Mapping Distrust and De-alignment: Evidence from Thirty-Five Democracies

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Abstract

Trust in political parties is declining and with it the relevance of parties, or so the de-alignment hypothesis claims. Using data from recent World Values Surveys, this paper provides evidence that the assumption is rather problematic. Longitudinal data shows that confidence is neither increasing nor declining but languishing at high levels. Additionally, cross-sectional data from the 2005-2008 WVS was analyzed using statistical tests at the individual and country level. The results demonstrate that one important factor increasing distrust is electoral disproportionality. Regime durability, interpersonal trust, and perceived democraticness reduce such sentiments. Corruption perception notably has no effect on individual respondents but decreases distrust on the national level. The results pose the question whether distrust is a reason for concern or just a phenomenon natural to representative democracy.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Political parties are commonly regarded as vital parts of modern representative democracy. Without them, democratic government is almost inconceivable. Political parties "created democracy and [...] modern democracy is unthinkable save in terms of the parties", Schattschneider (1942, 1) famously proclaimed. They fulfill important political functions, such as representation, mobilization, recruitment, and structure the political process, to only name a few (Sartori 2005; Schmitter 2001, 72–3). Yet in recent years, scholars have diagnosed an erosion of the representative function of parties as a transmission belt of societal demands into policy. Parties, as Richard Katz and Peter Mair argue, experience a transformation into agents of the state, bound by external constraints and often unable to respond to popular demands (Katz and Mair 1995; Mair 2009). These constraints exist for political parties in both established democracies and those parties in countries which experienced a more recent democratic transition, for example in the Third Wave of democratization (Bartolini and Mair 2001, 328–9).

Simultaneously, trust directed at political parties is among the lowest, when compared to other political institutions such as governments or parliaments (Dalton and Weldon 2005; Marien 2011a). This observation goes along with a vivid discussion among political science scholars whether political parties are declining in relevance (commonly dubbed the 'de-alignment hypothesis') or still alive and kicking (Wren and McElwain 2007). Indeed, indicators for de-alignment such as party membership and party identification are decreasing in most democratic polities (van Biezen, Mair, and Poguntke 2012). Paul Webb (2005, 635–6) summarized the most commonly used observations supporting the de-alignment hypothesis: increasing electoral volatility and effective numbers of parties, declining electoral turnout, slumping partisan identification and membership which result in an increasing share of non-partisans, and rising levels of anti-party sentiments. These observations support the assumption that political parties are experiencing a decrease of public confidence.

These "anti-party sentiments" (Poguntke 1996) are not a trivial problem and have real-life consequences. Dalton and Weldon (2005) report that voters with a low confidence in political parties are less likely to participate in elections and relatively more likely to cast their vote for 'anti-party' or 'anti-system' parties, especially from the right, and opposition parties. Unsurprisingly, electoral volatility also increases with the

feeling that political parties 'do not care'. Additionally, Dalton and Weldon (2005) furthermore find a correlation between respondents' trust in political parties and satisfaction with democracy, as well as the feeling that voting makes a difference. Their results illustrate the problematic effects of distrust, which affects electoral behavior as well as general feelings about the state of democracy. Anti-party sentiments are partly described as originating from ill-informed voters who are cynical about political parties and lack understanding of political processes (Webb 2005, 647).

Meanwhile, while not a completely new phenomenon, many scholars (e.g., Albertazzi and Mueller 2013; Bordignon and Ceccarini 2013; Mudde 2004) diagnose a surge of populist parties in Western democracies, whose most striking feature is their condemnation of established political parties and the respective party systems as a whole. They present themselves as 'real' representatives of the popular will. In a certain sense, they are also the results of 'responsible' government parties, which risk to leave the 'representational' aspects of their functions in a political system to such populist parties (Mair 2009). Omar Sanchez (2008, 316) furthermore points out that other potential results of party system de-institutionalization and populism include more erratic politics, strains on the functioning of representative democracy and political responsiveness, corruption and weakened checks and balances. Only some of these potential effects highlight that anti-party sentiments should not be shrugged off as irrelevant, especially considering the rise of these sentiments in most democracies (Dalton and Weldon 2005). There is, in sum, plenty of reason to be concerned about the effects of anti-party sentiments. Low electoral turnout, declining party membership and identification, and a seeming increase in populist parties, all can be understood as functions of distrust in political parties. The problems caused by them also give credence to searching for the factors causing these sentiments, because the factors fueling what Germans call Parteienverdrossenheit must first be identified before one can confidently try to counter them.

It is therefore surprising that even though researchers have produced a vast amount of literature on the subjects of political trust and political parties there is little communication between both fields. This study aims to add to the literature of both areas in two ways. First, it provides a general overview of the development of distrust in political parties, which is needed because it is still unclear whether confidence¹ in

¹ Using such a negative variable almost inevitably leads to odd language. In order to avoid confusion,

parties is actually in decline or just generally low. Declining trust is often taken for granted without providing further evidence. Hence, a longitudinal assessment of the levels of trust resolves the uncertainty about recent trends in public confidence in political parties. The second and larger part of the paper is dedicated to answering a second set of questions: what are the factors that fuel distrust in political parties? and how do party system variables affect such sentiments? The following part discusses the underlying theoretical assumptions required to answer these questions – mostly drawn from Easton's concepts of structural and personal legitimacy – and the findings of previous research conducted on similar questions. Data gathering, operationalization, and methodology of the study are explained in Chapter 3. Empirical evidence is presented in Chapter 4. Findings are summarized and discussed in the final chapters.

2. DISTRUST AND LEGITIMACY

To answer the question why people distrust political parties, it is first necessary to understand the functions that political parties fulfill in a political systems. David Easton argues that parties are located at this input side of a political system, which, amongst other institutions, act as "gatekeepers" that control societal inputs into the political system (Easton 1965, 138–9). Some of the demands entering the political system are translated into action, e.g. in form of statements or policies, which are the outputs of a political system. Since not all demands can be converted into outputs, some are naturally put aside and left unanswered (Easton 1965, 350). Any of the channels allowing input into the political system bears the risk of "channel failure" (Easton 1965, 120), which is the possibility that a channel fails at the dissemination of the societal demands in a bottom-up process. For political parties, this phenomenon is most similar to a malfunction of their representational function. A decline of trust in political parties can therefore indicate a response to a perceived failure in channeling societal demands into the political system or generating the expected outputs, i.e., an ill-conducted representational function of political parties.

This representational function is affected by institutional features of democratic regime, such as party systems and electoral rules, because these features shape

some remarks on the language used in the paper: 'Distrust' is the commonly used term. The terms distrust in political parties and trust in political parties describe the same indicator but opposite values, since the coding of the outcome variable (introduced later) reaches from trust to distrust on both respective ends of the scale. The terms trust or confidence are used interchangeably.

mechanisms of party interactions. On the other hand, features of political parties themselves – how they appear and how they act – will influence how people feel about them. The following two sections discuss how these two variables generate distrust in political parties. Finally, the role of national context and certain individual traits are presented.

a) Party systems and trust

The structure of party systems is a prominent feature that has an effect on trust in political parties. Although in Easton's (1965) influential work on the political system, political parties only play a marginal role, many other scholars examined the effects of party systems and electoral systems on voter representation, i.e. how structural factors influence how political parties channel societal demands. Maurice Duverger for example sees the two-party system as the outcome of a "natural political dualism" (Duverger 1990, 289), taking place roughly in a Left-Right division without an 'authentic' centrist party. Only political splits between such party groups along ideological divisions cause two-party systems to divert into a multiparty system (Duverger 1990, 291-295). If two-party systems are indeed a 'natural' occurrence, then these may be expected to channel social demands in the most efficient way. Such a "cleavage-reducing" (Easton 1965, 257) tendency of two-party systems and majoritarian electoral systems is also favored by Easton over "divisive" multiparty systems for its perceived inclusiveness. Following Downs' (1957) economic approach, though, twoparty systems ideologically converge along the median voter. In other terms, two-party systems limit pluralism and might necessarily, or naturally, filter out the many demands which are not close to the median voter. For others, the composition of the electorate, in form of distinct social cleavages, influences the type of party system which can be considered as 'appropriate' for a specific country (Dahl 1990). The effect of party systems on which and how societal demands are transferred into the political system can in sum be paradoxical for two-party systems. They appear more inclusive and pluralistic but at the expense of weeding out societal demands which are not close to the median voter, and therefore bear a higher risk of 'channel failure', effectively silencing some demands before they are dealt with in the political system.

Evidence speaks for such a connection between party systems and notions of trust and legitimacy. Marien (2011b) reports a relationship between electoral systems and political trust. Proportional (PR) systems generate a higher level of trust compared with less proportional ones, or majoritarian (FPP) systems. Marien suspects on of the effects of the pluralist representation in PR systems is to positively affect trust, while highly disproportional systems can generate high trust through a direct link between votes and government formation, especially in two-party systems. However, her assumption of a curvilinear function of disproportional representation cannot conclusively be verified, because the number of cases she considers does not suffice for proper generalization. Thus, a more straightforward conclusion from her findings would rather be that higher disproportionality causes lower levels of trust, i.e. a linear relationship between the two variables. In a similar vein, Banducci et al. (1999) demonstrated that an increase in the levels of trust directed at representative institutions, the government, and politicians occurred after changing from a FPP system to a PR system with a case study on electoral system reform in New Zealand in the mid-1990s. Likewise, an empirical analysis conducted by Wells and Krieckhaus (2006) on the effect of consensus or majoritarian democracies on democratic support amongst losers and winners of parliamentary elections demonstrates that institutional factors matter in the sense that losers feel less dis-attached in consensual systems, likely due to the lack of a winnertake-it-all principle in these polities. In sum, it can be expected that proportional representation has a positive influence on trust in political parties.

*H*₁: Disproportionality of electoral systems increases distrust in political parties.

