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Socialization and Institutionalization Effects on Immigrants' Social Trust

BOGDAN VOICU

Trust can be conceived as a manifestation of social capital¹ as well as a moral value². At individual level, its formations is seen either as product of early socialization which acts as a stable trait over ones' life, either as shaped by continuous exposure to culture and institutions³. In the social capital debate, the discussion of "social capital regimes"⁴ and cultures of participation⁵ stresses the societal embeddedness of both trust⁶ and sociability. In the sociology of values, two main sets of theories address contextual determinants of value formation and change⁷. The socialization hypothesis⁸ assumes that values form during early socialization. The institutionalization hypothesis⁹ claims that the institutional settings determine changes over the entire lifespan. This paper asks what happens with individuals when move from a context to another? My answer is that trust is a stable trait, in the sense that it is determined by the culture of primary socialization, but it also is adaptive to the culture of trust that exists in the society where one resides.

¹ P. Paxton, "Association Memberships and Generalized Trust: A Multilevel Model across 31 Countries", *Social Forces* vol. 86, no. 1, 2007, pp. 47-75.

² E. Uslaner, *The Moral Foundations of Trust*, Cambridge University Press, New York, 2002.

³ R. Bekkers, "Trust and Volunteering: Selection or Causation? Evidence From a 4 Year Panel Study", *Political Behavior*, vol. 34, no. 2, 2012, pp. 225-247.

⁴ F. Pichler, C. Wallace, "Patterns of Formal and Informal Social Capital in Europe", *European Sociological Review*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2007, pp. 423-435.

⁵ R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993.

⁶ H. Meulemann, "Introduction", in *Idem* (ed.), *Social Capital in Europe: Similarity of Countries and Diversity of People? Multi-Level Analyses of the European Social Survey 2002*, Brill, Leiden, Boston, 2008, pp. 1-40.

⁷ W. Arts, "Explaining European Value Patterns: Problems and Solutions", *Studia Sociologica*, vol. LVI, no. 1, 2011, pp. 7-31.

⁸ R. Inglehart, *Modernization and Post-Modernization. Cultural, Economic and Political Change in 43 Societies*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1997.

⁹ P. Gundelach, "National Value Differences: Modernization or Institutionalization?", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, vol. 35, no. 1, 1994 pp. 37-58.

Immigration provides a vast “natural experiment”¹⁰ that can be employed to study the process. Lacking panel data to assess if individuals change their levels of social trust when moving from one society to another, one may compare migrants to similar individuals who did not migrate. They might be either stayers (people from emigration countries who continue to live in their country of origin) or natives (non-migrants in immigration countries). Such people share with immigrants their exposure to either the culture of origin or the culture of current residence. One may also want to compare immigrants with other immigrants of different origin and the same host society. Therefore, there are three relevant comparisons: immigrants-stayers, immigrants-natives, immigrants-other immigrants. Simultaneously testing for them with cross-sectional data is feasible if one employs cross-classified multilevel analyses, and has access to information on indicators describing social trust cultures in both origin and host societies. To do so, I use datasets provided by the value surveys, particularly the 2008 wave of the European Values Survey (EVS).

Scholars dealing with international migrants’ levels of social trust have addressed the topic in recent studies¹¹. Dinesen¹² and Dinesen and Hooghe¹³ proved that, in the case of international migrants, both origin and host societies play a role in determining social trust. I go further and I test simultaneously the two explanations existing in the literature. Using EVS data, this paper compares among host societies, and includes simultaneously much more countries of origin than previous studies. A deeper analysis of the interaction effects of the cultural gap between the host country and the country of origin, of the stock of immigrants in the host society, and of their overall connectivity to their country of origin add as novelty to existing literature. They provide empirical evidence for theoretical considerations around the structural conditions that may shape the dual impact of early socialization and later exposure to culture and institutions.

The paper gradually builds the hypotheses. First it uses existing literature to describe how the social context in which one lives shapes one’s social trust. “Context”, in this paper, is not about personalized experiences, but refers to the continuous interaction through the social environment determines values and

¹⁰ P.T. Dinesen, “Where You Come From or Where You Live? Examining the Cultural and Institutional Explanation of Generalized Trust Using Migration as a Natural Experiment”, *European Sociological Review*, vol. 29, no. 1, 2013, pp. 114-128.

