HANDBOOK ON
Political Trust

'This Handbook *offers a comprehensive account of what is currently known about political trust. In 29 chapters, a stellar cast of 41 authors inform about the concept, its measurement, and correlates. In addition, they document empirically the development and distribution of political trust across the globe in different political settings. This volume is a "must read" for all those interested in political trust as a major resource for the political community, the political regime, and the political authorities.'*

Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Social Science Research Center Berlin, Germany

Political trust – of citizens in government, parliament or political parties – has been centre stage in political science for more than half a century, reflecting ongoing concerns about the legitimacy of representative democracy. This *Handbook* offers the first truly global perspective on political trust and integrates the conceptual, theoretical, methodological, and empirical state of the art.

An impressive, international body of expert scholars explore established and new venues of research, by taking stock of levels, trends, explanations and implications of political trust, and relating them to regional particularities across the globe. Along with a wealth of genuine empirical analyses, this *Handbook* also features the latest developments in personality, cognitive and emotional research and discusses, not only the relevance, but also the 'dark side' of political trust.

Discerning yet accessible, this *Handbook* provides scholars, students and policy makers with the tools to navigate through a complexity of theories, trends, causes and consequences of political trust, whilst also directing their future research.

Sonja Zmerli is Professor of Political Science at Sciences Po Grenoble, France and **Tom W.G. van der Meer** is Professor of Political Science at the University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.

Elgar
PUBLISHING

The Lypiatts, 15 Lansdown Road, Cheltenham, Glos GL50 2JA, UK
Tel: + 44 (0) 1242 226934 Fax: + 44 (0) 1242 262111 Email: info@e-elgar.co.uk
William Pratt House, 9 Dewey Court, Northampton, MA 01060, USA
Tel: +1 413 584 5551 Fax: +1 413 584 9933 Email: elgarinfo@e-elgar.com
www.e-elgar.com www.elgaronline.com

ISBN 978-1-78254-510-1
9 781782 545101

HANDBOOK ON
Political Trust

Sonja Zmerli
Tom W.G. van der Meer

EE
Elgar

HANDBOOK ON
Political Trust

Edited by
Sonja Zmerli • Tom W.G. van der Meer

EE
Elgar

Handbook on Political Trust

Edited by

Sonja Zmerli

Sciences Po Grenoble, France

Tom W.G. van der Meer

University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Edward Elgar PUBLISHING

Cheltenham, UK • Northampton, MA, USA

© Sonja Zmerli and Tom W.G. van der Meer 2017

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical or photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior permission of the publisher.

Published by
Edward Elgar Publishing Limited
The Lypiatts
15 Lansdown Road
Cheltenham
Glos GL50 2JA
UK

Edward Elgar Publishing, Inc.
William Pratt House
9 Dewey Court
Northampton
Massachusetts 01060
USA

A catalogue record for this book
is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Control Number: 2016949946

This book is available electronically in the Elgaronline
Social and Political Science subject collection
DOI 10.4337/9781782545118

Printed on elemental chlorine free (ECF)
recycled paper containing 30% Post-Consumer Waste

ISBN 978 1 78254 510 1 (cased)
ISBN 978 1 78254 511 8 (eBook)

Typeset by Servis Filmsetting Ltd, Stockport, Cheshire
Printed and bound in the USA

Contents

List of figures viii
List of tables xi
Individual-level data sources used for secondary analysis xiii
List of contributors xiv
Preface xvii
Acknowledgements xix

1 The deeply rooted concern with political trust 1
Tom W.G. van der Meer and Sonja Zmerli

PART I THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROACHES

2 The conceptual framework of political support 19
Pippa Norris

3 What kinds of trust does a democracy need? Trust from the perspective of democratic theory 33
Mark E. Warren

4 Functions of political trust in authoritarian settings 53
Paola Rivetti and Francesco Cavatorta

5 Political trust and multilevel government 69
Jordi Muñoz

6 The measurement equivalence of political trust 89
Sofie Marien

7 Objects of political and social trust: scales and hierarchies 104
Sonja Zmerli and Ken Newton

8 Political trust in experimental designs 125
Rick K. Wilson and Catherine C. Eckel

PART II CAUSES, CORRELATES, CONSEQUENCES

Micro level

9 Biological and psychological influences on political trust 143
Jeffery J. Mondak, Matthew Hayes and Damarys Canache

10 Emotion, cognition, and political trust 160
Elizabeth Theiss-Morse and Dona-Gene Barton

11 Education, socialization, and political trust 176
Quinton Mayne and Armen Hakhverdian

12 Political trust as a heuristic 197
Thomas J. Rudolph

13 Compliance, trust and norms of citizenship 212
Jan W. van Deth

14 Participation and political trust 228
Oscar W. Gabriel

15 Political trust and voting behaviour 242
Éric Bélanger

Meso and macro level

16 Procedural fairness and political trust 256
Marcia Grimes

17 Democratic input, macroeconomic output and political trust 270
Tom W.G. van der Meer

18 The welfare state and political trust: bringing performance back in 285
Staffan Kumlin and Atle Haugsgjerd

19 Political trust, corruption, and inequality 302
Eric M. Uslaner

20 Immigration, ethnic diversity and political trust 316
Lauren McLaren

21 Social capital, civic culture and political trust 338
Christopher Liu and Dietlind Stolle

22 Political trust and the mass media 353
Ken Newton

PART III POLITICAL TRUST ACROSS THE GLOBE

23 Political trust in North America 375
Russell J. Dalton

24 Political trust in Latin America 395
Matías Bargsted, Nicolás M. Somma and Juan Carlos Castillo

25 Political trust in Western and Southern Europe 418
Mariano Torcal

26 Post-communist societies of Central and Eastern Europe 440
Gergõ Závecz

27 Political trust in Sub-Saharan Africa and the Arab region 461
Marc L. Hutchison and Kristin Johnson

28 Political trust in the Asia-Pacific region 488
Chong-Min Park

29 Political trust and the decline of legitimacy debate: a theoretical and empirical investigation into their interrelationship 509
Jacques Thomassen, Rudy Andeweg and Carolien van Ham

