



# Changing patterns of **Trust** in Europe

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# The collapse of trust?



- ▶ One source of the loss of **social cohesion** is the **loss of trust** which is an essential element of cohesion
- ▶ There are claims that trust in political institutions, in the media and in business is declining
- ▶ The refugee crisis of 2015, the economic crisis of 2008 and various corruption scandals have all **undermined confidence** in the authority of traditional institutions and governance structures
- ▶ One response to this is the **rise of populist parties** claiming to speak for the people and against established elites. To provide an alternative voice.
- ▶ **But is trust really declining?**

# Different types of trust

- ▶ There are different **varieties of trust** which may show different trends
- ▶ **Generalised trust** is usually seen as an important measure of social capital and social cohesion and well being
- ▶ There is also trust in government and in mainstream institutions (the police, arms of justice, major companies, banks)
- ▶ There is trust in politics and politicians
- ▶ We have characterised these two as “**vertical trust**”
- ▶ Finally there is trust in friends, neighbours and those around you including people you do and don't know, people in your country and people of a different religion
- ▶ We have characterised this as “**horizontal trust**”

# Explaining trust

- ▶ David Lockwood (1992) building on classical social theory distinguished between **system integration** - meaning how the system coheres and **social integration** meaning how members of a society relate to one another. This can be seen roughly speaking as vertical and horizontal trust
- ▶ Most people consider mainly generalised trust. Dragolov and colleagues using the EQLS since 2011 conclude that **neither trust nor social cohesion** (using a wider set of indicators) **have changed much since 2011** when the survey was started
- ▶ IPSOS Mori in a report just published (2019) conclude that vertical trust was always low and might have declined a little **but generally not by very much** (they are considering the world population)
- ▶ A number of people have tried to create a common set of indicators using both **objective and subjective measures** (Berger Schmitt, Vergolini, Abbott and Wallace)

# Explaining Trust

- ▶ A paper by Chan To and Chan (2006) makes a relationship between types of trust and their correlates

	Subjective	Objective
Horizontal	Generalised Trust, trust in others	Social participation volunteering
Vertical	Trust in political institutions	Political participation voting

# Explaining Trust

- ▶ A series of papers by Delhey, Newton and Dragolov have explored the role of trust.
- ▶ In 2003 they found that trust is **better explained by social conditions, social networks and well being** than by individual and psychological theories.
- ▶ In 2005 they argued that trust is associated with Protestantism, the accumulation of wealth, the absence of corruption, equality and ethnic homogeneity and democracy. This is why the **Nordic countries** always seem to come out on top of the league
- ▶ In a third paper published in 2011 they looked at the **“radius of trust”** and distinguish between in group trust relating to family, neighbourhood and people known personally and outgroup trust relating to people not met before, people of another nationality or another religion. They conclude that whilst outgroup trust relates strongly to generalised trust, ingroup trust is more difficult to explain
- ▶ In 2011 the same team concluded that **wealthier countries and wealthier, more educated people** were associated with higher trust. It is a rich persons’ luxury. Poorer people in poorer neighbourhoods have to be more careful

# Regional patterns in Trust

- ▶ Delhey et al 2005 - generalised and vertical trust stronger in the **Nordic countries** (also IPSOS Mori polls 2019)
- ▶ 2011 Dragolov et al. **generalised and vertical trust in the north whilst poorer countries and poorer people more likely to have horizontal trust** (in friends and neighbours). Confirmed by Pichler and Wallace's analysis of social capital (date)
- ▶ 2003 Delhey et al concluded that **Post communist countries** do not fit the same explanations as Western European countries in terms of trust

# New Dimensions of Trust

- ▶ The increasing use of the **internet** since the 1990s mean that people get much of their information there.
- ▶ The explosion of the **social media revolution** after the advent of Web 2.0 in 2010 means that people are constantly bombarded with information, including stuff which they upload themselves and conversations they find themselves in (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram)
- ▶ This enables the circulation of “**fake news**” as well as genuine news
- ▶ There have been **various scandals** suggesting that companies such as Cambridge Analytica working for whoever hires them could manipulate the outcome of elections and referendums based on the harvesting of social media data
- ▶ **BUT Social relations** are also much facilitated by online social networking in ways that were not possible before the widespread use of hand held smart devices.

# Research Questions



TRUST

- ▶ 1. Is there a difference between vertical and horizontal trust?
- ▶ 2. How are these different types of trust distributed around Europe?
- ▶ 3. What are the trends in these different kinds of trust over time?
- ▶ 4. What social characteristics are associated with each kind of trust?
- ▶ 5. How do vertical and horizontal trust relate to different kinds of civic and political action?
- ▶ 6. How are vertical and horizontal trust affected by different sources of communication?

