Political confidence after civil war: Peacebuilding strategies and public opinion in 30 countries

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Abstract

The period following a civil war is fragile, and many conflicts reignite after only a few years. A growing literature examines how different peacebuilding strategies such as political power sharing, transitional justice, and peacekeeping operations can increase the likelihood of lasting peace. These theories often implicitly assume causal relations at the micro level, such as rebels' and supporters' sense of security and trust in postwar government, but rely almost exclusively on macro level aggregates in large-N studies. This paper examines the underlying assumption in previous theories and asks how various peacebuilding strategies influence political confidence among citizens in postwar societies. Previous research has found that political violence often leaves behind a legacy of attitudes detrimental to the development of stable peace and democracy. Combining these two strands of literature, we examine the role of political trust in postwar societies. Theories on stable peace after war differ, but often argue that social and political trust and regime legitimacy can be achieved through peacebuilding strategies. If citizens trust the government and the political institutions and believe that people have a say in politics, they should be less likely to support violence and insurgence as ways to gain influence. We expect that variations in peacebuilding strategies influence individuals' confidence in the government effectuating these strategies, and, ultimately, that this confidence or lack of confidence – explains risk of recurring conflict. The paper examines peacebuilding strategies and political confidence using cross-sectional survey data from 28 postconflict countries between 1984 and 2009.

Introduction

The period following a civil war is fragile, and many conflicts reignite after only a few years. A growing literature examines how different peacebuilding strategies such as political power sharing, transitional justice, and peacekeeping operations can increase the likelihood of lasting peace. These theories often implicitly assume causal relations at the micro level, such as rebels' and supporters' sense of security and trust in postwar government, but rely almost exclusively on macro level aggregates in large-N studies. It is commonly assumed that people affect the society in which they live, and that public opinion help determine political outcomes. It is therefore problematic that mass attitudes in the aftermath of violent conflict have been largely absent from the literature. For example, for political institutions to be effective, they should at least see some minimum of support, not only among elites, but also in the general population. Additionally, the institutional context probably affects public opinion. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Dayton agreement brought an end to the violence, but it also cemented Bosnian postwar politics along ethnic lines (McMahon & Western, 2009), a fact that could explain the continuing patterns of ethnic voting (Sandovici, 2010).

Postwar societies and postwar political institutions have some unique characteristics which make them different from other societies, such as the legacy of violence, the way in which the current political regime came into being (for example a peace agreement or a clear-cut military victory), and institutions designed specifically to address conflict issues (such as transitional justice and peacekeeping operations). While there is large variation also among postconflict countries, we argue that together, the characteristics of postwar situations and peacebuilding strategies influence postwar public opinion and provide the foundation for stable and democratic postconflict societies.

At present, the literature on public opinion and armed conflict is limited. The general literature on public opinion is very broad, but the large majority of studies are based on data from stable democracies in the Western hemisphere, and little has been done to combine insights from public opinion studies with the study of armed conflict. The general theories on political confidence highlight both cultural and institutional explanations: that trust in political institutions is a result of early-life socialization and interpersonal trust and a consequence of the performance of the institutions themselves (Mishler & Rose, 2001). While the literature reaches diverging conclusions about the relationship (Newton, 2007), recent research shows that general theories on political confidence do not fully capture institutional trust in countries ravaged by violent conflict (Dyrstad & Binningsbø 2012). Therefore, while we not at all disregard the explanatory effect of the well-established theories on public opinion, we anticipate that factors unique to postconflict countries influence trust in political institutions that is previously unaccounted for. First, the war itself may generate low confidence. Previous research shows that personal exposure to warfare can significantly affect people's political attitudes (Dyrstad, 2012) as well as ability to forgive and reconcile after war (Bakke et al., 2009). The experience of life-threatening conditions and loss of relatives and friends due to the war could make people more suspicious and less

trusting, which in turn would make them less disposed to confide in political institutions. We also expect that how the war ended has an important influence on postwar political trust: did the conflict end by harsh measures in a total military victory or through negotiations reaching a compromise settlement?

