

Introduction

With rising populism, trust in politics and politicians is decreasing (Inglehart & Norris 2016). Political institutions on different geographical levels, such as the United Nations (UN), the European Union (EU), as well as national governments may encounter effects of such decreased or lack of trust (Trithart & Case 2023; Bauer & Morisi 2023; European Commission 2021).

However, do the different levels of trust have an influence on the next higher geographical level and its corresponding political entity? Can we see whether low trust in the European parliament corresponds with low levels of trust in the UN? Lamprianou and Charalambous have complemented cue theory of existing studies that researched how citizens' opinion-forming on the transnational level is influenced by politics on the national level by analysing the effect of trust in the EU on the levels of trust in the UN (2018). In the light of governments managing crises such as the Covid-19 pandemic as well as the Financial Crisis of 2008, trust in politics more generally has been researched (Algan et al. 2017, Roth et al. 2011, Roth et al. 2013, Devine et al. 2023)

This political mistrust is often associated with people who fit the profile of globalisation losers. These can be characterised by their stances towards the economy, immigrants and the government, as well as through socioeconomic factors such as education, age, place of residency, unemployment, household income (Gordon 2018) and attachment to one's country (Steenvoorden & Hartevelt 2018: 30).

First, I summarise shortly relevant literature concerning political trust and the globalisation loser profile. Next, I introduce the European Social Survey Round 10 of 2023 which I use to conduct a logistic regression analysis. I check whether my model of trust dependency is better with or without taking into consideration the global loser profile with a Wald test. In addition to computing the Odds Ratio for the impact of trust in both the EU parliament and the national parliament on trust in the UN, I also check, whether there is a significant interaction effect between countries and trust in the EU parliament. Finally, I compute the predicted probabilities for an average European citizen to have trust in the UN based on their trust in European politics.

Literature Review

Trust on the European level to international trust

Lamprianou and Charalambous have made use of the Voice of the People survey series, the European Social Survey, the Eurobarometer, and the World Value Survey to determine whether the citizens take cues from politics on a European level to "[...] assess the trustworthiness of the UN" (2018: 483). According to the authors, this is particularly the case, if "[...] EU citizens do not have information, are not interested, or are not politically efficacious [...]" (2018: 483). Thus, the European Union is often seen as a proxy of the less politicised UN, and both are seen in contrast to one's own national politics (Lamprianou & Charalambous 2018: 483). Previous studies have focussed on how attitudes towards national politics shape one's opinion of transnational institutions and found implications "[...] that different forms of trust in political institutions are inextricably linked [...]" (Lamprianou & Charalambous 2018: 467).

Globalisation losers and trust in supranational political institutions

In order to connect the globalisation loser profile to citizens' level of trust, one has to define what this characterisation looks like. In an attempt to create "[...] a less reductive approach [...]" in the case of the United Kingdom during the phase of Brexit, he explains that voters of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) - which were in favour of Brexit - also exhibited distrust in the government (Gordon 2017: 2), which can be related back to the impact of crises. More generally, populism serves as a connector between citizens and the concept of political trust, as populists play rhetorically with the globalisation losers' already crumbling trust in political institutions (Gordon 2017: 6ff.). Steenvoorden and Harteveld have complemented this profile by evaluating also attachment to one's "heartland", thus an imagined and romanticised past (2018: 29) with implications on the perceptions of local politics, as for example by a national government, as I argue.

Following previous research, I argue that trust in the EU and national politics can have an overlapping effect on the trust levels in the UN. Furthermore, given that in political crises, such as Brexit, citizens perceived as "globalisation losers", have significant distrust in the political establishment, I expect similar effects on trust in the UN. This results in my research question: *Does the globalisation loser profile equally explains trust in the UN as both trust in national or European politics?*

Theory

Previously, I have explored how distrust on a more local level, as well as certain socioeconomic variables, play a role on an international level. In order to build my hypotheses, I first explain what political trust is and how it may be measured, and then, how I define losers of globalisation conceptually.

