Van der Meer and corruption examined by Uslaner in preceding chapters of this volume (see Chapters 17 and 19, respectively).

State Origins, State Development, and Institutional Functioning

A central component of state–society relations hinges on the foundations and formation of the state and formal institutional structures; a critical point of departure for understanding political attitudes in each of these regions requires tracing the evolution of the ‘sovereign’ state. Numerous theoretical works on the process of state building identify war as a fundamental motivation for the creation of strong and established states (e.g., Tilly, 1975; Organski and Kugler, 1980; Herbst, 1990; Bates, 2009). War requires the creation of standing militaries, tax structures, and bureaucracies to administer and manage sovereign control over territories and populations (Tilly, 1990; Herbst, 2000). Institutional development and bureaucracies are strengthened as the state develops a vested interest in promoting trade and regulating economic exchange in order to increase and streamline revenue streams, decreasing transaction costs and increasing profit flows for individuals (Englebert, 2000). This model holds true for the legitimization of government control over political authority and institutions in the West.

Both the African and Arab experiences vary in several key components of state origins and subsequent development. Historically, war in Africa is fought between mobile populations spanning state boundaries or engaging in conflict within a state boundary

(Englebert, 2000; Bates, 2009). State-building wars never occurred; many of the territorial boundaries that persist throughout Africa and the Arab world were arbitrarily inscribed by colonial powers without consideration of the ethnic, religious, or linguistic composition of requisite populations yet remain largely intact. In the Arab region, external threats were relevant in shaping state identity, but occurred after state boundaries had been established. Bates (2009) notes that despite the ‘accidental’ national boundaries inscribed by colonial European powers, populations remain politically committed to maintaining the majority of them, perhaps explaining why so many persist more than a half-century post-independence. Throughout the Arab region, strong regional kinship networks and patterns of patronage were antecedents to colonial governments, reinforced by ‘rentier’ or distributive structures following independence. Consequently, these patterns contribute to particular ways in which regime legitimacy functions within the region. In this chapter, we argue that post-colonial patterns of state–society relations produced either by extractive (tax and redistribution) or distributive (resource rent based without extraction) institutional structures coupled with varied external threat environments explain key levels of variance in individual-level political trust across both Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region. These trends are discussed in the subsequent section.

Institutions are comprised of formal structures designed to effectively govern behavior and distribute political authority within a society (North, 1981). Capturing the intersection of politics and economics, institutions represent the degree to which the political system is able to formulate and enforce rules. Existing examinations of political performance in the context of electoral competition support this contention; Alemika (2007), using the third round (2005–06) of the Afrobarometer survey, examines the relationship between the quality of elections and political trust noting that in countries with strong post-colonial or apartheid presidents (Mozambique, Namibia, and South Africa) and those with regular transfer of power through political competition (Ghana, Mali, Senegal, Tanzania, and Lesotho), trust in the president, parliament, courts, and police is high. Each of these represents facets of institutional efficiency and performance, despite a focus on single governance attributes, in this case procedural democracy or public approval.

Sub-Saharan Africa

The foundations of current Sub-Saharan African states precede colonialism; work on legitimacy and state building emphasizes the unique divergent experience of the African continent. Nunn (2008) notes that prior to annexation of African territories by European powers, the transatlantic slave trade functioned to decimate social cohesion in the most affluent settled regions along the Western African coast (also see Nunn and Wantchekon, 2011). Concentrated settlement, thriving markets, and easy access to oceanic transport facilitated systematic depopulation of the most politically integrated economically advanced regions (Nunn, 2008; Nunn and Wantchekon, 2011). The result was the functional disassembly of nascent institutions and political order. The subsequent ‘scramble for Africa’ was characterized by European efforts to acquire and control resources and territory to increase their own international influence and share of the global economy. Political control of regions was predicated on realization of economic resources resulting in practices of forced labor, forced migration, and population control and exclusion. The cost to human lives, culture, and existing political order was incalculable.¹ Even in the most inclusive colonial models, minority populations were provided with resources and

benefits premised on the exclusion of majority populations resulting in social dislocation and the institutionalization of privilege. Politicized identity in many instances became paramount, igniting ethnic divisions that previously had not existed (for an extensive discussion of political utility of identity differences in the African context, see Posner, 2004). Colonial control regimes created dual economies, with investment and infrastructure investments concentrated in single commodities (such as mineral ores, gems, rubber) or monocropping comprising the cash economy and confined to settlements along transit lines with the remainder of the population persisting in subsistence production. This legacy of concentrated economic activity, reliance on single commodity exports, and little incentive to broaden participation in the formal economy did little to increase political cohesion between populations characterized by traditionally organized social subunits characterized by high levels of internal group cohesion (Englebert, 2000).

After independence, these factors contributed to the creation of neo-patrimonial regimes where elites consolidated and distributed resources to maintain political control and along established kinship or other networks (*ibid.*). The consequence is a large subset of the population that is excluded from benefits, opportunity, and/or influence over the political system. Herbst (2000) notes that foreign direct investment, at times development assistance, and loans targeted at commodity development have exacerbated this trend. Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, despite vast resource wealth, remains one of the poorest global regions with very poor development outcomes. Despite the dire description, many African regimes negotiate these challenges with some measure of success.

Sub-Saharan African countries were subject to further political and economic interference following independence. The immediate post-colonial period was characterized by efforts to attain Cold War objectives characterized by large foreign aid flows and large loan packages. Unlike the Arab region, resource flows were fickle and predicated on political support rather than resource transfers. Several decades later, large debt burdens and failures to attain vibrant diverse economic development resulted in austerity measures adopted as components of structural adjustment programs as a condition of bailout packages from lenders of last resort. These programs required increased extractive effort based on an expanded tax base, despite a lack of infrastructure, administration, and low levels of development.

A number of countries in the region are structured as ‘extractive’ with at least a token effort aimed at increasing the transfer of individual resources to governments in the form of taxes. As of 2012, debt relief under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative and Multilateral Debt Relieve Initiative by over 33 countries in the region had been attained or was in progress as a consequence of reform in fiscal policy and macroeconomic indicators (Tiwari and Lewis, 2012). This reflects a targeted and substantive extractive strategy for financing regional governments.

This environment of austerity is coupled with the reliance on governments as often the sole providers of basic services including minimal health care, adequate access to food and water, education, and other basic needs. The World Bank (2015) reported in 2013, 46.8 percent of the population in the region was living on less than \$1.25 a day. Consequently, institutional efficiency and predictability is critical in this context, particularly in influencing individual attitudes.

The Arab region

The evolution of states within the Arab region follows many similarities to Sub-Saharan Africa with some distinct differences. Prior to colonialization of the region, the largely centralized Ottoman Empire dominated the region, inculcating patterns of patrimonialism predicated on family, kinship, or regional loyalties (Anderson, 1987). An additional pervasive element of both social and economic organization that persists in the region is the evolution of economic activity based on trade networks and routes rather than on land ownership (Amin, 1978). This pattern shaped colonial enterprise during European rule of the region as well. Instead of disrupting existing networks with the consequence of rupturing patterns of social cohesion, colonial patterns of political control reinforced the practice of economic exchange within kinship groups and relative political autonomy.

The realization of massive resource rents, largely in the form of oil, and independence left several structures in place. First, lack of traditions of 'landed wealth' coupled with centralized administration left the state in direct receipt of revenues from resource production (*ibid.*). Patterns of inequality created by a large pastoralist population and few landowners evident in other regions such as Sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America did not occur, as wealth and land ownership were not necessarily associated. States were left with few incentives to develop extractive capacity (tax bases) as large resource revenues eclipsed any possible realization of individual resource transfers. In many cases, distributive resources (oil revenues) exceeded both the absorptive and administrative capacity of the state. In cases such as Saudi Arabia, legitimacy became conferred not through extraction and redistribution but through transfer of resource rents and distribution that occur independently of the population. This type of structure forms what Tilly (1990) refers to as the 'Sultanate model of the state', with the consequence that patronage and kinship networks become more politically expedient and preferable to alternate models of social organization. This pattern of resource wealth was exacerbated by enormous foreign aid that was flowing into what became a strategic region of interest, for which Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Jordan are representative examples (Baraki, 1984). Representing a distinct additional form of direct state resource that bypasses the population and is available by elites for distribution along pre-existing channels, these practices reinforced the reliance on patronage for social order and organization. This pattern is so pronounced that in some countries such as Lebanon, there has been functionally no stable administrative apparatus since 1975 (Anderson, 1987).

In a study examining the political and social environments preceding and following uprisings in Egypt, Morocco, and Tunisia, Rivetti (2015) notes that state–society patterns function in a context bearing the imprint of colonial institutions. While actors and the political environment were undergoing complex and abrupt change, much of the organization, patterns, and practices were rooted in long-established structures and foundations (*ibid.*). One challenge in these transitions is to locate 'authentic' or representative political actors outside of identity groups. Limited civil administration evident in many of these countries resulted in governments that failed to provide services despite the revenues to enact such policies to a subpopulation, with the consequence that local non-state groups were filling a service provision vacuum. Salient examples include the role of the Muslim Brotherhood in supporting hospitals and schools in all governorates in Egypt or Hezbollah in Lebanon is widely cited for social service provision ranging from schools to hospitals to agricultural support for Lebanon's Shiite population (Kelly and White,

2006). Legitimacy can be transferred in part from the state to these non-state actors. The challenge is to incorporate these actors in a way that incurs responsiveness into a political system that conferred legitimacy upon them through their exclusion. We believe that this, in part, may account for many of the lower levels of political trust in the Arab region.

We rely on Organski and Kugler's (1980) insights to evaluate the degree institutions are extractive, utilizing the concept of relative political extraction, which identifies the expected extraction of individual resources (in this case taxes) of a country accounting for economic endowment and level of development (Kugler and Tamm, 2012). Taxes are identified throughout the literature and in particular in the African context as a key component of institutional competency and appropriately reflect levels of ascribed legitimacy to the state (Bates, 2009; Pollack, 2009; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011). However, when patterns of state–society relations are premised on institutions distributing rents derived from resources based outside the population as is the case in much of the Arab region, we anticipate that higher levels of extraction on the part of the government will be associated with declines in legitimacy and lower levels of political trust.

External Threats to the State

The extensive literature on political behavior and public opinion has long posited a strong relationship between threat (real or perceived) and individual attitudes and behavior. Recent studies examine how salient objective threats to the state, in the form of external militarized conflict, influence individual attitudes and behavior using cross-national survey data (Hutchison and Gibler, 2007; Hutchison, 2011a, 2011b; Gibler et al., 2012; Miller, 2013). Appreciating the nuanced relationship between conflict and political trust is important to understanding a critical facet of regime legitimacy.

Conflict and the threat of conflict is a persistent feature in both the African and Arab regions despite some general characteristics of those international conflicts differing. Threat is an important factor for political trust considering that a fundamental responsibility of any regime is to maintain the integrity of its territory and population. Even a small international dispute that does not result in large-scale conflict undermines trust in the government. Hutchison's (2011a) study notes that there is a distinct difference between government approval and trust in the government; even if government approval increases following the onset of a salient external threat (such as one over territorial control), trust in government is likely to decline. In contrast to claims that external threats and militarized disputes produce a rally-round-the-flag effect, they represent direct evidence to their respective publics that the government is unable to effectively ensure the security of its territory and population, particularly in a context where the overwhelming number of international engagements assume this form.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Historically, large-scale external military campaigns characterized by strategic objectives have been rare in Sub-Saharan Africa compared to other regions of the world (Lemke, 2002). Much more frequent occurrences include the support of small-scale opposition groups by external actors who provide training, arms, sanctuary, and resources to opposition groups or direct small-scale incursions by foreign militias into a single region or territory. Even an exceptional example of an external dispute, the large-scale

1978 Tanzanian invasion of Uganda resulting in Idi Amin's removal, was prompted by a small Ugandan occupation force that attempted annexation of Tanzania's Kagera Salient.² This was likely a consequence of deteriorating relations between Amin and Tanzanian President Nyerere, attributable in part to Nyerere's provision of ousted Ugandan President Obote's Uganda's People's Congress opposition force with resources and sanctuary (Acheson-Brown, 2001).

Generally speaking, although internal conflicts in Africa have been far bloodier, more protracted, and enduring than international conflicts,³ countries in this region continue to experience salient territorial militarized disputes. One of the most contentious issues in the region involves ongoing border struggles between Nigeria and Cameroon over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula.⁴ As a result, Nigeria experienced several militarized disputes over territorial issues from the 1990s until the mid-2000s. Uganda is another country in this region periodically involved in territorial disputes; between 2007 and 2008, Ugandan troops clashed with troops from the Democratic Republic of the Congo several times over the border around the Lake Albert Region (Palmer et al., 2015).

The Arab region

The Arab region is distinctly different. Territorial, religious, ethnic, and geopolitical disputes have fueled a substantial external threat environment. Ongoing rivalries within the region (for example, Egypt and Israel, Israel and Lebanon, Iran and Iraq) are enduring (Klein et al., 2006). A case in point is the Iran–Iraq War between 1980 and 1988, deemed by many to be the highest casualty conventional conflict between developing countries; the Correlates of War Project estimates the total battle deaths to number over 1.25 million (Sarkees and Wayman, 2010). Until the Arab Spring, conflict within the region superseded challenges to internal stability, resulting in a significantly different approach to state–society relations.

The external threat environment has driven the formation of states and reliance on strong leaders. Characterized by frequent border conflicts, salient external threats resulted in institutional development that privileged military influence and efficiency above other administrative apparatus (Gellner and Waterbury, 1977). Egypt and Tunisia enjoy large civil administrations emphasizing the professionalization and advancement of military bureaucracy ahead of other administrative entities designated for revenue extraction or social service provision (Anderson, 1987). A natural consequence of this development is the military as a relevant political actor coupled with authoritarian rule. The social structures are poorly equipped to deal with political competition and social organization outside of existing distribution networks and structures. This became strikingly evident following the Arab Spring uprisings throughout the region.

In describing our basic expectations on the primary contextual factors affecting overall political trust levels in the developing world, particularly Africa and the Arab region, we have argued that political trust is predicated on the performance of a government (Newton, 2001; Hetherington, 2005), particularly in satisfying basic obligations: security and governance. External threats function to decrease political trust in two ways. First, consistent with Hutchison (2011a), a government that is involved in a militarized dispute over territory has demonstrated to the population that it is unable to guarantee security and control over a region that should be under its exclusive control. Even as individuals may approve of actions to defend or retain territory, confidence in the government should

decline. We anticipate that territorial disputes, in particular, are likely to have a strong effect on political trust, as they represent a more salient threat to both the government and domestic populations (see Hutchison and Gibler, 2007; Vasquez, 2009; Hutchison, 2011a, 2011b; Gibler et al., 2012).

TRENDS IN TRUST ACROSS SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE ARAB REGION

Although both Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region present interesting and important settings within which to examine political trust, there are only a handful of studies that examine political trust in those regions in a systematic fashion in Sub-Saharan Africa (see Kuenzi, 2008; Hutchison, 2011a; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011; Johnson and Hutchison, 2012; Linke, 2013; Ishiyama and Laoye, 2014) and none that directly addresses political trust in the Arab region. As such, this chapter represents an important opportunity to provide an overview of trends across both regions.

Overall, political trust levels are low in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region. Using our political trust index,⁵ Figure 27.1 plots the average political trust levels across the countries in Sub-Saharan Africa surveyed by the Afrobarometer project from 1999 to 2009 in Panel A and political trust levels in the Arab region surveyed by the Arab Barometer project from 2006 to 2010 in Panel B.⁶ While data limitations prevent us from showing overall political trust levels in the Arab region from the post-Arab Spring Round 3 surveys here, we examine those trends below using available individual trust indicators. Figure 27.1 shows that the mean level of political trust in both regions hovers around the mid-point of a four-point scale (0–3) with the Sub-Saharan Africa region slightly above and the Arab region at the mid-point. Citizens in both regions are relatively lukewarm in their political trust of institutions. Figure 27.1 also reveals how stable overall political trust has remained across both regions over time, particularly when considering the volatility associated with many of the governments (albeit more so in Sub-Saharan Africa). We observe that overall political trust peaked around 2005–06 in Sub-Saharan Africa and in 2009–11 in the Arab region.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Few cross-national studies examine patterns of political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa, particularly over time; the majority of existing published work focuses on either single-country studies or examines a cross-section of countries during a single survey year. Seminal and major works on public opinion and attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa primarily focus on democratic and economic reform offering few insights on political trust in general (e.g., Bratton et al., 2005; but see Hutchison, 2011a; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011; Johnson and Hutchison, 2012; Linke, 2013).

Here we observe the cross-national differences between Sub-Saharan African countries across the first four rounds of the Afrobarometer surveys in two distinct ways. Figure 27.2 displays the mean aggregate political trust level for each country surveyed in the Afrobarometer project. The figure shows mean trust levels and the minimum and maximum values of mean political trust observed in the country if surveyed multiple

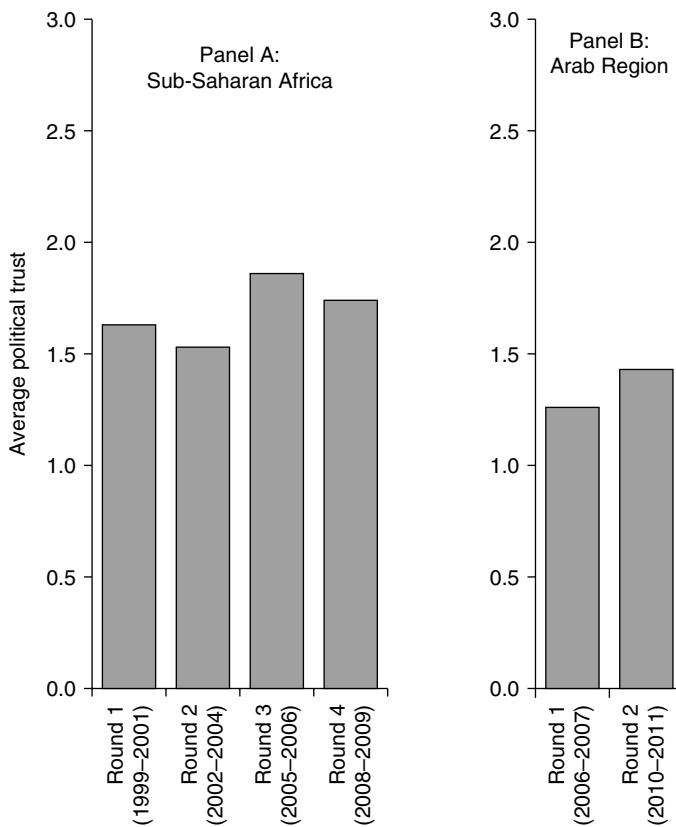


Figure 27.1 *Political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region over time*

times. This figure provides a sense of which countries have higher average levels of political trust and observed country-level variance over time.