Additionally, we expect the peacebuilding strategies implemented in postconflict societies to influence people's trust in governing institutions. Political power sharing ensures broad representation in decision-making bodies and is likely to strengthen individuals' support for such institutions. Further, United Nations peacekeeping operations contribute to security and stability, as well as rebuilding infrastructure, tasks we anticipate increase political trust. Various transitional justice processes may also be important in strengthening reconciliation among people living in postconflict states and as such strengthening the legitimacy of the postwar government.

The paper proceeds as follows: the next section starts with describing why political trust is important to study in postconflict societies, before it briefly elaborates on general theories about political trust. Thereafter we explain how conflict related factors and peacebuilding strategies can contribute to strengthen – or diminish – political trust in the aftermath of armed conflict. After discussing the relevant theories about political trust and presented our hypotheses we move on to describing the data and method we use. The last two sections are devoted to the analyses and discussion of our findings.

What explains postconflict political trust?

It is widely assumed that when citizens trust political institutions and participate in the political system, they contribute to stable, "deep" democracy (Almond & Verba, 1963; Lipset, 1959; Putnam, 1993). Confidence in the political system is also an indicator of regime legitimacy. High levels of political trust work as a guarantee of the system. Similarly, good institutions yield higher trust, thereby creating a virtuous circle of good governance and high levels of political trust. How to get this virtuous circle started is one of the topics of the large literature of democratic consolidation. In this paper, our focus is on a specific subset of countries, namely, states with a recent history of internal armed conflict.

States evolving from a civil war face the twin challenges of maintaining peace and creating good governance, i.e. a transition from war to democracy (Jarstad & Sisk, 2008). Much of the conflict recurrence literature has focused on institutional characteristics, explicitly or implicitly claiming a causal effect of these institutions on rebels' motivation to restart conflict (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; Walter, 2002), rebel sympathizers' support for violent opposition (Mukherjee, 2006), and opponents' ability to use violence against the postwar government (Toft, 2010). We argue that central in these relationships is regime legitimacy; the trust ordinary people have in the institutions governing their country. Satisfied citizens will not wage war against the state. If people have confidence in the political system, they are less supportive of mobilization and renewed insurgency, as they believe that their grievances can be solved peacefully within the system. Rather than studying the correlation between peacebuilding strategies and conflict

resumption, assuming an effect of the strategies on people's attitudes, we focus explicitly on the link between postconflict peacebuilding strategies and people's political trust following internal armed conflict.

The basic supposition in this paper is that in countries which have recently experienced armed conflict, factors related to the conflict itself and its aftermath play crucial roles in explaining political trust. We expect that such factors add to the explained variance of factors commonly used to explain political trust in all types of societies, regardless of conflictual heritage. Below we briefly describe recent theories on political confidence before we elaborate on the effect we hypothesize conflict and peacebuilding variables have.

General theories about political trust

Based on previous research, we focus on three sets of determinants of political trust: the performance of political institutions, people's socioeconomic status, and their general feeling of trust (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Newton, 2007; Newton & Zmerli, 2011; Norris, 1999; Zmerli & Newton, 2008).

Newton (2001) argues that political trust is shaped by the political system more than traits of the individual. He further argues that political trust is "a reflection of the external and objective conditions", which "makes trust scores a litmus test of how well the political system is performing in the eyes of the citizens. Low trust suggests that something in the political system – politicians or institutions, or both – is perceived as functioning poorly" (Newton, 2001, p. 205). People's social and political trust reflects the objective context around them, i.e., people have high trust if they live in trustworthy societies (Newton, 2001, 2007). When political institutions are able to combat corruption, increase freedoms, and ensure economic growth (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 36), the level of political trust is high. On the contrary, when institutions fail to provide these goods, trust in political institutions will be low.

Hutchison and Johnson (2011) arrive at the same conclusion, arguing that the state's capacity to deliver influence people's trust in institutions. Using data from the Afrobarometer, they find support for the argument that politically efficient governments increase political trust. Mishler and Rose (2001) find that institutional factors are stronger determinants of political trust than cultural explanations. According to institutional theories of trust, political confidence is "a consequence, not a cause, of institutional performance" (p. 31).