Proportional representation has a stronger tendency to produce multi-party systems. In the literature on political parties, fragmented and polarized party system are often seen as problematic and prone to conflict. Sartori (1990) for example argues that extreme pluralism, that a number of parties higher than about five often causes "centrifugal drives" to the extremes of the Left-Right spectrum, which also includes a major role for anti-system system parties and irresponsible oppositions. While Sartori does not establish a causal link between these party system features with trust in political parties, it might indicate a paradoxical effect of PR systems. Proportional electoral outcomes are perceived as positive, while the party systems that emerge in PR systems include more relevant political parties than FPP systems – a factor that affects confidence in political parties too. Aarts and Thomassen for instance (2008) report a negative influence of PR electoral systems on satisfaction with democracy. Measuring the perceived accountability and representativeness of electoral systems, the two scholars also find that the feeling to be represented by parliamentarians is more

important for satisfaction with democracy. The perception of accountability is linked with satisfaction as well, though with a statistically weaker influence. Such findings highlight the contradictory effect of majoritarian systems, where the linkage between election winners and government formation is usually clear and direct, whereas consensual systems with PR rules have a less apparent link between election outcomes and government formation, which oftentimes takes place in form of coalition governments. Surely, the theoretical base to formulate a thorough hypothesis about the influence of institutional factors from these observations is weak, but it suffices to include the number of parties and ideological polarization on the national level as control variables in order to check for a possible impact of both variables on trust in political parties. It is, tentatively, expected that the higher the fragmented and/or polarization of a party system, the higher the level of distrust of political parties in a given country, following Sartori's (1990) rather skeptical assessment of fragmented and polarized party systems.

b) Parties, politicians, and trust

Besides outlining structural features of political systems, Easton also provides a typology describing the different sources of legitimacy for the regime and the authorities, to which political parties belong. In his terms, a political systems mainly consists of the authorities, the regime, and the political community, each of which are objects of support and legitimacy (Easton 1965, 165). Ideology, structure, and personal qualities are the variables affecting the legitimacy of these political objects (Easton 1965, 287). Ideology is the "belief in the rightness [...] and in the compatibility of a regime and its authorities with them" (Easton 1965, 292), and fosters the legitimacy of political authorities. The same effect is exerted on the "very patterns in which the authorities are organized" (Easton 1965, 293), which addresses the general organizing principles of the political system. With regards to structural legitimacy, its sources are the belief that authorities gained power in the ways determined by the norms of the regime, as well as a norm-complying exercise of the powers vested to the authorities (Easton 1965, 298). Finally, personal legitimacy is nurtured by "the personal merit and worth of the authorities" (Easton 1965, 303), i.e. the conduct and personality of individual authorities. In sum, ideological legitimacy refers to the belief in the rightfulness and organizational structure of the political system as a whole, whereas personal legitimacy is defined as a property related to the individual aptness of representatives and office-holders. Structural legitimacy means the nature in which authorities gained office and act according to the principles and norms established in the system. Structural legitimacy can thus be understood as a linkage between the systemic level and the individual level, in which personal legitimacy originates from personal characteristics and the conduct of authorities.

David Easton's contribution is regularly cited as the theoretical foundation for analyses of political trust. Hooghe and Zmerli for example derive their definition of political trust as "the expectation that political actors generally behave in a fair manner" (Hooghe and Zmerli 2011, 3) from Easton's concept of support and legitimacy. A derived definition of trust in political parties would read as 'the expectation that political parties (and their members) generally behave in a fair manner'.² Distrust in that sense would mean the opposite, that is the feeling that political actors do not behave in a fair manner, such as determined by structural features – the 'rules of the game' – of the political system and individual character traits. This definition gives the opportunity to test hypotheses about the influence of perceived legitimacy flaws on confidence in political parties.

Evidence for such a connection between popular confidence in political parties and the conduct of politicians has been established by several authors. Studying Japanese politics for example, Pharr (2000) found that the perception of corruption predicts distrust in public officials on a more significant level than economic performance or social capital. Likewise, Donnatella della Porta (2000, 209) researched the relationship between corruption perception and satisfaction with democracy in Western Europe, claiming that both indicators show a "rough correlation". This effect is particularly strong when corruption of public officials is publicly displayed in scandals (Della Porta 2000, 210). Noteworthy, this erosion of trust in political institutions does not correlate with a decrease of interpersonal trust or trust directed at private institutions (Della Porta 2000, 213). Another observation was made by Chang and Chu (2006), who reported that

² A certain limitation to the abstract terms used by Easton is the theoretical distinction between the different objects of a political system. But political parties cannot discretely be ascribed to a single object of the political system, as they fulfill representational functions on the input side, as well as executive and structuring functions if a party is currently holding government office. This is a theoretical and methodological problem, because modern political parties transcend these boundaries. It moreover raises the question how or if citizen perception distinguishes between these different roles and functions of parties.

corruption perception of individual respondents is a strong predictor of distrust in political institutions in several Asian democracies. Here, a composite indicator for political trust is used in a multilevel analysis and a strong correlation between trust in different political objects reported. Chang and Chu (2006) furthermore find evidence for the assumption that a high perception of corruption bears the risk of a vicious circle threatening the quality of democratic governance.

Using qualitative interviews with Dutch voters, Van Wessel (2010) explicates paradox aspects of popular disenchantment with politics and political parties, where norms about and real experiences of the political process clash with each other. Her respondents expect politicians to act according to their political position and to stand up for their convictions if needed. When political parties and politicians fail to realize their promises, it is perceived as failure of their representational duty. But once politicians compromise or reach an agreement which does not fully realize their initial promises, it is felt as a betrayal to the voters, who expected "consistent" policy positions from their representatives. Van Wessel also reports a strong output and outcome orientation of the voter. Politicians should not engage in petty discussions but pragmatically solve urgent problems. The complexity of the political process required to reach this end is blinded out from the respondents' evaluation of politicians. Although these results are certainly limited in their potential for generalization. Van Wessel's findings nicely illustrate the paradoxical ways in which politicians and politics are perceived. Voters on the one hand expect strong political leadership and stable policy positions but disdain political conflict about issues and solutions based on trade-offs, which is perceived as a violation of the "contract" signed during the election (van Wessel 2010).

All aforementioned examples illustrate that the conduct of politicians, either in the form of blatant corruption or as materializing in political processes is often perceived as a 'betrayal' of their representational responsibilities and damages trust in political parties. More abstractly, what David Easton refers to as structural legitimacy – politicians playing by the rules of the game and behaving in a 'fair manner'– and personal legitimacy – an individual's suitability for office – is harmed. Notably, this effect may occur if 'the rules of the game' are contrary to public expectations about the functioning of government.

*H*₂: Corruption perception increases distrust in political parties.

Some authors claim that such trust in political institutions including political parties

is a "single theoretical concept" (Hooghe 2011; Marien 2011a), hence no individual treatment of trust in parties, governments, or other objects is necessary but a comprehensive understanding of the latent underlying variable of 'general' political trust. Yet the variation of levels of trust expressed in certain political institutions and especially political parties is undeniable (see Dalton and Weldon 2005), suggesting that at least some institutions are perceived and evaluated differently from others. Different scholars (Fisher, van Heerde, and Tucker 2010; Fisher, van Heerde-Hudson, and Tucker 2011) argue that condensing different objects of trust into a single measure bears certain theoretical shortcomings. Even Marien (2011a, 19) reports that trust in politicians and political parties share a statistical variance, supported by the findings of a factor analysis, that is unrelated to the concept of generalized political trust. Trust in politicians and political parties mus therefore be influenced by other factors. Similarly, Hooghe (2011) uses trust in political parties and politicians as dependent variables to prove that political trust can be measured on a single scale and be understood as a unidimensional concept. The general assumption of their argument will not be contested in this article, since the focus of interest is on political parties and not all political institutions. The finding that trust in politicians and political parties are correlated informs this paper by revealing that trust in political parties hinges on the conduct of politicians, who are the public faces of political parties, as outlined by Easton's concepts of structural and personal legitimacy. Similarly, if trust in political parties is lower than trust in other institutions but still related to the 'latent' concept of general political trust, then investigating the reasons for the variation in levels of trust is justification enough. Contextual variables such as features of the political systems or other national-level might explain exactly these levels of variation.

c) The influence of national and regional context

One other aspect that must be taken into consideration is the national or regional context that can influence levels of trust and distrust. Dalton (2004) for example analyzed several industrialized democracies and found that national contexts are very important for the 'erosion' of support in political institutions. It is safe to assume that the dependent variables are to some extent influenced by factors that can not be grasped without detailed analyses of each country. Political culture, historical pathways of political development, cleavage structures, and other factors are likely to be amongst those variables. At a higher level, the region, some of these factors can be found too:

European countries share features such as European integration. Central and Eastern European states have a common past of Communist control. South American, Asian, and African countries often experienced colonial rulership.

Such national peculiarities and regional trajectories are found to have an influence on political institutions and the mechanics of party systems. Margit Tavits and Natalia Letki (2009) for example discovered that Eastern European parties often have a 'reversed' attitude towards economic spending; leftist governments in post-Communist countries are more likely to enforce austerity measures, while right-party governments are prone to increase public spending to encourage economic growth. Moreover, political parties in Eastern Europe are less institutionalized than their Western European counterparts, which benefit from their mass organizations. Voter representation in Eastern Europe is thus dependent on other channels than a clear linkage between party identification and electoral choices (Rohrschneider and Whitefield 2012).

Many South American democracies are seeing a rise of populism and party system de-institutionalization (Sanchez 2008, 316). This development reinforces individualized parties and a rise of anti-party sentiments which scorch established parties, party systems, and representative democratic institutions (Sanchez 2008, 316). Finally, party systems in Africa are often weakly institutionalized and organized along ethnic lines (Mozaffar, Scarritt, and Galaich 2003; Weghorst and Bernhard 2014, 23). In Africa, Weghorst and Bernhard (2014, 10) also observe different effects of a country's colonial history, depending on whether colonial rule was exerted by France or Britain. Interestingly, proportional representation in Africa is also linked with higher levels of volatility (Weghorst and Bernhard 2014, 24).