Political trust, in its broadest sense, encompasses citizens' evaluations of key institutions within a polity. It includes a broad "[...] assessment of attributes that contribute to the trustworthiness of political institutions, including credibility, fairness, competence, transparency in policy-making, and openness to diverse perspectives". Political trust is crucial for the functionality of democratic societies, influencing the stability and legitimacy of democratic regimes with implications on citizens' behaviour and attitudes towards politics. In this paper, I follow a top-down approach, which emphasises the performance of political institutions, as perceived by the citizens through the proxy of trust. Political trust may be measured by questions about the confidence in various political institutions, as in surveys such as the World Values Survey or the European Social Survey (Zmerli 2014: 4887ff.).

Based on previous literature on cue-taking effects from trust in national and European politics on trust in the UN, my hypothesis H1 is: *The less a person has trust in both European or national politics, the lower will be also that person's trust in the UN.*

On the other side, globalisation losers can be defined according to specific socio-economic factors. For instance, Kriesi et al. (2008) and Bornschier (2010) argue that employment status and education are principal explanatory factors for fitting a globalisation loser profile. This implies that a low-skilled person who is unemployed might be more exposed to the risks of becoming a "globalisation loser". This also taps into the domain of income, as I expect a higher-skilled person to earn better. I argue that also in this case age plays a certain role, as well, since I do not expect the older generations as well trained in the technological environment for instance nowadays, as their younger peers. Additionally, Kenny and Luca have been able to discern differences in the perception of globalisation and migration depending on a person's domicile (2021: 566), such that a person in a rather rural area would hold more hostile views against both issues than a rather urban person. This is also reinforced by previous findings which indicate that a person with a certain attachment to a rather local or national identity will have different views on globalisation in juxtaposition to a person with a European or even an international identity (Teney et al 2014: 587). Therefore, my second hypothesis, H2, is as

follows: *The more a person's socioeconomic profile and specific political views match the globalisation user's profile, the less trust they will have in the UN.*

Data

For my analysis, I make use of the European Social Survey (ESS) Wave 10 from 2020, with the topic "Democracy, Digital social contacts". This particular round included respondents from 31 countries in Europe and was collected from mid-September 2020 to September 2022 with a response rate of 70%. This wave encompassed socio-economic variables, as well as items about political behaviour and corresponding views. The ESS was established in 2001 and since then gathered responses about "[...] public attitudes and values within Europe and [...] how they interact with Europe's changing institutions [...]" in 40 countries (ESS ERIC 2023).

In the sample of the ESS10, I have 17670 observations for 514 variables in total. However, when restricting the dataset to the variables that I use for the analysis and removing NAs, I am left with a filtered dataset of 1511 observations for eleven variables.

The variables I use will be *trstun* (trust in the UN, recoded as a binary variable, such that the lower three levels become the base category and the upper three levels the comparison category), *trstep* (trust in the European Parliament), *trstprl* (trust in country's parliament), *imbgeco* (views on whether immigrants are good or bad for country's economy), *atchctr* (levels of emotional attachment to a specific country), *edulvlb* (education levels, recoded to four categories based on ISCED scores), *domicil* (respondents' description of their place of residence), *agea* (the respondent's age, recoded to higher or equal), *hinctnta* (respondents incomes originally in deciles, recoded in quintiles), *uemp12m* (a binary variable measuring whether a respondent had "[a]ny period of unemployment and work seeking [that] lasted 12 months or more"), and later on, for further analysis, also the variable *cuntry* (country) (ESS ERIC 2023).

Method

Logistic Regression

Logistic regression is a statistical technique designed for modelling the likelihood of a binary outcome, where the dependent variable can take on only two values, thus, in most cases success

or failure, or, the occurrence or non-occurrence of an event, respectively. In my case, it is the remodelled response variable *trstun*, which indicates whether somebody has (rather) no trust at all or (rather) has complete trust. It is tested by the aforementioned explanatory factors, which are both of categorical and continuous nature. The logistic regression model generally employs the logistic function (sigmoid function) to transform a linear combination of predictor variables, providing a probability estimate between 0 and 1 (Long 1997: 34ff.).