# Different types of Trust

- ▶ A factor analysis of the trust questions in the WVS suggested that the strongest factor was “**No Trust**” and the second strongest was **horizontal trust**. A third factor of **vertical trust** was present only weakly
- ▶ Horizontal and vertical trust were constructed as indexes to use as dependent variables in further analysis

# Trend patterns using WVS 1980-2017

## Generalised Trust

- ▶ **Generalised trust is generally increasing** across Europe and is increasing most of all in those countries that already had high levels of trust such as Austria, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands and Germany. In all of these countries it has risen more than 10% since 1980
- ▶ **Generalised trust is low and has decreased** in Eastern European countries, including Hungary, Poland and Romania but has increased in Slovenia by nearly 10 percentage points
- ▶ There are **strong variations across Europe** with the highest being Norway with 72.8% in 2017 and the lowest being Romania with just 12.3% of people feeling that most people can be trusted

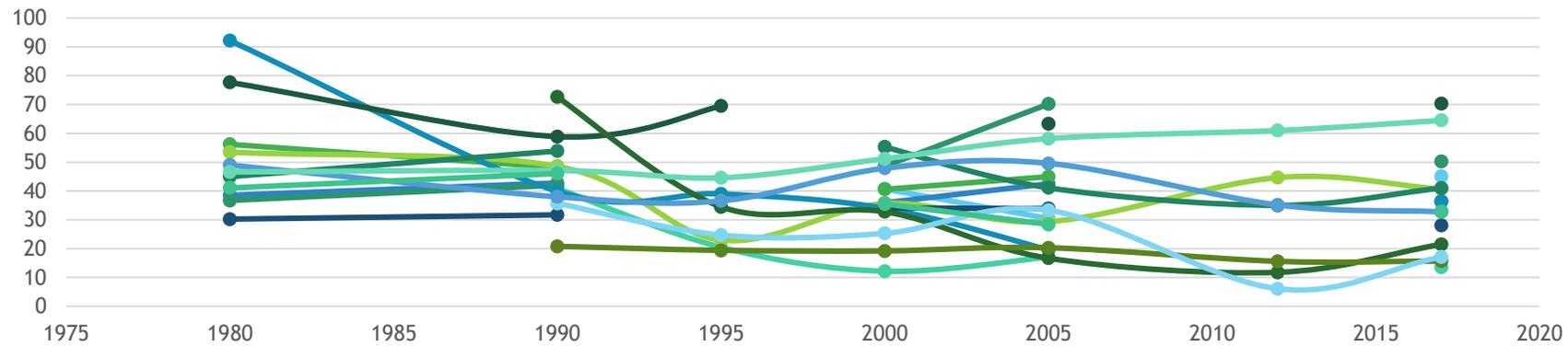


# Trends in Vertical Trust



- ▶ Trust in government has declined in most countries since 1989 when the question was first asked. In some high trust countries it has gone up (Austria, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden) but in Eastern European countries it has declined quite dramatically (by 29% in the CR for instance and by 25% in Slovenia). It ranges from a high of 47 % in the Netherlands to a low of 15% in Slovenia.
- ▶ Trust in Parliament has declined in most European countries except for Sweden, Denmark, Austria and Belgium. It dropped particularly dramatically in Eastern Europe (by 27% in the Czech Republic and 52% in Poland). It ranges between 70% in Norway and 16% in Romania)

# Trust in Parliament



- Austria
- Belgium
- Czech Republic
- Denmark
- France
- Germany
- Hungary
- Italy
- NL
- Norway
- Poland
- Romania
- Slovenia
- Spain
- Sweden
- UK

# Trust in major institutions: vertical trust



- ▶ Other institutions include the civil service, labour unions, the Press, Armed Forces, Churches, Education system, Police
- ▶ Here we see no major trends, generally this is fairly stable or even rising slightly
- ▶ except for more trust in the Armed Forces and less trust for the Church in Catholic Countries

# Trends in Horizontal Trust



- ▶ **Trust in neighbours (asked only since 2005) is generally high**, ranging from 92% in the Netherlands and 91% in Sweden to just 45% in Romania. It has been rising since 2005 in all countries apart from France and Romania)
- ▶ **Trust in known people has generally risen across Europe** and is very high, ranging from 99% in Sweden to 64% in Romania. However, there was a 3% decline in France
- ▶ **Trust in others in the country** (asked only in 1989 and 1999) is generally **high and rising**, ranging from 85% in Slovenia to 41% in Italy (in 1989)
- ▶ **Trust in people you meet for the first time is high and rising** across Europe (apart from France) ranging from 83% in Denmark to 12% in Romania
- ▶ **Trust in people of another religion is high and rising** since 2005 ranging from 84% in Norway to 40% in Slovenia
- ▶ **Trust in people of another nationality is high and rising** across Europe ranging from 85% in Norway to 26% in Romania

# General Trends in Trust

- ▶ Vertical trust in politics and government has generally been low and falling, whilst horizontal trust in those around you has been high and rising
- ▶ High trust countries in northern Europe have generally seen a rise in trust including even vertical trust, whilst low trust countries have seen a fall in vertical trust especially
- ▶ Low trust countries, especially those in Eastern Europe have low vertical as well as horizontal trust. High trust countries are generally high in both
- ▶ It seems that after the initial hopes of democratisation and marketisation following the overthrow of communism, Eastern Europeans are becoming more and more disillusioned with politics. But they don't seem to trust each other particularly much either, even though horizontal trust is increasing.

# Tentative Conclusions

- ▶ The results suggest that we cannot speak about a decline of social cohesion in Europe in terms of trust.
- ▶ There are some suggestions that **system integration** in the form of politics is on the decline, but other aspects of system integration are fine
- ▶ At the some time **social integration** is strong and getting stronger even across barriers of nationality and religion.
- ▶ There are other suggestions that a sense of place is strong and growing and this might help to explain some aspects of horizontal trust (Wallace 2019)

# Further Analysis

- ▶ Further Analysis will include the characteristics of people with different kinds of trust (are high trust people wealthier, more educated etc. as we would predict?)
- ▶ Are there differences between low trust and high trust countries in this respect?
- ▶ Also we will look at whether the forms of communication, in particular social media, has any impact on these emerging patterns and if so, how.