In East Asia, the Left-Right dimension fails to structure party systems as it does in Western countries, where party systems are usually polarized along a Left-Right spectrum. Politics in the Philippines, Korea and Taiwan are much more affected by personalized parties, regional cleavages or questions of national identity. In these countries, voting choices are only marginally determined by a voter's self-positioning on the Left-Right scale and party positions (Jou 2010). Japan, on the other hand, has a clearly polarized party system, which a) highlights the relevance of national context and b) might be an outcome the longevity of democratic rule, as polarized party systems usually emerge over time after democratic transition and consolidation (Dalton and Tanaka 2007, 218). Philippe Schmitter reminds us that political parties in newer

democracies have problems acting as aggregators and intermediaries of societal demands, fail at structuring political processes, provide less identification, and offer less distinguishable ideological alternatives (Schmitter 2001). Hence, the durability of a democratic regime will also be included as a control variable, because a certain degree of variation of the levels of distrust can be expected between longstanding democracies and Second or Third Wave democracies (Kuenzi and Lambright 2001, 462–3; Sanchez 2008, 318). As a tentative hypothesis, it is expected that distrust in political parties is lower in long-established democracies than newly democratized countries.

*H*₃: Long-established democratic regimes reduce distrust in political parties.

d) Individual traits and trust

Besides the discussed variables that are directly linked with political objects – parties or authorities – other, not necessarily political orientations and factors, can affect political trust, because democratic government not only relies on formal political institutions and structures, but also on attitudes and orientations. Almond and Verba's (1963) landmark study *The Civic Culture* was dedicated to explore and evaluate such individual-level factors. They concluded that "stable democracy depends upon more than the structures of government and politics: it depends upon the orientation that people have to the political process–upon the political culture" (Almond and Verba 1963, 498). The quote is first and foremost a reminder that the dependent variable – trust in political parties – can serve as an indicator for political culture and, additionally, may affect the overall stability of a democratic regime. Yet it also hints at the necessity to include some additional individual-level factors in the analysis.

Interpersonal trust, for example, is often named as an important factor that generates political trust. Almond and Verba (1963, 490) regard such interpersonal and social trust as a "generalized resource that keeps a democratic polity operating. [...] Social trust facilitates political cooperation among the citizens in these nations, and without it democratic politics is impossible". This trust translates into political trust, when authorities and the political elite – of which political parties are a part – are not perceived as "alien and extractive forces" (Almond and Verba 1963, 490), which relates to Easton's categories of personal and structural legitimacy. Other authors alternatively argue that interpersonal trust is unrelated to political trust (e.g. Della Porta 2000) or even an entirely different category of 'quasi trust' (Hardin 2002, 157). For the purpose of this study, the expectation that interpersonal trust is not correlated with trust in political

parties is treated as the null hypothesis. Positively phrased, interpersonal trust goes along with trust in political parties.

Satisfaction with democracy is also related to political trust, as Chang and Chu (2006) find. Satisfaction with democracy can be understood as an indicator of the perceived functioning and legitimacy of a democratic regime itself. These notions are related to perceptions of freedom, fairness, and political influence (Wells and Krieckhaus 2006), which also foster positive attitudes towards political objects. Hence an indicator measuring democratic satisfaction will be included, assuming that democratic satisfaction increases trust in political parties, i.e., that satisfaction with the regime fosters confidence in political parties.

Economic evaluations and institutional performance, which indicate the outcome performance of a political system, can also affect confidence in political parties (Anderson and Guillory 1997; Chang and Chu 2006; Marien2011b). Positive outcomes, i.e., economic growth or high income levels, are expected to positively affect confidence in political parties. For individuals, this means that earners of relatively high incomes are more likely to hold positive attitudes towards political parties, as they might perceive their position as resulting from beneficial outputs provided by the authorities. Likewise, education is a further individual-level variable affecting political trust. Higher educated individuals are usually more politically active and involved, as opposed to the higher likelihood of less-educated individuals abstaining from political involvement (Almond and Verba 1963, 400).

3. METHODOLOGY

The different formulated hypotheses should be tested using individual and country-level variables However, although a multitude of surveys measuring trust and attitudes towards political institutions exist, the exact items required to code the dependent and independent variables are not wholly included in any single survey.³ Hence, aggregate measures for trust in parties and corruption perception will initially be utilized, which is a subpar approach, but nonetheless sufficient for the first aims of this study. Only in a final step, multilevel analysis will be used to assess the influence of country-level variables and individual-level variables on distrust in political parties.

³ The only survey approximating a sufficient mix of items might be the East Asian Barometer (EAB), but the limited scope of countries measured in the EAB clashes with the larger view envisaged for this study.

a) Sampling and case selection

The cross-sectional analysis makes use of the 2005-08 World Values Survey dataset, which in total covers 57 countries. The decision to use WVS data was rooted in the number of countries covered with these surveys. Other more regularly conducted surveys such as the Eurobarometer only cover European countries, which bears a risk of unit homogeneity, since European countries often share similar features (Ebbinghaus 2005), while the WVS offers data on democracies worldwide.

Amongst these 57 countries, all democratic countries were selected. Democratic countries were chosen based on a two-criterion selection procedure using both Polity IV data and Freedom House rankings. Since democracy can be conceived as a multi-dimensional concept with electoral democracy as one dimension, and civil liberties as the other (Dahl 1971), selecting cases on the basis of the two rankings makes sense and decreases the possibility of using cases which are not 'genuine' democracies. Hence, only countries with a Polity IV DEMOC score of 6 or higher and a classification of "free" in the Freedom House Index at the time when the WVS survey was conducted were selected.⁴ In total, 35 countries were selected from the 2005-08 WVS (see Appendix A) based on the two criteria. This cross-sectional sample from 2005-08 included 18 countries which were OECD members and eleven which were EU member states at that time.

For the longitudinal analysis, data from 12 countries from all four waves conducted between 1995 and 2014 met the dual criterion of the Polity IV and the Freedom House indices. Crucial for the selection was that at least three of the four surveys included the item indicating the outcome variable in order to prevent large time gaps between point of measurement.

b) Measuring distrust in political parties

For the aggregate analysis, values of the dependent variable, **distrust in political parties**, were taken from this the World Values Survey 2005-08 data set. In these surveys, respondents are asked how much confidence they have in different political and societal institutions, including political parties. The answers are coded using a four-point interval scale with two positive values and two negative values indicating whether respondents trust or distrust political parties, which approximates Easton's (1965, 161-

⁴ Both indices were chosen because Polity IV data measures electoral accountability of public officials as well as institutional features of political systems, whereas CPI data focuses on political rights and the practice of democratic principles in the surveyed countries.

162) recommendation to measure trust directed at political objects at least on an ordinal scale. The question in the World Values Survey was phrased as follows:

(V139)

"I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? Political parties:

1 A great deal 2 Quite a lot 3 Not very much 4 None at all"

Both negative responses (3 and 4) were aggregated and taken as each country's level of *total distrust*. Similarly, responses indicating "not very much" (number 3) were used as a measure for *moderate distrust* and answer number 4 ("none at all") served as indicators for *strong distrust*. The results are percentages of each country which show the proportion of respondents not trusting political parties with differing intensity. Using these three indicators for various levels of distrust allows for a more precise analysis on the national level, as some variation in the levels of the various aggregated indicators can be expected.

On the individual level, the dependent variable is treated as an interval-scaled variable for use in the ordinal regression models later reported in this paper. In these models, the original 4-point scale as asked in the survey questions was used as the outcome variable. No further change of the variable was made.

c) Country-level predictors

Disproportionality was measured using the least square index (LSq) introduced by Michael Gallagher (1991). The index quantifies the difference between the vote share gained in elections and the actual seat share in parliament, which might be the result of rules such as electoral thresholds or different rules in PR and FPP systems. Using the Gallagher index allows for a better analysis of the impact of electoral systems on trust, because it is a metric variable which can be used for more types of tests than, say, a nominal scaled variable distinguishing between PR, FPP, and mixed systems. Scores are published online by Gallagher (2013) himself. The scores used are taken from the last election preceding the survey which measured the dependent variable.⁵

Corruption perception as an indicator for the independent variable of personal

⁵ The LSq index measuring proportionality of electoral systems is calculated with the formula

legitimacy was measured using Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI). The index is published annually since 1995 and is calculated from several other corruption indices, resulting in a standardized score for each country (or territory). Values range from 0 to 10, whereby 0 = "highly clean" and 10 = "highly corrupt". Since the CPI covers most countries and goes back until 1995, it is the best available measure for public perception of corruption in a country.⁶ The country scores used here were taken from the CPI report in the year of the WVS survey in each country.

However, using the CPI, a national-level index, as an indicator for the levels of personal legitimacy is only a second-best solution. Aarts and Thomassen's (2008) method taking individual-level items asking about respondents about their feeling of representation through politicians as independent variables is arguably a better approach because they would measure the individual-level predictors directly on the individual level. They therefore approximate Easton's concepts of personal and structural legitimacy and channel failure better than the national-level CPI scores. But since the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) questionnaire, which was used for the Aarts and Thomassen study, lacks items asking respondents about their level of trust or confidence in political parties, this solution is unfortunately not possible in this inquiry.

Two variables measure features of each country's party system. The **effective number of parties** in parliament (Laakso and Taagepera 1979) is the first one. The indicator is widely accepted as a measure for party system fragmentation because it takes into account the number and size of parties represented in a legislature. Data is taken from Gallagher's (2013) dataset which is available on-line and covers most countries and elections worldwide. The scores used are taken from the last election preceding the survey which measured the dependent variable.⁷

$$LSq = \sqrt{\frac{1}{2}\sum (V_i - S_i)^2}$$
 where V_i denotes the vote share of individual parties and S_i the seat

share of the same party.

7 The LSq and ENP values for Ghana, Mali, and Taiwan were calculated by hand based on IBU Parline data (for Ghana, no vote shares were available and LSq could not be calculated). ENP is calculated

with the formula $ENP = \frac{1}{\sum P_i^2}$ where P_i denotes the seat share parties have gained in a given parliament.

⁶ The Global Corruption Barometer, which measures public perceptions on corruption and is also published by Transparency International, might be a more suitable indicator but covers less countries.

Party system polarization was measured using the Polarization index developed by Dalton (2008).⁸ Dalton originally calculates the index from CSES data on party positions ranging from 0 to 10 on a Left-Right scale and the vote shares of these political parties to form a weighted statistic for party system polarization. Extreme positions of small parties thus have a weaker effect on the index than extreme positions of parties with high vote shares. In Dalton's (2008, 906) formula, the index ranges from 0 to 10, whereby a value of 0 indicates no polarization, i.e. all parties have a similar position on the Left-Right scale. A value of 10 means that all parties are positioned on the extremes of the political spectrum.⁹ For this analysis, Left-Right scores from the Manifesto Project Database were recoded to a 0 to 10 scale and used as the initial party positions on a Left-Right spectrum.