¹¹ *Ibidem*; E. Uslaner, “Where You Stand Depends on Where Your Grandparents Sat: The Inheritability of Generalized Trust”, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, no. 72, 2008, pp. 725-740.

¹² P.T. Dinesen, “Does Generalized (Dis)Trust Travel? Examining the Impact of Cultural Heritage and Destination-Country Environment on Trust of Immigrants”, *Political Psychology*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2012, pp. 495-511; *Idem*, “Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit.”.

¹³ P.T. Dinesen, M. Hooghe, “When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do: The Acculturation of Generalized Trust among Immigrants in Western Europe”, *International Migration Review*, no. 44, 2010, pp. 697-727.

behaviors. Second, the paper reviews the literature connecting social trust and international migration, and uses it to further refine the double-contextuality assumption. The section on data sources and methodological solutions focuses on computing indicators and overcoming the difficulties due to data availability. Cross-classified models produce the findings. The conclusion discusses implications for existing literature and for future research.

Contextual Determinants of Social Trust

Social or generalized trust refers to the extent to which people believe that unknown persons or other members of the society are trustworthy¹⁴. It indicates one of the varieties of trust, along with particularistic trust (referring in particular to status groups), and strategic trust (related to specific persons). As “the main component of social capital”¹⁵, trust is seen as an essential prerequisite for cooperation and as an expression of the propensity that one has to socialize.

Considering the sources of generalized trust, one may depict two broad explanations¹⁶. They emphasize the role of initial formation, respectively the exposure to institutional influences. The first approach treats trust as a persistent cultural trait¹⁷ that is inherited or learned during primary socialization¹⁸. Trust can be conceived as a moral value¹⁹, or a general predisposition resulting from faith and knowledge. It derives from previous experiences, but it is also socially learned, it acts as a latent construct to direct attitudes and behaviors, particularly the ones related to cooperation, tolerance, and benevolence. This fits the broad definitions of social values²⁰. Two important approaches are salient with respect to contextual determinants of value formation and change: socialization and institutionalization²¹. According to socialization hypothesis, the formative years are the time when one's material conditions and social environment blend together to shape values, which remain stable over one's entire life. A more

¹⁴ E. Uslaner, *The Moral Foundations of Trust*, cit.

¹⁵ K. Newton, “Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy”, *International Political Science Review*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2001, pp. 201-214/p. 202.

¹⁶ P.T. Dinesen, “Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit.”; D. Stolle, M. Hooghe, “The Roots of Social Capital: Attitudinal and Network Mechanisms in the Relation between Youth and Adult Indicators of Social Capital”, *Acta Politica*, no. 39, 2004, pp. 422-441.

¹⁷ R. Inglehart, *Modernization and Post-Modernization...cit.*; R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work...cit.*

¹⁸ E. Uslaner, “Where You Stand Depends on Where Your Grandparents Sat:...cit.”.

¹⁹ *Idem*, *The Moral Foundations of Trust*, cit.

²⁰ W. Jagodzinski, “Methodological Problems of Value Research”, in H. Vincken et al(eds.), *Comparing Cultures: Dimensions of Culture in a Comparative Perspective*, Brill, Leiden, 2004, pp. 97-121.

²¹ W. Arts, “Explaining European Value Patterns:...cit.”.

secure environment is said to lead to modern, or even late-modern or post-material, values²². Growing up in a secure environment stresses higher-order needs, allowing people to be more open to change, more interested in self-expression and self-fulfillment, and to put more trust in others.

Despite its broad acceptance, the socialization hypothesis has to face strong criticism and amendments. Exposure to various contextual setups, for instance at the workplace²³ triggers a learning processes which eventually determines value change. Acquiring knowledge transforms the sense of control and security that people experience. In the end, the feeling that one's environment is controllable and predictable leads to social trust. Drastic transformations in social context, like periods of recession and increased uncertainty, also shape individual values, in a continuous adaptive process, "driving people to adopt those values that fit given external conditions"²⁴. According to the institutionalization hypothesis, value change comes from the internalization of existing institutions²⁵. They provide models that most people learn during their formative years and tend to follow their entire lives. Social institutions manifest their influence during adulthood as well, providing consistent guidelines along which members of a collectivity adjust their behaviors, needs, and values, including the tendency to trust others. Society as a whole is both a large reference framework and a large membership group. In order to fulfill affiliation needs, one may want to conform to its strong norms. This may be particularly important for international migrants willing to affirm their belonging to either their host or origin society. Repeated compliance with social norms eventually impacts one's values²⁶. Therefore, when everybody around trust others, this should be an incentive to start trusting. The opposite should hold true as well.