The first logistic regression equation is expressed as follows:

$$v = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{trstep} + \beta_2 x_{trstprl} + \beta_3 x_{imbgeco} + \beta_4 x_{atchctr} + \beta_5 x_{uemp12m} + \beta_6 x_{edulvlb} \\ + \beta_7 x_{domicil} + \beta_8 x_{hinctnta} + \beta_9 x_{agea} + \varepsilon$$

$$trstun = P(Y_1 = 1) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(v)}}$$

which both contains the trust profile (denoted by the variables *trstep* and *trstprl*) and the globalisation loser profile (*imbgeco*, *atchctr*, *uemp12m*, *edulvlb*, *domicil*, *hinctnta*, *agea*). Here, $P(Y_1 = 1)$ represents the probability of the respondent having rather complete trust (1) in the UN, compared to having rather a low trust in the UN (0). β_0 is the intercept, $\beta_1 \dots \beta_9$ are the respective coefficients, which get multiplied by the independent variables $x_{trstep} \dots x_{agea}$. Lastly, there is the random error term ε , which stands for the variance that cannot be explained by my model. Generally, the first line represents the linear component, however, it needs to be transformed to a non-linear function, as shown by the exponential term in the second line of the equations, to accommodate the logistic nature, and, thus put into event probability (Prof. Frenzel 2023).

$$trstun = P(Y_2 = 1) = \frac{1}{1 + e^{-(\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_{trstep} + \beta_2 x_{trstprl} + \varepsilon)}}$$

Next, I also perform a Wald test, to determine whether the first equation (trust & globalisation user profile) or the second equation (only trust profile) displays a better fit for the data. More generally, the Wald test may assess the validity of constraints, in my case a reduced model with only the trust profile, imposed on the model parameters. It considers the difference between constrained and unconstrained estimates and the curvature of the log likelihood function: Thus, the test quantifies the disagreement between constrained and unconstrained estimates. A larger difference suggests the constraint might not hold. Moreover, it considers the curvature of the log-likelihood function (Long 1997: 87ff.).

Transformation of Variables

In this section, I want to briefly describe the transformations of the variables that I have made for making my analysis possible and valid.

First, I have recoded the *trstun* variable, which originally had ten parameter values, into a binary one, where zero denotes the category “rather no trust”, and includes the lower three parameter values, and one represents the category “rather complete trust”, and encompasses the upper three parameter values. Furthermore, to only keep the participants that have reached the voting age of most countries, I take a subset of all the respondents that are over 17 for further analysis.

Next, I have simplified the education variable *edulvlb* by creating four different categories based on the ISCED scores (0-1, 2-3, 3-4, 5-6). Simplification has also been done to the *domicil* variable, such that the first category is about living in “a big city”, the second category is about living in “Suburbs or outskirts of big city” or “Town or small city”, the third category is having their domicile in a “Country village” or a “Farm or home in countryside” (ESS ERIC 2023). Then, I also transform the original income categories in deciles to quintiles.

In the dataset provided by the lecturers, the post-stratification weight was missing. This is why I calculated it on my own by multiplying the population weight *pweight* with the design weight *dweight*.

Lastly, I remove the NAs from the variables I want to make use of in my analysis

Results

Logistic Regression

Table 1: Outcome of Logistic Regression Y_1

Deviance Residuals:

Min	1Q	Median	3Q	Max
-4.4184	-0.1148	-0.0329	0.0908	4.3784

Coefficients:

	Estimate	Std. Error	z value	Pr(> z)	
(Intercept)	-5.826160	1.070131	-5.444	5.20e-08	***
trstep	0.969181	0.080812	11.993	< 2e-16	***
trstprl	0.287812	0.069701	4.129	3.64e-05	***
imbgeco	0.014623	0.058846	0.248	0.8038	
atchctr	-0.019288	0.069712	-0.277	0.7820	
uempl2m	0.550298	0.328959	1.673	0.0944	.
edulvlb	0.053985	0.215541	0.250	0.8022	
domicil	-0.351028	0.228656	-1.535	0.1247	
hinctnta	0.029331	0.114342	0.257	0.7976	
agea	0.006259	0.010847	0.577	0.5639	

Signif. codes: 0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

(Dispersion parameter for binomial family taken to be 1)

Null deviance: 1118.13 on 1510 degrees of freedom
Residual deviance: 303.92 on 1501 degrees of freedom
AIC: 262.87

Number of Fisher Scoring iterations: 7

First, I run the regression analysis which evaluates the impact of both the trust profile and the globalisation loser profile. From all the variables, my trust profile is highly significant, including positive estimates of 0.97 for trust in the European parliament and 0.29 for trust in the national parliament. This implies that if a person has more trust in their national parliament or, even more so, trust in the European Parliament they are also more likely to have trust in the UN. Considering the globalisation loser profile, only the unemployment variable *uempl2m* is slightly significant on the 0.1 level. Therefore, I see much more confirmation for the trust profile rather than the globalisation profile. The overall fit is good, as indicated by a lower residual deviance of the model including the predictor variables than the null deviance of the intercept model.