The **age of a democracy** of each case was taken from Polity IV data, where it is called 'durability' of a regime and measured in years. The values recorded in the Polity IV data set indicate the amount of years a political regime has existed without undergoing major institutional or other structural changes (indicated by a three-point change of the *Democ* or *Autoc* variable in the Polity IV data set). This might mean a transition from authoritarianism to democracy or vice versa. But since only democratic countries were sampled, the most recent regime change will mean a democratic transition, or, possibly, a slight a slight deterioration of the state of a democratic regime, e.g., if a country's *Democ* score drops from 10 to 7 or lower. However, this is not the case in the sample, because all countries in the sample experienced democratic transitions as a baseline for the durability indicator.

A control variable measured on the national level is **GDP/capita**, which checks for a country's income level influencing trust in political parties. Both regime durability and GDP per capita were included as logarithmized variables in the following statistical analyses, because any change of a single unit of both variables (years and current US dollars PPP) can be expected to only have a marginal influence on the dependent variable, especially towards the longer end of the value range.

8 Dalton and Tanaka (2007) also used the index in an earlier paper.

9 The formula Dalton suggests is $PI = \sqrt{\sum (V_i) \left[\frac{(LR_i - \bar{x_{LR}})}{5}\right]^2}$ where V_i indicates each parties vote share and LR_i the score of each party on the 1-10 Left-Right scale, and \bar{x}_{LR} the party system average of the Left-Right scale.

Finally, 'government effectiveness' scores and 'voice and accountability' scores from the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI) were included. As controls, they approximate national level outcomes of the political system and public influence in and transparency of decision-making.¹⁰ In total, eight indicators on the country level were collected. While it would be theoretically reasonable to include more independet variables or control variables in the model, the sample size of 35 countries limited the amount of variables.

d) Individual-level predictors

In order to measure the impact of country-level predictors (that is, party system variables) on the individual-level outcome variable that is trust in political parties, a multilevel model will subsequently be used. Multilevel models seek to explain variation among individuals who can be divided into different groups, which is why multilevel models are sometimes called hierarchical models (see Steenbergen and Jones 2002 for an introduction in multilevel analysis). Multilevel models distinguish between Level-1 and Level-2 variables, the former on the individual level and the latter on the group level. Multilevel analysis prevents analytical flaws that occur when group members are the unit of analysis, which requires a technique that is mindful of "unit-wise heterogeneity" (Jones 2008, 607), and is therefore the most suitable statistical approach.

For the given proposal, the second level is the country-level, in which the respondents of the WVS reside. The influence of group membership and features of these groups are thus treated as a second-level independent variables. Similar models have been used to analyze corruption perception (Chang and Chu 2006), the relationship between political institutions and satisfaction with democracy (Wells and Krieckhaus 2006; Aarts and Thomassen 2008) or the influence of electoral systems on political trust (Marien 2011b), to list just a few.

The indicator for **education** was taken from the WVS dataset and coded on a scale ranging from 1 (= no formal education) to 9 (= university degree or similar). **Interpersonal trust** is measured with a dichotomous variable with the possible answers that 'most people can be trusted' (code: 0) or that one 'can't be too careful' when dealing

¹⁰ The 'voice and accountability' index is influenced by trust in parliament and satisfaction with democracy scores, which some (Marien 2011; Hooghe 2011) say are related to trust in political parties. Hence, if the influence of these factors is strong enough in the final index, a positive relationship between the index and the DV can be expected.

with other people (code: 1). **Democratic satisfaction** is measured with a ten-point scale (where 1 = "not at all democratic"; 10 = "completely democratic") indicator. The model also incorporated standard control variables such as **age**, **gender** (0 = female; 1 = male), and the self-positioning on a **Left-Right scale** ranging from 1 = left to 10 = right.

Unfortunately, the WVS questionnaire lacks specific items to measure economic evaluations and performance of government at the individual level. Institutional performance and economic evaluations can only be assessed by conceiving **household income** and the earlier mentioned country-level variables of **GDP/capita** and **government efficiency** as proxy indicators for these two variables.

4. RESULTS

The analysis was conducted in several steps. First, the level of distrust over time in a number of cases is presented. Only by this means, trends in the levels of distrust can be tracked and the question whether trust is declining be answered. Second, the hypotheses regarding the influence of corruption perception and the proportionality of electoral systems are tested using the two outcome variables calculated from the WVS 2005-08 dataset and the independent variables presented earlier. In a third and final step, the influence of the individual-level and country-level independent variables on individual-level attitudes (i.e. trust in political parties) is tested by the means of a multilevel analysis.

a) Longitudinal evidence: distrust over time

The most valid evidence supporting the "de-alignment hypothesis" is the gradual decline of party membership, party identification, and electoral turnout in a number of established democracies. In order to test the validity of the de-alignment hypothesis for the outcome variable of trust in political parties, data from the four World Value Surveys conducted between 1995 and 2014 was collected and analyzed. Figure 1 presents the development of distrust in political parties in those 19 years for the 13 countries which participated in more than two of the World Values Surveys. The left panels shows the development of total distrust and the right panels displays strong distrust. European countries are display in the top row, and all other in the bottom row. Moderate distrust is not included, as it is the difference of strong distrust subtracted from total distrust on a country-by-country basis.



Source: Own calculations based own World Values Survey data.

Top row displays European democracies and the bottom row non-European democracies. Missing WVS4 scores for Australia, Germany, New Zealand, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, and Uruguay were calculated by forming an average from WVS3 and WVS5 results (WVS3 1995-1998, WVS4 1999-2000, WVS5 2005-2008, WVS6 2010-2014).

The first observations striking the eye is that the overall levels of distrust is relatively high. Total distrust averages between 81 and 77 percent for all four waves. The highest score is found in New Zealand during the third WVS wave with a staggering 93.9 percent. Sweden during the last wave reports the lowest level with 55.51 percent. Strong distrust, which is also included in the total distrust scores and displayed in the two panels on the right, never falls below 26 percent on average. In other words, at least a quarter of respondents across all countries does 'not at all' trust political parties.

What is also evident from these figures is the only incremental change of distrust across the four different WVS waves. On average, total distrust in the thirteen selected countries declined by 3.2 percent from 81 percent during the third World Value Survey (1995-98) to 77.6 percent in the last wave (2010-14). There is, however, considerable variation when looking at individual countries. Germany, New Zealand, Japan, and Sweden, experience a decline of total distrust of ranging from eleven to 17 percent between the third and sixth wave. The United States, Chile, and Slovenia to the contrary have rising levels of total distrust with an increase of roughly seven percent.

A different development of strong distrust in political parties can be seen in the right panels. The average of strong distrust remained roughly the same between the third and sixth survey (26.5 and 26.8 percent, respectively). Only some countries – Australia, Romania, Slovenia, and the United States – report rising levels of strong distrust. In New Zealand, strong distrust even decreased by 19.5 percent. In most other countries, the overall levels stagnated.

In order to explore the effect and the statistical significance of the longitudinal aspect, linear regressions using the respective survey waves (coded from 0 to 3) as independent variable and the percentages of strong and total distrust as dependent variable were used. Total distrust has a coefficient of B = -1.004, which resembles the findings reported above (p = 0.380; SE = 1.133). R² of the model is merely 0.015. Strong distrust resulted in a larger coefficient (B = -3.369, SE = 2.835) that also fails to reach statistical significance (p = 0.240). R² of the strong distrust regression is 0.027. The de-alignment hypothesis claims that people are becoming increasingly disaffected from political parties. Both models illustrate, however, that opposed to common belief, time plays no relevant role for distrust in political parties.

But besides the general trend for the time from 1995 to 2014, changes between the two most recent waves between 2008 and 2014 are interesting, too, because of the

potential influence of the Global/European Financial Crisis. Distrust was already high prior to the economic downturn which limits the potential effects of the crisis. At least total distrust remained almost entirely unchanged, even decreasing by 2.9 percent. Strong distrust, on the other hand, rose slightly in the given sample, although by a mere 0.29 percent. In individual countries, though, more significant changes could be observed. Strong distrust in Spain and Slovenia surged by 14 and 17 percent, respectively. It also increased in Australia (7.1 percent), Romania (5.6 percent), and the United States (4.5 percent). The largest decline of strong distrust was seen in Germany, where a decrease of 18 percent took place between the last two surveys. In Chile, Poland, and South Korea, a less attenuated decrease of roughly six percent occurred. These marked hikes and decreases in strong distrust between the 2005-08 and 2010-14 World Value Survey waves suggest that changes in individual countries are heavily contingent on domestic factors, such as a government's management of the crisis, and not part of a universal trend towards increasingly skeptical populaces.

In sum, using distrust in political parties as a measure for citizen de-alignment does not indicate a worsening development, even if distrust levels are already high on average. Much to the contrary, distrust measured both as total and strong distrust slightly decreased across the sampled countries during the observed time frame. What these numbers tell is first, that there is no universal trend towards higher distrust over the last 20 years, and second, that numbers and changes between survey waves vary markedly among individual countries, indicating that trust in political parties is to a large extent mediated by domestic factors or current events. Similarly, it can safely be inferred that the slight decline of total distrust is mostly caused by a decrease of moderate distrust (not shown).

b) Aggregated levels of trust, cross-sectional

Let's now turn to the WVS 2005-08 data and the influence of national-level variables on the overall levels of trust in the 35 countries under scrutiny. This analysis is conducted in three steps. First, the overall levels of total trust, moderate distrust, and strong distrust are assessed descriptively. Second, the influence of the national-level variables is evaluated variable by variable, using scatterplots of the existing data. Finally, a multivariate regression is used to determine the strength of the influence of all variables in a single model.

Figure 2 presents the overall levels of trust in the 35 selected countries of the 2005-

08 World Value Survey. The stacked bar graph consists of each country's aggregated responses of the four-point trust scale. It presents an interesting picture: answers indicating moderate distrust in political parties make up the largest share in almost every country. They are followed by the response strong distrust/"none at all" and "quite a lot", which are almost even. "A great deal" of confidence is reported in a small minority of countries; only India, Ghana, Mali, Cyprus, and South Africa express mentionable levels of high confidence.