Figure 27.3 presents a panel of graphs charting political trust by country over time.⁷

Unlike the relative stability in regional trust levels that we observe in Figure 27.1, figures here reveal considerable range in political trust levels across and within countries in the region. The within-country variability strongly suggests that state-level factors play a large role influencing overall political trust as massive changes in demographic composition over a relatively short period of time is unlikely. In terms of our key variables, levels of extractive capacity and external threat environment, the overall trends here are suggestive but not conclusive.

It is not surprising that Senegal and Tanzania rate high in political trust. Tanzania enjoys a history of political inclusion based on the populist precedents set during the post-independence period by Nyerere (with the exception of Zanzibar). Recently, the country witnessed parallel development of a professional civil service and intrusion of distributional patronage networks into the bureaucracy, resulting in both accolades and concern

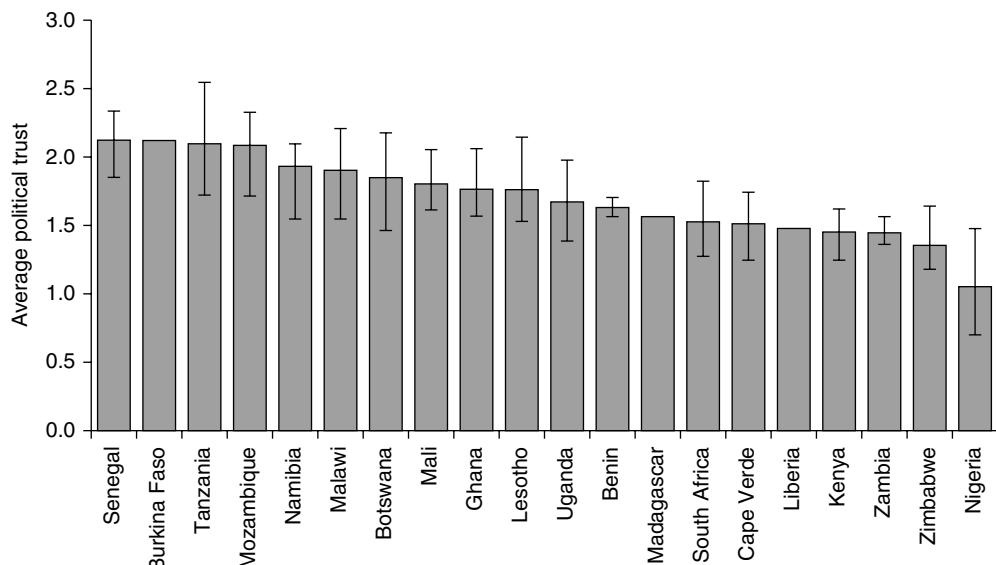
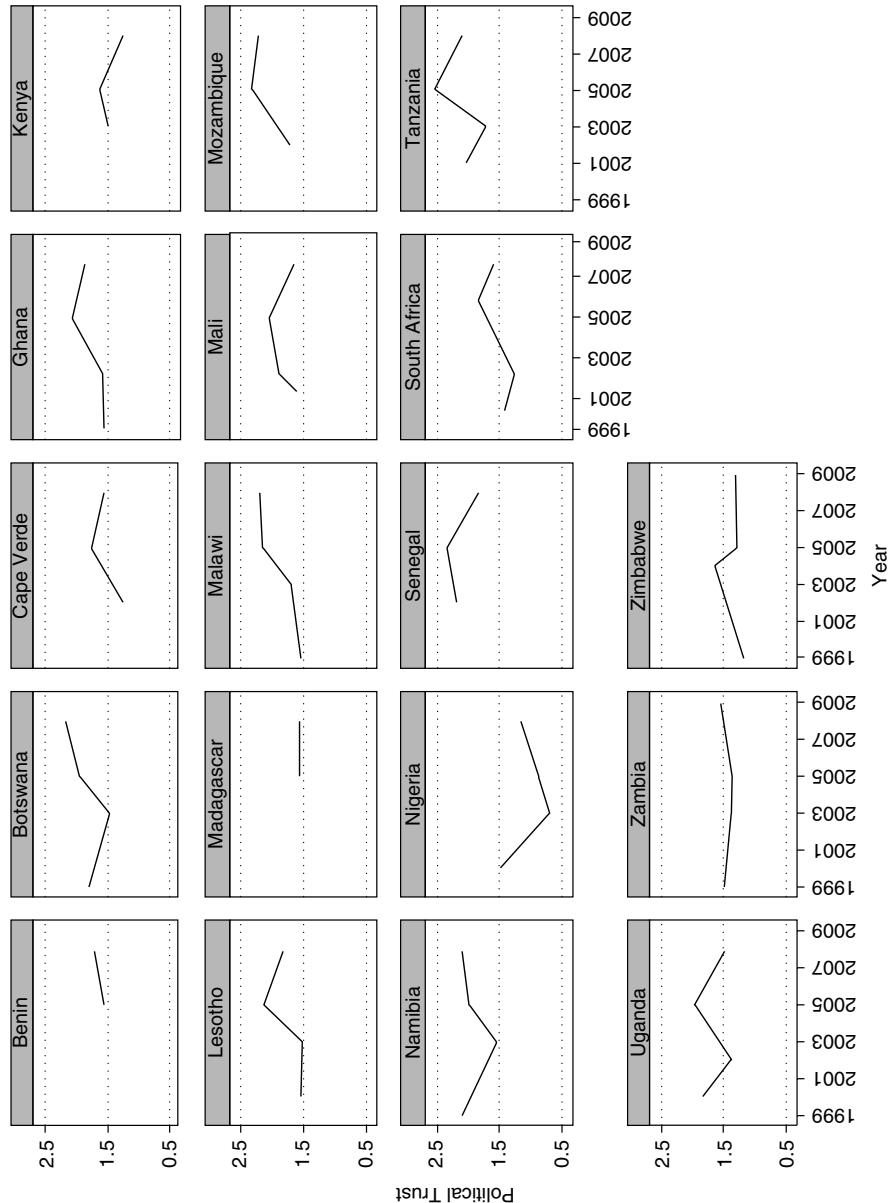


Figure 27.2 Average political trust levels across Sub-Saharan Africa

in the evaluation of Tanzania's governance and institutional structure. Institutional performance in Tanzania is consistently high with a stable percentage of tax revenue (83–92 percent between 1990 and 2013) contributing to total revenue, while Senegal scores even higher (93–98 percent in the same period) (World Bank, 2014). Senegal is also characterized by a transition to competitive elections with alternating political parties assuming control over the last two decades following a long history of one-party rule. In each instance, political control and patronage networks failed to disrupt individual resource transfers in the form of taxes indicating strong and consistently functioning institutions. Finally, neither country experienced territorial militarized disputes during this time.

Of similar significant note is the lower level of political trust in Nigeria, observed in Figure 27.3. This anomaly illustrates the contrast between extractive and distributive institutional structures. Several sources of conflict in state–society relations are present in Nigeria. In the northwestern and central states, religious conflicts between Muslim and Christian populations have resulted in the adoption of parallel Sharia courts along secular court structures. Ongoing settler–indigene conflicts abound between groups identified as indigenous and those settling later (primarily in central Nigerian states). The government has exacerbated these conflicts by dividing resources and political offices between groups, resulting in competition for influence. Finally, resource conflicts exist in the Niger Delta region between ethnic groups for control of resource rents, again exacerbated by the strategy of creating new states along ethnic lines.

An oil exporter since pre-independence, Nigeria's oil rents range in the survey periods between 27 and 15 percent of its overall GDP (World Bank, 2014). Reliance and distribution of resource rents reinforced ethnic divisions in oil-producing regions and produced kinship- and patronage-based networks. Conflict over the distribution of oil rents was a substantial contribution to the 1967 Biafran civil war. Oil-producing states currently



Source: Afrobarometer.

Figure 27.3 Political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa, by country (1999–2009)

retain 13 percent of taxes and revenue from resource rents prior to distribution to the federal government and redistribution (up from the historical rate of 10 percent between 1968 and 1989). This effort to embrace fiscal federalism was designed to mitigate ethnic competition and revenue capture, however the distributive attributes of the oil-dominated economy in the Niger Delta region produced competition and opposition to formal institutional structures, exacerbating conflict. Nigeria also experienced a series of territorial disputes with Cameroon over the oil-rich Bakassi Peninsula preceding and through the survey period. This is a more complex issue than our simple summary offers, yet it highlights the models of extraction and distribution we identify as shaping state–society relations.

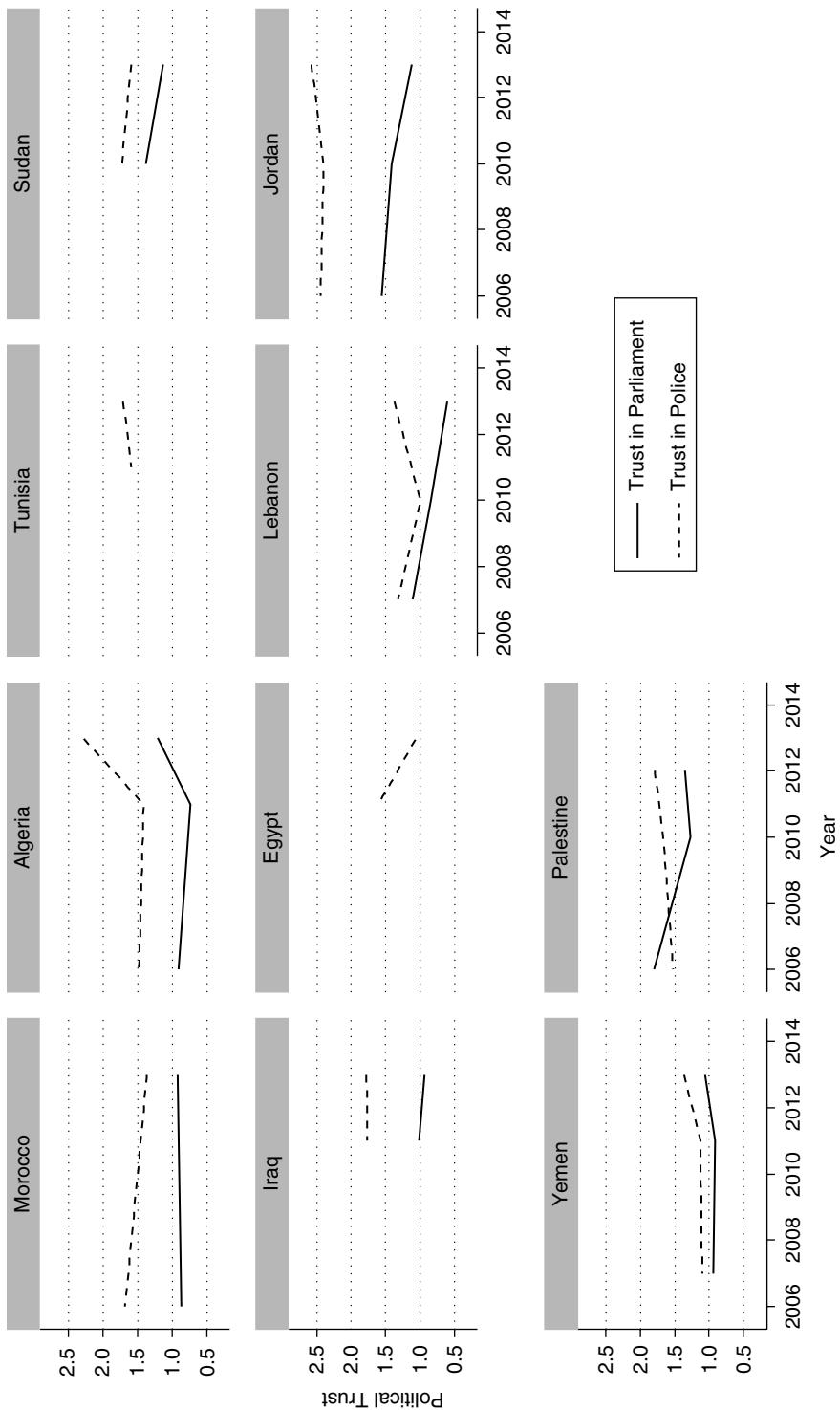
The Arab Region

Studies on the Arab region are often focused solely on democratic attitudes with little focus on political trust (e.g., Tessler, 2002; Jamal, 2006, 2007, 2009; Jamal and Tessler, 2008). Although we examine the overall trend in political trust across the Arab region up to 2011 in Figure 27.1, the post-Arab Spring Round 3 survey allows us initial examination of whether this regional upheaval had any noticeable effect on patterns of trust across countries. The Round 3 survey has significant data limitations, restricting our ability to analyze overall trends as well as preventing incorporation into the analyses below. Most notably, Round 3 only offers two trust indicators, trust in parliament and trust in police, asked in the previous rounds of the Arab Barometer. Further limiting our ability to examine overall trends is that in two important Arab Spring countries, Tunisia and Egypt, only trust in police is measured across multiple surveys. Thus, while this study is the first empirical assessment of political trust and institutional performance for the region, we are cautious to draw any strong inferences given the smaller number of cases and data limitations.

Figure 27.4 plots out trust in parliament and trust in police across ten Arab region countries over time revealing that the regional changes in these trust indicators following 2010 were relatively stochastic. Although trust in police increased in seven out of the ten countries, only half of the countries experienced an increase in trust for parliament. Further examination also reveals that the effect of the Arab Spring varied considerably both across the region and within individual countries.

In Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen, countries where governments were overthrown during the Arab Spring, we see that trust in police increased following this upheaval in Tunisia and Yemen but decreased sharply in Egypt. In the case of Egypt, the decline in trust in police is understandable given that both surveys were conducted during the tumultuous period between President Hosni Mubarak's resignation and the overthrow of President Mohamed Morsi that was marked by continued violent protest.⁸ In Yemen, both trust in police and trust in parliament increased over time following the unrest that eventually resulted in the removal of President Ali Abdullah Saleh from power.

In countries that experienced extensive major protests during the Arab Spring (Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Morocco, and Sudan), changes in trust for parliament and police were inconsistent both across countries and, in most instances, within countries. Only Algeria and Sudan experienced similar changes across both measures as trust in the parliament and police increased in Algeria but both declined in Sudan. In the other three countries, there were divergent trends in trust as both Iraq and Jordan experienced increased trust



Source: Arab Barometer.

Figure 27.4 Political trust in the Arab region, by country (2006–13)

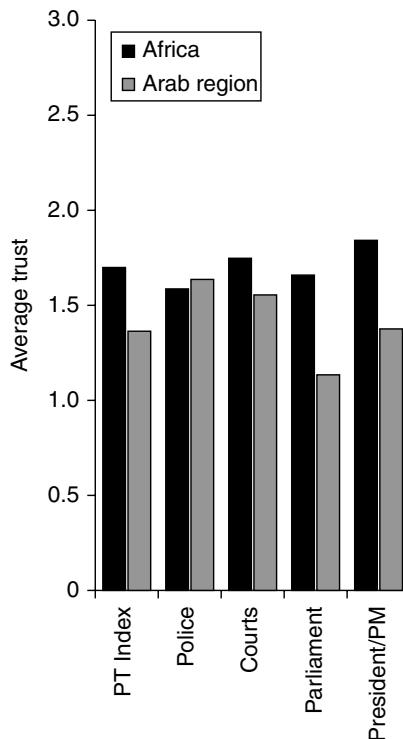


Figure 27.5 Difference in trust between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region

in police but declining trust in parliament while these trends were reversed in Morocco. Overall, the post-Arab Spring trends in political trust offer no clear discernible patterns and confirm that we still have much to learn about how the Arab Spring influenced trust across the region in future research.

Figure 27.5 compares regional mean levels of political trust across institutions. Political trust is higher across Sub-Saharan African institutions than in the Arab region, despite lower levels of economic development and higher levels of internal instability. We posit that this is in part due to inherent differences between the extractive vs distributive institutional models and their corresponding social structures and arrangements.

Overall trends in the region are consistent with our arguments on institutional capacity and political trust. We posit that higher levels of extraction in Sub-Saharan Africa, where revenues are reliant largely on taxes, should be positively related to political trust. When legitimacy hinges on redistribution of tax revenues rather than simple distribution of independent rents, governments are more reliant on and responsive to populations, as they require them to function. In distributive institutional structures, populations expect that resource rents will provide the government with the necessary resources to function and implement policy. As noted by Rivetti and Cavatorta in Chapter 4, a key facet of political trust is the predictability of government actions. Individuals in distributive institutional systems have a significant expectation surrounding the role of government and social structures in resource distribution. Changes in these structures, including

‘state building’ efforts to increase the tax base and pull the population in, are likely to significantly disrupt these established relationships and current patterns of state–society relations. Consequently, in *distributive* institutional designs, higher levels of extraction are likely to be associated with lower levels of political trust. In the section that follows, we conduct a more rigorous test of these expectations using multilevel modeling estimation techniques on survey data from both regions.

DATA AND ANALYSIS

As noted above, we use cross-national survey data from two sources, the Afrobarometer and the Arab Barometer, to assess political trust in both Africa and the Arab region. Our data analysis examines these data as opposed to the more widely used World Values Survey (WVS) for several reasons. First, the political trust questions are more direct indicators of political trust, asking respondents whether they ‘trust’ certain political institutions rather than report their ‘confidence’ in those institutions as measured in the WVS.⁹ Second, the questions in both barometers are more consistent across countries and time and wide-ranging in terms of individual-level predictors than the WVS, particularly for the countries in these regions. A more comprehensive individual-level model allows us to draw stronger inferences regarding the influence of the macro-level characteristics on political trust by reducing the likelihood that the reported relationships are due to compositional effects. Finally, and most importantly, the barometers allow us to draw from larger samples of countries and points in time than the offerings in the WVS.¹⁰ In these analyses, we draw from Rounds 1–4 of the Afrobarometer, which were conducted across 20 countries between 1999 and 2009, and Rounds 1 and 2 of the Arab Barometer, which were conducted across 12 countries between 2006 and 2011. From the Afrobarometer, we can examine 65 macro-level units (surveys representing country and year) and 78 000 individual respondents while the Arab Barometer offers 16 macro-level units and 19 000 respondents.