Wald test

In order to understand better if the model with only the trust profile would be better than including also the globalisation loser profile, I first evaluate the model with only the independent variables `trstep` and `trstprl` and then perform a Wald test to find the better fit.

Table 2

```
Deviance Residuals:
    Min       1Q   Median       3Q      Max
-4.6071 -0.1149 -0.0330  0.0990  4.4567

Coefficients:
            Estimate Std. Error z value Pr(>|z|)
(Intercept) -4.90645    0.37199  -13.19 < 2e-16 ***
trstep       0.95439    0.07592   12.57 < 2e-16 ***
trstprl      0.28987    0.06371    4.55 5.38e-06 ***
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Signif. codes:  0 '***' 0.001 '**' 0.01 '*' 0.05 '.' 0.1 ' ' 1

(Dispersion parameter for binomial family taken to be 1)

    Null deviance: 1118.13  on 1510  degrees of freedom
Residual deviance:  311.13  on 1508  degrees of freedom
AIC: 257.94

Number of Fisher Scoring iterations: 6
```

Here again, both trust variables are significant and point in the same direction as before, such that increasing trust in either the European parliament or national parliament is associated with an increase in trust in the UN, whereas a bit less strong than in the previous model that encompassed both profiles. Furthermore, the model, including the predictor variables, exhibits a good overall fit, as shown by its lower residual deviance compared to the null deviance of the intercept model.

Table 3: Wald test

```
Model 1: trstun ~ trstep + trstprl + imbgeco + atchctr + uemp12m +edulvlb
+ domicil + hinctnta + agea
Model 2: trstun ~ trstep + trstprl
      Res.Df Df    F Pr(>F)
1      1501
2      1508 -7  1.0009 0.4287
```

Since the Wald test was not significant, I cannot assume that the globalisation profile in model 1 makes the overall fit better. Thus, the trust profile is a better fit than it being combined with the globalisation loser profile.

Odds Ratio

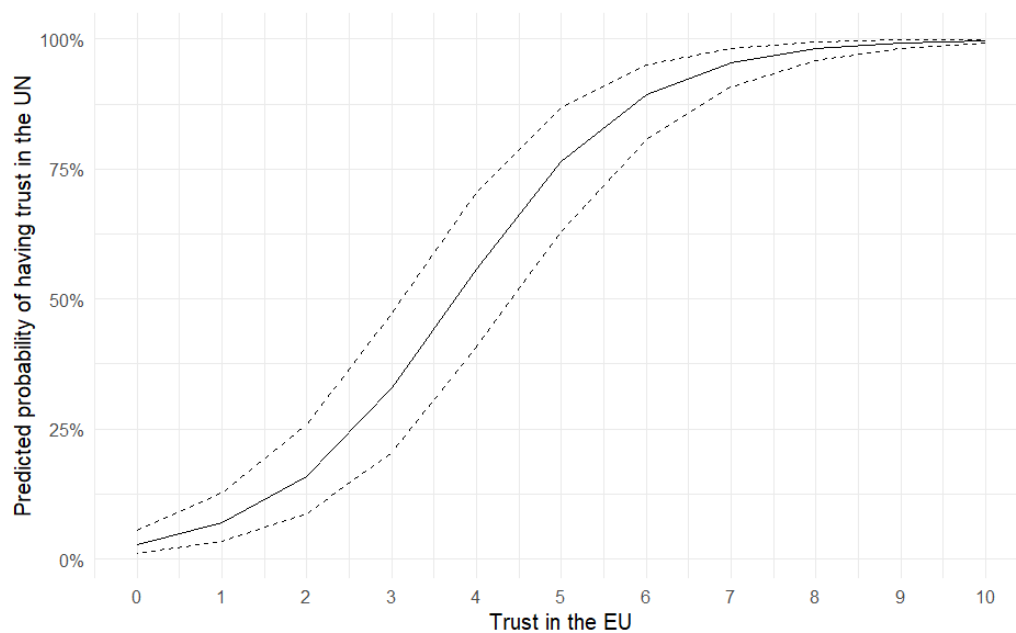
Now, calculating the Odds Ratio to better interpret the coefficients, I focus on the results of the trust variables, as the previous Wald test determined the model with only these predictors is a better fit. I get the following results: The Odds Ratio for the *trstep* variables is ~ 2.64 , which, thus, indicates a 164% increase in the odds of having rather more trust in the UN in the case of a one-unit increase in the *trstep* variable. In the case of the variable *trstprl* the Odds Ratio is at ~ 1.33 , indicating a 33% increase in the odds of having rather more trust in the UN in the case of a one-unit increase in the *trstprl* variable.