This is consistent with the idea that "living in among trustworthy people" promotes trust²⁷. The context tends to permanently shapes social trust as a

²² U. Beck, E. Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization. Institutionalized Individualism and Its Social and Political Consequences*, Sage, London, 2001; R. Inglehart, *Modernization and Post-Modernization...cit.*; A. Inkeles, "Making Man Modern: On the Causes and Consequences of Individual Change in Six Developing Countries", *American Journal of Sociology*, vol. 75, no. 2, 1969, pp. 208-225.

²³ A. Inkeles, "Making Man Modern:...cit.", pp. 213-214.

²⁴ R. Inglehart, C. Welzel, *Cultural Change and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2005, p. 38.

²⁵ W. Arts, "Explaining European Value Patterns:...cit."; U. Beck, E. Beck-Gernsheim, *Individualization...cit.*; P. Gundelach, "National Value Differences: Modernization or Institutionalization?", *International Journal of Comparative Sociology*, vol. 35, no. 1, 1994, pp. 37-58.

²⁶ L. Newson, P.J. Richerson, "Why Do People Become modern? A Darwinian Explanation", *Population and Development Review*, vol. 35, no. 1, 2009, pp. 117-158/p. 118.

²⁷ E. Uslaner, "Where You Stand Depends on Where Your Grandparents Sat:...cit.", p. 727.

product of institutional influences²⁸, which provide patterns that individuals follow and internalize.

The literature on social capital addresses the idea of “regimes of social capital”, of “cultures of participation and social cohesion”²⁹. They create specific environments in which norms of participation and trust become genuine role models. Such cultures were observed in regions within a country³⁰; internal structures of relations within organizations are said to depend on consistent patterns of sociability and trust found in various countries³¹; regions within a particular continent to differ with respect to social capital levels³².

The discussion on institutionalization and cultural embeddedness of trust leads to the first hypothesis: (H1) *When living in an environment rich in social trust, people tend to increase their own levels of social trust.* The richness in social trust of a collectivity may be characterized by the average level of any social trust indicators, or, more simply, by the percentage of people who tend to trust others. Therefore (H1) states that the higher the percentage of those who trust others within the society where one lives, the higher the probability that the respective person will trust others. This might be particularly important, and easier to notice, in the case of immigrants: they socialize in a different culture and become exposed to the average levels of trust in the host society, that, according to (H1) start to change their probability to trust others.

Considering both socialization and institutionalization, it results that social trust of each individual is shaped by two types of contexts. First, there are the formative years, when growing up occurs in a specific climate of trust, which is likely to be learned and internalized. The second hypothesis considers such dependency: (H2) *When growing up in a culture rich in social trust, one has a higher propensity to trust others.*

(H1) and (H4) indicate a double-contextuality for social trust, which is easier to describe considering immigrants. They depend on the climate of social trust in their country of residence, as well on the one in their country of birth. The climate is defined by cultural norms of trust reflected in the average levels of generalized trust in their two relevant societies.

²⁸ P.T Dinesen, “Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit.”; D. Stolle, M. Hooghe, “The Roots of Social Capital: Attitudinal and Network Mechanisms in the Relation between Youth and Adult Indicators of Social Capital”, *Acta Politica*, no. 39, 2004, pp. 422-441.

²⁹ F. Pichler, C. Wallace, “Patterns of Formal and Informal Social Capital in Europe”, *Sociological Review*, vol. 23, no. 4, 2007, pp. 423-435.

³⁰ G. Bădescu, P.E. Sum, “Historical Legacies, Social Capital and Civil Society: Comparing Romania on a Regional Level”, *Europe-Asia Studies*, vol. 57, no. 1, 2005, pp. 117-133; R. Putnam, *Making Democracy Work...*cit.

³¹ F. Fukuyama, *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, Free Press, New York, 1995.