We construct our political trust measure from the Afrobarometer surveys by taking the individual mean from four different indicators of individuals’ trust across several government institutions: the president, the courts, the police, and the national electoral commission.¹¹ While this general measure of political trust differs slightly from Hutchison and Johnson (2011), these four items were included across all four rounds of the Afrobarometer, allowing us the broadest coverage across countries and time.¹² We use a similar construction for our political trust measure in the Arab Barometer surveys by drawing from four different indicators: the courts, parliament, the police, and political parties.¹³ By assessing trust across different dimensions, our measure represents generalized trust in government rather than an indicator of support for any particular leader or government agency. For each item, individual respondents were asked to report their trust level for that particular sector of government along a four-point scale (0–3). By using the individual mean across their respective four indicators, our dependent variable ranges from 0 (low trust) to 3 (high trust) for both the Afrobarometer and the Arab Barometer analyses.¹⁴

A true test of our theoretical expectations requires estimation that accounts for both the macro-level and individual-level factors affecting individual trust. To accomplish this

and isolate the effects of our key independent variables, we construct a multilevel dataset that allows us to control for factors that are associated with political trust at both the individual and state levels.

Individual-level and Macro-level Variables

For comparability reasons, we tried to construct similar individual-level models across both the Afrobarometer and the Arab Barometer but there are differences in individual-level predictors of political trust between the two regional survey projects. While not ideal, we contend that these differences in individual-level models should not overly bias our results, particularly since we are most concerned with the relationships between the macro-level factors and political trust. In both surveys we use standard measures of socioeconomic indicators but rely on slightly different attitudinal and behavioral predictors.¹⁵

For the Afrobarometer models, we base our individual-level model of political trust on Hutchison and Johnson (2011) and Hutchison (2011a). In addition to socioeconomic indicators, age, gender, education, and urban/rural residency, the Afrobarometer models include measures for government performance, democratic satisfaction, government satisfaction, economic satisfaction, political participation, and political interest, which we expect to have positive influence, as well as indicators for economic hardship and media exposure that we expect to negatively affect political trust. For the Arab Barometer models, we tried to emulate the Afrobarometer models but differences in individual-level indicators prevents a complete match. The Arab Barometer models include measures for government performance, government satisfaction, government responsiveness, economic satisfaction, unconditional government support, social trust, political participation, and political interest in addition to socioeconomic indicators. All told, these individual variables try to account for an individual's orientation and satisfaction toward government, level of political interest and engagement, economic satisfaction, and socioeconomic characteristics.

For the macro-level variables, we include measures for militarized interstate disputes, relative political extraction, economic development, democratic longevity (Afrobarometer), democracy–autocracy scores (Arab Barometer), civil conflict, and ethnic fractionalization.¹⁶ In the interest of space, we summarize the variable descriptions as well as the data sources and coding procedures for the individual-level and macro-level variables in the Electronic Appendix to this chapter.

Method: Multilevel Analyses

We are most interested in examining how macro-level factors such as political capacity and external threats affect individual political trust; our estimation strategy and technique must effectively address the nested nature of our data. Ignoring the multilevel nature of our data would result in significant statistical and inferential errors, including underestimation of the standard errors for our macro-level variables or ecological fallacy problems (see Hutchison and Johnson, 2011 for a more detailed discussion). We rely on multilevel statistical modeling techniques that can account for both the spatial (countries) and temporal (time) differentiation. This technique allows us to generate unbiased standard

errors by jointly modeling the macro-level and individual-level data to estimate separate variance structures (Raudenbush and Bryk, 2002).¹⁷

RESULTS

Table 27.1 presents four multilevel political trust models using the Afrobarometer sample and data. Model 1 offers the individual-level model as a baseline for evaluation of the macro-level factors affecting political trust. Model 2 incorporates the state-level control variables to the baseline individual-level model. Models 3 and 4 introduce our key

Table 27.1 Political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1999–2009

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>								
Government performance	0.13	0.01**	0.13	0.01**	0.13	0.01**	0.13	0.01**
Democratic satisfaction	0.14	0.01**	0.14	0.01**	0.14	0.01**	0.14	0.01**
Government satisfaction	0.32	0.01**	0.32	0.01**	0.32	0.01**	0.32	0.01**
Economic satisfaction	0.03	0.00**	0.03	0.00**	0.03	0.00**	0.03	0.00**
Political participation	0.03	0.01**	0.03	0.01**	0.03	0.01**	0.03	0.01**
Political interest	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01
Economic hardship	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*
Media exposure	-0.04	0.00**	-0.04	0.00**	-0.04	0.00**	-0.04	0.00**
Age	0.00	0.00**	0.00	0.00**	0.00	0.00**	0.00	0.00**
Gender (female = 1)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Education	-0.05	0.01**	-0.05	0.01**	-0.05	0.01**	-0.05	0.01**
Urban	-0.07	0.01**	-0.07	0.01**	-0.07	0.01**	-0.07	0.01**
<i>Country*survey level</i>								
Relative political extraction					0.16	0.08*	0.13	0.06*
Territorial MIDs (five year)							-0.12	0.06*
Non-territorial MIDs (five year)							-0.03	0.02
Ethnic fractionalization			-0.04	0.13	0.16	0.13	0.16	0.13
Economic development			-0.49	0.33	-0.73	0.34*	-0.51	0.36
Civil conflict			-0.11	0.12	-0.08	0.13	-0.04	0.13
Continuous democracy			-0.00	0.00	0.01	0.00	0.00	0.00
Constant	0.86	0.04**	1.09	0.16**	0.80	0.16**	0.84	0.16**
<i>Variance components</i>								
Level 1 (residual)	0.42	0.02	0.42	0.02	0.42	0.02	0.42	0.02
Level 2 (survey)	0.08	0.02	0.08	0.02	0.08	0.01	0.07	0.01
Intra-class correlation	0.17		0.16		0.16		0.15	

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

N (level 1): 78 410.

N (level 2): 64.

Entries are maximum likelihood coefficients using Stata 13, with robust standard errors in parentheses.
The intra-class correlation for the one-way ANOVA is 0.18.

Source: Afrobarometer (1999–2009).

independent variables to assess their independent effects and evaluate the influence of state external threat environment and political capacity on individual trust levels.

Model 1 begins by evaluating the individual-level predictors of political trust. This specification serves as a baseline model for comparison with the later models that include the state-level variables and a point of comparison with other regional studies that primarily examine political trust through individual-level predictors. Although we are principally interested in the macro-level effects, individual-level predictors remain the strongest influence on individual trust. Similar to the previous work on political trust in Africa, the individual-level predictors perform as theoretically expected and with little to no difference in their effects from individuals in other regions of the world. This is an important point worth highlighting as one of the common myths found in the conventional wisdom regarding African individual political behavior is that it is qualitatively different than other regions, particularly North America and Europe. We find little evidence to suggest that individual-level antecedents of political trust amongst Africans are much different than the rest of the world (see Bratton et al., 2005; Hutchison and Johnson, 2011; Hutchison, 2011a).

While we incorporate our state-level control variables for comparison purposes in Model 2, we are primarily interested in Models 3 and 4 where our key independent variables are introduced.¹⁸ Model 3 re-examines the relationship studied in Hutchison and Johnson (2011) regarding the effect of relative political extraction on individual political trust but with a larger sample and a slightly different set of controls. Our model reveals a positive and statistically significant relationship between capacity and trust, consistent with our expectations for Africa. Higher relative political extraction is associated with greater levels of individual trust across African countries; increasing governmental efficiency is one critical step towards stimulating greater political trust throughout society.

Our militarized interstate dispute variables (MIDs) are introduced to our baseline model in Model 4. We find more evidence supporting previous research that places state-level external threat as a key explanatory factor in accounting for differences in trust across countries in Africa. Model 4 reveals that while external threat does affect trust, it is only threat relating to territory that is salient enough to influence individual attitudes. This finding is consistent with previous findings linking territorial disputes to individual political attitudes and behavior (see Hutchison and Gibler, 2007; Hutchison, 2011a, 2011b; Gibler et al., 2012; Miller, 2013). The results in Model 4 support Hutchison's (2011a) work linking territorial disputes to lower individual trust levels in Africa but over a larger sample and improved dispute data. The results support our contention that salient threats to the state's territorial integrity can represent policy failure to the respective domestic population, serving to reduce overall political trust. The parameter estimates also reveal that territorial disputes have stronger substantive effects on political trust than most of the individual-level predictors.

Model 4 represents our fully specified model including both the relative political extraction and external threat measures. The results here are consistent with previous findings on African political trust in that we observe a significant positive relationship between state capacity and trust as well as a significant negative relationship between territorial disputes and trust. The parameter estimates suggest that the effects of extraction and territorial disputes are largely independent of one another.¹⁹

The Afrobarometer models offer strong support for our generalized expectations,

demonstrating that governments focusing on improving political extraction will foster a higher degree of political trust, while states with low political extraction will continue to suffer from legitimacy problems from their respective domestic societies. These findings also reinforce the contention that the rally effects that often follow salient external threats to the state do not affect trust evaluations in a positive manner, despite the strong relationship between government approval and political trust. Rather, territorial disputes appear to erode individuals' trust or confidence in their government.

Table 27.2 presents results on the Arab region using the survey data from the Arab Barometer. These models are significant in that, to our knowledge, they represent the first multilevel analysis of political trust within the region. Model 5 presents our

Table 27.2 Political trust in the Arab region, 2006–11

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE	b	SE
<i>Individual level</i>								
Government performance	0.28	0.02**	0.28	0.02**	0.28	0.02**	0.28	0.02**
Government satisfaction	0.05	0.00**	0.05	0.00**	0.05	0.00**	0.05	0.00**
Government responsiveness	0.14	0.02**	0.14	0.02**	0.14	0.02**	0.14	0.02**
Economic satisfaction	0.11	0.02**	0.11	0.02**	0.11	0.02**	0.11	0.02**
Unconditional government support	0.04	0.01**	0.04	0.01**	0.04	0.01**	0.04	0.01**
Political interest	0.03	0.02*	0.03	0.02*	0.03	0.02*	0.03	0.02*
Social trust	0.15	0.02**	0.15	0.02**	0.15	0.02**	0.15	0.02**
Age	-0.01	0.00*	-0.01	0.00*	-0.01	0.00*	-0.01	0.00*
Gender (female = 1)	0.06	0.02**	0.06	0.02**	0.06	0.02**	0.06	0.02**
Education	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*	-0.02	0.01*
Employed	-0.03	0.01*	-0.03	0.01*	-0.03	0.01*	-0.03	0.01*
<i>Country*survey level</i>								
Relative political extraction					-0.23	0.09*	-0.15	0.06
Territorial MIDs (five year)							-0.18	0.04
Non-territorial MIDs (five year)							0.01	0.02
Ethnic fractionalization			0.66	0.11**	0.61	0.09**	0.64	0.11**
Economic development			0.96	0.28**	1.39	0.29**	1.22	0.19**
Civil conflict			0.15	0.06*	0.14	0.05*	0.10	0.04*
Democracy-autocracy score			-0.04	0.01**	-0.04	0.00**	-0.04	0.00**
Constant	0.48	0.11**	-0.49	0.22*	-0.55	0.17**	-0.49	0.12**
<i>Variance components</i>								
Level 1 (residual)	0.38	0.02	0.38	0.02	0.38	0.02	0.38	0.02
Level 2 (survey)	0.08	0.02	0.06	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.04	0.02
Intra-class correlation	0.13		0.13		0.10		0.09	

Notes:

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$.

N (level 1): 13458.

N (level 2): 14.

Entries are maximum likelihood coefficients using Stata 13, with robust standard errors in parentheses. The intra-class correlation for the one-way ANOVA is 0.22.

Source: Arab Barometer (2006–11).

individual-level model of political trust. We find almost no deviations from the general expectations regarding the direction and statistical significance of our individual-level predictors. Like Sub-Saharan Africa, these results fly in the face of the conventional wisdom that individual political behavior in the Arab region is qualitatively different than in other regions. At the individual level, the attitudes and characteristics expected to positively or negatively affect political trust coincide with the majority of previous literature based in European or North American contexts. We observe that individuals are more likely to trust their respective government if they believe the government has performed well in achieving important domestic objectives, are largely satisfied with their government, believe that government is responsive to ordinary citizen needs, are satisfied with their country's economic performance, support their government, are interested in politics, are trusting of others, and female. Conversely, older, more educated, and employed individuals are less likely to trust their government.

Model 6 introduces our state-level control variables and demonstrates some significant differences in how they affect individual political trust compared to other regions. The positive coefficient for economic development is in line with expectations and we note that ethnic fractionalization and civil conflict are also positively associated with political trust. The effect of civil conflict on individual trust is particularly surprising and may warrant future analysis. The negative effect of the country's level of democracy on political trust is not especially surprising when considering that this region is still largely dominated by autocracies with tight controls on media freedom. Individuals in the few relatively open societies have greater exposure to reports of government ineffectiveness and corruption, which serves to lower trust (see Chapter 19 by Uslaner).

Models 7 and 8 introduce our political extraction and external threat variables. Relative political capacity is negatively associated with individual political trust in the Arab region. Although this finding is the opposite of what we find in Sub-Saharan Africa, it aligns with our expectations of the role that political extraction plays in this region. The relationship between extractive institutions and individual trust is contingent on several factors, including individuals conferring legitimacy based on the reliance of governments on populations. In the Arab region, higher levels of extractive institutional capacity results in lower levels of political trust because the extractive institutions are largely linked to distributive institutional structures. Our findings here correspond with previous studies on distributive states, where resource increases are not accompanied by corresponding increases in available resources or the provision of public goods.

Although we are unable to directly test the proposition across our two survey samples due to the differences in individual-level variables, these findings are consistent with our logical argument. In distributive states, increasing individual transfer of resources without corresponding changes in responsiveness or social organization (such as disrupting entrenched kinship or patronage networks) are likely to only diminish levels of political trust. A contrasting case in point is Mexico, where significant disruption of patron-client relationships established by the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI) were accompanied by significant electoral reform. Consequently, as illustrated by Bargsted, Somma and Castillo in this Handbook (Chapter 24), Mexico's range of individual-level political trust is average among its regional peers and significantly higher than nearly all countries within the Arab region.

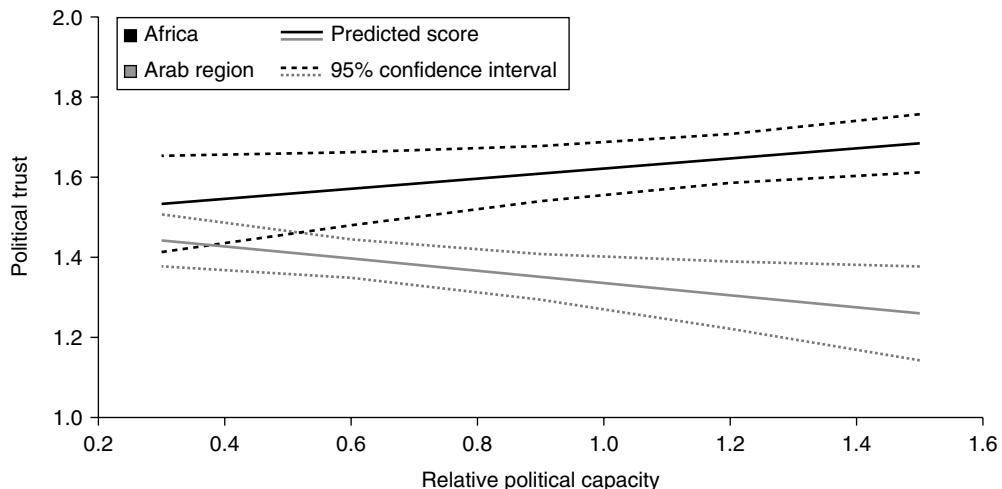


Figure 27.6 Varied effect of political capacity on political trust across regions

Figure 27.6 plots the effect of extractive institutions on individual trust across the regions using the same scale for comparability purposes.²⁰ Although the difference in the direction of the relationship between Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region is stark, the strength of the overall effect of political extraction on political trust is similar. What is clear from this figure is that extractive capacity plays a large role in shaping political trust throughout society but the direction of that effect is contingent on organization of the society as either extractive or distributive.

We find strong support for our expectations regarding the ability of salient external threat to influence individual political trust. As in Sub-Saharan Africa, we observe that territorial threats to the state negatively affect individual trust and non-territorial disputes have no significant effect. Substantively, the effect of a single territorial dispute in decreasing political trust in the Arab region is about twice as strong as found in Sub-Saharan Africa. In calculating the marginal effects moving from zero to a single territorial MID across both regions, we find that it decreases trust in the Arab region by about 15 percent (-0.18) compared to only 7 percent (-0.12) in Sub-Saharan Africa.²¹

The results from the Arab region are important in that they mirror the dynamic observed in Africa (also see Hutchison, 2011a). Taken together, these findings lend further support for the contention that the ‘rally effect’ observed in more advanced countries following salient threats differs significantly throughout large segments of the developing world suggesting that in regions rife with violent political conflict, the most important responsibility of a government is to provide security and to mitigate territorially motivated threats.

CONCLUSION

Discussion

Our results strongly support the contention that two facets of regime legitimacy, the ability of a government to control a designated population and territory and the reliance of governments on populations for critical resources, are critical in promoting political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa. In the Arab region, we find strong support for the argument that security challenges significantly inhibit political trust. Our findings support previous work on influences of political attitudes in Sub-Saharan Africa and make several important contributions to the literature. Individual-level predictors of political trust attitudes amongst Sub-Saharan Africans are virtually identical to those found in other regions of the world, challenging conventional wisdom that African political attitudes and behaviors are qualitatively different than in other parts of the world. We also demonstrate that state-level contextual factors are highly salient in influencing political trust and regime legitimacy and the effect of certain state-level factors, such as state capacity, on individual political trust can vary by region.

Academics or policy-makers should not overlook the role of state-level contextual factors when investigating how to increase legitimacy. In the context of institutional performance, governments should carefully consider the consequences of policy outcomes that decrease the need for the establishment of a tax base and extractive capacity of the state. The current 'Billion Dollar Map' proposed by the World Bank to identify Africa's undiscovered oil and mineral resources has tremendous consequences for regime legitimacy. Large resource rents discourage governments from pursuing or maintaining their tax effort, as individual taxes are dwarfed by resource rents and remain much more difficult and politically costly to collect. If legitimacy hinges on extractive rather than distributive institutions, this approach should be pursued with caution. Territorially based militarized disputes also highlight the importance of basic functions of government, the provision of security and control over coercive capacity of designated territory, in promoting legitimacy. In a region where population movements are common, conflicts often span borders, and 'contagion' occurs with some frequency, disputes are more relevant than simply the body count associated with a particular clash.

Future Research

Our study has important implications for how cross-national analyses of political trust can and should be studied in subsequent research. Research examining political attitudes across countries or even across time should be cognizant that individuals are influenced by contextual factors that differ immensely across countries. To account for these critical influences on individual political behavior, researchers must deal with the multilevel nature of their data. Failure to evaluate the security environment and external threats will result in missing a major level influence on individual political trust. Consideration of unique regional macro-level factors will result in a more nuanced and clear understanding of the foundations of political trust. Finally, although Sub-Saharan Africa faces stiff challenges when it comes to regime legitimacy, our findings offer some hope that countries

that improve their institutional capacity and avoid external threats will be rewarded with greater trust from their respective societies.