Index 526

Nevitte, N. (1996), *The Decline of Deference*, Petersborough, ON: Broadview Press.
Nevitte, N. (ed.) (2002), *Value Change and Governance in Canada*, Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.
Nevitte, N. (2015), 'The decline of deference revisited', in R.J. Dalton and C. Welzel (eds), *The Civic Culture Transformed*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 35–58.
Nevitte, N. and M. Kanji (2002), 'Authority orientations and political support: A cross-national analysis of satisfaction with governments and democracy', *Comparative Sociology*, **1** (3), 387–412.
Newton, K. (1997), 'Politics and the news media: Mobilization or videomalaise?', in R. Jowell, J. Curtice and A. Park et al. (eds), *British Social Attitudes: The 14th Report, 1997/98*, Aldershot, UK: Ashgate, pp. 151–68.
Newton, K. (1999), 'Social and political trust in established democracies', in P. Norris (ed.), *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Governance*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 169–87.
Newton, K. and P. Norris (2000), 'Confidence in public institutions: Faith, culture or performance?', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 52–73.
Norris, P. (ed.) (1999), *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Norris, P. (2000a), 'The impact of television on civic malaise', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 231–51.
Norris, P. (2000b), *The Virtuous Circle*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
Norris, P. (2011), *Democratic Deficit: Critical Citizens Revisited*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
Nye, J. and P. Zelikow (1997), 'Conclusions: Reflections, conjectures and puzzles', in J. Nye, P. Zelikow and D.C. King (eds), *Why People Don't Trust Government*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 253–81.
Nye, J., P. Zelikow and D.C. King (1997), *Why Americans Mistrust Government*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Orren, G. (1997), 'Fall from grace: The public's loss of faith in government', in J. Nye, P. Zelikow and D.C. King (eds), *Why Americans Mistrust Government*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 7–107.
Patterson, T. (1993), *Out of Order*, New York: Knopf.
Pew Research Center (2010), 'Distrust, discontent, anger and partisan rancor: the people and their government', 18 April, accessed 24 April 2015 at http://www.people-press.org/2010/04/18/distrust-discontent-anger-and-partisan-rancor/.
Pharr, S.J. and R.D. Putnam (eds) (2000), *Disaffected Democracies: What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Putnam, R.D. (2000), *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Renewal of American Community*, New York: Simon and Schuster.
Putnam, R.D. (ed.) (2002), *Democracies in Flux: The Evolution of Social Capital in Contemporary Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Smith, G. (2009), *Democratic Innovations: Designing Institutions for Citizen Participation*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
Stokes, D. (1962), 'Popular evaluations of government: An empirical assessment', in H. Cleveland and H.D. Lasswell (eds), *Ethics and Bigness*, New York: Harper, pp. 61–72.
Wolfe, A. (2006), *Does American Democracy Still Work?*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

24. Political trust in Latin America

Matías Bargsted, Nicolás M. Somma and Juan Carlos Castillo

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 statemakers 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 socioeconomic 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

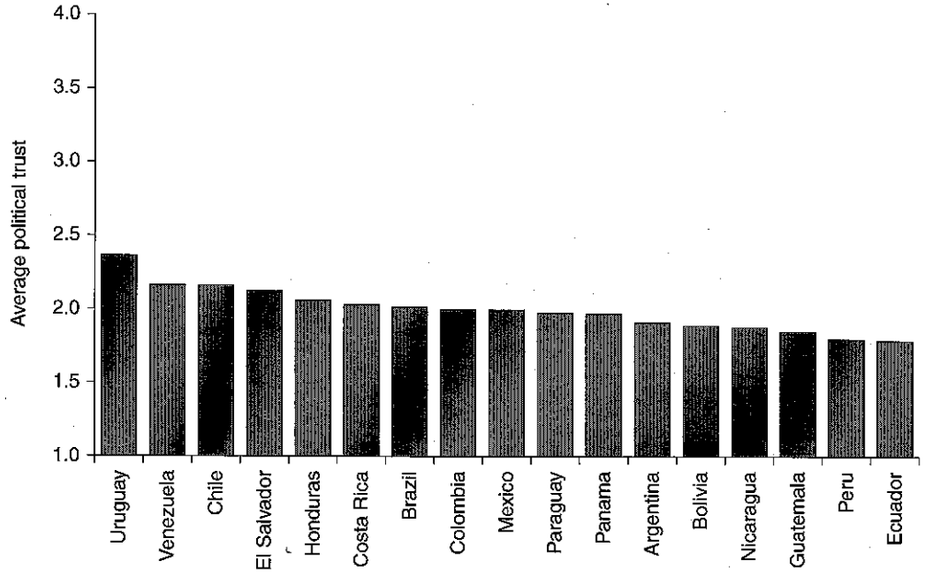

Figure 24.1 Trust in political institutions by country in Latin America (average from 1996 to 2011)

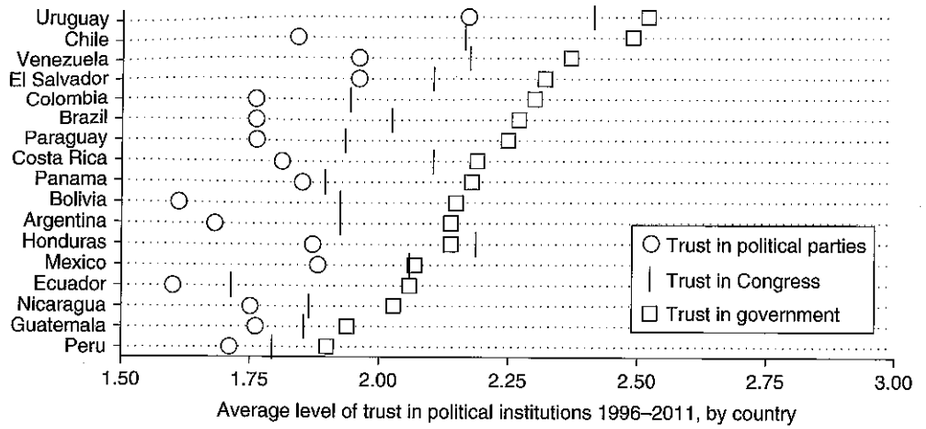

Figure 24.2 Trust in government, Congress, and political parties by country in Latin America (average from 1996 to 2011)