H1: Political trust is higher among people living in countries with better institutional performance.

Perhaps more important than actual performance, however, is how citizens *perceive* the economic and political performance of the institutions. Political trust is also a consequence of an individual's personal experience with and evaluation of institutional performance. Following Mishler and Rose (2001), we expect that the evaluation of institutional quality differs according to one's own situation. A poor, unemployed person will most likely view the economic performance of governing institutions as worse than a rich person with a secure income. Our third hypothesis about political trust in postwar countries is thus:

H2: Political trust is higher among individuals with higher socioeconomic status.

Whereas the main finding in Mishler and Rose (2001) is that political confidence is substantially affected by political and economic performance, both real and perceived,[1] there are other social and cultural factors that should be taken into account. While previously quite critical (Newton, 2007), Newton and Zmerli (2011) now support the cultural theory of political trust, explaining political trust as a natural consequence of other types of trust, in particular trust in other people, family, and society. In line with this theory, political trust emerges from early-life socialization, where individuals learn to "trust or distrust other people by experiencing how others in the culture treat them and how, in return, others react to their behavior" (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 34). Political trust at the individual level may therefore correspond with the individual's expression of other types of trust. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H3: Political trust is higher among individuals with higher general social trust.

Political trust after armed conflicts

The above cited research on political trust looks at political trust in established or consolidating democracies, but not in postwar societies. Although we expect institutional and cultural factors to have substantial explanatory effect in postconflict countries too, we anticipate that the war experience itself has an effect. From statistical studies we know that large-scale civil wars with high numbers of casualties are more likely to recur than less intense armed conflicts (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Jarstad & Nilsson, 2008; Toft, 2010). Hartzell, Hoddie, and Rothchild (2001, p. 184) point to the high levels of individual and group insecurity after violent conflicts, claiming that such "feelings of insecurity will prevail given the fears, memories, and sunk costs associated with high levels of casualties" (2001, 190). In fearful societies, people will have difficulties with trusting each other and their government's ability to secure a stable peace. Previous research also shows that personal exposure to warfare can significantly affect people's political attitudes (Dyrstad, 2012a, 2012b). The experience of life-threatening conditions and loss of relatives and friends due to the war could make people generally more suspicious and less trusting, which in turn would make them less disposed to confide in political institutions. We expect that individuals living in countries that experienced particularly costly armed conflicts display less trust in the postwar government:

H4: Political trust is lower among people who live in countries with previous costly wars.

[1] However, it should be noted that Mishler & Rose (2001) do not include macro level performance variables directly into the model, nor do they estimate the cross-country and within-country variance using multilevel modeling. It is possible that a larger sample of countries and a better model specification of macro explanations would show a more direct effect of macro level variables.

Ethnic wars are known to be particularly challenging to end (Kaufmann, 1996) and have higher risks of conflict resumption (Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Mattes & Savun, 2009; Toft, 2010). Such conflicts are often linked to different degrees on political participation. For example Cederman, Wimmer, and Min (2010, p. 95) claim that among groups which are excluded from the political system "feelings of resentment will be widespread and can be channeled into successful collective action." They further argue that when governments gain political legitimacy by favoring coethnics, those excluded are more likely to challenge the government through violent means (Cederman et al., 2010, p. 95). Thus, if some of the antagonists feel excluded from the postwar political system, which some groups may be likely to do after ethnic conflicts, they are likely to display lower levels of political trust. We expect that ethnic conflicts may make reconciliation even more difficult and that political trust is lower in countries which have experienced such conflicts.

H5: Political trust is lower among people living in countries with previous ethnic armed conflict.

Peacebuilding strategies and political trust

The above factors describe different characteristics of the armed conflict and how it was fought. These are important legacies in postconflict societies and are likely to shape how people view the country they live in and the institutions that govern them. More important, however, we expect that political trust is influenced by how the conflicts were terminated and the peacebuilding strategies implemented in order to end war and create durable peace.