Some immediate future implications are evident for each region as well. One of the major challenges for Sub-Saharan Africa is meeting its vast human and economic development needs, despite numerous efforts and strategies for increasing development in the region, one of the most recent international initiatives taking the form of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which rely on resource transfer from wealthy countries to the region. Foreign aid is fickle, and few of the current MDGs will be attained. Any long-term economic development strategy will require a lengthy road; most rely on the creation or reinforcement of export-based economic models. The implications of high-value commodity exports as a major development strategy are discussed above. Despite criticism, few alternate economic development models exist. Unlike the Arab region, patronage and kinship networks are fragmented, with any resulting distributional structures along these lines likely to exclude major portions of the population and result in significantly lower levels of political trust.

In the Arab region, shifting away from distributional institutions to extractive ones is likely to also result in even lower levels of political trust. One of the significant challenges of countries in the region is managing potentially uncertain resource revenues, and changes in supply and global demand. Regime legitimacy that hinges on maintaining significant resource transfers is perilous. The Arab region offers valuable contributions in examining the influence of threat environment on political trust as the repercussions of the Arab Spring continue to generate external security threats from neighboring countries. We expect that the region will face increasing external militarized conflict in the future. Furthermore, trends in political trust following the Arab Spring lend little clarity as to whether these events had a generalized effect across the region. In fact, these trends suggest that the effect of the Arab Spring was highly conditional within each affected country and most certainly warrants further in-depth investigation in future research.

Given the paucity of previous research in both regions, they each offer a multitude of different directions for further research on political trust. The state-level conditions facing countries in these regions differ significantly from other parts of the world, offering opportunities to improve our understanding of political trust. Many of the factors addressed in other chapters of this Handbook seem to have relevance in both of these regions, including corruption, macro- and micro-level economic performance, and the divergence between expected and actual government performance. We expect that culturalist explanations of political trust will find both regions rich with cases for comparative analysis. Similarly, both regions are strong candidates for a more comprehensive analysis on the effects of income inequality in shaping individual political trust. Last, researchers should look beyond cross-national approaches and explore the rich subnational variation found in these countries, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa. We have only scratched the surface on political trust in both Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region in this chapter. It is up to future researchers to build on these foundations for a more systematic understanding of political trust in these regions.

NOTES

1. It is worth noting that the colonial experience across the region was not similar and different patterns of colonial control and influence were established.
2. This is a region located in the northwest section of Tanzania on the western shore of Lake Victoria.
3. Notable examples include the Second Congo War between 1998 and 2003 where the Human Security Report Project (2009) notes an estimated 5.4 million died, the Biafran War in Nigeria between 1967 and 1970 where between 1 and 3 million deaths are estimated to have occurred (Madiebo, 1980), and the Second Sudanese Civil War between 1983 and 2005, where well over a million people perished (UN, 2013).
4. See Gibler et al. (2012) for more detail about these territorial disputes and how they affected national identity patterns at the subnational level in Nigeria.
5. As we detail below, the index used here is generated from four different individual indicators of trust in governmental institutions. The Afrobarometer index is created from trust indicators on the president, the courts, the police, and the national electoral commissions and the Arab Barometer index is based on indicators on the courts, parliament, the police, and political parties.
6. The Afrobarometer is a survey project conducted across 20 Sub-Saharan African countries measuring political, social, and economic attitudes (Bratton et al., 2005). These data are publically available and accessed at www.afrobarometer.org. The Arab Barometer is a survey project conducted across 12 countries in the Middle East and Northern Africa measuring political, social, and economic attitudes. These data are publically available and accessed at www.arabbarometer.org.
7. Burkina Faso and Liberia are not included in this figure since they were only surveyed at one point in time.
8. The Round 2 survey in July 2011 was conducted five months after President Mubarak resigned the presidency while the Round 3 survey in March 2013 was conducted three months prior to the overthrow of President Morsi.
9. Norris points out in Chapter 2 conceptualizing political trust, that both indicators of trust and institutional confidence do tap into a similar dynamic.
10. Our samples in both Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region are not representative of the regions and present challenges when attempting to generalize findings. As Bratton et al. (2005) note, countries selected for the Afrobarometer tend to be more populous, democratic, and less prone to civil conflict than found in a truly representative sample. Similarly, the countries selected in the Arab Barometer, particularly in the earlier rounds prior to the Arab Spring, are more politically stable, less prone to internal strife, and economically advanced. We anticipate that our results will favor higher levels of political trust than what we would observe in a truly representative sample in these regions.
11. The Cronbach's alpha score for the simple additive index is 0.79. Factor analysis demonstrates the variables loaded on the factor above 0.64 with an average loading of 0.68. A factor score generated from this loading correlated with our measure at 99 percent.
12. Hutchison and Johnson (2011) relied on a six-indicator measure of political trust that included these four measures as well as trust in the armed forces and the government-led media drawn from the first three rounds of the Afrobarometer. The armed forces and government-led media indicators were not included in Round 4 of the Afrobarometer.
13. The Cronbach's alpha score for the simple additive index is 0.77. Factor analysis revealed that all of the variables loaded on the factor above 0.55 with an average loading of 0.67. A factor score generated from this loading correlated with our measure at 99 percent.
14. One significant concern in this analysis is uncertainty over the reliability of trust measures across authoritarian regimes. Rivetti and Cavatorta note in Chapter 4 that concern that respondents indicate more 'trust' in government due to fears of state reprisals is often misplaced.
15. We do not include a measure of corruption perception at the individual level despite the fact that, as Uslaner observes in Chapter 19, this is important in both of these regions because we do not have full coverage of this item across our samples.
16. For the most part, the macro-level variables measure both cross-country and within-country temporal variation with the exception of ethnic fractionalization, which captures country-level variation only. However, given the smaller number of temporal units compared to cross-national units, we run a higher risk of conflating cross-national and longitudinal variance. Thus, our models below are most likely reflective of cross-national variance rather than changes across time.
17. We use Stata 13 to estimate the random coefficient multilevel models below. In all of the analyses below, we employ a random coefficient model specification allowing for random slopes for our government satisfaction and government performance measures.
18. In terms of our control variables, the most surprising finding is that civil conflict does not have a statistically significant effect across models. Theoretically, we strongly expected a negative relationship between civil conflict and political trust.

19. Although space considerations do not allow us to address this, we do expect our main independent variables to affect different items of our index differently. In Hutchison (2011a), territorial disputes negatively affect trust in the army but have no significant impact on trust in the courts in Sub-Saharan Africa. We expect a similar differential effect here as well with reduced trust toward political institutions most commonly linked to state security apparatus, such as the police and president/prime minister, under conditions of salient external threats. We expect trust in political institutions linked to tax effort and enforcement, such as parliament, president/prime minister, and the courts, to vary more strongly with levels of relative political extraction.
20. The Sub-Saharan Africa sample has a wider range between the minimum and maximum levels of capacity than the Arab region. Figure 27.6 does not show the full substantive effect of capacity on trust as it moves from minimum to maximum values for Sub-Saharan Africa.
21. Sub-Saharan African countries experienced a higher number of territorial disputes than those in the Arab region. We also calculated the marginal effects of territorial disputes in Sub-Saharan Africa moving from minimum (0) to maximum (4); moving from the minimum to maximum number of territorial disputes decreases political trust by about 38 percent (-0.46).

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For the electronic appendix, see www.e-elgar.com/handbook-on-political-trust-companion-site.

28. Political trust in the Asia-Pacific region*

Chong-Min Park

INTRODUCTION

The Asia-Pacific region exhibits greater variation in political regimes than any region of the world. It houses the most populous democracy in the world (India) and the most populous non-democracy (China); the two first-wave ‘modern’ democracies in the region (Australia and New Zealand) and the only second-wave democracy (Japan); two consolidated third-wave democracies (South Korea and Taiwan); the most populous Muslim democracy in the world (Indonesia) and the most populous Catholic democracy in the region (Philippines); the most unlikely democracy from the communist world (Mongolia) and a one-time democratic role model for its neighbors (Thailand); two resilient pseudo-democracies (Malaysia and Singapore); and an authentic one-party dictatorship (Vietnam) and a de facto one-party system (Cambodia) (Huntington, 1991; Diamond, 2008). According to the most recent Freedom House report, in 2014, 13 countries (41 percent) of the region were rated as ‘free’, 14 (36 percent), ‘partly free’, and nine (23 percent), ‘not free’ (Freedom House, 2015). Asia-Pacific, a region of greater cultural and religious diversity, varies widely by the type of regime and the mode of governance.

Until recently, much of empirical research on political trust has been carried out in advanced democracies in the West (Listhaug and Wiberg, 1995; Norris, 1999; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Dalton, 2004). Thanks to recent cross-national public opinion surveys in Asia in the wake of third-wave democratization, researchers are now able to examine and compare how ordinary people view institutions of government across much of the region (Chu et al., 2008; Chang et al., 2013; Park and Chang, 2013). Although the time span covered by these surveys is short, the longitudinal data even allow researchers to trace, albeit restrictively, changes in political attitudes and beliefs in many parts of Asia.

With a thin series of data, in this chapter we first describe and compare the levels and trends of political trust across the Asia-Pacific region and then analyze individual-level determinants of political trust, especially in East Asia. In doing so, we shed some light on the nature and sources of political trust across the region where democracies and authoritarian regimes compete with each other as alternative forms of governance (Bell et al., 1995; Croissant and Bünte, 2011; Diamond et al., 2013; Fung and Drakeley, 2014).

CASES, DATA, AND MEASURES

Cases

Although the chapter deals with political trust across the Asia-Pacific region, analysis is confined to the cases where comparable public opinion data are available for at least two points in time over the past two decades. The cases include 12 countries from

East Asia – Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Mongolia, Philippines, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam; three countries from South Asia – Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan; and two countries from Australasia – Australia and New Zealand. According to Polity IV regime classification (Marshall, 2015), during the period surveyed Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan remained democracies; Cambodia and Singapore, anocracies or mixed types; and China and Vietnam, autocracies. Thailand downgraded from a democracy to an anocracy while Malaysia upgraded from an anocracy to a democracy. Pakistan downgraded from a democracy to an autocracy. In view of Freedom House ratings of political rights and civil liberties for the survey years of each sample country (Freedom House, 2015), we consider here Australia, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Japan, Mongolia, New Zealand, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand full or flawed democracies whereas Cambodia, China, Malaysia, Pakistan, Singapore, and Vietnam, single-party, dominant-party, or military authoritarian regimes. Among the latter, Malaysia and Singapore may be further classified as competitive authoritarian regimes (Levitsky and Way, 2002; Case, 2014; Tan, 2014).

Indeed, the region harbors different political regimes. This diversity of regime types complicates the distinction between trust objects, especially between the regime and the authorities. In democracies governments can be changed regularly without regime change. Hence, regime institutions can be distinguishable from the incumbent government. By contrast, in authoritarian regimes the fate of the regime is often closely related to that of the incumbent government. Thus regime institutions may be conflated with the incumbent government (see Chapter 4 by Rivetti and Cavatorta). Hence, it should be emphasized that the meaning of political trust and its systemic implications may differ greatly across regime types.

Data

For this study we rely on two series of public opinion data – Asian Barometer Survey (ABS) and World Values Survey (WVS). ABS is the first comparative survey project monitoring support for democracy in East Asia. For more than a decade since 2001 four rounds of ABS have been conducted across much of the region.¹ This study utilizes the first three rounds. The first round includes eight cases (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Mongolia, Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand). The second and third rounds add five more cases (Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, and Vietnam). The data points covered by ABS in these three rounds constitute the first decade of the twenty-first century.

In addition to ABS, this study also utilizes four of six waves of WVS, which provide data for Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan as well as Australia and New Zealand. WVS also provides additional data for most East Asian cases. The data points covered by the waves of WVS used here represent the period between the mid-1990s and the early 2010s.² The number of data points analyzed for each sample country range from a low of two to a high of seven.³ It should be emphasized that a few data points make it hazardous to determine whether changes, if any, constitute trends or simple fluctuations.

Measures

Each round of ABS includes questions that tap into trust in a set of institutions. It asks: ‘For each one (institution), please tell me how much trust you have in them. Is it a great deal of trust, quite a lot of trust, not very much trust, or none at all?’ WVS uses similar questions. It asks: ‘For each one (organization), could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: Is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence, or none at all?’ Seven institutions or organizations are selected for analysis. They include the courts, the national government, political parties, parliament, the civil service, the military (or armed forces), and the police. They are all public institutions distinguishable from private institutions such as trade unions and major companies, but they may be further classified in various ways. The national government, parliament, and the courts constitute three branches of government. The national government, parliament, and political parties establish representative institutions distinguishable from non-elected state organizations such as the military, the police, and the civil service. The courts, the police, and the military may be seen as law and order institutions. The civil service and the police represent the administrative apparatus of the modern state. Hence, it would be important to take the complex nature of the institutions into account when trust judgments are compared across them. Last, there is one caveat of the measurement: in repressive authoritarian regimes political fear may shape responses to the questions to inflate the level of political trust.

LEVELS AND TRENDS

Levels of Trust by Institution Types

Figure 28.1 shows the average percentage of respondents indicating some degree of trust, calculated as the mean of trust in a range of institutions.

Yet, all public institutions surveyed do not enjoy the same level of trust. The degree of contestation or consensus they involve seems to matter. Trust in these institutions separately is described in Table 28.1.

We begin with representative institutions. First, trust in the national government, largely referring to the executive branch, varies between regime types. Japan displays the lowest level. It is followed by Australia, New Zealand, South Korea, and Taiwan. In these advanced democracies, no matter whether they are presidential or parliamentary systems, only a small minority indicates some degree of trust. In contrast, authoritarian regimes fare far better. In China, Vietnam, and Singapore an overwhelming majority places trust in the party-controlled central government.

Second, trust in parliament, a key institution of representation, also varies across regime types. South Korea and Japan display the lowest level. They are followed by Taiwan, New Zealand, and Australia. In these advanced democracies, only a tiny minority places trust in their contentious legislature regardless of whether they are presidential or parliamentary systems. Notable is that the trust gap between the executive and the legislature is smaller in parliamentary democracies (Japan, New Zealand, and Australia) than in presidential ones (South Korea and Taiwan). In the parliamentary system, a

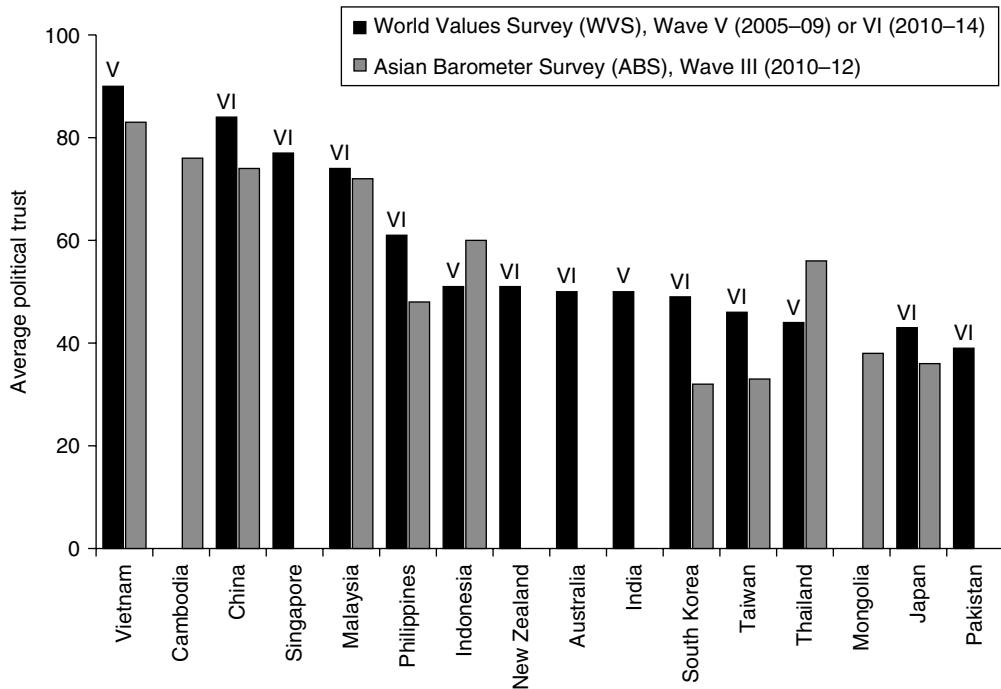


Figure 28.1 Political trust in the Asia-Pacific region

majority party or a coalition that dominates the legislature controls the executive. Hence, trust in one institution is more likely to spill over into the other. It may be less so in the presidential system where the executive is separated from the legislature. Meanwhile, the consensual legislature in authoritarian regimes fares best despite its limited or largely symbolic role. Striking examples are Vietnam, China, and Singapore where an overwhelming majority indicates trust in the legislature controlled by a single or dominant party.

Finally, trust in political parties, key actors of modern politics, also varies greatly across regime types. New Zealand, one of the two first-wave democracies in the region, displays the lowest level. It is followed by Japan, Australia, South Korea, and Taiwan. In these advanced democracies only a small minority places trust in political parties, which tend to move toward a two-party system (Reilly, 2007). Other new democracies fare not much better. By contrast, single-party authoritarian regimes fare far better. Vietnam, whose system is characterized by the supremacy of its communist party, displays the highest level. It is followed by its neighboring one-party socialist state, China.

We now turn to non-elected state institutions. First, trust in the judiciary, whose independence is one of the hallmarks of democracy, varies between countries, if not regime types. Mongolia exhibits the lowest level. It is followed by Taiwan and South Korea. In these new democracies the courts fail to inspire trust. By contrast, the judiciary in most authoritarian regimes fares better despite that its independence appears to be compromised by extensive executive influence. Singapore enjoys the highest level, followed by Vietnam, China, and Malaysia where a large majority indicates trust in the courts.