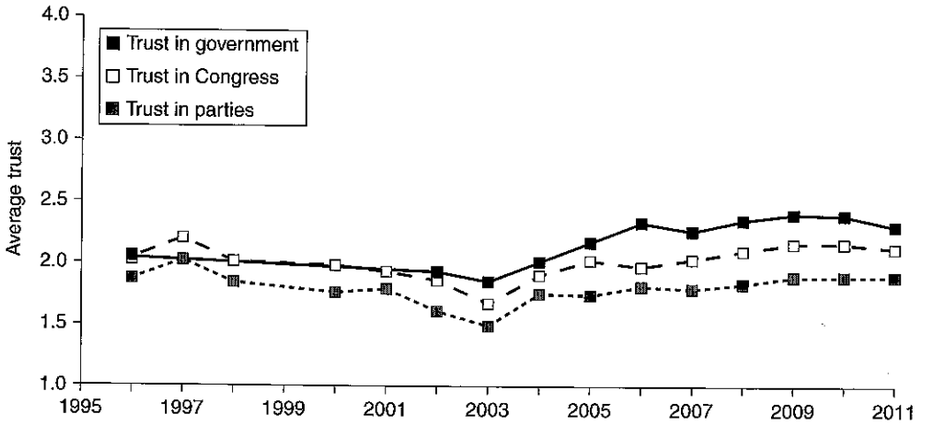

Figure 24.3 Evolution of political trust in different institutions

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

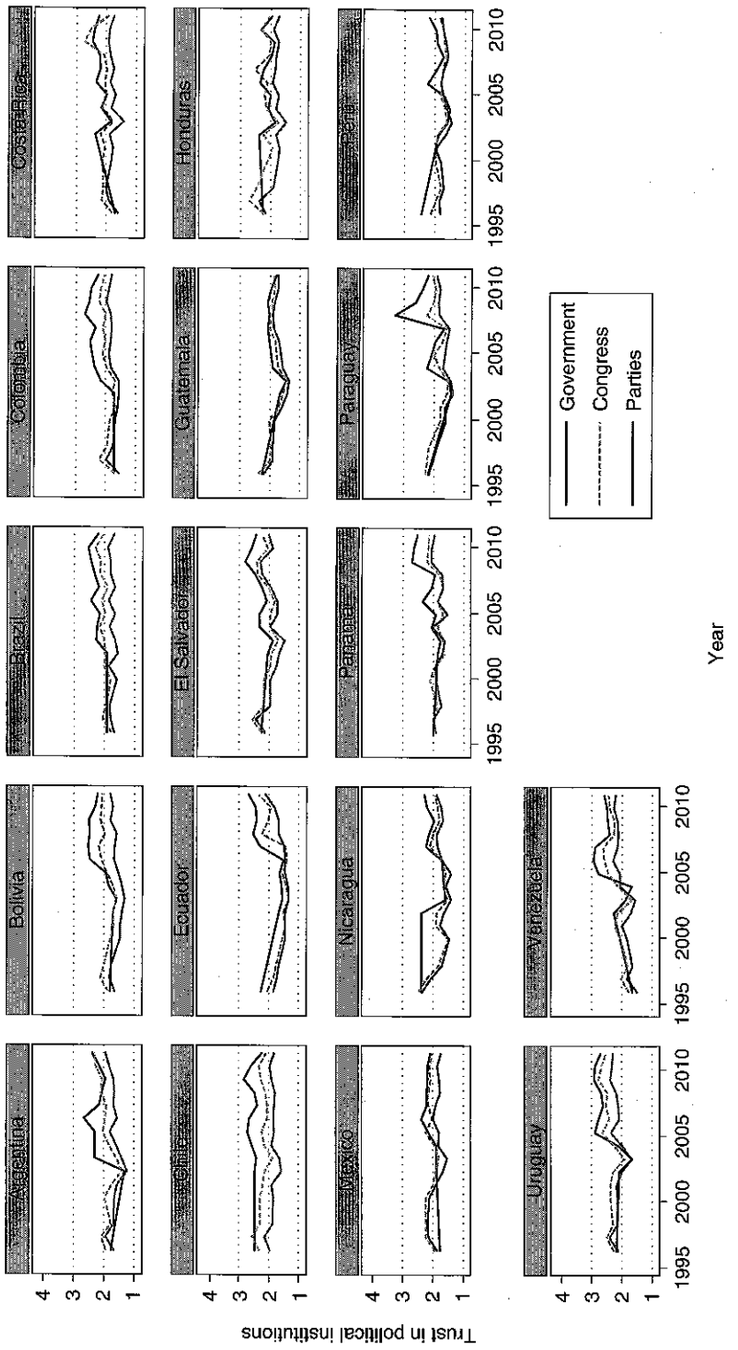

Figure 24.4 Evolution of trust in political institutions in Latin American countries

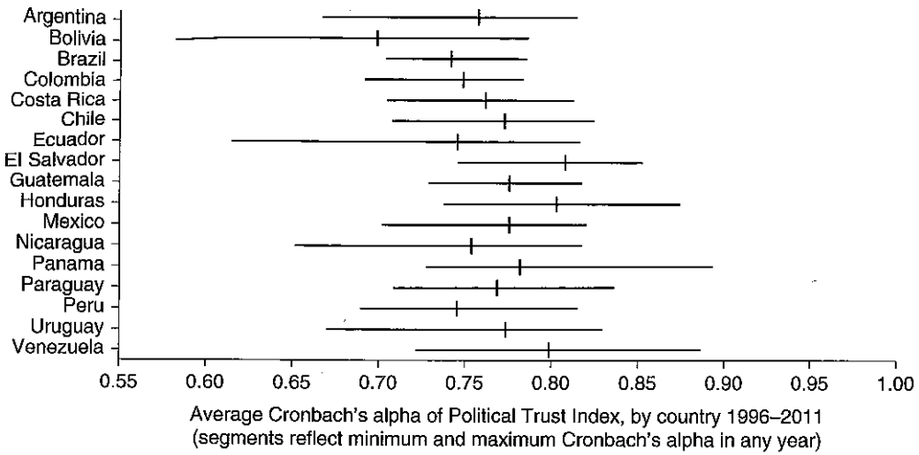

Figure 24.5 Average Cronbach's alpha of political trust index by country, 1996–2011

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	268 413		272 420		205 107		204 576	
N surveys	255		255		187		187	
N countries	17		17		17		17	

Notes:
* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$; *** $p < 0.001$.
Sigma^2 survey (within country); sigma^2 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 175000 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
Individual level										
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	−0.027***	−0.027	0.007***	−0.027	0.007***
Cohort 1951–60	−0.032	0.007***	−0.032	0.007***	−0.033	−0.033***	−0.033	0.007***	−0.033	0.007***
Cohort 1961–70	−0.044	0.006***	−0.043	0.006***	−0.044	−0.044***	−0.044	0.006***	−0.044	0.006***
Cohort 1971–80	−0.056	0.006***	−0.056	0.006***	−0.056	−0.056***	−0.056	0.006***	−0.056	0.006***
Cohort 1980 or after	−0.032	0.006***	−0.031	0.006***	−0.032	−0.032***	−0.032	0.006***	−0.032	0.006***
Secondary education	−0.015	0.004***	−0.015	0.004***	−0.015	−0.015***	−0.015	0.004***	−0.015	0.004***
Technical education	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.007	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.007	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	0.059***	0.059	0.005***	0.059	0.005***
Evangelical	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.050***	0.050	0.006***	0.050	0.006***
Other religion	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.008	0.011	0.008
Evaluation national economy	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.178***	0.178	0.002***	0.178	0.002***
Presidential approval (yes = 1)	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.003***	0.409	0.409***	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***
Country level										
Presidential party economic ideology	−0.062	0.012***							−0.034	0.012**
Control of corruption			0.193	0.085*					0.060	0.076
Log GNI per capita (ppp)					0.370	0.056***			0.176	0.077*
Gini index							−0.026	0.004***	−0.013	0.006*
Constant	*1.323*	*0.051****	*1.280*	*0.062****	*−2.269*	*−2.269****	*2.485*	*0.206****	*0.269*	*0.927*
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	
Sigma² intercept	0.017		0.020		0.016		0.016		0.014	
Sigma² 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 19000 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. Stegmueller (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.