Internal armed conflicts terminate in different ways. While quite a few fizzles out with no clear settlement, the most common termination types are peace agreements and military victories. Licklider (1993) found that peace agreements were more likely to break down, i.e. new war resuming, than victories, however, this finding has weaker support in more recent multivariate analyses (e.g. Doyle & Sambanis, 2006; Fortna, 2004). Toft (2010) separates between government and rebel victory and finds that winning rebels are most capable of preserving a durable postconflict peace. Toft's (2010) rationale is that victorious rebels will make efforts to keep the promises they made during conflict and as such reduce the incentive to wage new war.

Another reason why military victories may lead to durable peace lies in the definition of the termination category itself. A victory implies a counterpart which is military defeated. Unfortunately, such conflict termination most often comes with severe civilian losses and is increasingly viewed as unacceptable by the international community. Thus, especially in the post-Cold War period, international actors put pressure on belligerents to negotiate an end to the armed conflicts.

The impact of conflict termination on political trust may not be straight-forward. It is not unlikely that an individual's trust in government after war depends on which party the individual supported during war. Nonetheless, as peace agreements prevent any party from being the sole loser, fewer people will be dissatisfied with postwar developments. We expect that governments

which are able to reach a negotiated settlement yield higher support than governments which are not able to make such compromises.

H6: Political trust is higher among people living in countries with peace agreements.

Peace agreements do, however, not come in one form only. Whereas some peace agreements can be comprehensive and include a wide range of arrangements, such as the Dayton agreement which ended the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina, others are a few pages only, with few other regulations than laying down arms. One common provision in peace agreements is political power sharing. In various ways, agreements call for inclusive postconflict government where opposition or rebel groups themselves are allowed a seat at the table. Such postwar power sharing is expected to bring both durable peace and stable democracy, although it also may work counter to both (Jarstad & Sisk, 2008; Sriram & Zahar, 2009). Proponents of postconflict power sharing claim it provides security guarantees as well as guarantees for the conflicting parties, in particular the rebel group, to have a political role and power after conflict (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; Mattes & Savun, 2009; Mukherjee, 2006; Walter, 2002). According to Walter (2002), warring parties will not lay down their weapons before they are certain about their political inclusion after the war. Power sharing is supposed to ensure this inclusion, thus providing the necessary trust in the postconflict governing institutions (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; Walter, 2002). Binningsbø (2011) claims that political power sharing, measured as PR elections and parliamentarism, also ensures ordinary people's attitudes and opinions are translated into political power as these institutions provide broader representation and participation (see also Norris, 2008).[2] Using data from World Values Survey, Kittilson & Schwindt-Bayer (2010) find that power sharing institutions increase underrepresented groups', especially women's, engagement in politics. We anticipate that institutions which ensure broader representation, participation and engagement will increase political trust too, leading to our seventh hypothesis:

H7: Political trust is higher among people living in countries with power sharing.

The end of the Cold War brought more leverage to the United Nations. Without superpower rivalry, the Security Council has been able to put more pressure on states in armed conflict as well as enabling a more active role for the UN (Fortna, 2004). One such role has been to send peacekeeping troops to countries ravaged by war. While the effect of such operations is debated, Fortna's (2004) findings suggest that peacekeeping operations are deployed where conflicts are most challenging to end. Still, both Doyle & Sambanis (2006) and Fortna (2004) find that peacekeeping operations increase the chances of stable peace after war. In addition to acting as security guarantees (Walter, 2002), such troops often assist in various rebuilding tasks in war-affected countries. Peacekeeping operations have contributed to disarmament, demobilization

[2] Opponents of postconflict power sharing, however, argue that power sharing strengthens intergroup differences (Rothchild & Roeder, 2005; Spears, 2000) and increases the likelihood of renewed conflict because violence has proved as a successful approach to gaining political power (Tull & Mehler, 2005).

and reintegration of former rebels and soldiers, mine clearance, rebuilding infrastructure such as schools and roads, and providing a level of security for ordinary people which was not present during war. Although such efforts are attributed to the peacekeeping troops and not the governing institutions, we expect people's support for peacekeepers will influence people's support for political institutions too.