Table 28.1 Trust in institutions (%) in the Asia-Pacific region

Country	Survey Year (Data Source)	National Government	Parliament	Courts	Civil Service	Police	Military	Political Parties	Average
Australia	1995 (WVS III)	26	30	34	37	75	66	15	40
	2005 (WVS V)	39	35	53	39	82	81	14	49
	2012 (WVS VI)	31	31	60	44	84	85	13	50
	<i>Average</i>	32	32	49	40	80	77	14	
Bangladesh	1996 (WVS III)	77	77	72	72	36	52	66	65
	2002 (WVS IV)	87	86	NA	95	53	72	78	79
	<i>Average</i>	82	82	—	84	45	62	72	
Cambodia	2008 (ABS II)	66	60	50	81	65	81	61	66
	2012 (ABS III)	77	77	62	81	73	89	73	76
	<i>Average</i>	72	69	56	81	69	85	67	
China	2001 (WVS IV)	95	90	NA	48	71	96	86	81
	2002 (ABS I)	93	89	71	69	75	96	95	84
	2007 (WVS V)	87	80	76	73	75	81	75	78
	2007 (ABS II)	96	82	70	49	67	85	88	77
	2011 (ABS III)	93	89	77	65	80	92	92	84
	2012 (WVS VI)	84	77	71	65	66	84	74	74
	<i>Average</i>	91	85	73	62	72	89	85	
	1995 (WVS III)	48	53	67	53	36	74	39	53
	2001 (WVS IV)	49	42	NA	38	34	83	28	46
India	2006 (WVS V)	44	47	58	38	56	71	37	50
	<i>Average</i>	47	47	63	43	42	76	35	
	2001 (WVS IV)	50	40	NA	57	51	83	NA	56
Indonesia	2006 (WVS V)	50	34	50	53	50	73	50	51
	2006 (ABS II)	65	59	55	72	65	84	42	63
	2011 (ABS III)	57	51	51	71	64	84	42	60
	<i>Average</i>	56	46	52	63	58	81	45	

Japan	1995 (WVS III)	30	24	74	35	76	60	17	45
	2000 (WVS IV)	25	20	NA	29	48	63	17	34
	2003 (ABS I)	22	13	61	9	49	48	9	30
	2005 (WVS V)	29	21	77	30	65	70	17	44
	2007 (ABS II)	20	16	43	26	48	53	14	31
	2010 (WVS VI)	24	20	74	32	68	67	15	43
	2011 (ABS III)	12	12	53	28	64	76	8	36
	<i>Average</i>	23	18	64	27	60	62	14	
Malaysia	2006 (WVS V)	75	68	78	70	75	85	58	73
	2007 (ABS II)	69	64	63	73	59	77	52	65
	2011 (ABS III)	76	70	71	79	69	85	54	72
	2012 (WVS VI)	75	69	80	78	74	80	62	74
	<i>Average</i>	74	68	73	75	69	82	57	
Mongolia	2002 (ABS I)	58	60	46	56	48	65	40	53
	2006 (ABS II)	56	57	38	54	54	73	37	53
	2010 (ABS III)	35	29	23	39	51	75	17	38
	<i>Average</i>	50	49	36	50	51	71	31	
Pakistan	1997 (WVS III)	NA	NA	51	47	17	97	31	49
	2001 (WVS IV)	33	74	NA	37	28	85	24	47
	2012 (WVS VI)	35	26	45	35	20	82	31	39
	<i>Average</i>	34	50	48	40	22	88	29	
Philippines	1996 (WVS III)	57	59	66	66	55	68	44	59
	2001 (WVS IV)	50	61	NA	70	61	74	45	60
	2002 (ABS I)	49	44	50	58	46	54	34	48
	2005 (ABS II)	40	38	44	52	50	52	31	44
	2010 (ABS III)	46	43	45	55	56	58	36	48
	2012 (WVS VI)	57	57	65	65	66	70	47	61
	<i>Average</i>	50	50	54	61	56	63	40	
New Zealand	1998 (WVS III)	15	14	45	26	78	57	6	34
	2004 (WVS IV)	38	32	44	39	72	67	13	44
	2011 (WVS VI)	45	36	61	43	79	76	15	51
	<i>Average</i>	33	27	50	36	76	67	11	
Singapore	2006 (ABS II)	89	84	89	86	90	90	70	85
	2010 (ABS III)	86	83	86	78	83	76	69	80
	2012 (WVS VI)	79	74	83	76	79	77	68	77
	<i>Average</i>	85	80	86	80	84	81		69

Table 28.1 (continued)

Country	Survey Year (Data Source)	National Government	Parliament	Courts	Civil Service	Police	Military	Political Parties	Average
South Korea	1996 (WVS III)	44	31	58	78	47	70	25	50
	2001 (WVS IV)	29	10	NA	64	49	62	10	37
	2003 (ABS I)	26	15	51	45	50	45	16	35
	2005 (WVS V)	46	26	51	63	58	48	24	45
	2006 (ABS II)	35	7	27	30	42	47	9	28
	2010 (WVS VI)	50	27	67	49	58	63	26	49
	2011 (ABS III)	22	11	36	35	50	58	12	32
	<i>Average</i>	36	18	48	52	51	56	17	
Taiwan	1995 (WVS III)	68	44	57	57	58	74	34	56
	2001 (ABS I)	39	18	41	52	45	59	41	42
	2006 (WVS V)	33	14	39	41	38	41	10	31
	2006 (ABS II)	16	20	31	53	47	53	16	34
	2010 (ABS III)	32	19	29	48	46	43	14	33
	2012 (WVS VI)	45	28	47	60	63	53	23	46
	<i>Average</i>	39	24	41	52	50	54	23	
Thailand	2001 (ABS I)	65	55	58	63	56	76	47	60
	2006 (ABS II)	60	59	70	69	63	74	51	64
	2007 (WVS V)	39	33	72	44	43	51	23	44
	2010 (ABS III)	53	43	61	68	59	71	36	56
	<i>Average</i>	54	48	65	61	55	68	39	
Vietnam	2001 (WVS IV)	97	94	NA	74	91	95	87	90
	2005 (ABS II)	85	95	83	76	89	96	85	87
	2006 (WVS V)	96	96	87	80	89	96	88	90
	2010 (ABS III)	82	87	78	71	87	94	82	83
	<i>Average</i>	90	93	83	75	89	95	86	

Notes:

Entries are the percentage expressing some degree of trust.
 NA = not available.

Source: Asian Barometer Survey (2001–11); World Values Survey (1995–2012).

Second, trust in the civil service, a key instrument of governance, displays a somewhat different pattern. The region's three long-standing democracies are distinguished from others by their low trust. Japan shows the lowest level, followed by New Zealand and Australia. Not only in the prototype of the developmental state (Japan) where the bureaucracy has extraordinary policy-making power but also in exemplary neoliberal states (New Zealand and Australia) where new public management reforms are rooted, only a minority places confidence in their professional bureaucracy. Surprisingly, the civil service in Bangladesh enjoys the highest level despite widespread patronage and corruption. As expected, Singapore, whose merit-based bureaucracy is rated as the most efficient around the world, remains near the top. In general, the civil service in single-party authoritarian regimes, where the state is hardly differentiated from the ruling party, fares better.

Third, trust in the police, a core instrument of law enforcement, also displays a different pattern. Pakistan, whose police and other security services engage in the abuse of power, displays the lowest level. The countries in which only a minority expresses confidence in the police include South Asian democracies (SDSA Team, 2008). In contrast, the two oldest democracies in the region, Australia and New Zealand, display higher trust than most sample countries including authoritarian regimes. In general, the police in authoritarian regimes fare better than that in most new democracies.

Finally, the military or the armed forces are the only state organization that enjoys majority trust in every country surveyed, suggesting that they are established everywhere as a symbol of national strength or pride. Taiwan and South Korea, both of which endured prolonged authoritarian rule backed by the military, display the lowest level. Nonetheless, their military still earns higher trust than any other institution. The party-controlled military in Vietnam and China commands nearly everyone's trust. So does the military in Pakistan, which is known to have exercised de facto control over government.

The analysis reveals that low trust in representative institutions is most pronounced across much of the region. In 11 of 17 countries surveyed political parties fall below the 50 percent trust threshold. In nine countries parliament drops below that threshold. By contrast, there is no country where the military registers below that threshold. The police and the civil service mark below that threshold only in three and five countries, respectively. It is evident that contentious input institutions endure lower trust than non-elected output institutions.

Low trust in representative institutions such as parliament and political parties is striking particularly in advanced democracies, regardless of the number of years of democratic rule. Notable is that in single-party authoritarian regimes that are very attentive to coopting political problems, political parties are not even least trusted. However, in dominant-party competitive authoritarian regimes that generate more losers than single-party authoritarian regimes, political parties are found least trusted, just as in two-party or multi-party democracies. As regards non-elected state institutions, by contrast, there emerges no pattern of public trust distinguishing between regime types. All the findings suggest that the degree of contestation an institution involves matters to trust judgments.

Levels of Trust by Regime Types

The type of institution that is most or least trusted varies between regime types. First, in advanced democracies representative institutions are among the least trusted. In Japan

the judiciary ranks first, followed by the police and the military. By contrast, political parties register the lowest level, followed by the National Diet and the central government. The civil service, increasingly seen as incompetent and corrupt, is distinguished from other output institutions by its lower trust (Ikeda and Kohno, 2008). In South Korea, the military, which used to be one of the key pillars of authoritarian rule, shows the highest level of trust. It is followed by the civil service and the police. These output institutions are distinguished from contentious input institutions. For instance, political parties register the lowest level, followed by the National Assembly. Both earn the trust of only a small minority (Shin and Park, 2008). In Taiwan the military ranks first, followed by the civil service and the police. As in South Korea, non-elected institutions are distinguished from the Legislative Yuan and political parties, which earn the trust of only a small minority. Money politics and party political bickering could be seen as causes of the low trust (Chang and Chu, 2008). The two oldest democracies in the region are no exceptions to this pattern. In Australia and New Zealand, the police and the military stand at the top. By contrast, political parties, parliament, and the national government remain at the bottom.

Second, the pattern found in less advanced democracies seems somewhat complicated. Elected input institutions are not always among the least trusted. Likewise, non-elected output institutions are not always among the most trusted. As in advanced democracies, in Indonesia, the Philippines, and Thailand the military enjoys the highest level, followed by other output institutions such as the civil service, courts, and the police. By contrast, political parties and the legislature remain at the bottom. However, other cases deviate from this pattern. In Mongolia, the military ranks first and political parties last. But the courts, which are marred by corruption among judges, finish second to last (Ganbat et al., 2008). In India, the military ranks first, followed by the courts. By contrast, the police and the civil service along with political parties stand at the bottom. In Bangladesh the civil service ranks first. The national government and parliament are near the top. Even political parties command majority trust. However, the police stand at the bottom. In South Asia the police, a street-level agency that has direct interaction with ordinary people, is often found among the least trusted (SDSA Team, 2008).

Finally, in dominant-party or single-party authoritarian regimes, every institution is more or less trusted. The consensual legislature controlled by a dominant or single party is not among the least trusted. Yet, in competitive authoritarian regimes, as in most democracies, political parties remain among the least trusted. In Malaysia and Singapore none of the institutions surveyed fail to enjoy majority trust. Among them, political parties rank last. Notable is that in authoritarian regimes output institutions are often among the least trusted. In Cambodia, which becomes a de facto single-party state (Curley, 2014), every institution surveyed commands majority trust. Among them, the military ranks first while the judiciary, which is marred by inefficiency and corruption, stands at the bottom. In Pakistan, the military enjoys the trust of an absolute majority. By contrast, the police show the lowest level, followed by political parties and the national government. They all earn the trust of only a small minority. In Vietnam, none of the institutions surveyed fails to enjoy the trust of an absolute majority. Among them, the military ranks first while the civil service, a target of government reform, last. In China, every institution surveyed commands majority trust.⁴ Among them, the central government stands at the top while the politicized bureaucracy, seen as corrupt and inefficient, remains at the bottom (Shi, 2008).

How broad or deep is political trust or distrust across the region? We ascertain the breadth of political distrust by counting the number of institutions whose average trust level falls below the 50 percent threshold. We also ascertain the breadth of political trust by counting the number of institutions whose average trust level exceeds the 66 percent threshold. In Australia, India, and Pakistan five of seven institutions fall below the 50 percent threshold. Japan, New Zealand, South Korea, and Taiwan have four such institutions. By contrast, all authoritarian regimes have no such institutions. This finding indicates that political distrust remains far wider especially in advanced democracies, confirming the phenomenon of critical citizens across democratic parts of the region. As regards the breadth of political trust, in Singapore and Vietnam all seven institutions surveyed surpass the 66 percent threshold. Cambodia, China, and Malaysia have six such institutions. By contrast, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Taiwan have no such institutions. This finding demonstrates that support for the prevailing system of government remains far more robust in non-democratic parts of the region.

Considering the number of both kinds of institutions simultaneously, we ascertain the depth of political trust or distrust. The results show that political distrust runs deep particularly in new democracies with highly contested politics such as South Korea and Taiwan, suggesting greater regime vulnerability to short-term forces (Park, 2014; Park and Chu, 2014). By contrast, in dominant-party or single-party authoritarian regimes such as Malaysia, Singapore, China, and Vietnam political trust remains robust, indicating greater regime resilience independent of short-term forces.

Trends of Trust

In this section, we trace changes in political trust in those countries with at least four data points. As shown in the last column of Table 28.1, the direction and size of changes in the overall level of trust seem to vary across regime types. In some new democracies such as South Korea and Taiwan a decline with cyclical fluctuations occurs over a longer time period. Yet, in other new democracies such as the Philippines and Thailand a dramatic decline or fluctuation concentrates in specific periods. In some authoritarian regimes such as China and Vietnam a modest decline is followed by increased trust. These findings suggest that short-term forces may be responsible for much of the rise and fall in political trust across many parts of the region.

Although it is difficult to determine the exact nature of the changes with such a few data points, we may distinguish between four patterns. The first is of small fluctuations with a downward trend, as in Japan, an old democracy suffering from a decades-long economic downturn. The second is of small fluctuations without a trend, as in Vietnam and China, single-party authoritarian regimes with high-performing economies. The third is of large fluctuations with a downward trend, as in South Korea and Taiwan, new maturing democracies with a slow economy and contentious politics (Diamond and Shin, 2014). The last is of large fluctuations without a trend, as in Thailand and the Philippines, new fragile democracies beset with government corruption and electoral polarization (Chachavalpongwan, 2014; Quimpo, 2014).

In brief, a marked downward trend in political trust is hardly a prominent feature of the political landscape across much of the region. It is only a few new democracies that suffer a downward trend with cyclical fluctuations. In authoritarian regimes political

trust remains high with minor fluctuations. In democracies fluctuations seem to reflect partially a cyclical pattern, perhaps based on the life of the incumbent government. Also noteworthy is that all institutions seldom move together: representative institutions often move independently of non-elected state institutions.

POLITICAL TRUST AND REGIME PREFERENCE

In democratic parts of the region low political trust neither encourages acceptance of authoritarian rule nor undermines support for democracy. And in its non-democratic parts high political trust hardly discourages preference for democracy, if not acceptance of authoritarian rule. As to support for authoritarian rule, the first two columns of Table 28.2 present evidence from ABS.⁵ Strongman rule, one of the common forms of authoritarian rule, receives widespread opposition across East Asian democracies. Of them South Korea displays the highest level, followed by Japan, Indonesia, and Taiwan. In these democracies opposition to strongman rule is prevalent despite low political trust.⁶ The notable democratic exception is Mongolia: it displays only minority disapproval of strongman rule as it suffers a sharp drop in political trust. Even in authoritarian regimes with high political trust, disapproval of strongman rule remains widespread.⁷

Second, disapproval of single-party rule is also prevalent across much of East Asia regardless of the level of political trust. Even in democracies with low political trust an absolute majority disapproves of party dictatorship. South Korea reports the highest level. Japan and Taiwan stand near the top. In authoritarian regimes with high political trust disapproval of party dictatorship is also prevalent. For instance, in Singapore and Malaysia an absolute majority disapproves of single-party rule. The only exception among the countries surveyed is Vietnam, an authentic single-party authoritarian regime, where only a small minority disapproves of party dictatorship.⁸

As to preference for democracy, drawing from ABS, the last column of Table 28.2 shows the percentage of respondents choosing the statement ‘Democracy is always preferable to any other kind of government’. In advanced democracies, low political trust hardly seems to undermine preference for democracy. In South Korea, Taiwan, and Japan preference for democracy increases or remains stable while trust in political institutions, especially parliament and political parties, declines. By contrast, politically divided Thailand suffers a sharp decline in preference for democracy as trust in representative institutions declines. In Mongolia, where political trust declines, only a minority remains supportive of democracy. Notable is that in competitive authoritarian regimes high political trust rarely deters their citizens from entertaining democracy as the best form of government.⁹

In sum, in democratic parts of the region, trust in institutions, particularly representative institutions, declines over time, but there is no parallel drop in support for democracy or rejection of authoritarian alternatives. Notable is that the region’s advanced democracies endure low trust in representative institutions, but preference for democracy as a universal value remains high or even increases. It is claimed that democratic legitimacy is more likely to be threatened only if the public lose faith in institutions and, at the same time, endorse alternatives to democracy (Klingemann, 1999). That seems not to be the case with the advanced democracies across the Asia-Pacific region: they

Table 28.2 Preference for political regime (%) in East Asia

Country	Survey Year (Data Source)	Rejection of Strongman Rule	Rejection of Single-party Rule	Preference for Democracy
Cambodia	2008 (ABS II)	72	67	52
	2012 (ABS III)	80	68	56
	Average	76	68	54
China	2002 (ABS I)	NA	NA	54
	2007 (ABS II)	62	NA	54
	2011 (ABS III)	59	NA	52
	Average	61	—	53
Indonesia	2006 (ABS II)	84	87	64
	2011 (ABS III)	74	77	58
	Average	79	82	61
Japan	2003 (ABS I)	80	67	69
	2007 (ABS II)	78	84	62
	2011 (ABS III)	83	91	63
	Average	80	81	65
Malaysia	2007 (ABS II)	63	76	71
	2011 (ABS III)	61	71	74
	Average	62	74	73
Mongolia	2002 (ABS I)	56	71	54
	2006 (ABS II)	36	70	40
	2010 (ABS III)	43	74	49
	Average	45	72	48
Philippines	2002 (ABS I)	70	70	64
	2005 (ABS II)	60	65	50
	2010 (ABS III)	64	67	55
	Average	65	67	56
Singapore	2006 (ABS II)	87	88	59
	2010 (ABS III)	87	79	47
	Average	87	84	53
South Korea	2003 (ABS I)	84	87	49
	2006 (ABS II)	83	88	43
	2011 (ABS III)	80	88	66
	Average	82	88	53
Taiwan	2001 (ABS I)	68	70	40
	2006 (ABS II)	77	83	47
	2010 (ABS III)	80	87	51
	Average	75	80	46
Thailand	2001 (ABS I)	68	62	84
	2006 (ABS II)	69	84	73
	2010 (ABS III)	72	77	68
	Average	70	74	75

Table 28.2 (continued)

Country	Survey Year (Data Source)	Rejection of Strongman Rule	Rejection of Single-party Rule	Preference for Democracy
Vietnam	2005 (ABS II)	76	35	72
	2010 (ABS III)	69	3	65
	Average	73	19	69

Notes:

Entries are the percentage expressing pro-democratic responses.