Source: World Values Survey 2005-08

Most countries display a level of total distrust between 60 and up to almost 80 percent. People in the majority of countries included in the sample are very skeptical towards political parties. Total distrust is very high in countries such as Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, and Argentina where the aggregated measure even transcends the 90 percent mark. Moderate distrust is high in almost every country. Yet, high levels of strong distrust are mostly visible in countries with comparatively lower levels of socio-economic development, countries with recent experience of political crises, and/or Third Wave democracies. These are, for example, Romania, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, Argentina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Chile, Peru, Poland, Taiwan, Slovenia, and Mexico. Yet, Germany and France also report high levels of strong distrust, indicating that this is not a homogenous group. On the other extreme, countries such as Ghana, India, Indonesia, and South Africa express relatively low levels of distrust (total, moderate, and strong), similar to the Nordic countries of Sweden, Norway, and Finland, which report the lowest levels of strong distrust in political parties.

Figure 3: Distrust in political parties: regional differences



Notes:

(a) Error bars represent +/- 1 standard deviation.

(b) North America/Oceania = US, CA, AU, NZ. Central/South America = PE, CL, AR, BR, MX, TT, UY. Africa = GH, ML, ZA. Western Europe = CY, FI, FR, DE, GB, IT, NL, NO, ES, SE, CH. Eastern Europe = BG, PL, RO, SI, UA. Asia = IN, ID, JP, KR, TW.
Sourcest World Volume 2005, 2009

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008

Broken down into different regions, an interesting picture emerges. Figure 3 shows the regional (unweighted) average response of distrust in political parties. Note that the highest (=4) value indicates strong distrust and the lowest value (=1) "a great deal" of trust in political parties. Regionally, Middle and South America ($\bar{x} = 3.22$), as well as Eastern Europe ($\bar{x} = 3.24$) show the highest average levels of distrust. Located in the center are North America and Oceania ($\bar{x} = 2.98$), Western Europe ($\bar{x} = 2.96$), and Asia ($\bar{x} = 2.90$). African respondents on average reported the lowest level of distrust ($\bar{x} =$ 2.72). However, standard deviation is highest in Africa (SD = 0.933) and Asia (SD = 0.830), meaning that these two regions are also the least homogenous ones in terms of confidence in political parties. Regional contexts therefore have an influence on the levels of trust in political parties. Especially in post-authoritarian Eastern Europe and Middle and South America, distrust in political parties is extensive.

c) Sample variability

The high variation in the dependent variable is confirmed by the statistics reported in Table 1. Aggregated total distrust is lowest in India (53.6 percent) and highest in Peru (95.3 percent). Respondents in Mali (31.4 percent) reported the lowest level of moderate distrust, whereas their counterparts in the United States expressed the highest level (68.8 percent). Strong distrust is lowest in Norway (6.4 percent) and peaks in Peru (49.9 percent). On average, 50.25 percent of the respondents in all countries answered the question with "not much", 27.62 with "none at all", resulting in an average total distrust

level of 77.87 percent.

The independent variables are displayed in a similar fashion. On average, countries have ENP scores of 3.89 'effective parties'. Mali scores lowest with 1.59 effective parties, which suggests a dominant-party system. Brazil, on the other hand, has the highest score of 9.32 and thus a highly fragmented party system. The standard deviation is 1.75, meaning that most countries roughly have between 2 and 6 effective parties and by that a two-party system (with possible smaller third parties) or a moderately pluralist party system.

	Ν	Range	MIN	MAX	Mean	Median	SD
Mod. Distrust (%)	35	37.4	31.4	68.8	50.3	51.3	10.75
Strong distrust (%)	35	43.5	6.4	49.9	27.6	26.4	12.24
Total distrust (%)	35	41.7	53.6	95.3	77.9	79.0	10.81
ENP	35	7.73	1.59	9.32	3.89	3.76	1.75
Lsq	34	21.69	.26	21.95	5.95	4.35	5.05
СРІ	35	7.2	2.4	9.6	5.9	5.9	2.42
Efficiency	35	71.2	27.8	99.0	74.3	80.0	21.33
Accountability	35	58.7	41.3	100.0	77.5	81.3	17.53
Durability	35	192	5	197	48	23	48.31
GDP/cap	35	72,334	451	72,785	20,545	16,023	18267.26
Polarization	22	9.05	.05	9.10	2.90	2.22	2.56

Table 1: Descriptive statistics (national-level)

Source: Own calculations.

The Gallagher index (LSq) averages at 5.95 with a median at 4.35 (SD = 5.05). This suggests a slightly skewed distribution with outliers at the far end. And indeed, countries using rather disproportional electoral systems such as France with a score of 21.95 and Great Britain (LSq = 16.73) are the most extreme cases. To the other end, South Africa, scoring a 0.26, has the most proportional electoral system.

Party system polarization was measured using Dalton's (2008) formula for 22 countries where sufficient information about parties' positions on a Left-Right scale was available from the Party Manifesto Project. The calculated values range from Ukraine = 0.15 to Japan = 9.10. A mean of 2.90 and a median of 2.22 imply that most party systems in the sample are only moderately polarized along the Left-Right Dimension. A certain problem of the individually calculated scores is the difference from Dalton's

original results. Germany's and Japan's party systems are amongst the most polarized in this sample, although having only average scores in Dalton's sample. Hence, the external validity of the procedure to calculate scores utilized here is questionable.¹¹

Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index has an average of 5.87 and a median score of 5.90. Since the CPI is measured on a scale ranging from 0 to 10, this indicates a slight tendency towards "clean" CPI scores of the sample. The lowest score, though, is recorded for Indonesia (CPI = 2.4), which indicates a relatively high level of corruption. The maximum score is shared by Finland and New Zealand (CPI = 9.6).

Scores for government efficiency range from 27.80 to 99.00, with a mean of 74.33 and a median score of 80.00. Accountability scores taken from the same WGI data-set range from 41.30 to 100 (mean = 77.49, median = 81.30). These differences suggest that the observed countries have a slightly higher overall score in government accountability than government efficiency.

In terms of regime durability, the countries included in the sample display a high variation. The lowest value is 5 years for Peru, while the US occupies the maximum at 197 years. Hence, the mean (47.51 years) differs significantly from the median (23.00 years). Standard deviation and variance also display the very heterogeneous composition of the sample in terms of regime durability.

Finally, income as measured in GDP per capita (PPP, current US\$) is even less homogeneously distributed throughout the sample. Lowest annual income is found in Mali at \$450.85 and highest for Norway with an average income of \$72,784.95 per year. The sample is skewed towards the lower/middle income countries with a mean = 20545.11 and the median = 16,022.94. Transforming both GDP per capita and regime durability to a logarithmic scale reduces the heterogeneity of both variables and results in a distribution more akin to a bell curve.

d) Aggregate-level bivariate effects

Figure 4 shows the bivariate effects of all eight predictor variables on total and strong distrust at the country level. When contrasted with total distrust (top row), ENP, Polarization index, CPI, government efficiency and government accountability, and the

¹¹ Compare for instance Germany's scores (2.70) or Japan's scores (3.30) using Dalton's (2008, 907) method with the results here (6.98 and 9.10, respectively) for the same legislatures. One of the sources to obtain the polarization scores, either CSES survey data or Manifesto Project data, therefore produces results with questionable validity.

logarithmized durability variable result in almost horizontal trend lines for total distrust and produce statistically insignificant p-values. This means that all these predictor variables do not or only marginally affect total distrust. The LSq index and logarithmized GDP per capita, on the other hand, have a positive effect on total distrust. LSq also is the only variable that reaches a level of statistical significance (p = 0.052). One interesting observation about the distribution of the LSq-to-total-distrust panel is that total distrust rapidly increases at LSq scores between 0 and 10 but stays on a certain level afterward, which might imply that disproportionality only affects distrust up to a certain level and ceases to affect the outcome variable once disproportionality reaches a certain cut point. The findings cast doubt on Marien's (2011b) hypothesis that electoral systems affect political trust in the form of a curvilinear function and rather support the expectation formulated earlier that disproportionality has an almost linear effect on distrust in political parties.

For the strong distrust (bottom row) measure, effect directions are more varied. Two distinct patterns can be identified. First, some variables affect strong distrust positively, with a minimally inclined slope, as in the cases of ENP, LSq index, and Polarization index, although all effects are insignificant. The positive effect is strongest for the LSq and ENP variables. Second, the other variables – CPI, government efficiency & accountability, regime durability, and GDP per capita – have a negative influence on strong distrust and reach statistical significance (p < 0.05).





Source: Own compilation.

Without displaying the bivariate effects of each predictor on moderate distrust, one important inference can be made from a simple mathematical exercise. For the independent variables where total distrust results in a horizontal trend line and strong distrust in a positively inclined one, moderate distrust will have the inverse direction of the strong distrust line. Therefore, increasing CPI, Government efficiency and accountability, logarithmized durability, and GDP per capita cause a decrease of strong distrust whilst simultaneously increasing moderate distrust in political parties. Only via the disaggregation of the dependent variable, this particular pattern could be revealed. A mere analysis of composite distrust would have suffered from a loss of information as a result of aggregation.

These findings suggest that 'cleaner', older, richer, and efficient democracies will suffer from less strong distrust than their younger, more corrupt, less affluent, and less efficient counterparts. Countries with disproportional representation and fragmented or polarized party systems are more likely to face strong distrust by their citizens. Yet the findings also highlight that total distrust is almost unaffected by the mentioned independent variables. Apparently, total distrust rather plateaus at a high level, without being affected by most country-level predictors. Similar levels of total distrust can be found for two-party systems as well as for multiparty systems, for corrupt and for clean countries, as well as for old and new democracies. It is mainly strong distrust (and, inversely, moderate distrust) that is determined by the various predictors.

e) Aggregate-level multivariate effects

Because the scatterplots presented above only demonstrate bivariate relationships between the predictor variables and each outcome variable, a multivariate regression was used to assess the effects of each independent variable in a single model. The results are reported in Table 2. Note that only ENP, LSq index, CPI, regime durability (logarithmized), and government efficiency were included as predictors. The decision to exclude government accountability and GDP per capita was caused by strong multicollinearity between these three and other independent variables. A correlation matrix revealed that government accountability correlates highly with government efficiency (r = 0.949) and CPI (r = 0.931). Similarly, GDP per capita strongly correlates with CPI, government efficiency, and government accountability (for all three: r > 0.8). Dalton's index of party system polarization was omitted because of the low number of cases ($N_{PI} = 22$) for which the variable could be calculated. A further reduction of the already small sample would have decreased the already limited feasibility of the sample for statistical analysis.