REFERENCES

Altman, D. and J.P. Luna (2012), 'Introducción: El estado latinoamericano en su laberinto' [Introduction: The Latin American state in its labyrinth], *Revista de Ciencia Política*, **32** (3), 521–43.

Anderson, C.J. and Y.V. Tverdova (2003), 'Corruption, political allegiances, and attitudes toward government in contemporary democracies', *American Journal of Political Science*, **47** (1), 91–109.

Cameron, M.A. (2009), 'Latin America's left turns: Beyond good and bad', *Third World Quarterly*, **30** (2), 331–48.

Carreras, M. and N. Castañeda-Angarita (2013), 'Who votes in Latin America? A test of three theoretical perspectives', *Comparative Political Studies*, doi: 10.1177/0010414013488558.

Catterberg, G. and A. Moreno (2006), 'The individual bases of political trust: Trends in new and established democracies', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, **18** (1), 31–48.

Centeno, M.A. (2003), *Blood and Debt: War and the Nation-State in Latin America*, Philadelphia, PA: Penn State University Press.

Dahl, R.A. (1971), *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Duch, R.M. and R.T. Stevenson (2008), *The Economic Vote: How Political and Economic Institutions Condition Election Results*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Eaton, K. (2012), 'The state of the state in Latin America: Challenges, challengers, responses and deficits', *Revista de Ciencia Política*, **32** (3), 643–57.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) (2012), 'Poverty continues to fall in Latin America, but still affects 167 million people' [press release], accessed 6 August 2016 at http://www.eclac.cl/cgi-bin/getProd.asp?xml=/prensa/noticias/comunicados/9/48459/P48459.xml#.

Eisenstadt, S.N. and L. Roniger (1984), *Patrons, Clients and Friends: Interpersonal Relations and the Structure of Trust in Society*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ellner, S. (2012), 'The distinguishing features of Latin America's new left in power: The Chávez, Morales, and Correa governments', *Latin American Perspectives*, **39** (1), 96–114.

Fairbrother, M. (2013), 'Two multilevel modeling techniques for analyzing comparative longitudinal survey datasets', *Political Science Research and Methods*, **2** (1), 1–22.

Goodwin, J. (2001), *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945–1991*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Grimes, M. (2006), 'Organizing consent: The role of procedural fairness in political trust and compliance', *European Journal of Political Research*, **45** (2), 285–315.

Hakhverdian, A. and Q. Mayne (2012), 'Institutional trust, education, and corruption: A micro–macro interactive approach', *The Journal of Politics*, **74** (3), 739–50.

Handlin, S. (2012), 'Social protection and the politicization of class cleavages during Latin America's left turn', *Comparative Political Studies*, **46** (12), 1582–609.

Helmke, G. and S. Levitsky (eds) (2006), *Informal Institutions and Democracy: Lessons from Latin America*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Jackson, J.E., B.W. Mach and R. Markowski (2010), 'Party strategies and electoral competition in post-communist countries: Evidence from Poland', *Electoral Studies*, **29** (2), 199–209.

Kitschelt, H., K. Hawkins and J.P. Luna et al. (2010), *Latin American Party Systems*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Levine, D.H. and S. Mainwaring (1989), 'Religion and popular protest in Latin America: Contrasting experiences', in S. Eckstein (ed.), *Power and Popular Protest: Latin American Social Movements*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, pp. 203–40.

Mainwaring, S. (2006), 'State deficiencies, party competition, and confidence in democratic representation in the Andes', in S. Mainwaring, A.M. Bejarano and E. Pizarro (eds), *The Crisis of Democratic Representation in the Andes*, Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, pp. 295–345.

Mainwaring, S. and A. Pérez-Liñán (2005), 'Latin American democratization since 1978', in S. Mainwaring and F. Hagopian (eds), *The Third Wave of Democratization in Latin America: Advances and Setbacks*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 14–61.

Mishler, W. and R. Rose (2001), 'What are the origins of political trust? Testing institutional and cultural theories in post-communist societies', *Comparative Political Studies*, **34** (1), 30–62.

Mishler, W. and R. Rose (2005), 'What are the political consequences of trust? A test of cultural and institutional theories in Russia', *Comparative Political Studies*, **38** (9), 1050–78.

Morris, S.D. (2004), 'Corruption in Latin America: An empirical overview', *SECOLAS Annals*, **36**, 74–92.

Murillo, M.V., V. Oliveros and M. Vaishnav (2010), *Dataset on Political Ideology of Presidents and Parties in Latin America*, Columbia University, accessed 6 August 2016 at https://mariavictoriamurillo.com/data/.

Norris, P. (ed.) (1999), *Critical Citizens: Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

O'Donnell, G.A. (1994), 'Delegative democracy', *Journal of Democracy*, **5** (1), 55–69.

O'Donnell, G.A. (2001), 'Reflections on contemporary South American democracies', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, **33** (3), 599–609.

Ortiz, I. and M. Cummins (2011), 'Global inequality: Beyond the bottom billion a rapid review of income distribution in 141 countries', *Child Poverty and Inequality: New Perspectives*, working paper.

Posada Carbó, E. (ed.) (1996), *Elections before Democracy: The History of Elections in Europe and Latin America*, London: Macmillan.

Posada Carbó, E. (ed.) (1998), *In Search of a New Order: Essays on the Politics and Society of Nineteenth-Century Latin America, Volume 2*, London: University of London.

Posada-Carbó, E. (2000), 'Electoral juggling: A comparative history of the corruption of suffrage in Latin America, 1830–1930', *Journal of Latin American Studies*, **32** (3), 611–44.

Rose, R. and W. Mishler (2011), 'Political trust and distrust in post-authoritarian contexts', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 117–40.

Rotberg, R.I. (2002), 'The new nature of nation-state failure', *Washington Quarterly*, **25** (3), 83–96.

Segovia, C.S. (2008), *Political Trust in Latin America*, Ann Arbor, MI: ProQuest.