NA = not available.

Source: Asian Barometer Survey (2001–12).

face only critical but democratic citizens. The low political trust there largely reflects dissatisfaction with regime performance rather than rejection of democratic values and principles.

INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL TRUST

Considering prior theory and research (Weatherford, 1987; Evans and Whitefield, 1995; McAllister, 1999; Miller and Listhaug, 1999; Pharr and Putnam, 2000; Mishler and Rose, 2001; Gilley, 2009; Norris, 2011), we develop two regime performance-based accounts and assess them in the context of East Asia for which data are available. First, the model considers policy performance as one source of political trust. Economic performance has been treated as the most important dimension of policy performance. From this perspective, low political trust should reflect the failure of government to solve economic problems such as economic growth, inflation, and unemployment (Lipset, 1959). However, policy performance is not necessarily confined to the economy. It covers other areas of government activity such as law and order, socio-economic security, and environmental protection (Roller, 2005). The inability of government to solve these problems should also undermine political trust. In this study, we include three major areas of government action – economic well-being (national and household economy), public security, and anti-poverty.¹⁰ The policy performance explanations emphasize government competence or capacity as a driver of trust judgments.

Second, our model considers process performance, another source of political trust. The process performance accounts emphasize standards of democratic or good governance such as rule of law, accountability, representation, impartiality, transparency, and so forth (Diamond and Morlino, 2004; Rothstein and Teorell, 2008; Gilley, 2009). The failure of government to act in accordance with these procedural standards of good governance should undermine political trust, regardless of policy outcomes (Tyler, 2001). In this study, we focus on rule of law, an essential component of democratic or good governance, against which the exercise of public power is often evaluated. We distinguish between its four aspects – law-abidingness, anti-impunity, openness or transparency, and anti-corruption.¹¹

In addition, we consider three alternative accounts for political trust. First, the winner–loser thesis emphasizes that election outcomes impact trust judgments (Anderson et al., 2005). In this perspective, political trust may reflect partisan support for incumbents or ‘home team’ effects (Holmberg, 1999). Hence, political trust should be higher among those who voted for the party in power while lower among those who voted for the opposition. The winner–loser thesis highlights the influence of election outcomes as well as the system of representation. Second, the social capital thesis emphasizes the role of social trust in accounting for political trust (Newton, 2006). Social trust and political trust are considered to be ‘different sides of the same coin’. It is claimed that enduring and deep-seated beliefs about people shape the trustworthiness of public officials which in turn impact confidence in institutions (Mishler and Rose, 2001). The impact of social trust reflects the influence of long-term forces including early socialization. Finally, the media malaise thesis claims that low political trust may be produced by exposure to media that convey negative news on government (Norris, 2000). Heavy exposure to policy failures and political scandals should undermine political trust. The impact of media exposure may capture the influence of specific events. In sum, the variables associated with the alternative accounts here include winner–loser status, social trust, and media exposure.¹²

We also introduce four standard demographic control variables – gender, age, education, and income.¹³ As compared to regime performance, they may capture the influence of politically exogenous forces such as socialization, modernization, or generational replacement.

For multivariate analysis we use data drawn from ABS III. Our dependent variable is a composite index of political trust constructed by combining trust in the national government and parliament, political branches of government. We perform OLS on these variables country by country. Table 28.3 presents the results with two statistics – *beta* and *R*². The explanatory power of our model varies from one country to another. The model works best in Malaysia, one of the competitive authoritarian regimes, while most poorly in Japan, the oldest democracy in East Asia. This suggests that the performance-based model would work better in political regimes whose legitimacy is largely based on policy performance, especially an economic one.

First, considering the policy performance cluster, national economy has effects in all ten countries analyzed. The sign is in the expected direction, indicating that the more individuals are favorable toward national economic conditions, the more they are likely to trust institutions. By contrast, household economy has effects in only one country, Singapore. In this affluent non-democracy when individuals perceive themselves to be better off, they are more likely to trust institutions. The finding suggests that ‘sociotropic’ rather than ‘egocentric’ economic evaluations play a far greater role in determining political trust across most parts of East Asia.

The role of other dimensions of policy performance turns out to be limited. In only two of ten countries examined, public security has significant, albeit weak, effects. Interestingly, one of them is South Korea, one of the safest countries in the region. Anti-poverty more often has effects. Surprisingly, the cases where it has effects include ‘very high human development’ countries such as South Korea and Singapore, both of which face increasing socioeconomic inequality.

Of the minimal functions assumed by the modern state, macroeconomic management proves to be a strong predictor across much of East Asia. By contrast, other public

Table 28.3 Determinants of political trust in East Asia (standardized regression coefficients)

	Japan	South Korea	Taiwan	Mongolia	Indonesia	Philippines	Thailand	Malaysia	Singapore	Cambodia
<i>Policy performance</i>										
National economy	0.089***	0.127***	0.218***	0.201***	0.266***	0.246***	0.352***	0.235***	0.113**	0.227***
Household economy	0.064	0.004	0.066	0.043	-0.066	0.057	0.066	0.057	0.138**	-0.003
Public security	0.019	0.070*	0.032	0.043	0.055	0.048	0.065	0.062	0.026	0.103**
Anti-poverty	0.051	0.104**	0.044	0.015	0.108**	0.008	0.013	0.211***	0.100*	0.071*
<i>Process performance</i>										
Law-abidingness	0.042	0.110**	0.067	0.079*	0.063	0.005	0.081*	0.075	-0.020	0.132***
Lack of impunity	0.070	0.050	0.141***	0.003	0.074*	0.087*	-0.079*	0.118**	0.105*	0.095**
Openness	0.120**	0.107**	0.094*	0.008	-0.005	0.070	0.227***	0.038	0.039	0.061
Anti-corruption	0.113**	0.125***	0.117**	0.112***	0.064	0.112**	0.138***	0.120**	0.149***	0.127***
<i>Alternative accounts</i>										
Winner	-0.024	0.101**	0.180***	0.021	-0.027	0.136***	-0.008	0.226***	0.202***	0.066*
Media exposure	-0.042	-0.011	-0.038	0.056	0.017	0.065*	-0.008	0.068	-0.001	0.075*
Trust in people	0.041	0.115***	-0.012	0.079**	0.167***	0.051	-0.051	0.035	0.001	0.026
<i>Demographic controls</i>										
Male	0.018	-0.063	-0.025	0.068*	-0.128***	-0.019	-0.060	0.043	-0.061	0.022
Age	0.056	0.043	-0.144***	0.006	-0.054	-0.029	-0.039	-0.021	0.233***	0.007
Education	-0.043	-0.030	-0.092*	-0.025	-0.103**	-0.071*	-0.036	-0.031	0.070	0.009
Income	0.004	-0.039	-0.101**	-0.019	0.073*	-0.013	-0.007	0.007	-0.062	-0.001
<i>R</i> ²	0.106	0.227	0.276	0.127	0.190	0.197	0.321	0.383	0.230	0.220
N	908	835	842	1,038	774	848	680	550	583	876

Note: * $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.

Source: Asian Barometer Survey (2010–12).

goods such as law and order and the protection of the destitute far less often drive trust judgments.

Second, examining the process performance cluster, law-abidingness has effects in only four of ten countries analyzed. Its impact is found more often in democracies than authoritarian regimes. Anti-impunity has effects in seven of ten countries analyzed. Intriguing is that it has negative effects in Thailand, indicating that when Thais perceive public officials to act with impunity, they are more likely to trust institutions. This may reflect a unique Thai experience of political polarization between those supporting and opposing former Prime Minister Thaksin who was convicted by the court. Openness or transparency has effects in only four of ten countries, surprisingly none of which are authoritarian regimes. Anti-corruption has effects in nine of ten countries examined, regardless of regime types. The only exception is Indonesia, where official corruption remains endemic (Drakeley, 2014). Of four aspects of law-based governance, anti-corruption proves to be the most consistent, if not always the strongest, predictor (Chang and Chu, 2006).

Comparing two clusters of performance variables, it turns out that national economic well-being and control of corruption play the most consistent role in determining political trust across most sample countries, democratic or authoritarian. Of them, national economic well-being is the strongest predictor in eight of ten countries examined, indicating that government capacity to solve economic problems remains a more powerful source of political trust.

Third, we turn to the cluster associated with alternative theories of political trust. Being winners instead of losers has effects in six of ten countries. The impact of being winners is greater in presidential than parliamentary democracies. For instance, in Taiwan and South Korea, presidential democracies with contentious politics, it proves to be one of the major influences. This suggests that a winner-takes-all system of representation tends to generate too many losers, which would lower political trust. It also has large effects in competitive authoritarian regimes. In Singapore and Malaysia, the impact of winner status proves to be the strongest or the second strongest predictor. This suggests that the rules of the game failing to ensure a level playing field are likely to produce many permanent losers, which would undermine political trust. All the findings indicate that the system of representation may influence political trust by coopting or excluding losers.

Social trust has effects in only three of ten countries, indicating that the social capital thesis may not hold across much of East Asia. Oddly, the exceptions include South Korea and Indonesia, where social trust is known to have narrow radii (Delhey et al., 2011). In Indonesia, social trust is the second strongest predictor, after national economic well-being while in South Korea, one of the major influences.

Media exposure has significant, albeit weak, effects in only two of ten countries – the Philippines and Cambodia. Yet, the sign is positive, meaning that the more individuals are exposed to media reports, the more they are likely to trust institutions. Perhaps in these partly free or not free countries the press rarely denounces government leaders so that more exposure to media news indicates more exposure to pro-government propaganda, which should increase political trust. This finding illustrates a complex relationship between media exposure and political trust (Norris, 2000). Undoubtedly media contents matter but even negative information itself may not necessarily lower political trust because individuals tend to be selectively exposed to information which is consistent with their prior beliefs.

Finally, considering demographic control variables, the role of life circumstances or

social positions proves to be limited or inconsistent. Socialization over the life cycle fails to change trust judgments. More education neither encourages rational skepticism nor discourages excessive confidence. Rising standards of living hardly bring about the value changes which would render individuals more elite-challenging (Inglehart, 1999). Social background variables thought to be associated with socialization, modernization, or post-modernization prove to be poor predictors across much of the region. All the findings suggest that changes in political trust seem more likely to reflect the influence of short-term political and economic performance rather than that of long-term socio-cultural forces (Wong et al., 2011).

To sum up, regime performance matters but the role each kind of performance plays varies between regime types (Wang et al., 2006). In affluent democracies, process or political performance more often has effects. This pattern is also found even in less affluent democracies. In authoritarian regimes, affluent or not, policy performance as often has effects as process performance. No doubt, economic performance remains the most important contributor across much of East Asia. Yet, its role in generating political trust differs depending on the level of development and the type of regime. In affluent democracies, economic performance plays a limited role. By contrast, in less affluent democracies as well as authoritarian regimes, affluent or not, economic performance plays a greater role. In most new democracies, public contestation for power itself may not lead to higher political trust. What matters seems whether government is effective in managing the economy (Yap, 2013).

CONCLUSION

In this chapter, we describe and compare the levels and trends of political trust across the Asia-Pacific region, a home of different types of regime or modes of governance. The analysis reveals that in democratic parts of the region input institutions such as parliament and political parties endure lower trust than output institutions such as the military, the police, and the civil service. In the region's advanced democracies contentious representative institutions are least trusted. By contrast, in single-party authoritarian regimes that could avoid too many losers, even input institutions including political parties are not among the least trusted.

The country rank order of political trust shows that advanced democracies are at the bottom while high-performing authoritarian regimes are near the top. The public's trust in institutions of government in advanced democracies runs low, suggesting that a trusting public is not a key element of democracy. By contrast, in dominant-party or single-party authoritarian regimes political trust remains high, indicating regime resilience in the midst of third-wave democratization.

It is found that a downward trend in political trust is not a prominent feature of the political landscape across much of the region. The broad picture is one of stability for most authoritarian regimes whereas one of large or small fluctuations for most democracies. Only a few new democracies suffer a downward trend. The oldest democracies enjoy even an upward trend. In other new democracies, fluctuations in political trust reflect a cyclical pattern, perhaps based on the life of the incumbent government. That there is no general upward or downward trend across much of the region further strengthens short-term performance-based explanations of political trust.

It is also discovered that low political trust hardly results in widespread acceptance of authoritarian rule across many democratic parts of the region. Even if political trust declines over time, there is no parallel drop in preference for democracy. Likewise, in non-democratic parts of the region high political trust rarely discourages preference for democracy. The findings suggest that low political trust across democratic parts of the region may not constitute a crisis of democratic legitimacy.

It is revealed that as the level of democracy deepens, procedural standards of good governance appear to be more relevant criteria for evaluation of politics and government. Nonetheless, national economic performance remains the most powerful source of political trust across many parts of East Asia. All the findings suggest that changes in public trust may reflect less the influence of socio-cultural forces than that of regime performance, strengthening the thesis that political trust is politically endogenous (Mishler and Rose, 2001).

That political trust is lower in democracies suggests that more civil liberties and political rights hardly boost the public's confidence in institutions of government. Trust judgments seem to be driven by both government capacity to solve problems and its commitment to good governance. The trouble is that in a globalizing world old and new policy problems facing government become increasingly too complex to solve. As a result, policy performance may not be a reliable source of political trust. In this regard, procedural standards of good governance would become more important in shaping confidence in institutions of government. Evidence from East Asia suggests that rule of law, one of the hallmarks of good governance, constitutes a significant source of political trust not only in democracies but also in authoritarian regimes.

NOTES

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1. The first round (ABS I) was carried out between 2001 and 2003; the second (ABS II), between 2005 and 2008; and the third (ABS III), between 2010 and 2012. See Asian Barometer website, <http://www.asianbarometer.org>.
 2. The third wave (WVS III) was carried out between 1995 and 1998; the fourth (WVS IV), between 1999 and 2004; the fifth (WVS V), between 2005 and 2009; and the sixth (WVS VI), between 2010 and 2014. See World Values Survey website, <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org>.
 3. Japan and South Korea have seven data points; China, Philippines, and Taiwan, six; Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, and Vietnam, four; Australia, India, Mongolia, New Zealand, Pakistan, and Singapore, three; Bangladesh and Cambodia, only two. Notice that China, Indonesia, and Taiwan had two data points for the same year.
 4. Much evidence indicates that high political trust in China is fairly robust and unlikely to be inflated by political fear (Shi, 2001; Gilley, 2008; Steinhardt, 2012).
 5. ABS asks: 'For each statement, would you say you strongly approve, approve, disapprove, or strongly disapprove? (a) We should get rid of parliament and elections and have a strong leader decide things; and (b) Only one political party should be allowed to stand for election and hold office'. Instead of (b), ABS I uses the following statement: 'No opposition party shall be allowed to compete for power'.
 6. Evidence from WVS also suggests that in most democratic parts of Asia-Pacific low political trust hardly encourages acceptance of strongman rule.
 7. On the contrary, evidence from WVS shows that in most non-democratic parts of Asia-Pacific high political trust coexists with low rejection of strongman rule.
 8. This question was not asked in China.
 9. Evidence from WVS indicates that regardless of regime types or levels of political trust, in Asian-Pacific

- countries surveyed a large majority remains supportive of democracy and that preference for democracy fluctuates little across much of the region.
10. National economy is measured by responses to the question ‘How would you rate the overall economic condition of our country today – very good, good, not good nor bad, bad or very bad?’ Household economy is measured by responses to the question ‘As for your own family, how do you rate the economic situations of your family today – very good, good, not good nor bad, bad or very bad?’ Public security is measured by responses to the question ‘Generally speaking, how safe is living in this city/town/village – very safe, safe, unsafe or very unsafe?’ Anti-poverty is measured by agree–disagree responses to the statement ‘People have basic necessities like food, clothes, and shelter’.
 11. Law-abidingness is measured by responses to the question ‘How often do you think government leaders break the law or abuse their power – always, most of the time, sometimes, or rarely?’ Anti-impunity is measured by responses to the question ‘Do officials who commit crimes go unpunished – always, most of the time, sometimes, or rarely?’ Openness or transparency is measured by responses to the question ‘How often do government officials withhold important information from the public view – always, most of the time, sometimes, or rarely?’ Anti-corruption is measured by responses to the question ‘How widespread do you think corruption and bribe-taking are in the national government – hardly anyone is involved, not a lot of officials are corrupt, most officials are corrupt or almost everyone is corrupt?’
 12. As regards the winner–loser status, those who voted for the winning camp in the last national election are designated as winners while those who voted for the losing camp, as losers. Social trust is measured by responses to the statement ‘Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you must be very careful in dealing with people?’ Media exposure is measured by responses to the question ‘How often do you follow news about politics and government – every day, several times a week, once or twice a week, not even once a week, or practically never?’
 13. Income is measured by responses to the following question: ‘Does the total income of your household allow you to satisfactorily cover your needs? Our income covers the needs well and we can save, our income covers the needs all right without much difficulty, our income does not cover the needs, there are difficulties, or our income does not cover the needs, there are great difficulties’.

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29. Political trust and the decline of legitimacy debate: a theoretical and empirical investigation into their interrelationship

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INTRODUCTION

As the editors of this volume argue in the very first sentences of the introductory chapter, the survival and stability of democratic regimes ultimately rests on citizens' beliefs in their legitimacy. Political legitimacy is important in all systems of government, as rule by force alone is not viable, not even in authoritarian systems of government. In a democratic system, legitimacy even constitutes the core of what democracy is about. However, the belief that the legitimacy of politics is eroding in democratic systems in recent decades is as widespread as it is persistent, at least in the popular press. In the political science literature it is fiercely debated whether we are witnessing a decline of legitimacy or not. This debate is closely related to the literature on political trust, because confidence in political institutions is widely used as one of the primary indicators of political legitimacy (cf. Scharpf, 2003; Newton, 2007).

This chapter, by contrast, argues that political trust and legitimacy should not be equated so easily. It aims to structure this debate more carefully by drawing on David Easton's original concept of system support (1975). Unlike most scholars nowadays, Easton distinguished between legitimacy and political trust, both perceived as essential ingredients of political support. This chapter thus explores the relationship between political trust, legitimacy and political support. It is divided into four major sections. The first proposes three theoretical approaches to the relationships between the three aforementioned concepts. The second section addresses the decline of legitimacy debate and discusses empirical evidence for whether such a decline occurred or not. The third section discusses evidence for different explanations of variation in political support, and the final section concludes with a reflection on how legitimacy in democratic regimes might be enhanced in practice.