	<u>Standard</u>	model	<u>Factor model</u>					
	Strong distrust	Total distrust	Strong distrust	Total distrust				
	В (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)	B (SE)				
(Constant)	36.612*** (10.061)	72.038*** (11.646)	32.329** (12.894)	87.693*** (13.350)				
ENP	1.383 (1.012)	.609 (1.172)	1.040 (1.065)	.398 (1.103)				
Lsq	.791** (.333)	.765* (.385)	.731** (.356)	.801** (.369)				
CPI [♭]	-2.325 (1.825)	650 (2.112)	-2.233 (1.873)	-2.642 (1.939)				
Log(Durability)	-12.760** (5.543)	-1.455 (6.415)	-	-				
Efficiency	.151 (.219)	.070 (.254)	-	-				
Democracy Component ^c	-	-	-1.741 (4.440)	6.015 (4.597)				
R ²	.519	.131	.430	.176				
F	6.044	.842	5.475	1.549				
N	34	34	34	34				

Table 2: Effects of predictor variables (multivariate regression)

Notes:

(a) All entries are unstandardized coefficients. ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

(b) $VIF_{CPI} = 6.660$

(c) $VIF_{DC} = 6.531$

First, two independent multivariate regressions were run with the original indicators; one each for the outcome variables of strong and total distrust. The two columns on the left side of Table 2 show the results of these regressions. The results for both outcome variables roughly resemble the patterns displayed in the bivariate analysis. That is, the direction of effects changes with the outcome variable. Using total distrust as the outcome variable resulted in smaller and less significant coefficients for ENP, CPI, logarithmized durability, and government efficiency, indicating that changes in total distrust cannot be predicted well by the model. Additionally, R² (0.131) and F (0.842) of the total distrust model also imply a low explanatory power.

The model using strong distrust as an outcome variable produced decent R² (0.519) and F (6.044) values, which suggests that the independent variables predict the levels of strong distrust better than total distrust. Moreover, disproportionality and regime are statistically significant (p < 0.05). A reason for concern, though, are the relatively high

standard errors in the two models, which are problematic for the inferential power of a statistical model. Smaller standard errors are desirable, because they suggest that the observations made in the sample are close to observations that will be made in a population. In the given models, the high standard errors, sometimes even larger than the coefficients, indicate that the observations are not explained well by the statistical model.¹²

Problematic, too, is that most coefficients are statistically insignificant, except for the positive influence of Gallagher's LSq index and logarithmized regime durability on strong distrust (for bot p < 0.05).¹³ Judging only by the effects found for ENP, LSq and CPI, two observations can be made. First, a high number of parties and a disproportional electoral system are related to higher percentage of strong distrust in political parties. This effect, though, is somewhat mitigated by a high coefficient of the CPI. Because higher scores of the CPI express lower corruption, a negative sign in front of the regression coefficient is exactly the outcome hypothesized in the beginning. Additionally, older regimes have a moderating effect on strong distrust, as highlighted by the negative sign in front of the durability coefficient. In sum, using countries as the unit of analysis, disproportional electoral systems will increase the statistical probability of populaces expressing strong distrust, while a higher age of a democratic regime decreases the same probability.

Additionally, another two regressions were run using a single variable calculated through a Principal Component Analysis which replaced regime durability, government efficiency, government accountability, and GDP per capita. The purpose was to reduce the effect of collinear predictors, because all four listed variables load strongly (factor loads between 0.828 and 0.965) on a single component (Eigenvalue = 3.503, 58.38 percent of variance explained). The CPI was omitted from this component because the focus of research is on the individual influence of corruption perception on trust. Likewise, ENP and LSq also load on a second component with an Eigenvalue = 1.215

¹² This view is for instance maintained by King (1986, 676–7), who pointed out that R² only has limited meaning for the explanatory power of test results. Instead, standard errors provide better insights about the inferential power of a model.

¹³ It is important to mention that small-N samples usually produce non-significant results in test statistics, since the sample size is too small to infer on values for a larger population, which, however, does not mean that effect sizes should be ignored, but that a more cautious interpretation of the results is required (Kramer and Rosenthal 1999).

(20.26 percent of variance explained), but were included as individual variables because of the potential influence of the variables themselves. Also, correlation between ENP and LSq is still acceptable (r = -0.245). The results are reported in the two columns on the right of Table 2 ("factor models", the newly generated variable is listed as "democracy component", as it mostly describes features of stable and functioning democracies).

The coefficients of ENP and LSq remain mostly unchanged in their direction and size. As in the first two models, LSq is the only independent variable that reaches statistical significance in the models forecasting strong and total distrust (p < 0.05). The coefficient for CPI remains most stable in the strong distrust model. For total distrust, the coefficient of CPI even increases by from -0.651 in the standard model to -2.642 in the factor model. The component variable has a strong and significant effect on moderate distrust and a negative influence on strong distrust. All factors included in the component therefore diminish the probability for a country to report higher levels of strong distrust. However, CPI and the component both have a high Variance Inflation Factor (VIF > 6.5), which highlights the strong collinearity between both variables. This finding might also explain the erratic behavior of the coefficient of CPI and other variables in the models. In overall terms, the two factor models using the 'democracy component' have roughly the same R² values as the two standard models, suggesting that the explanatory power of them is similar.

As overall results, the multivariate analysis revealed that a) strong distrust can be predicted more precisely than total distrust with the variables used here, and that b) the disaggregation of total distrust helps to detect the effects of the different variables. With regards to the effects of individual predictors, c) higher ENP scores correlate with higher levels of strong distrust, d) higher disproportionality measured with Gallagher's LSq index correlates positively with strong distrust, that e) 'cleaner' CPI scores correlate negatively with strong distrust but have mixed effects on moderate and total distrust, and that f) older regimes will face less strong distrust. In other words, total distrust on the country level stays, statistically, unaffected by the predictor variables. This evidence correspond with the results of the bivariate analysis: the more disproportional an electoral system is, and the higher the fragmentation of a party system, the higher will be the strong distrust of the electorate. Moreover, the age of a democratic regime, i.e. the further a democracy is consolidated over time, translates itself directly into less

strong distrust in political parties, at a statistically significant level.¹⁴

f) Multilevel regression

Lastly, all theoretically relevant variables were used in a multilevel model that incorporates the effects of individual-level (L1) and country-level (L2) predictors. The employed technique was a multilevel ordinary logistic regression and was calculated using STATA's *meologit* command. One advantage of this additional analysis is that the independent variable could be inserted with its original four-point scale. The results are reported in Table 3. Note that not all variables were used. Certain predictors–government accountability, GDP per capita, and party system polarization – were again omitted because of strong multicollinearity and a high amount of missing values. The most relevant variables to test the formulated hypotheses were nonetheless included in the model.¹⁵

The results displayed in Table 3 reveal that of the individual-level predictors, only two variables have a statistically significant effect on confidence in political parties. Interpersonal trust and democratic satisfaction exert a strong influence on confidence in political parties. The relatively high and negative coefficient of both variables indicates that people who rather distrust others are also much more likely to have low confidence in political parties, or, positively phrased, people who trust others are also more likely to be confident in political parties. Similarly, respondents who voice higher satisfaction with democracy are more likely to trust political parties than those being dissatisfied with the state of democracy in their country.

Higher levels of education increase the likelihood of respondents distrusting political parties. Income, on the other hand, has a slightly negative effect on distrust, meaning that respondents living in higher income households will display higher trust in political

¹⁴ A remark on the sample size and statistical significance, the robustness of the models the used here, and thereby the results, is questionable due to the small N of the sample, the amount of predictor variables and the influence of multicollinearity.

¹⁵ On a side note, logistic regression results report coefficients that indicate the change in the odds of a value change of the dependent variable. A negative estimate means that a respondents with higher scores of the predictor variable are more likely to answer with lower values (more trusting) of the outcome variable. Conversely, positive estimates mean that respondents with higher scores of the predictor variable are more likely to have answered in a higher category (more distrusting) of the outcome variable. The coefficients cannot be interpreted as linear effects of the independent variables.

	Predictor	Coefficient	SE	Z					
Indi	Interpersonal trust	354***	.026	-13.48					
ividu	Democraticness	192***	.005	-35.01					
ıal le	Education	.025***	.006	4.26					
evel	Income	019***	.005	-3.64					
	Age	001	.001	-1.35					
	Gender (male)	.036	.022	1.61					
	Left-Right	008	.005	-1.47					
Nati	LogDurable	657**	.279	-2.36					
onal	Lsq	.039**	.017	2.37					
llev	ENP	.028	.051	.54					
<u>e</u> _	СРІ	.012	.096	.12					
	Efficiency	.009	.011	.82					
	/cutpoint 1	-4.972	.113	-44.04					
	/cutpoint 2	-2.655***	.109	-24.42					
	/cutpoint 3	166	.107	-1.55					
	/country variance	.207	.053						
	Wald Chi ²		1,570.99						
	N level 1		29,729						
	N level 2		32						

Notes:

(a) ***p < 0.01, **p < 0.05, *p < 0.1.

(b) LR test vs. ologit regression: chibar2(01) = 1471.31 Prob>=chibar2 = 0.0000

parties. Both effects are statistically significant, but the size of the coefficients implies that the influence is rather small. Gender, age, and Left-Right placement also resulted in very small and statistically insignificant coefficient. All hypothesized relationships on the individual level are supported by this result and are not affected by control variables, especially the expectations for interpersonal trust and democratic satisfaction.

At the national level, LSq and logarithmized regime durability resulted in significant coefficients (for both p = 0.018). Therefore, respondents from countries with disproportional electoral systems are more likely to distrust political parties. Durability resulted in a negative effect which indicates that the longevity of a democratic regime

has an effect that mitigates distrust in political parties. ENP, CPI, and government efficiency have positive coefficients, although not on a statistically significant level. Finally, the variance of country fixed effects is 0.207, which suggests that country group membership at least affects trust in political parties. A variance close to zero would mean that group membership does not affect confidence in political parties. Variation on the country-level that could not be grasped with the given predictor variables thus exists within the model.