Stegmueller, D. (2013), 'How many countries for multilevel modeling? A comparison of frequentist and Bayesian approaches', *American Journal of Political Science*, **57** (3), 748–61.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2011), *2011 Global Study on Homicide: Trends, Context, Data*, Vienna: UNODC.

Uslaner, E.M. (2011), 'Corruption, the inequality trap, and trust in government', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 141–62.

Valenzuela, J.S. (2006), 'Caudillismo, democracia y la excepcionalidad chilena en América Hispana' [Warlordism, democracy and Chilean exceptionalism in Hispanic America], *Revista de Occidente*, **305**, 11–28.

Van der Meer, T.W.G. and P. Dekker (2011), 'Trustworthy states, trusting citizens? A multilevel study into objective and subjective determinants of political trust', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 95–116.

Zmerli, S. and J. Castillo (2015), 'Income inequality, distributive fairness and political trust in Latin America', *Social Science Research*, **52**, 179–92.

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

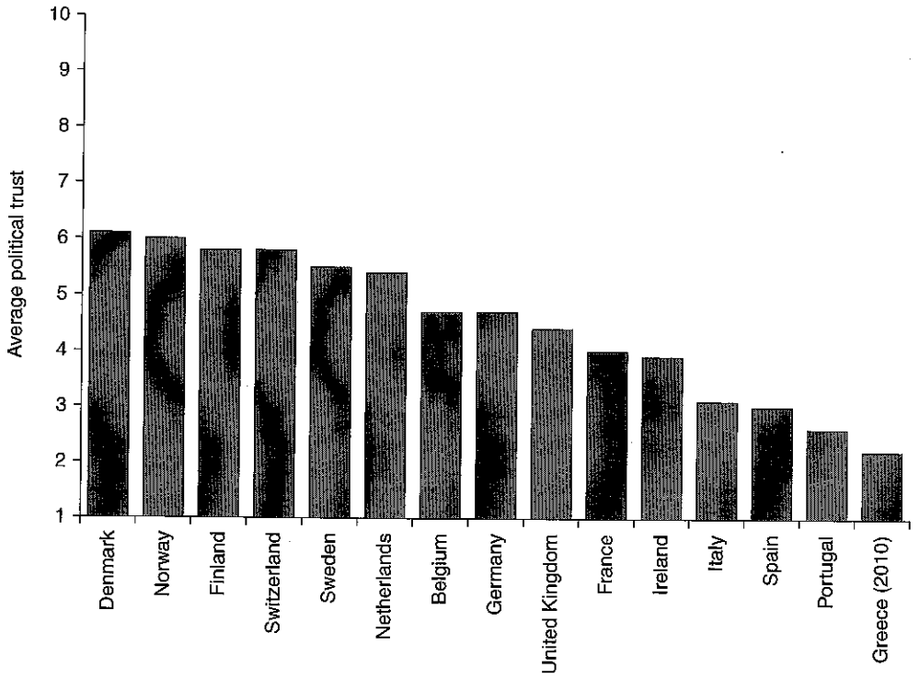

Figure 25.1 *Average levels of political trust in 15 Western and Southern European countries in 2012*

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

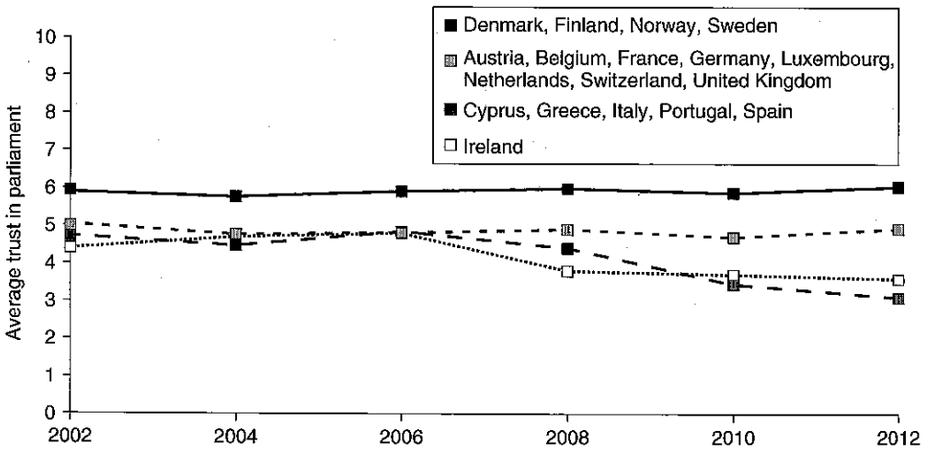

Figure 25.2 Evolution of trust in parliament in Europe 2002–12 by group of countries

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	Political parties	Politicians	Political parties	Politicians	Political parties	Politicians	Political parties	Politicians
Austria	15	15	16	15	18	19	NA	NA	NA	NA
Belgium	30	30	32	30	24	26	23	24	29	31
Cyprus	NA	NA	30	31	29	33	18	18	9	8
Denmark	51	51	53	54	54	53	42	42	48	47
Finland	43	42	44	44	43	42	35	34	41	41
France	13	16	12	12	12	15	10	13	12	13
Germany	12	14	14	16	14	16	14	15	18	20
Greece	18	19	NA	NA	8	8	3	4	NA	NA
Iceland	36	40	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	18	23
Ireland	22	22	22	23	14	14	11	12	13	15
Italy	16	17	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	6	7
Luxembourg	32	37	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Netherlands	41	39	47	46	51	51	52	52	47	50
Norway	25	26	29	29	34	33	36	38	43	44
Portugal	4	4	7	7	6	6	5	5	3	4
Spain	20	19	16	17	14	15	10	11	7	7
Sweden	29	28	33	31	35	34	42	40	38	38
Switzerland	28	33	32	38	31	39	34	41	41	45
United Kingdom	18	19	15	16	18	17	18	18	19	21

Notes:
% 6–10 on scale.
NA = not available.

Source: European Social Survey integrated dataset (2002–12).