H8: Political trust is higher among people living in countries with peacekeeping operations.

Regardless of whether an internal armed conflict is motivated by noble causes or not, warfare brings devastating consequences for the people living through it. Killings, injuries, sexual violence, displacement, destruction of buildings, roads and land, and hopelessness are not uncommon characteristics of war. These crimes are most often carried out by large number of perpetrators representing all parties to the conflict. In the aftermath of war, societies need to decide how to deal with these wrongdoers. Often, especially in relation to peace agreements, parties agree to grant amnesty to all violators during war and no prosecution takes place. However, sometimes large war crimes tribunals are established, such as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia. Occasionally, truth and reconciliation commissions are put in place to map all crimes that took place during conflict.

Which types of transitional justice arrangements a postconflict society decides to implement may have and influence on reconciliation and trust in the country. It can be argued that justice is necessary to heal traumas and old wounds, which again is needed to reach reconciliation and peace (e.g. Mani 2002, Long & Brecke 2003). Additionally, a failure to carry out justice may undermine the legitimacy of the postconflict government and encourage future violence (e.g. Mani 2002, Elster 2004, Gloppen 2005). Thus, we assume that transitional justice efforts have trust-enhancing effects in postconflict states, resulting in our last hypothesis about peacebuilding strategies and political trust:

H9: Political trust is higher among people living in countries with transitional justice.

Data and methods

Our data stems from a combination of the World Values Survey (WVS) and the European Values Studies (EVS). The two surveys started out as a joint project, so most questions and answer categories remain the same. Therefore, while there are some differences between (as well as within) the two sources, the data are highly comparable. The source of data is an integrated file provided by the two organizations (European Values Study Group & World Values Survey Association, 2006). To this file, we added the fourth EVS wave in order to include the 2008 survey (EVS, 2010). Together, these two sets of surveys cover a span of 30 years and about 100 countries. Our sample consists of all postconflict countries for which comparable survey data (WVS or EVS) exist. This means that we have excluded cases where the conflict has relapsed after the survey was conducted, such as Peru and Pakistan, where surveys have been conducted,

but where conflicts have later reignited. Where several waves of surveys have been conducted, we have chosen the earliest postconflict survey. For example, in the case of Serbia and Montenegro, we chose the 1996 survey instead of the more recent 2001 survey.

Table 1 provides an overview of the countries included in our sample, including which year the last conflict ended and which year the survey was conducted. Rather than a representative sample of countries, this is a convenience sample. However, the countries included show large variety in terms of continent, time since last conflict, and type of conflict, so even if European countries are somewhat overrepresented and African countries underrepresented, we believe that our results can give valuable insight in political trust in postconflict countries. The small N_2 means that it is hard to obtain statistically significant effects of the macro level factors, and results should be interpreted also in terms of the size of the effects.

Table 1. Countries, conflict year and survey year

Country	Conflict end	Survey conducted	Years at peace before survey
Argentina	1977	1984	7
Bangladesh	1992	1996	4
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995	1998	3
Burkina Faso	1987	2007	20
Croatia	1995	1996	1
Cyprus	1959	2008	47
Egypt	1998	2000	2
El Salvador	1991	1999	8
Ghana	1983	2007	24
Greece	1949	1999	55
Guatemala	1995	2005	10
Indonesia	2005	2006	1
Kosovo	1999	2008	9
Macedonia, Republic of	2001	2009	8
Malaysia	1981	2006	25
Mexico	1996	2000	4
Moldova, Republic of	1992	1996	4
Morocco	1989	2001	12
Northern Ireland	1998	1999	1
Romania	1989	1993	4
Rwanda	2002	2007	5
Serbia and Montenegro	1991	1996	5
South Africa	1988	1990	2
Spain	1992	1995	3
Trinidad and Tobago	1990	2006	16
Venezuela	1992	1996	4
Zimbabwe	1979	2001	22
			N_2 = 27; N_1 =33,158