Interaction Effect

Next, I check whether an interaction effect between the predictor variables *trstep* and *cntry* adds to a better model fit by evaluating the first model without the interaction effect but only keeping the respondents that have replied to the *cntry* variable and then calculating the second model with the interaction effect. With a Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) of 316.08 model 1 (without the interaction effect) provides a better model fit than model 2 with a BIC of 439.37.

Predicted Probabilities

Figure 1: Predicted Probabilities of average European to have trust in the EU



This graph denotes the predicted probabilities – with its confidence intervals which are small – for a person, who is roughly 49 1/2 years old person which lives in a suburban area or a small city, that has a household's total net income within the 5th or 6th decile, that has an education on the ICED level 3 or 4 and is emotionally attached to his or her own country, that slights swings towards finding immigration bad for the economy, and also tends to not trust its own country's parliament follow an s-shaped curve, with slow growth in the beginning, linear between trust levels three and five, and then again slow growth, which in the end smooths out, thus, following rather a logistic curve in general. Therefore, the probability of having trust in the UN does not proportionally grow with the trust in the EU in the beginning, then the trust rapidly increases and it reaches with the trust in the EU levels 8-10 also full trust with the UN, as well. Therefore, generally, it can be said that if trust in the UN grows with trust in the EU.

Discussion

The findings of my study contribute to the understanding of the relationship between political trust at different levels and whether the globalisation loser profile exerts an equally viable influence on trust in international organisations. The results from my main model suggest a significant positive association between trust in both the European and national parliaments and trust in the United Nations, respectively. This implies that individuals who express higher levels of trust in their national and European political institutions are more likely to extend that trust to the UN and, thus, confirms my first hypothesis H1. This aligns with previous research emphasising the interdependence of trust in various political institutions.

However, the analysis also reveals that variables associated with the globalisation loser profile, such as socio-economic variables and political attitudes, do not consistently contribute to the prediction of trust in the UN, and, therefore, I cannot confirm the second hypothesis. The significance of the trust profile in comparison to the globalisation loser profile indicates that political trust may play a more dominant role in shaping attitudes toward international institutions, which is reinforced by the Wald test results, suggesting that the model focusing solely on the trust profile provides a better fit than the one including both trust and globalisation loser profiles. This stresses the importance of political trust as a strong predictor of the perception of international political institutions. Thus, in answer to my research question, I can state that the globalisation profile does not equally explain trust in the UN as the trust profile.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this paper provides insights on the association between political trust on a national and transnational level, as well as the globalisation loser profile, and trust in the United Nations. The results highlight the principle role of political trust on lower geographical levels in shaping attitudes toward international political entities, with trust in the European and national parliaments serving as significant predictors of trust in the UN. In comparison to the trust profile, variables associated with the globalisation loser profile show barely any impact.

These findings may have implications for scholars and policy-makers seeking to understand the dynamics of political trust and its consequences for citizens' agreement to transnational cooperation. Fostering trust at the national and European levels may positively contribute to building trust in international institutions. Future studies could delve deeper into the mechanisms through which political trust works and explore potential political action to enhance trust in both national and international political entities, especially in times of crisis.

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