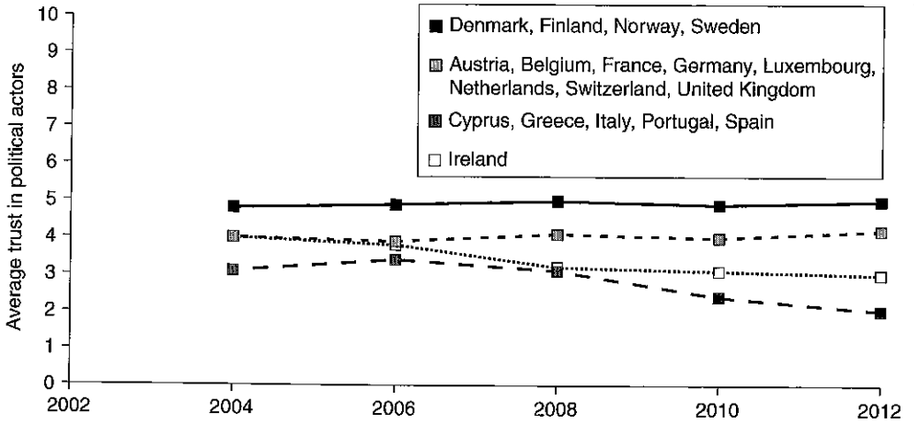

Figure 25.3 Evolution of trust in the actors of representation (political parties and politicians) in Europe 2004–12 by group of countries

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).

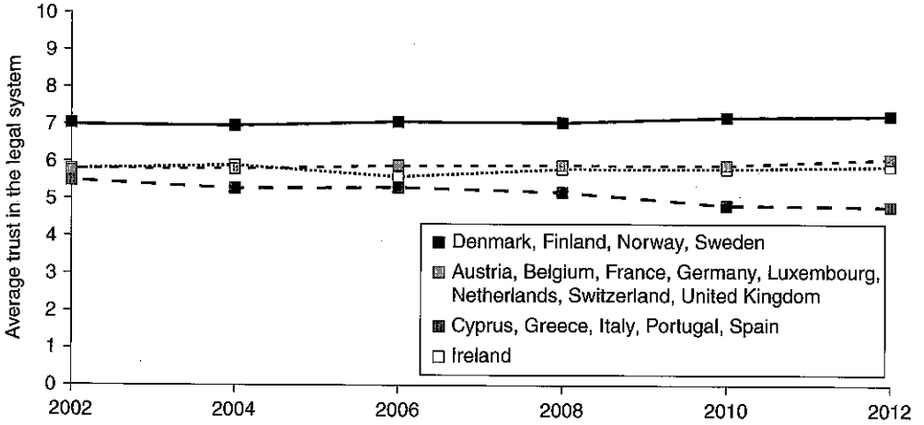

Figure 25.4 Evolution of trust in the legal system in Europe 2002–12 by group of countries

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 income[5] (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
Electoral and ideological dimension						
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
Social and political input and output						
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**
Cultural factors						
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
Control variables						
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

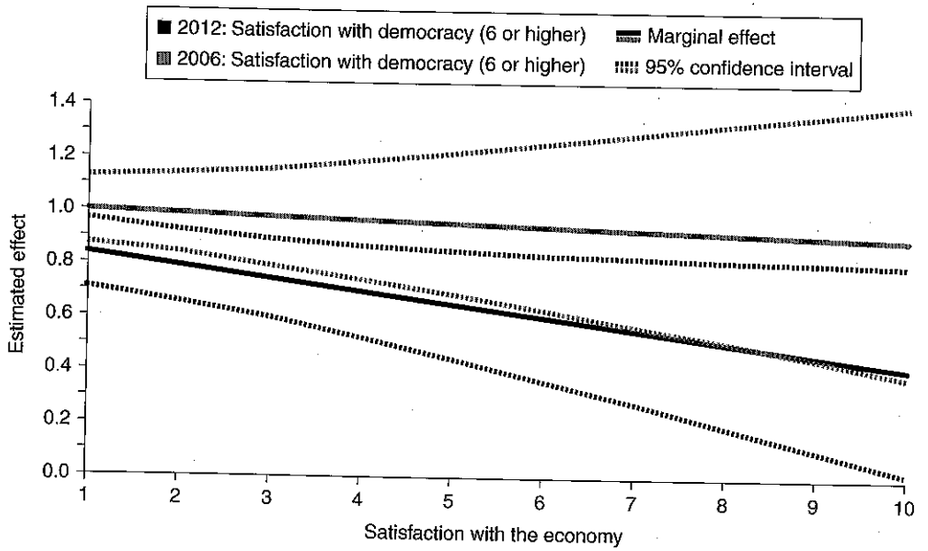

Figure 25.5 *Marginal effects on trust in the parliament of satisfaction with democracy, by satisfaction with the economy, 2006 and 2012*

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).

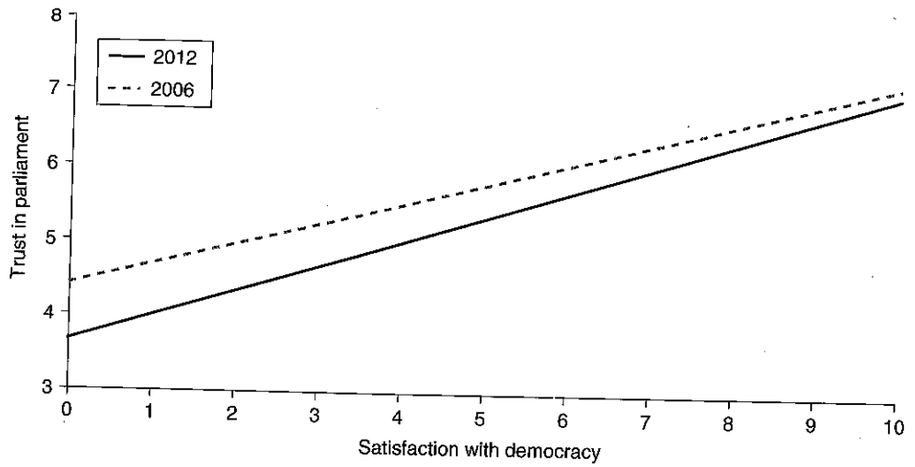

Figure 25.6 *Satisfaction with democracy and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012*

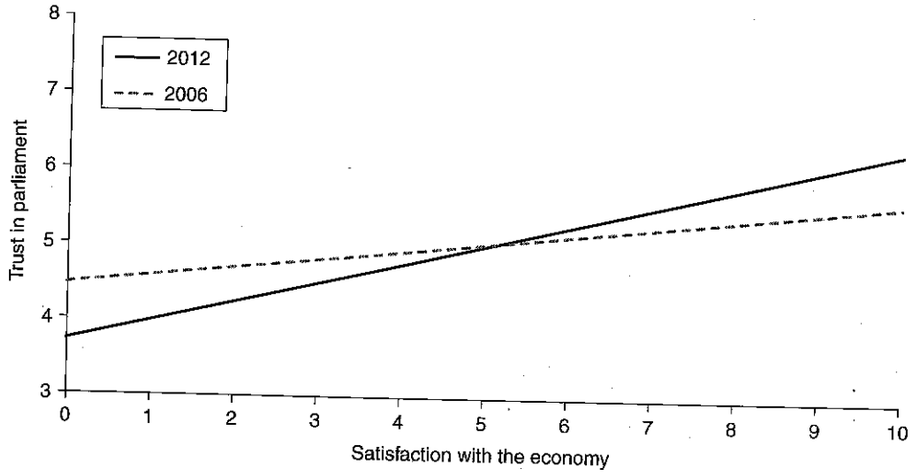

Figure 25.7 *Economic satisfaction and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012*