To the survey data we have added macro level variables from a variety of sources (see below). Our unit of analysis is individuals in postconflict countries. The combination of country and individual variables gives our data a hierarchical structure, which means that multilevel modeling is the most appropriate method of analysis. We assume a two-level regression model where individual survey respondents constitute the first level, and their country of residence the second. The multilevel model allows us to estimate the intraclass correlations and how much of

the variance in the dependent variable is found at each level, as well as introducing explanatory variables at both levels.

The dependent variable is a scale of political confidence, generated from three variables that tap into confidence in the government, the parliament, and the political parties.[3] A confirmatory factor analysis shows that the variables scale quite well (Cronbach's alpha = 0.82, KMO = 0.71). The scale was coded to an approximately continuous scale from 1-4, where 4 corresponds to "a great deal of confidence" and 1 "none at all".

To test H1 (institutional performance), we use national GDP per capita and GDP per capita growth, employment rates, and level of democracy. The three first variables are from the World Development Indicators (World Bank, annually), while level of democracy is measured as the Polity IV score (Marshall & Jaggers, 2009).[4] All four variables report the average value for the postconflict peace years, i.e. including the first year of peace after conflict and the last year before the year the survey was conducted. To test the effect of individual socioeconomic status (H2), we use education, measured through a set of dummy variables where completed high school or similar is the reference category, and a dummy variable which takes the value of 1 if the respondent is unemployed. To avoid losing countries because of missing data, we have set education to the reference category (e.g., completed high school) for all respondents in countries where these variables are missing.[5] Comparable income data on the individual level was not available. Social trust (H3) is measured through a dichotomous variable that takes the value of 1 for respondents who answered that "most people can be trusted" (as opposed to "you can't be too careful"). At the individual level, we also control for gender, age (in years),[6] and rural residence. Rural residence is coded as a scale where 1 is a city of 100,000 or more, and 7 is a place with less than 2,000 inhabitants.[7] For 6 countries, we have imputed the mean value in order to keep the number of countries as high as possible.

Turning to the conflict related variables, we use the number of battle-related deaths and conflict duration to measure costly wars (H4) and a dummy variable reporting whether the previous armed conflict was over ethnic issues or not (H5) (Cederman, Wimmer & Min, 2010).[8] In some of the countries in our analyses, for example Bosnia-Herzegovina and Indonesia, there have been more than one previous conflict, either over time or parallel. When there have been

[3] The questions were formulated as "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? Government/parliament/political parties."

[4] Countries which in the Polity IV dataset are coded as -66 (interruption periods), -77 (interregnum periods), or -88 (transition periods) are set to missing.

[5] This affects Argentina, Croatia, and Romania. Since we are primarily interested in variables at the country level, this strategy is chosen in order to keep as many countries as possible in the sample. Assuming that the missing is not related to the value on the dependent variable, this does not bias the regression estimates (Allison, 2002).

[6] Age is imputed to its mean (39.46275) for Argentina to avoid missing.

[7] Rural residence is imputed to its mean for Azerbaijan, Argentina, Cypros, El Salvador, South Africa, and Zimbabwe.

[8] Ethnic Armed Conflict dataset: http://hdl.handle.net/1902.1/11797 [Version 1].

more than one conflict over time (since the Second World War) we use battle deaths for the most recent armed conflict. When there have been parallel conflicts we add the number of battle deaths for these conflicts. Battle-related deaths are from Lacina & Gleditsch (2005).

We control for conflict termination (H6) by adding two dummy variables recording whether the armed conflict ended with a peace agreement or a military victory. The variables are from Kreutz (2010).[9] To test H7 about power sharing we added a dummy variable recording the presence or absence of power sharing in the aftermath of the armed conflict. We used information from Mattes & Savun's (2009) and Mukherjee's (2006) datasets to code this variable.