Only the hypothesized relationships between distrust and disproportionality, and between distrust and regime durability can be supported by the model, even if the effect appears small for disproportionality. Corruption perception on the national level has no significant effect on trust in political parties. It is unclear though, whether this is a result of methodological shortcomings, as mentioned before, such as including correlated predictor variables in the model, or if national-level measures for corruption perception indeed fail to explain individual-level attitudes. After all, it is not unimaginable that an individual's perception of corruption is unaffected by national-level surveys. In lay terms, expert surveys ranking countries on their corruption levels might be detached from the individual perception of politicians and parties that make up the perception of personal and structural legitimacy. Unfortunately, this problem persists until more suitable survey data is available which includes individual-level items covering perceived corruption or misconduct of politicians, the satisfaction with representation through political parties, as well as items inquiring about a respondent's confidence in political parties. Hence, the hypothesis that corruption perception affects individuallevel trust in political parties should not entirely be rejected, even if, statistically speaking, the null hypothesis must favored.

Finally, another stated intention of the analysis was to detect the influence of the number of parties on trust in political parties. Using the Effective Number of Parties as an indicator for this party system feature, it was found that ENP and distrust are positively linked, i.e. that a higher number of parties in parliament correlates with higher levels of distrust in political parties, but not statistically significant. There is thus no supporting evidence for a better acceptance of two-party systems or multi-party systems.

5. SUMMARY

The starting point of the study was the question if trust or, better, distrust in political parties is changing over time, whether party and electoral systems affect these levels, and how perceptions of misconduct and corruption influence these perceptions. The formal hypotheses were:

*H*₁: Disproportionality of electoral systems generates distrust political parties.

- *H*₂: Corruption perception increases distrust in political parties.
- H_3 : Long-established democratic regimes reduce distrust in political parties .

The first hypothesis (H_1) was confirmed with statistically significant effects at the individual and national level and it can confidently be claimed that disproportionality boosts distrust in political parties. H_2 could not be supported. Only a bivariate effect of corruption perception that lowers strong distrust was found. H_3 was supported, because the age of a democratic significantly affects strong distrust on the national level, and also reduces distrust on the individual level.

Moreover, several tentative hypotheses about the relationships between dependent and independent variables were formulated based on less clear theoretical grounds or from the results of previous research:

National * Higher party system fragmentation generates distrust in political parties.
 Higher party system polarization generates distrust in political parties.
 Higher democratic satisfaction reduces distrust in political parties.
 Interpersonal trust reduces distrust in political parties.
 Better education reduces distrust in political parties.
 Higher income reduces distrust in political parties.

The first two expectations, party system fragmentation and polarization increasing distrust in political parties, could not be confirmed with statistically significant effects, even though higher ENP scores indicate higher distrust. At the individual level, the tentative hypotheses describing the influence of democratic satisfaction and interpersonal trust are supported by the statistical tests. Notably, education has a reverse effect: better education does not entail more trust but more distrust. Higher income, though, reduces distrust as hypothesized.

To wrap up, longitudinal data from World Values Surveys between 1995 and 2014

also demonstrated that distrust in political parties languishes at a generally high level and is not increasing. The cross-sectional analysis of the aggregated levels of strong and total distrust showed that total distrust is hardly affected by any of the chosen predictor variables, be it CPI, government efficiency, regime durability, number of parties, or party system polarization. Disaggregating the data was thus a reasonable choice, because the explanatory power of each predictor is much higher when contrasted with strong distrust.

6. DISCUSSION

The potentially negative effects of anti-party sentiments have been stressed by numerous scholars (Poguntke 1996, Dalton and Weldon 2005, Webb 2005). Albeit constrained by certain empirical and methodological limitations, this study provided ample evidence that electoral systems indeed affect confidence in political parties on the national level and on the individual level, although with varying effect sizes. It was also found individual-level orientations – trusting other people and deeming one's own country democratic – accompany each other.

One aspect unaffected by the results is the effect of distrust in political parties. While the aforementioned authors demonstrate negative outcomes, other scholars maintain that critical attitudes towards political institutions are an inherent feature of modern democracies and a core principle of the liberal theory upon which democratic government is based (Norris 2011, 245). As Russel Hardin emphasizes, "in a perhaps strange and counterintuitive way, representative democracy and distrust go together in political theory" (Hardin 2002, 107), prominently in some of the Federalist Papers written by Madison, who warned against the dangers of excessive and unchecked government, and, most notably, also against the forming of factions and parties. It is certainly out of the scope of this study to discuss all theoretical implications and questions surrounding distrust in political parties. Yet after all, critical attitudes towards authorities might not necessarily be a 'bad' thing. Distrust can first and foremost be a positive attitude if it prevents from taking harm (Hardin 2002, 89). Brigitte Geissel moreover discovered that government performance is positively related with 'critical attentiveness' of citizen and provided empirical evidence for her findings. She reports that "states with citizenries which are strongly convinced that critical attentiveness is a civic duty provide extraordinary qualities of governance, whereas states with citizenries with a weak normative disposition of critical attentiveness score lower" (Geissel 2008,

865). Almond and Verba reach a similar conclusion in *The Civic Culture*, stating that "if citizens are to maintain some control over political elites, their loyalty to the system and to the elites must not be complete and unquestioning" (Almond and Verba 1963, 488). Another aspect Almond and Verba already mentioned is that "the ordinary citizen is not the ideal citizen" (1963, 490), which implies that the expectation of trust and an active 'civic culture', to use Almond and Verba's term, is more a wishful ideal than a realistic possibility for 'ordinary' people. In that sense, critical attitudes towards authorities are a normal feature of every democracy.

For some, distrust in political parties might, counterintuitively, be a symptom of enhanced support for democracy and rising democratic aspirations. Ronald Inglehart (1999) for instance found that citizens in advanced industrialized democracies are more critical of authorities than their counterparts in less advanced countries. Such a mechanism would also explain the finding that distrust in political parties rises with one's level of education. Better educated and more critical electorates paired with a more sensitive perception of authoritative democratic procedures might thus be a reason for this seemingly paradoxical tension between support for democracy and eroding trust in authorities (Inglehart 1999). Moreover, with rising levels of education, the public appears better informed about politics and possible solutions to urgent problems. However, if globalization, economic integration and other processes really render successful management of this world harder, then a paradox emerges. While problems are easier to understand, finding solutions has become harder, and the ability to do so did not necessarily increase. In sum, officials fail to meet the demands of a better informed public, hence "trust or faith declines because our expectations rise and we increasingly judge our leaders incompetent" (Hardin 2002, 162–3). Although this is a speculative interpretation, distrust in political parties could be a result of changing expectations from politicians or governments and increasing support for more deliberative and direct forms of democracy which challenge long-established procedures of representative democracy. Reforming decision-making procedures away from party-centered representation may offer a potential solution to some causes of the low levels of confidence (Norris 1999, 270)

Such formal aspects of representative democracy however can hardly change the structural problem that trust directed towards authorities with whom no individual relationship can be fostered is unusual because asymmetric relationships rarely result in

trust. For most individuals, it is impossible to be as informed about the motivation and interests of authorities as about the interests of, say, close friends. With only a limited understanding and observation of the behavior of authorities, it is much easier to perceive them as not concerned with the individual needs and interests of oneself. Under such circumstances, it is almost impossible to generate genuine trust in authorities that is similar to interpersonal trust in other individuals (Hardin 2002, 91). With regards to trust in authorities, power is also unevenly distributed. the weaker actor in such a relationship - imagine a voter who decided to cast his or her vote for a particular political party – has no guarantee that the elected official is actually concerned with the individual preferences of a single voter. Certainly there are channels via which officials can be contacted and appealed, or voted out of office, but such "inequalities of power" (Hardin 2002, 101) nonetheless inhibit the development of trust. Hardin (2002, 156) summarizes the problem, stating that "I must know that the agents or the institution act on my behalf because they wish to maintain their relationships with me. That is generally not possible for government and its officials". This structural problem of nonreciprocal relationships also applies to voters and political parties and might be one of the causes of the generally high levels of distrust, as found in this paper. They also relate to Van Wessel's (2010) qualitatively substantiated observations of the feeling of powerlessness vis-a-vis politicans and a perceived lack of influence of politicians and political parties, which, unfortunately, could not be further explored in this study. This power asymmetry caused by the mechanisms of representative democracy however is an inherent feature of the very same system, and is unlikely to vanish.

Whether distrust is a desirable or even necessary aspect of democratic politics is also relevant with regards to the inverse relationship between strong and moderate distrust at the national level. It was found that total distrust in most countries stays unaffected by the predictor variables. Without speculating too far, this might be evidence for a 'natural' level of distrust among the analyzed populaces. Hardin (2002), as mentioned above, insists that genuine trust in authorities is hard to generate for people who maintain an asymmetrical and non-personalized relationship with authorities, which might be a possible explanation for the overall high levels of total distrust in political parties. It is possible to imagine that under certain conditions, such as rather disproportional electoral systems, fragmented party systems, perceived corruption, and certain national contexts, it is more likely that a larger share of this 'naturally' occurring distrust is transformed into strong distrust. The given results speak, tentatively, for such an effect, although further research on the causal mechanisms, using better suitable indicators, would certainly be beneficial.

Yet, even if distrust is not a problem by itself, low confidence in political parties still poses certain challenges. The Eastonian concepts of specific and general support for political objects, that are, general beliefs about the legitimacy of the political community and the principles of governance, offer insights about the potential effects of low confidence. Specific support is directed towards individual institutions, actors, and policies. There is a certain danger involved that prolonged low specific support for one of these objects might "trickle upwards" and also harm the diffuse support for the political system itself. Arguably, eroding personal and structural legitimacy of political parties can lead to eroding levels of diffuse support. While this is not yet the case in most advanced democracies, the proliferation of populist, 'anti-system', or 'anti-party' parties in many European countries is a problem in the way that the object rejected by such parties, i.e., the 'established' parties, party democracy, or even representative liberal democracy itself, are already high up the ladder of abstraction in Easton's model of a political system. The translation of weakened diffuse support for these object into actual action is reinforced by the success of anti-party parties by reducing the electoral costs for voters to express these sentiments. This development might signal decreasing levels of support for the political regime which exists in such liberal and representative democracies. As Easton himself admits, eroding support is not a problem for a political system, "unless a counter-elite or organized groups [...] give direction and impulse to the dissafected" (Easton 1965, 224), and anti-party parties might be characterized as such. Even if these parties rarely challenge the political community they emerge in after all, many of these populist parties harness nationalist sentiments – the political community that is the European Union can be found as the focal point of concern for many populist parties, particularly in Western and Eastern Europe. These developments and the challenges originating from them underscore the necessity to better understand party distrust and the mechanisms behind it.