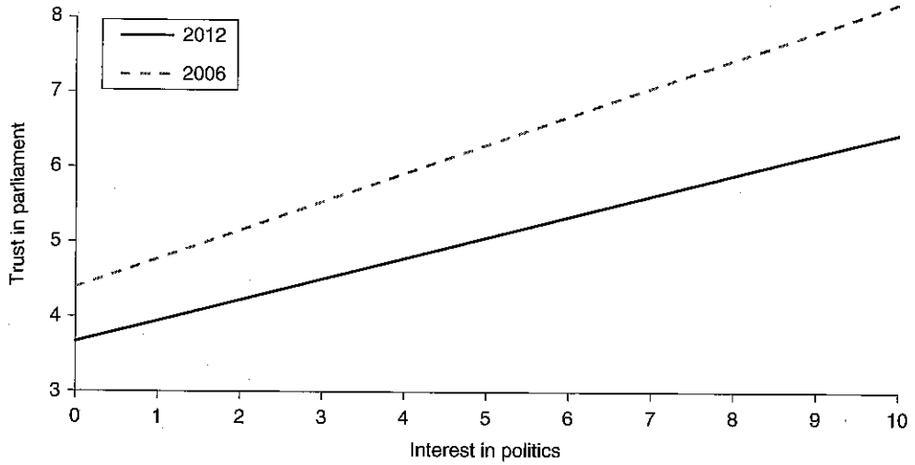

Figure 25.8 *Interest in politics and trust in parliament in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012*

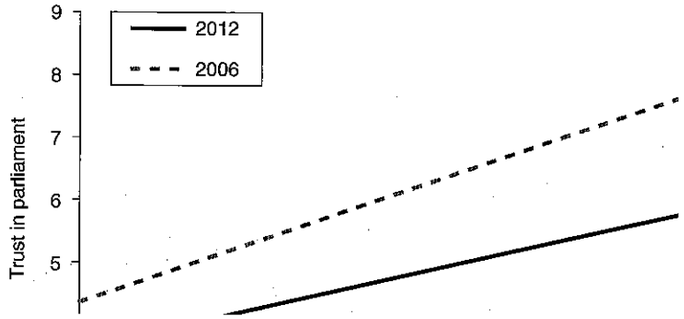

Figure 25.9 *Social trust and trust in actors of representation in Cyprus, Greece, Ireland, Iceland, Portugal and Spain, 2006 and 2012*

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.

REFERENCES

Alesina, A. and R. Wacziarg (2000), 'The economics of civic trust', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 147–70.

Anderson, C.J. and M.M. Singer (2008), 'The sensitive left and the impervious right. Multilevel models and the politics of inequality, ideology, and legitimacy in Europe', *Comparative Political Studies*, **41** (4–5), 564–99.

Anderson, C.J. and Y.V. Tverdova (2003), 'Corruption, political allegiances and attitudes toward government in contemporary democracies', *American Journal of Political Sciences*, **47** (1), 91–109.

Anderson, C.J., A. Blais and S. Bowler et al. (2005), *Losers' Consent. Elections and Democratic Legitimacy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Armingeon, K. and K. Guthmann (2013), 'Democracy in crisis? The declining support for national democracy in European countries, 2007–2011', *European Journal of Political Research*, **53** (1), 423–42.

Barnes, S.H. and G. Sani (1974), 'Mediterranean political culture and Italian politics. An interpretation', *British Journal of Political Science*, **4** (3), 289–303.

Bruneau, T.C. and A. Macleod (1986), *Politics in Contemporary Portugal. Parties and the Consolidation of Democracy*, Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner.

Bruneau, T.C., P.N. Diamandouros and R. Gunther et al. (2001), 'Democracy, Southern European style?', in P.N. Diamandouros and R. Gunther (eds), *Parties, Politics, and Democracy in the New Southern Europe*, Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 16–82.

Citrin, J. and S. Luks (2001), 'Political trust revisited, Déjà vu all over again?', in J.R. Hibbing and E. Theiss-Morse (eds), *What Is It About Government That Americans Dislike?*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, pp. 9–27.

Clarke, H.D., N. Dutt and A. Kornberg (1993), 'The political economy of attitudes toward polity and society in Western democracies', *Journal of Politics*, **55** (4), 998–1021.

Criado, H. and F. Herreros (2007), 'Political support. Taking into account the institutional context', *Comparative Political Studies*, **40** (12), 1511–32.

Della Porta, D. (2000), 'Social capital, beliefs in government, and political corruption', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 202–28.

Denters, B., O.W. Gabriel and M. Torcal (2007), 'Norms of good citizenship', in J.W. van Deth, J.R. Montero