A dummy variable recording whether the country hosted a UN peacekeeping operation in relation to the previous armed conflict is included to test H8. This variable is coded based on online descriptions of United Nations peacekeeping operations.[10] Finally, to test H9 about the effect of transitional justice on political trust we include three variables from the Post-conflict Justice Dataset (Binningsbø et al., 2012). These are three dummy variables with the values 1 if a postconflict society used a trial, truth commission, or amnesty to address the wrongdoings of the past, and 0 if not.

Analysis

The first part of the analysis is dedicated to the common explanations for political trust, i.e., institutional performance and individual level characteristics (Table 2). In order to determine the share of variance found of each level of analysis, we start with an empty model (Model 0). The intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) is .184, which means that about 18 percent of the variance in political trust is found between the countries. The ICC increases a little when adding individual level explanatory variables (Model 1).

H1 suggested that political trust is higher among people living in countries with better institutional performance. We tested several indicators of institutional performance, such as level of democracy, GDP per capita, GDP growth, and employment rate. Of all these indicators, only GDP growth shows a robust effect on political trust (Model 2). Employment rate becomes statistically significant on a .10 level in some model specifications, but this appears to be the effect of sample composition and reduced sample size, since this variable is missing for several countries. The other variables do not have any effect on political trust. In sum, the results for macro level institutional performance are mixed. Economic growth appears to increase political trust, but the effect is small. The other variables have no effect.

Turning to H2, we find a stronger effect of individual level socioeconomic status, but the effect is somewhat contrary to what we expected. Those with low education (i.e., not completed higher primary education) have higher trust than the reference group, while higher education has

[9] Kreutz' (2010) original variable has six types of conflict termination: (1) peace agreement; (2) ceasefire; (3) ceasefire with conflict regulation; (4) victory; (5) no or low activity; and (6) other (which includes state failure and termination of colonial rule). We single out categories (1) and (4), the remaining are set to 0 for both variables.

[10] See www.un.org/en/peacekeeping.

no effect at all. On the other hand, being unemployed appears to reduce political trust, even if the effect is small.

Table 2. Individual level and institutional determinants of political trust

	Model 0	Model 1	Model 2
Male		-0.0249***	-0.0249***
		(-3.42)	(-3.42)
Age		0.00348***	0.0048***
		(13.57)	(13.57)
Low education		0.0865***	0.0865***
		(9.06)	(9.07)
Higher education		-0.0100	-0.0101
		(-0.95)	(-0.95)
Unemployed		-0.0537***	-0.0538***
		(-4.37)	(-4.37)
Rural residence		0.0168***	0.0168***
		(8.36)	(8.35)
Most people can be trusted		0.160***	0.160***
		(17.76)	(17.76)
GDP growth			0.00986*
			(1.97)
Constant	2.327***	2.086***	2.044***
	(33.60)	(29.03)	(28.90)
sigma_u	0.359***	0.367***	0.301***
sigma_e	0.758****	0.749***	0.746***
ICC	0.184	0.193	0.173
N2	27	27	27
N1	43,191	43,016	43,016

t statistics in parenthesis, * p<0.10,** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

In line with H3, those with a higher level of social trust also display a higher level of political trust. Of the variables included in Model 1 and 2, social trust has the largest substantial effect. All the control variables have statistically significant effects. Women, older people and people residing in more rural areas have generally higher political trust than others.

The remaining hypotheses are at the macro level. In order to test these, we use Model 2 as a baseline models to which additional macro level variables are added sequentially. The results are reported in Table 3.