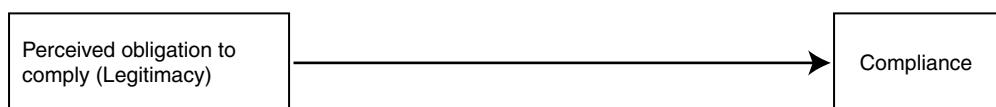
LEGITIMACY, POLITICAL TRUST AND POLITICAL SUPPORT

Other than in a few chapters in this volume, the term 'legitimacy' does not frequently occur on the pages of this *Handbook on Political Trust*.¹ Yet, many will read this book also as a book on political legitimacy. The concepts of political trust and political legitimacy are closely intertwined in the literature. 'Trust might be an indicator of legitimacy, be derived from it, and contribute to its reinforcement, but trust should not be confused

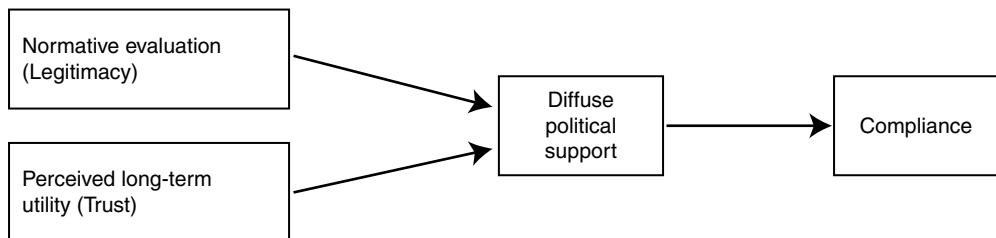
with legitimacy' (Linz, quoted in Dogan, 1994, p. 305). The quote nicely illustrates how muddled the relationship between the concepts of political legitimacy and political trust is: trust as indicator, as consequence, and as cause of legitimacy. In political science, legitimacy and trust are usually treated as near synonyms: 'we rely on a straightforward but also very general definition of political support, also variously referred to as political trust or political legitimacy' (Anderson et al., 2005, p. 19), or 'Political trust means that the legitimacy of the political regime is acknowledged and that there is a high degree of willingness to accept the decisions of politicians and government agencies' (Hooghe and Zmerli, 2011, p. 3). As outlined above, this section systematically explores the linkage between these two concepts in relation to the concept of political support, which is also often used as an indicator or proxy of legitimacy.²

The concepts of political legitimacy, trust, and support have in common that all three play a role in the search for an explanation of the compliance of citizens, even when these citizens find themselves in opposition to the political authorities of the day, or do not agree with the particular policy concerned, and even when they are not forced to obey by credible and deterrent sanctions. We can roughly discern three approaches to linking the three concepts to voluntary compliance: (i) legitimacy is unrelated to trust and/or support and has a direct effect on compliance; (ii) legitimacy and trust are two separate sources of political support, which in turn leads to compliance; and (iii) legitimacy and trust are conceptual components of political support. Figure 29.1 illustrates the three approaches.

i. Legitimacy as sense of duty, unrelated to political trust or political support



ii. Legitimacy and political trust as sources of diffuse political support



iii. Legitimacy and political trust as components of diffuse political support

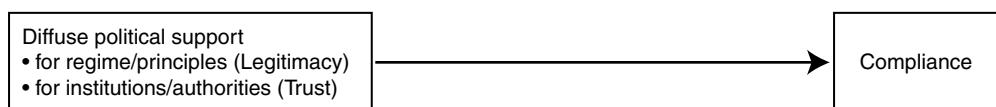


Figure 29.1 The theoretical relationship between legitimacy, trust, political support and compliance

Legitimacy as Sense of Duty, Unrelated to Political Trust and Support

In the first approach, legitimacy is conceived as divorced from trust or support. In this view, citizens act in a particular way because they consider it their duty to do so. In studies of turnout in elections, for example, a sense of civic duty is one of the most frequent answers to the question ‘Why do you vote?’ (e.g., Knack, 1992; Blais, 2000). It could be argued to be close to forced compliance, with the force being internalized by the citizens. Thus, authors wonder whether compulsory voting also increases turnout when sanctions are low or absent (Norris, 2004; Blais, 2006). Beyond the study of turnout, political scientists rarely define legitimacy in terms of a sense of duty. This is different in, for example, criminology and the sociology of law. In these disciplines the legitimacy of the police, for instance, is measured by survey items such as ‘To what extent is it your duty to do what the police tell you even if you don’t understand or agree with the reasons’. Legitimacy thus operationalized is very different from trust in the police, which is measured by items such as ‘Based on what you have heard or your own experience, how often would you say the police generally treat people in [country] with respect?’ (European Social Survey Round 5 – 2010).³ Tyler measured both ‘perceived obligation’ (‘People should obey the law even if it goes against what they think is right’ etc.) and ‘support’ for the police (‘On the whole Chicago police officers are honest’ etc.). Both were found to contribute to compliance with the law, but they were only weakly correlated (Tyler, 2006, pp. 45–50). However, if we return to the study of electoral turnout, Bowler and Donovan (2013) show that a sense of duty indeed increases voter turnout but that that sense of duty itself is affected by the degree of trust in politicians.

One of the disadvantages of legitimacy as a sense of duty or perceived obligation is that, thus defined, the concept begs the question where this sense or perception is coming from. If we can generalize the finding of Bowler and Donovan, it can even be derived from trust. However, it is much more common to relate the sense of duty to comply to a belief in the moral right of the authorities to request compliance. Indeed, such a moral judgment is usually seen not as a cause of legitimacy, but as legitimacy itself: ‘[T]he justification of authority’ (Peter, 2014 in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*) or the ‘rightful holding and exercising of political power’ (Gilley, 2006, p. 500).⁴ Hence, legitimacy is a normative judgment that, when applied to political authority, provides reasons that justify the authorities’ holding and exercising of political power (Van Ham and Thomassen, 2012). The difference between legitimacy as a sense of duty and legitimacy as a belief in the justification of political authority is that, in the first definition, the individual needs not subscribe to the normative judgment themselves, but accepts that most members of society see it this way. In this way, legitimacy is primarily an attribute of the authority in question regardless of the individual citizen’s beliefs. Dornbusch and Scott (1975) have introduced this distinction between legitimacy as a sense of duty and legitimacy as a normative judgment in terms of the validity and propriety of legitimacy:

Propriety is an actor’s belief that a social order’s norms and procedures of conduct are desirable and appropriate patterns of action. Validity, in contrast, is an individual’s belief that he or she is obliged to obey these norms and procedures even in the absence of personal approval of them. (Johnson et al., 2006, p. 55)

Legitimacy and Political Trust as Sources of Political Support

If we follow this second approach and conceptualize legitimacy not as a sense of duty but as the normative justification of political authority, legitimacy judgments require a comparison of normative principles of what constitutes the ‘ideal, just’ authority to the ‘real-existing’ authority. If norms and reality match, authority will be considered legitimate, and if norms and reality deviate, authority will be considered to suffer from a legitimacy ‘gap’ or ‘deficit’ (Van Ham and Thomassen, 2012). Therefore, just like Robert Dahl (1956) conceptualizes polyarchy as the extent to which the real world of politics meets the requirements of the more abstract ideals of democracy, legitimacy is a matter of degree: the smaller the gap between the ‘ideal, just’ authority and the ‘real-existing’ authority, the more legitimate it is.

Thus defined, individual citizens’ legitimacy beliefs constitute one of the *sources* of political support in Easton’s (1965, 1975) conceptual framework. Easton defines political support as ‘an attitude by which a person orients himself to an object either favorably or unfavorably, positively or negatively’ (Easton, 1975, p. 436). He identified three ‘levels’ or ‘objects’ of political support: the political community, the political regime and the political authorities. Easton further distinguished ‘diffuse’ support from ‘specific’ support, where diffuse support refers to a more abstract and stable support for the political regime that is more or less detached from its immediate performance and forms a ‘reservoir of goodwill’.

Support can be based on three different sources: short-term utility, long-term utility and norms/values (Table 29.1).⁵ Whereas specific support is based on short-term utility or output satisfaction, diffuse support can have two different sources: long-term utility and norms/values. Diffuse support based on long-term utility is referred to as trust, while diffuse support based on norms and values is referred to as legitimacy. Both can refer to the political regime as well as to the authorities.⁶

Easton (1975, p. 447) defines trust as the feeling of the members of the political system ‘that their own interests would be attended to even if the authorities were exposed to little supervision or scrutiny’. This feeling, in addition to its source in socialization, can be expected to:

[. . .]be stimulated by the experiences that members have of the authorities over time. The outputs and performance of incumbent authorities may slowly nourish or discourage sentiments

Table 29.1 The concept of political support according to Easton

		Objects of Support		
Types of support	Sources	Political community	Regime	Authorities
Diffuse	Norms/values	Identification with political community	Legitimacy regime Trust in regime	Legitimacy of authorities Trust in authorities
Long-term utility				
Specific	Short-term utility			Satisfaction with day to day output

Source: Fuchs (1989, p. 18).

of trust. In time such sentiments may become detached from the authorities themselves and take the form of an autonomous or generalized sentiment towards all incumbent authorities and perhaps the regime as well. (Easton, 1975, p. 448)

Therefore, the metaphor of ‘a pragmatic running tally of how people think the government is doing at a given point in time’ (Hetherington, 2005, p. 9; see also Chapter 10 by Theiss-Morse and Barton) seems to reflect this long-term performance evaluation perfectly well.

Easton defines legitimacy as:

[. . .]the conviction on the part of the member that it is right and proper for him to accept and obey the authorities and to abide by the requirements of the regime. It reflects the fact that in some vague or explicit way he sees these objects as conforming to his own moral principles, his own sense of what is right and proper in the political sphere. (Easton, 1965, p. 278; 1975, p. 451)

What legitimacy and trust have in common is that both are the outcome of an evaluation, but the criteria are different. Legitimacy implies a normative judgment and is defined by the extent to which the authorities and the regime meet a person’s norms and values. Trust implies an instrumental judgment on the performance of the regime and the authorities, not on their daily performance but on their performance over a longer period of time.

Operationalizing Easton’s refined and not always consistent conceptual framework has proven to be difficult. In order to operationalize the full framework we would need to distinguish between three different objects of supports (authorities, regime and political community), between specific and diffuse support, and between three different sources of support: perceived long-term utility (trust), moral norms or values (legitimacy) and perceived short-term utility (output satisfaction). However, in Easton’s writings it is not immediately obvious to what extent the sources of political support should be interpreted as the *causes* or as one of the *defining characteristics* of political support. Easton seems to opt for the latter interpretation by distinguishing between two *kinds* of diffuse support, legitimacy and trust, whereas specific support is by definition an instrumental orientation towards the authorities and their policy performances. However, as Figure 29.1 illustrates, we prefer to make an operational distinction between the phenomenon we are interested in (political support), its possible causes (in this case legitimacy and long-term utility) and its possible consequences (compliance). By making this distinction we can then consider it an empirical question to what extent political support for the political system depends on its legitimacy rather than its trustworthiness.

Legitimacy and Political Trust as Components of Political Support

The third approach to conceptualizing the relations between legitimacy, trust and political support clearly builds on Easton’s framework. Given the complexity and, in some respects the ambiguity of that framework, a more straightforward version was developed. First, legitimacy and trust have become components rather than sources of political support. Democratic norms and values (regime principles) are now included as one of the three elements of a more refined conceptualization of the ‘political regime’, one of the three

Eastonian *objects* of support. Trust is no longer linked to long-term utility, but serves as a content-independent operationalization of political support for institutions and authorities. Second, whereas in Easton's conceptual framework diffuse support can refer to all three levels or objects of support, the two main dimensions of support are here reduced to a single dimension where specific support refers to the lower levels of support, the political authorities in particular, whereas diffuse support refers to support for the political community and the political regime. Finally, the level of the political regime has been further specified into regime principles, regime performance and regime institutions, leaving a five-fold classification of political support (Dalton, 1999; Norris, 1999). This classification has been used – with minor adaptations – by many scholars since (Dalton, 2004; Newton, 2006; Criado and Herreros, 2007; Booth and Seligson, 2009; Norris, 2011; Campbell, 2011; Kotzian, 2011). This approach is also the one adopted in this Handbook, introduced by Norris in Chapter 2 and partly corroborated empirically in Chapter 6 by Marien and Chapter 7 by Zmerli and Newton.

Table 29.2 provides an overview of the measurements most commonly used to assess citizens' political support, following this framework.⁷ Support for the political community is most commonly measured as national pride. With regard to the political regime, a distinction is made between citizens' support for regime principles and regime performance. Regime principles are often measured as support for democratic political regimes versus

Table 29.2 A hierarchy of political support: levels, operationalization, measures

Level of Support	Operationalization	Measurement
Political community	Affective attachment to political community	National pride
Political regime		
● Principles	Preferred political system	Preferred: Having a democratic system, democracy best political system in all circumstances
	Evaluation of democracy as a political system	Democracy may have problems but better than any other form of government
● Performance	Evaluation of performance of the democratic political system	Satisfaction with way democracy works in country
● Institutions	Confidence/trust in institutions	Confidence/trust in: Armed forces, police, justice/legal system Parliament, political parties, national government, civil service, local government
Political authorities	Confidence/trust in political actors and authorities	Confidence/trust in: Government (cabinet), president/prime minister, politicians, civil servants Trust the government to do what is right
	Evaluation of performance of national government	Satisfaction with the national government/cabinet Approval of government's record

Source: Van Ham and Thomassen (2017).

other regime types, or as citizens' evaluations of democracy as a political regime, whereas regime performance is often measured as satisfaction with the functioning of democracy. Support for regime institutions is most frequently measured by trust or confidence in a range of different political institutions, such as parliament, political parties, the legal system, and so forth. Finally, support for political authorities is most commonly measured by trust in (incumbent) political authorities as well as evaluations of their performance. Trust in political authorities often refers to trust in politicians, the president or the national government or cabinet. Evaluations of performance tend to inquire about respondents' satisfaction with 'the people in national office' or ask respondents to evaluate the governments' record or 'how good (or bad) a job the government or president has done'.⁸

In this framework the successive objects of support are presented as a kind of hierarchy. Moving upwards in this hierarchy, political support gradually becomes more diffuse rather than specific. The often implicit assumption is that the higher up in the hierarchy we get, the more consequential political support is for the stability and eventually the survival of democracy. A lack of support for individual authorities is not much of a problem. If people are dissatisfied with specific politicians or parties, or with the incumbent government, they can vote them out of office at the next elections. Some degree of political distrust at that level is even considered healthy as it prompts citizens to monitor their political representatives closely and makes politicians aware that they are accountable (e.g., Rosanvallon, 2008). Lenard (2008) refines the argument by arguing that it is valid only for mistrust (caution, doubt, scepticism) as it fosters vigilance, but not for distrust (cynicism, suspicion), which fosters abstention. In his contribution to this Handbook, Warren, too, differentiates various types of political trust according to their desirability from a democratic perspective (see Chapter 3).

Supposedly, the consequences of distrust get more serious when we move upwards in the hierarchy. If people are dissatisfied with specific institutions or with the functioning of democracy, the remedy lies no longer in simple alternation of government but requires improvement, reform or replacement of political institutions. But if people no longer share the norms and values of democracy, it is hard to see how the democratic regime can eventually survive.

In this hierarchy diffuse support has often been equated with the legitimacy of a political system or political institutions (Dalton, 1999, p. 58). However, this approach does not distinguish evaluations of political authority as it functions in practice from the normative criteria used to evaluate its performance. Other than in the Eastonian model, in this third approach trust and legitimacy are not sources but indicators of support.

IS THERE A DECLINE OF POLITICAL SUPPORT?

Empirical research seeking to answer the question whether there has been a decline in legitimacy in advanced industrial democracies primarily builds on the third approach outlined above. Remarkably, even in the empirical literature using more or less the same limited longitudinal data, there is anything but consensus with regard to this question. The first large-scale comparative study trying to answer this question was the Beliefs in Government (BIG) project, conducted in the early 1990s (Borre and Scarbrough, 1995; Kaase and Newton, 1995; Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995; Niedermayer and Sinnott, 1995;

Van Deth and Scarbrough, 1995). One of the major problems this project had to deal with was the lack of consistent measurements over time within countries, let alone longitudinal data suitable for comparisons across countries. Nevertheless, this project led to a clear conclusion: ‘The citizens of West European countries have not withdrawn support from their democracies in recent decades. . . The discourse of challenge during the 1970s and 1980s was thus presumably an élite discourse without any real mass basis’ (Klingemann and Fuchs, 1995, p. 435). However, the conclusion of the BIG project was soon challenged. Hardly ten years later, Dalton, on the basis of data for a larger set of countries and a longer time period, came to the opposite conclusion: ‘By almost any measure, public confidence and trust in, and support for, politicians, political parties, and political institutions has eroded over the past generation’ (2004, p. 191). Not much later, Norris came to a diametrically opposite conclusion again, confirming the conclusion based on the BIG project. ‘Public support for the political system has not eroded consistently in established democracies, not across a wide range of countries around the world. The “crisis” myth, while fashionable, exaggerates the extent of political dissatisfaction and too often falls into the dangers of fact free hyperbole’ (2011, p. 241).

While the differences between the earliest studies and later ones may be due to longer time spans and a larger number of countries, it can hardly explain why the more recent studies come to such different conclusions (Van Ham and Thomassen, 2017). Moreover, both Dalton and Norris use the conceptual framework and the instruments of measurement summarized in Table 29.2.

What, then, might solve this issue? At a recent conference Dalton (2012) argued that the answer to the question whether political support has declined over time depends on (1) what you mean by ‘support’, (2) what you mean by ‘over time’ and (3) what you mean by ‘where’. These questions quite nicely indicate the main elements of the controversy.

With regard to the first question, there is hardly a dispute about the highest levels of support in Table 29.2 (Van Ham and Thomassen, 2017; see also Klingemann, 1999; Dalton, 2004; Van de Walle et al., 2008; Marien, 2011; Norris, 2011). At the level of support for the political community, all studies find that support is high and stable, and if anything increasing rather than decreasing. Support for regime principles also seems to be almost universally high, which might be one of the reasons why trends at this level are hardly studied by any of the major comparative studies. Satisfaction with the way democracy works, though fluctuating over time, demonstrates no clear downward trend and therefore is hardly a matter of dispute either. The controversy concerns the level of institutions. According to Dalton political support has declined over time ‘if we mean trust in politicians, parties, parliament’ (see also Chapter 23). In contrast, Norris (2011, 2012) finds no evidence for declining trust in national government, political parties or parliament in European democracies.

The explanation for these differences might be related to what we mean by ‘over time’ and ‘where’, that is, which countries the analysis applies to. Dalton’s analysis refers to a much longer time span than Norris’s analysis. He finds that political support has declined over time ‘if we are comparing trust today to early benchmarks in “the civic culture” age of the 1960s’ (Dalton, 2012). The most significant decline took place in the 1960s and 1970s, with levels of support levelling off in the early 1980s (see also Chapter 23 by Dalton). This might explain why Norris, analysing a later and much shorter period from the mid-1990s until 2008 with Eurobarometer data, finds no evidence for declining trust in

national government, political parties or parliament in European democracies. Therefore, the findings of the two studies are not necessarily inconsistent but apply to different time periods.