and A. Westholm (eds), *Citizenship, Involvement in European Democracies. A Comparative Analysis*, London: Routledge, pp. 66–87.
Dogan, M. (2005a), 'Introduction. Political mistrust as a worldwide phenomenon', *Comparative Sociology*, **4** (1–2), 1–10.
Dogan, M. (2005b), 'Erosion of confidence in thirty European democracies', *Comparative Sociology*, **4** (1–2), 11–54.
Enders, C.K. and D. Tofighi (2007), 'Centering predictor variables in cross-sectional multilevel models. A new look at an old issue', *Psychological Methods*, **12** (2), 121–38.
Hakhverdian, A. and Q. Mayne (2012), 'Institutional trust, education, and corruption. A micro–macro interactive approach', *The Journal of Politics*, **74** (3), 739–50.
Harteveld, E., T.W.G. van der Meer and C.E. de Vries (2013), 'In Europe we trust? Exploring three logics of trust in the European Union', *European Union Politics*, **14** (4), 542–65.
Hetherington, M.J. (1998), 'The effect of political trust on the presidential vote, 1986–96', *American Political Science Review*, **93** (2), 311–26.
Hetherington, M.J. and T.J. Rudolph (2008), 'Priming, performance, and the dynamics of political trust', *Journal of Politics*, **70** (2), 398–412.
Holmberg, S. (1999), 'Down and down we go. Political trust in Sweden', in P. Norris (ed.), *Critical Citizens. Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 103–22.
Hooghe, M. and S. Zmerli (2011), 'Introduction. The context of political trust', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 1–12.
Hooghe, M., R. Dassonneville and S. Marien (2015), 'The impact of education on the development of political trust: Results from a five-year panel study among late adolescents and young adults in Belgium', *Political Studies*, **63** (1), 123–41.
Katzenstein, P.J. (2000), 'Confidence, trust, international relations, and lessons from smaller democracies', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 121–48.
Kriesi, H. (2012), 'The political consequences of the financial and economic crisis in Europe: Electoral punishment and popular protest', *Swiss Political Science Review*, **18** (4), 518–22.
Listhaug, O. (1995), 'The dynamics of trust in politics', in H.D. Klingemann and D. Fuchs (eds), *Citizens and the State. Changing Public Attitudes toward Government in Western Europe*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 261–97.
Listhaug, O. (2006), 'Political disaffection and political performance. Norway, 1957–2001', in M. Torcal and J.R. Montero (eds), *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies. Social Capital, Institutions, and Politics*, London: Routledge, pp. 213–43.
Listhaug, O. and M. Wiberg (1995), 'Confidence in political and private institutions', in H.D. Klingemann and D. Fuchs (eds), *Citizens and the State. Changing Public Attitudes toward Government in Western Europe*, Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 298–322.
Luhiste, K. (2006), 'Explaining trust in political institutions. Some illustrations from the Baltic states', *Communist and Post-Communist Studies*, **39** (4), 475–96.
Magalhães, P.C. (2005), 'Disaffected democrats, political attitudes and political action in Portugal', *West European Politics*, **28** (5), 973–91.
Mamadouh, V.D. (1999), 'A political-cultural map of Europe. Family structures and the origins of differences between national political cultures in the European Union', *GeoJournal*, **47** (3), 477–86.
Marien, S. (2011), 'Measuring political trust across time and space', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 13–46.
Mendrinou, M. and I. Nicolacopoulos (1997), 'Interests, parties and discontent in the public mind, sympathy scores for Greek parties and interest groups', paper presented for the European Consortium for Political Research (ECPR) Congress, Bern, Switzerland.
Mishler, W. and R. Rose (2001), 'What are the origins of political trust? Testing institutional and cultural theories in post-communist societies', *Comparative Political Studies*, **34** (1), 30–62.
Mishler, W. and R. Rose (2007), 'Generation, age, and time. The dynamics of political learning during Russia's transformation', *American Journal of Political Science*, **51** (4), 822–34.
Montero, J.R. and M. Torcal (1990), 'Voters and citizens in a new democracy. Some trend data on political attitudes in Spain', *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, **2** (2), 116–40.
Morlino, L. and M. Tarchi (1996), 'The dissatisfied society. The roots of political change in Italy', *European Journal of Political Research*, **30** (1), 41–63.
Newton, K. (2007), 'Social political trust', in R.J. Dalton and H.D. Klingemann (eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 342–61.
Newton, K. and P. Norris (2000), 'Confidence in public institutions. Faith, culture, or performance?', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 52–73.

Norris, P. (ed.) (1999), *Critical Citizens. Global Support for Democratic Government*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Norris, P. (2000), 'The impact of television on civic malaise', in S.J. Pharr and R.D. Putnam (eds), *Disaffected Democracies. What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pp. 231–51.
Norris, P. (2011), *Democratic Deficit. Critical Citizens Revisited*, Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
Pharr, S.J. and R.D. Putnam (eds) (2000), *Disaffected Democracies, What's Troubling the Trilateral Countries?*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
Polavieja, J. (2013), 'Economic crisis, political legitimacy, and social cohesion', in D. Gallie (ed.), *Economic Crisis, Quality of Work and Social Integration. The European Experience*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 256–78.
Prior, M. (2010), 'You've either got it or you don't? The stability of political interest over the life cycle', *The Journal of Politics*, **72** (3), 747–66.
Rohrschneider, R. (2005), 'Institutional quality and perceptions of representation in advanced industrial democracies', *Comparative Political Studies*, **38** (7), 850–74.
Ross, A. and M. Escobar-Lemmon (2011), 'The price of personalizing politics. Political distrust and economic performance in Latin America, 1996–2006', *Electoral Studies*, **30** (3), 406–16.
Segatti, P. (2006), 'Italy forty years of political disaffection. A longitudinal exploration', in M. Torcal and J.R. Montero (eds), *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies. Social Capital, Institutions, and Politics*, London: Routledge, pp. 244–75.
Torcal, M. (2006), 'Political disaffection and democratisation history in new democracies', in M. Torcal and J.R. Montero (eds), *Political Disaffection in Contemporary Democracies. Social Capital, Institutions, and Politics*, London: Routledge, pp. 157–89.
Torcal, M. (2014), 'The decline of political trust in Spain and Portugal. Economic performance or political responsiveness?', *American Behavioral Scientist*, **58** (12), 1542–67.
Torcal, M. and M. Bargsted (2015), 'Confianza política en Europa y América Latina: Un estudio comparado con datos y causas' [Political confidence in Europe and Latin America: A comparative study with data and causes], in L. Paramio (ed.), *Desafección Política Y Gobernabilidad. Un Reto Político*, Madrid: Marcial Pons, pp. 163–200.
Torcal, M. and P. Magalhães (2010), 'Cultura política en el Sur de Europa. Un estudio comparado en busca de su excepcionalismo' [Political culture in Southern Europe. A comparative study in search of its exceptionalism], in M. Torcal (ed.), *La Ciudadanía Europea En El Siglo XXI. Estudio Comparado De Sus Actitudes, Opinión Pública Y Comportamiento Políticos*, Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, pp. 45–84.
Uslaner, E.M. (2011), 'Corruption, the inequality trap, and trust in government', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 141–62.
Van der Meer, T.W.G. (2010), 'In what we trust? A multi-level study into trust in parliament as an evaluation of state characteristics', *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, **76** (3), 517–36.
Van der Meer, T.W.G. and A. Hakhverdian (2016), 'Process, performance, and political trust. A cross-national study in 48 European countries on political trust as an evaluation of institutional quality and economic performance, and the supposedly moderating role of issue orientations', *Political Studies* (in press), doi: 10.1177/0032321715607514.
Van Erkel, P. and T.W.G. Van der Meer (2016), 'Macro-economic performance, political trust, and the Great Recession. A multilevel analysis of the effects of within-country fluctuations in macro-economic performance on political trust in fifteen EU countries, 1999–2011', *European Journal of Political Research*, **55** (1), 177–97.
Zmerli, S. and K. Newton (2011), 'Winners, losers and three types of trust', in S. Zmerli and M. Hooghe (eds), *Political Trust: Why Context Matters*, Colchester, UK: ECPR Press, pp. 67–94.

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