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APPENDIX

A. Sampled countries

WVS wave	Selected countries	Total N of respondents
WVS 2005-08	Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Cyprus, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Great Britain, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mali, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Poland, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Trinidad and Tobago, Ukraine, United States, Uruguay	44,376

B. List of variables and sources (country level)

Variable	Source	Indicator
Trust in Political Parties	Main sample: WVS 2005-2008 Additional samples for longitudinal analysis: WVS 2010-2014 WVS 1999-2000 WVS 1995-1998	 (V139): "I am going to name a number of organisations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all? Political parties" 0 A great deal 1 Quite a lot 2 Not very much 3 None at all For country-level scores, answers options 3 and 4 are aggregated for <i>total distrust</i>. Options 3 and 3 are also aggregated by themselves as measures for <i>moderate distrust</i> and <i>strong distrust</i>. On the individual level, the scale is used as an ordinal scale ranging from 1 to 4, allowing statistical methods which require at least ordinal- level data.
Corruption Perception	CPI (published annually)	CPI country scores 0 (highly corrupt) 10 (highly clean)
Proportionality of the electoral system	Gallagher (2013)	Gallagher's Least Square (LSq) index 0 (low disproportionality) 100 (high disproportionality)
Effective number of parties (ENP)	Gallagher (2013)	Laakso's & Taagepera's Effective Number of Parties in Parliament
Party system polarization	Manifesto Project Database	Polarization index scores (Dalton 2008) based on Left-Right scores and seat shares of parties in

		parliament.
		0 (not polarized)
		10 (very polarized)
Age of democracy	Polity IV Project	Durability of the regime in years
GDP/capita	IMF World Economic Outlook Database	GDP/capita (PPP), current US\$ in the year before the DV was sampled
Government effectiveness	World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators	Government Effectiveness scores from the last WGI survey before the survey of the DV 0 100
Voice and Accountability	World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators	Voice and Accountability scores from the last WGI survey before the survey of the DV 0 100

C. List of variables (individual level)

Source: World Values Survey 2005-2008

Variable	Indicator
Gender	V235: Sex
	1 Male 2 Female -1 to -5 Missing values
	recoded into:
	0 female 1 male
Age	V237: Age of respondent
	Age in years
Education	V238: What is the highest educational level that you have attained?
	1 No formal education
	9 University with degree/Higher education – upper-level tertiary certificate -1 to -5 Missing values
Income	V253: Household income
	"On this card is a scale of incomes on which 1 indicates the 'lowest income decile' and 10 the 'highest income decile' in your country. We would like to know in what group your

	household is. Please, specify the appropriate number, counting all wages, salaries, pensions and other incomes that come in."
	1 Lower step
	 10 Upper step -1 to -5 Missing values
Left-Right scale	V114: In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?
	1 Left
	10 Right -1 to -5 Missing values
Interpersonal trust	V23: Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?
	1 Most people can be trusted 2 Can't be too careful -1 to -5 Missing values
	recoded into
	0 Can't be to careful 1 Most people can be trusted
Satisfaction with democracy	V163: And how democratically is this country being governed today? Again using a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 means that it is "not at all democratic" and 10 means that it is "completely democratic", what position would you choose? (Code one number):
	1 Not at all democratic
	10 Completely democratic -1 to -5 Missing values

D. Country-level scores and levels of distrust

D. Country-level scores and levels of distrust											1						
Country	Year	Polity IV Democ	Freedom House	A great deal of confidence (%)	Quite a lot of confidence (%)	Not much confidence (%)	No confidence at all (%)	Total distrust (%)	Lsq	ENP	CPI	Polarization	Durability (years)	GDP/cap	Government efficiency	Government accoutability	N respondents
Argentina	2006	8	Free	0.9	6.9	45.6	46.6	92.2	4.99	6.49	2.9	-	23	4,782	53.70	57.70	982
Australia	2005	10	Free	1.0	12.9	68.6	17.5	86.1	8.60	2.44	8.8	.47	104	32,673	96.60	94.70	1,395
Brazil	2006	8	Free	1.8	19.2	32.7	46.3	79.0	3.00	9.32	3.3	-	21	4,743	52.70	63.00	1,485
Bulgaria	2006	9	Free	2.3	15.0	43.0	39.7	82.7	3.97	4.80	4.0	3.93	16	3,753	61.00	65.40	967
Canada	2006	10	Free	2.1	21.3	58.6	17.9	76.5	8.61	3.22	8.5	2.06	118	36,149	97.60	94.70	2,051
Chile	2006	10	Free	1.3	16.6	37.9	44.2	82.1	6.79	5.59	7.3	-	17	7,565	85.40	89.40	975
Cyprus	2006	10	Free	6.6	25.8	41.2	26.3	67.5	2.42	3.90	5.6	-	32	22,742	84.90	78.80	1,049
Finland	2005	10	Free	1.6	26.8	56.0	15.6	71.6	3.16	4.93	9.6	.62	61	36,152	99.00	99.50	996
France	2006	9	Free	1.5	14.9	46.5	37.2	83.7	21.95	2.26	7.4	5.64	37	35,107	92.20	94.20	990
Germany	2006	10	Free	0.5	12.3	53.0	34.2	87.2	2.16	4.05	8.0	6.98	16	33,603	90.70	93.80	1,996
Ghana	2007	8	Free	12.0	28.7	39.4	19.9	59.3	1.09	2.07	3.7	-	6	953	58.50	58.70	1,512
Great Britain	2006	10	Free	2.0	15.9	57.2	25.0	82.2	16.73	2.46	8.6	-	126	38,585	94.60	92.30	973
India	2006	9	Free	19.3	27.1	33.9	19.7	53.6	4.53	6.52	3.3	-	56	749	55.10	60.10	1,597
Indonesia	2006	8	Free	3.9	26.6	55.1	14.4	69.5	4.45	7.07	2.4	-	7	1,291	38.50	45.20	1,900
Italy	2005	10	Free	0.9	15.6	55.0	28.5	83.5	10.22	5.30	5.0	2.85	57	30,020	75.10	87.00	986
Japan	2005	10	Free	1.4	21.3	56.5	17.9	74.4	15,63	2,27	7.3	9.10	53	36,444	89.80	82.70	1,008
Mali	2007	7	Free	13.6	23.0	31.4	32.0	63.4	-	1,59	2.7	-	15	451	27.80	56.30	1,380
Mexico	2005	8	Free	3.5	20.5	36.3	39.9	76.2	4,74	2,76	3.5	1.87	8	7,520	63.90	58.20	1,530

D. Country-level scores and levels of distrust (continued)

b. Country-rever scores and revers of distrust (continued)																		
Country	Year	Polity IV Democ	Freedom House	A great deal of confidence (%)	Quite a lot of confidence (%)	Not much confidence (%)	No confidence at all (%)	Total distrust (%)	Lsq	ENP	CPI	Polarization	Durability (years)	GDP/cap	Government efficiency	Government accountability	N respondents	
Netherlands	2006	10	Free	0.7	22.6	58.2	18.5	76.7	1.03	5.54	8.7	.44	61	39,190	98.00	99.00	1,013	
New Zealand	2004	10	Free	0.8	14.0	67.7	17.5	85.2	2.37	3.76	9.6	6.92	127	20,224	93.70	100.00	864	
Norway	2007	10	Free	0.6	28.0	65.0	6.4	71.4	2.67	4.56	8.7	1.95	62	72,785	96.10	98.10	1,015	
Peru	2006	9	Free	1.3	3.4	45.4	49.9	95.3	13.95	3.78	3.3	-	5	2,917	32.70	49.50	1,466	
Poland	2005	10	Free	0.5	6.5	51.3	41.7	93.0	6.97	4.26	3.4	3.50	14	6,625	70.70	81.30	919	
Romania	2005	9	Free	1.2	11.7	45.6	41.4	87.0	3.74	3.36	3.0	4.10	9	3,503	51.20	60.60	1,687	
Slovenia	2005	10	Free	0.8	8.1	58.8	32.2	91.0	4.79	4.90	6.1	.67	14	16,965	81.50	84.10	971	
South Africa	2007	9	Free	10.3	33.5	38.5	17.7	56.2	.26	1.97	5.1	-	13	5,511	69.30	68.30	2,882	
South Korea	2005	8	Free	1.1	23.1	49.4	26.4	75.8	12.11	2.36	5.0	2.38	17	15,029	80.00	70.20	1,199	
Spain	2007	10	Free	2.4	26.1	55.9	15.6	71.5	4.25	2.53	6.7	4.78	29	28,081	78.50	83.20	1,163	
Sweden	2006	10	Free	0.9	32.3	58.9	7.9	66.8	3.02	4.15	9.2	1.11	89	40,958	97.10	96.20	985	
Switzerland	2007	10	Free	1.0	25.2	62.2	11.6	73.8	2.56	4.97	9.0	3.99	159	54,321	98.50	98.60	1,185	
Taiwan	2006	10	Free	0.7	9.5	46.9	43.0	89.9	6.44	3.30	5.9	-	14	16,023	82.00	77.40	1,219	
Trinidad and Tobago	2006	10	Free	1.5	8.2	58.1	32.1	90.2	3.71	1.98	3.2	-	44	12,346	60.50	66.30	980	
Ukraine	2006	7	Free	2.2	15.1	45.9	36.8	82.7	8.56	3.38	2.8	.15	15	1,830	34.10	41.30	871	
United States	2006	10	Free	1.9	13.5	68.8	15.9	84.7	1.57	1.99	7.3	.23	197	44,224	91.20	89.90	1,201	
Uruguay	2006	10	Free	4.7	31.7	34.3	29.3	63.6	1.32	2.39	6.4	-	21	5,263	69.30	75.50	984	