What remains is the question as to ‘where’, that is, to which countries can these findings be generalized. Dalton claims that his findings can be generalized to all established democracies. However, the problem is that data covering the whole period from the 1950s or at least the late 1960s are available for just a few countries (i.e., the United States, West Germany, Canada, France, and Sweden). Therefore, it is hard to say whether such a generalization is justified.

As part of a more encompassing project on the decline of legitimacy debate, Van Ham and Thomassen (2017) analysed the available cross-national data on political support, using multiple datasets⁹ for as long a time period as possible (i.e., the mid-1970s/early 1980s until 2012), to evaluate the empirical evidence for declining legitimacy. The thesis of long-term decline of political support in established democracies does not seem to be supported by their analysis. They find no consistent evidence for declining political support, at least not for the period covered by their data, that is, the mid-1970s/early 1980s until 2012. Rather, they find large variation between countries, both in the levels of political support as well as in overtime trends. This analysis conforms to most chapters in this Handbook that focus on different regions of the globe. Consistent patterns of decline are only apparent in North America (Chapter 23 by Dalton) and Central and Eastern Europe (Chapter 26 by Závecz), while the chapters on Latin America (Chapter 24, by Bargsted, Somma and Castillo), Western and Southern Europe (Chapter 25 by Torcal), the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) (Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson), and the Asia-Pacific region (Chapter 28 by Park) emphasize divergent trends and fluctuation in political trust.

However, it must be noted that the data underlying these conclusions generally do not allow looking far back in time. Comparative data for trust in national governments start in the late 1980s and for trust in political parties in the early 1990s. Hence, it may be the case that a decline in political support for political institutions and authorities took place in the 1960s and 1970s, as Dalton (2012) suggests. Otherwise, though, there is no empirical evidence for a universal decline of political support in general, and even of trust in political institutions specifically.

EXPLAINING COUNTRY DIFFERENCES IN POLITICAL SUPPORT: DEMOCRATIC PERFORMANCE OR LONG-TERM UTILITY

Rather than seeking to explain legitimacy decline, it is therefore more fruitful to focus on theories seeking to explain the considerable differences in the levels and trends of political support between countries (Van Ham et al., 2017). At this point, the second approach to the conceptual relations between legitimacy, trust, and political support may be useful. This allows us to ascertain to what extent this variation in political support is due to differences in the evaluation of the democratic performance of the system (legitimacy) rather than in differences in the evaluation of the long-term utility of the system (political trust).

Democratic Values

As argued above, in order to measure people's sense of legitimacy we need to know (1) people's moral judgments or values and (2) their perception of the extent to which the political system conforms to these judgments or values. Since we are interested in the legitimacy of democracy we logically only take into account people's democratic values. The question then is to what extent the functioning of the political system conforms to people's democratic values (democratic performance). Since democracy is an essentially contested concept, this does not give us a firm yardstick to interpret people's evaluation of the actual functioning of democracy as long as we do not know their understanding of democracy. The often used question on satisfaction with the functioning of democracy seeks to bypass this problem by leaving the democratic values that people used as a yardstick for their evaluation implicit. However, this gives us only the outcome of the evaluation, not its content, and thus does not help in interpreting variation across countries or over time.

The first step is thus getting a better understanding of what people mean when they refer to the concept of democracy. Strikingly, in open-ended survey questions people primarily identify democracy in terms of freedom and civil liberties, especially in established democracies and Eastern Europe. By contrast, definitions referring to democracy as a *modus operandi*, that is, to the decision-making procedures and institutions of government, are only about half as frequent as those citing freedom and liberty. Only a tiny minority of 10 per cent of the citizens in established democracies define democracy in terms of social and economic development, equality or justice, or peace and stability (Dalton et al., 2008, pp. 6–9). This massive interpretation of democracy in terms of freedom and civil liberties reflects the historical compromise between two different principles that constitute liberal democracy. The first one is the principle of popular sovereignty: sovereign power is exercised by, or in the name of, the people. The second principle, and at least as important, is that the liberty of individual citizens must be protected against the power of the state, whether or not this power is based on the (majority of the) people. Liberal democracy cannot exist without the principles of the 'rule of law' or the *Rechtsstaat*. Democracy in the limited sense of popular sovereignty and *Rechtsstaat* have different intellectual roots but have been integrated into Western democratic institutions. There is no fixed balance between these two principles that, together, constitute the normative basis of Western liberal democracies. The relative weight of the two principles can be different in different states, or within one state at different times or between different groups of people (Thomassen, 2007).

The importance of both principles of democracy is confirmed by analyses of the module on democratic values in the sixth wave of the European Social Survey, conducted in 2012. In this module people were first asked to indicate on an 11-point rating scale how important 15 different aspects of democracy were to them, 13 of which are relevant to our argument.¹⁰ From a theoretical point of view these aspects can be grouped into four broad categories: the *Rechtsstaat*, democratic decision-making, social justice and direct democracy. The distribution of the responses on these items is extremely skewed.

As the second column of Table 29.3 shows, the mean values vary between 7.4 and 9.2 whereas the maximum value is 10. This is not surprising as these items were selected as at least in theory important aspects of democracy. The respondents in these surveys basically confirm this importance.

The ESS question battery confirms the findings on the meaning of democracy

Table 29.3 Perceived importance of aspects of democracy (European Social Survey, 2012)

Aspect of Democracy	Average Score (0–10)	Country-specific Ranking			
		1st	Top 3	Last 3	Last
<i>Rechtsstaat</i>					
Courts treat everyone the same	9.2	24	27	0	0
Courts able to stop government acting beyond its authority	8.8	0	9	0	0
Media provide reliable information to judge government	8.7	0	4	0	0
Media free to criticize government	8.2	0	0	2	0
Protection of rights of minority groups	8.3	1	0	2	0
<i>Democratic decision-making</i>					
Free and fair elections	8.9	3	18	0	0
Government explains its decisions	8.8	0	13	0	0
Governing parties punished in elections if done a bad job	8.4	0	1	1	0
Opposition parties free to criticize government	8.3	0	0	0	0
Political parties offer clear alternatives	8.0	0	0	11	0
Voters discuss politics before deciding how to vote	7.4	0	0	22	4
<i>Social justice</i>					
Government protects all citizens against poverty	8.7	1	11	0	0
Government seeks to reduce income differences	8.2	0	1	5	0
<i>Direct democracy</i>					
Citizens have final say through referendums	8.3	0	0	2	0

Source: Kriesi and Ferrin (2014).

using the open-ended questions discussed above. The aspects of democracy associated with the *Rechtsstaat* are generally considered more important than aspects associated with the decision-making rules of democracy.¹¹ There is little dispute on the importance of the courts treating everyone equally as an aspect of democracy: it has the highest average score (9.2) and the lowest standard deviation (1.57, not in table); it is in the top three of democratic aspects in all 27 countries in which the survey was held, and the single most important aspect in 24 of these countries. The items in the cluster on decision-making procedures with the highest importance score are free and fair elections, transparency (the government explaining its decisions) and accountability (governing parties being punished in elections if they have done a bad job). These items are clearly related to popular sovereignty.

Therefore, although less outspoken than the answers to open-ended questions, these findings suggest that of the two main dimensions of liberal democracy, popular sovereignty and the *Rechtsstaat*, people tend to consider the *Rechtsstaat* as the most important one. Therefore, we expect the quality of the *Rechtsstaat* to have a major effect on people's evaluation of democracy.

Long-term Interests

Considerably less attention has been devoted to the operationalization of long-term utility. Above we referred to Easton's notion that political trust is based on the belief that one's interests are taken into account by the authorities. This implies a need to determine what citizens regard as their most important interests in such an evaluation, similar to the attempts to discover which democratic norms citizens perceive as most important. As an operationalization of long-term utility, Easton argues, it is experience with the authorities' handling of one's interests that contributes to trust. One way of measuring this is by long-term economic performance. We are therefore not interested in short-term fluctuations in macroeconomic performance (inflation or employment rates etc.). A country's GDP per capita, however, is relatively stable over a longer period of time and may serve as an appropriate (albeit rather crude) indicator, embedded in a large body of literature studying the government's macroeconomic performance as an explanation of variation in political support (see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer).

Democratic or Macroeconomic Performance?

If we want to assess the relative contribution of democratic performance (legitimacy) and long-term utility (trust) to political support, a first step would be to compare the performance in terms of the *Rechtsstaat* with macroeconomic performance in terms of GDP, as the previous section suggests. The performance on criteria of the *Rechtsstaat* is the focus of recent scholarship on the 'quality of government' (QoG). Rothstein and Teorell (2008) define quality of government in terms of the impartiality of the executive, which is at the basis of more specific aspects of the quality of government, like professional bureaucracies and the quality of public service, the rule of law and the absence of corrupt practices. This is quite similar to the criteria of the *Rechtsstaat* as discussed above.

Van der Meer (2017) tries to assess the relative effect of the quality of government and GDP per capita on support for various political objects. For that purpose, he relies on both the actual quality of government (measured by expert judgments) and people's evaluations of impartiality, rule of law and professionalism.¹² His main findings are that the objective quality of government is far more important for the explanation of political support than the state of the economy. Although people's evaluations of impartiality, rule of law and professionalism are directly related to political support, they fail as intervening variables between the quality of government and political support. However, there is an interaction between quality of government and the importance people attach to the relevant aspects of democracy: the more importance people attach to impartiality, rule of law and professionalism, the stronger the effect of quality of government on political support. Therefore, despite all possible caveats, we can conclude that the *Rechtsstaat/QoG* seems to be more important for explaining the level of political support than long-term utility measured as GDP per capita.

Legitimacy as a Reservoir of Goodwill

At least as interesting as the relative effect of legitimacy and long-term utility is the interaction between legitimacy and (short-term) economic performance. As early as

the 1950s, Lipset (1959) tried to explain why some European democracies, the Weimar Republic in particular, fell for the lure of fascism and national socialism, whereas other countries like the Scandinavian and Low Countries did not. This, he argued, was due to the fact that in the latter countries the democratic political system was legitimate whereas in Germany it was not. Therefore, the democratic regime did not immediately lose its support during the economic crisis in the early 1930s because it was sustained by a ‘reservoir of goodwill’ provided by the legitimacy of the regime. In Germany this reservoir was absent because the norms and values of democracy were hardly rooted in the political culture of this country. Therefore, the negative effect of the policy failure of the German political system during the crisis was not mitigated by its legitimacy as it was in other countries with a more established democratic system (Lipset, 1959, p. 86).

In a similar vein Magalhães (2017) tests whether the insight from the social psychology of organizations that ‘outcome favorability’ and ‘procedural fairness’ interact in the explanation of support for decision-makers and organizations applies to the world of politics as well. If it does, ‘we should expect citizens’ evaluation of regimes and their institutions to be particularly affected by economic performance in those countries where the quality of government is lowest’. This hypothesis is corroborated. Analysing data from the European Social Survey, Magalhães confirms Lipset’s classic hypothesis. He finds that both economic performance and quality of government have an effect on political support. But at least as important is his finding that countries with a high quality of government are less sensitive to short-term fluctuations in economic performance:

In countries with low quality of governance, good economic performance can drive satisfaction and trust to relatively high levels. However, economic crises bring support down with a bang in such contexts. Specific support may be contingent on economic performance, but this is especially the case in countries where political and policy-making institutions are of low quality, impartiality and fairness. (Magalhães, 2017, p. 19)

In conclusion, assuming that the quality of government is strongly related to legitimacy, legitimacy appears to be a far more important and stable source of political support than long-term (economic) utility or policy performance.

CONCLUSION

This chapter explored the relationship between political trust, legitimacy and political support, concepts that are all too often conflated. We started out with a conceptual analysis of these three terms and identified three approaches in the literature. The first approach defines legitimacy as a sense of duty that generates compliance regardless of trust or support. It is rarely put to use within political science, with a possible exception for the study of electoral turnout. The second approach is by David Easton, in which legitimacy is defined as the perception that the authorities conform to the same democratic moral principles as the citizen, and trust as the feeling of the members of a political system that their long-term interests will be looked after by the authorities. In this approach, legitimacy and trust are separate sources of political support. The third approach conceives of legitimacy and trust as components of diffuse political support. It builds on Easton’s refined conceptual framework, by reducing it to a single dimension,

running from specific support for the authorities and public policy via support for the institutions and authorities (political trust) to diffuse support for the political regime and the political community (legitimacy).

Subsequently, we investigated how these approaches applied to existing empirical research. The third approach, understanding political trust and legitimacy as components of political support in general, has been primarily applied in the decline of legitimacy debate. A general overview of the literature suggests no consistent evidence for a decline of political support, at least not since the 1980s. Instead, empirical evidence suggests substantial cross-country and over-time variation in political support.

The second approach, with legitimacy (as evaluation based on democratic values) and political trust (as long-term utility) as separate sources of political support, proved useful to understand the causes of these cross-national differences. As people's sense of legitimacy implies an evaluation of the political system in terms of their (democratic) values, we first assessed what these values are in order to measure legitimacy. Comparative research clearly shows that what people primarily associate with democracy and what is most important to them are the values of the rule of law or the *Rechtsstaat*, in particular equal treatment by the judiciary and the executive. This, we argued, is a strong justification for focusing on the state's performance with regard to these aspects of the *Rechtsstaat*. Recent scholarship shows indeed that the quality of government (operationalized in terms of impartiality and equal treatment) is far more effective in explaining country differences in political support than long-term utilities (operationalized as GDP/capita), and that quality of government mitigates the negative effects of short-term policy failures on political support. This twin effect of quality of government on political support suggests the empirical importance of legitimacy in comparison to utilitarian considerations for citizens' political support.

While this chapter and the previous ones in this Handbook show a lack of hard evidence for a long-term structural decline of legitimacy in most democratic countries, it would be short-sighted and naive to think that this Handbook could put an end to the crisis of legitimacy debate. First, although there is no hard evidence for a general long-term decline of political support, in many countries political trust is extremely low, not only trust in major political actors as politicians and political parties but also even in parliament, one of the major pillars of representative democracy. Around 2010 in several Southern and East European democracies as well as in countries like the UK and the USA the vast majority of citizens have no trust in parliament (Van Ham and Thomassen, 2017; see also Chapter 23 by Dalton, Chapter 25 by Torcal and Chapter 26 by Závecz). Second, political support strongly declined since the onset of the Great Recession in 2008, in particular in the countries most severely hit by the crisis. While the current decline of political support might have been triggered by the economic crisis, it might also be a reflection of a deeper crisis in people's beliefs about the development of society and politics (see also Chapter 25 by Torcal): converging crises fit in a more general pattern of globalization leading to feelings of insecurity and powerlessness that in turn undermine people's belief in the effectiveness and trustworthiness of the major actors and institutions of representative democracy. Third, the aggregate developments we referred to in this chapter can easily mask major differences between citizens within countries. As several studies have shown, there seems to be a gap between the winners and losers of globalization, between the well-educated and lower-educated groups in society. It is this latter group of people in

particular who have less trust in the political establishment as is shown by survey research. As Éric Bélanger shows in Chapter 15, they are more inclined to vote for populist parties giving a voice to people's dissatisfaction with the developments referred to above and with the political establishment. However, if these parties keep winning an increasing proportion of the electoral vote but are permanently excluded from governmental power either because the established parties form a closed cartel against them or because of their own choice, this might lead to an even further loss of confidence in the existing political order.

Our findings on the causes of the differences in political support between countries have major implications for the debate on the improvement of democracy. It has often been argued that the cure for democracy is more democracy, that is, in order to cure people's dissatisfaction with democracy one should reform and improve democracy so as to give citizens a better say in political decision-making. From a normative democratic perspective this conclusion is hardly disputed. However, as recent empirical research seems to indicate (see Chapter 17 by Van der Meer for an overview), attempts to increase the legitimacy of democracy by political engineering at the input side of the political system might have only weak or indirect effects on strengthening citizen perceptions of its legitimacy. The cure for democracy, or at least for the *legitimacy* of democracy is not necessarily more democracy but better quality of governance (as is confirmed by the extensive overviews by Grimes (Chapter 16), Kumlin and Haugsgjerd (Chapter 18) and Uslaner (Chapter 19)). This conclusion seems to confirm the argument made by people like Kornhauser (1959) in the 1950s that the long-term stability of democracy depends on the extent to which it is founded on a well-established *Rechtsstaat*. This clearly indicates what should be the major concern for developing and well-established democracies alike.

NOTES

1. Some discussion occurs in Chapter 1 by Van der Meer and Zmerli, Chapter 13 by Van Deth, Chapter 16 by Grimes and Chapter 27 by Hutchison and Johnson.
2. Parts of the discussion on legitimacy in this chapter derive from earlier research by the authors, and can be found in Van Ham et al. (2016).
3. In addition, all ESS rounds comprise the standard question of trust in the police: 'Using this card, please tell me on a score of 0 to 10 how much you personally trust each of the institutions I read out. 0 means you do not trust an institution at all, and 10 means you have complete trust: The police'.
4. Where 'rightful' means 'in accordance with accepted standards of moral or legal behavior, justice, etc.' (Gilley, 2006, p. 500).
5. This table was copied from Fuchs (1989, p. 18) and translated back into English by the authors.
6. Although he does not expand on this, according to Easton (1975, p. 451), 'the notion is even applicable to political communities. Separatist ethnic and linguistic groups typically consider morally unacceptable and untrustworthy those political communities in which they are reduced to a subordinate, disadvantaged status'.
7. For a more comprehensive overview of measures of legitimacy see Van Ham and Thomassen (2012).
8. Some of these measurements can certainly be criticized: Is national pride a proper operationalization of support for the political community? Are political parties best seen as political institutions or as political authorities? Are questions about trust in a whole category (parties, politicians) appropriate when it is inherent in a democratic system that citizens must make a choice between components of that category?
9. The following datasets were analysed: the World Values Survey and the European Values Study (WVS/EVS), the Eurobarometer surveys (Eurobarometer), the European Election Studies (EES), and the European Social Survey (ESS).
10. We excluded the items 'Politicians take into account the views of other European governments' and 'Immigrants only get the right to vote once they become citizens' from the analysis as, in our view, these items refer to European integration and citizenship rules respectively, not to democracy.

11. In contrast to the open-ended questions in the regional barometers, the ESS method yields social justice, measured in terms of government responsibility for the equality of incomes, and protection against poverty as important elements of democracy as well, just like direct democracy in the form of referendums.
12. These evaluations are similar to the legitimacy judgments based on the ESS discussed above.

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