Table 3. Macro level determinants of political trust

	Model 3	**Model 4**	**Model 5**	**Model 6**	**Model 7**	**Model 8**	**Model 9**	**Model 10**
GDP growth	0.0100**	0.0115**	0.0100	0.0117**	0.0101**	0.0122**	0.00681	0.0101**
	(2.00)	(2.36)	(1.93)	(2.25)	(2.03)	(2.47)	(1.34)	(2.18)
Conflict duration	0.00437							
	(0.48)							
Battle deaths		-0.00000336*						-0.00000354*
		(-1.68)						(-1.96)
Ethnic conflict			-0.0253					
			(-0.18)					
Peace agreement				-0.159				
				(-1.06)				
Power sharing					-0.0904			
					(-0.68)			
UN operations						-0.286*		-0.260*
						(-1.92)		(-1.97)
Postconflict trial							-0.240*	-0.290*
							(-1.73)	(-2.31)
Constant	2.020***	2.087***	2.064***	2.083***	2.083***	2.117***	2.146***	2.285***
	(23.60)	(28.94)	(18.56)	(26.49)	(23.01)	(27.50)	(24.02)	(24.79)
sigma_u	0.341***	0.326***	0.348***	0.336***	0.340***	0.326***	0.325***	0.286***
sigma_e	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***	0.749***
ICC	0.172	0.159	0.178	0.167	0.171	0.159	0.159	0.127
N_2	27	26	27	27	27	26	27	26
N_1	43,016	43,016	40,986	43,016	43,016	40,986	43,016	40,986

Individual level variables not shown. t statistics in parenthesis, * p<0.10 ** p<0.05, *** p<0.01.

H4 proposed that political trust is lower among people who live in countries with costly wars. This is tested in Model 3 and 4. The *duration* of the previous conflict has no effect, but the conflict intensity, measured as the number of battle deaths, comes close to statistically significant on a .05 level with a small, negative coefficient. Thus, H4 finds only limited support. According to H5, political trust is lower among people who live in countries which have experienced ethnic armed conflict. This finds no support, as the dichotomous variable for ethnic conflict has no statistically significant or substantial effect (Model 5).

The last four hypotheses suppose that different peacebuilding strategies have an effect on political trust. None of these finds any support. The conflict termination type does not appear to have any effect on postconflict (H6, Model 6). Similarly, we find no support for the hypothesis that power sharing agreements yield any higher trust (H7, Model 7). H8 proposed that political trust is higher among people living in countries with peacekeeping operations (Model 8). Here, the results are contrary to what we expected. The effect in not strong, and only statistically significant on a .10 level, but our data indicate that postconflict political trust is actually lower in countries which have UN peacekeeping troops. One possible explanation for this could be that, as suggested by Fortna (2004), such troops are deployed in more deep-rooted conflicts, and the variable also works as a proxy for conflict intensity, but the correlations between battle deaths and conflict duration, and the presence of UN troops is not very high.

Finally, H9 proposed that political trust is higher among people living in countries with transitional justice. We measure this through three different variables, namely, amnesties, truth commisions, and postconflict trials. Of these, only the measure of postconflict trials has any significant effect (Model 9). Contrary to what we expect, the coefficient is negative and statistically significant on a .10 level, indicating that countries which have carried out postconflict trial processes actually see lower political trust than other postconflict countries.

Model 10 summarizes the macro level variables that influence postconflict political trust. The effects remain quite stable across different model specifications, indicating that the results are relatively robust. Including all the variables reduces the intraclass correlation from 0.19 (Model 1) to 0.13, which means that a lower share of the unexplained variance is found on the second level of analysis. The unexplained variance on the country level is reduced by 22 percent with the inclusion of these four variables. To estimate the explanatory power of each of them, we insert the values of the 10^{th} and the 90^{th} for each variable to calculate the net difference. For economic growth, this gives a net difference of 0.1558 or an approximately 4 percent increase in political trust. For battle deaths, the corresponding numbers are -0.1947885 or an almost 5 percent reduction. UN peacekeeping operations has a net effect of -0.260 or a 6.5 percent reduction, while postconflict trials have a net effect of -0.290 or a reduction in political trust of more than 7 percent. Thus, economic growth has the most robust, and the only positive, effect on political trust, while postconflict trials have the largest negative effect. Our micro level hypotheses find some support, in particular, high levels of social trust appears to expand into

political trust. Of the macro level variables, only H3 on the effect of institutional performance finds some support, while the others are rejected.

Discussion

[TO BE ADDED]

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