³² M. Paldalm, G.T. Svendsen, “Missing Social Capital and the Transition in Eastern Europe”, *Journal of Institutional Innovation, Development and Transition*, no. 5, 2001, pp. 31-34.

Social Trust and Immigrants

A look on the literature that connects immigrants and social trust allows a further refinement of the two hypotheses. Empirical evidence is to be found for the dual dependency or one of its parts – either the impact of the host, either of one of the origin. Alesina and La Ferrara³³ signaled the need to investigate the issue. Considering flows to specific migration destinations, scholars have shown that the culture of the origin country leaves a genuine “footprint” on immigrants³⁴. Most of these findings are based on inspecting covariance at the aggregate level. Uslaner³⁵ added individual-level determinants. Dinesen and Hooghe³⁶ proposed cross-national analyses and included institutional trustworthiness of the destination society as a measure for dual-contextualization. Bagno³⁷ argued for the institutional explanation, asserting that the longer the stay in Germany, the more the migrants reflect German values. Dinesen³⁸ and Nannestad et al³⁹ successfully tested the transferability of the trust culture in the country of origin, also arguing upon the importance of the experiences and exposure to institutions in the host society.

The above-mentioned papers converge on the idea that social trust is fostered both by the origin culture and the context provided by the host society, as stated in the two parts of my hypothesis. I contribute to this literature controlling for the dual-contextuality given by cultural norms of trust by increasing the scope of the analyses to a larger number of host and origin societies, and by refining the effect through several additional hypotheses that I introduce in the following.

The culture of trust in a certain society may be indicated by the average level of social trust displayed by the members of that society. Strictly referring to immigrants, the above (H1) and (H2) hypotheses may be reformulated as:

³³ A. Alesina, A. La Ferrara, “Who Trusts Others?”, *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 85, no. 2, 2002, pp. 207-234.

³⁴ O. Bagno, “The Destination Does Matter”, *Haifa: The Graduate Conference*, 2006, <http://gradcon.huji.ac.il/docs/19.pdf>; T.W.Rice, J.L. Feldman, “Civic Culture and Democracy from Europe to America”, *Journal of Politics*, vol. 59, no. 4, 1997, pp. 1143-1172; S.N. Soroka, J.F. Helliwell, R. Johnston, “Modeling and Measuring Trust”, in F. Kay, R. Johnston (eds.), *Diversity, Social Capital, and the Welfare State*, University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 2006, pp. 95-136.

³⁵ E. Uslaner, “Where You Stand Depends on Where Your Grandparents Sat: ...cit.”.

³⁶ P.T. Dinesen, “Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit.”.

³⁷ O. Bagno, “The Destination Does Matter”, cit.

³⁸ P.T. Dinesen, “Does Generalized (Dis)Trust Travel?...cit.”.

³⁹ P. Nannestad, G.T. Svendsen, P.T. Dinesen, K.M. Sønderskov, “Do Institutions or Culture Determine the Level of Social Trust? The Natural Experiment of Migration from Non-western to Western Countries”, *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, vol. 40, no. 4, 2014, pp. 544-565.

For immigrants, the higher the average level of trust in the host society, the higher their propensity to trust; also, a higher level of trust in their society of origin would determine a higher level of trust among immigrants. Immigrants depend on two contexts. The first is their birth society with its specific culture of trust. Immigrants' country of origin has a strong impact on them due to the social values interiorized during their early socialization. These values travel with them when they enter a host society. Controlling for individual characteristics, when in the same society of residence, immigrants from countries where people have a great deal of trust in others are more likely to trust others than immigrants from less trusting societies. The host society has its own norms and culture of trusting others. Once immigrants are exposed to this new culture, they adapt their own levels of social trust to accommodate those imposed by the local social norms. Since the host culture is salient in providing daily interactions, at least when considering things like meeting co-workers, shop-keepers, random people when using public transportation, and parents of the children's colleagues, it is likely that the host culture's norms will be more influential. Therefore: (H3) *The effect of the host society's average level of social trust is stronger than that of the culture of origin.*

If considering the cultural norms and the double-context involved by international migration, an important question is to which level one should locate the context. An average indicator of cultural norms in the country of origin reflects one's formative heritage. The simple assumption is that the "average" culture has some impact on all members of a society. It creates a general context in which people have evolved. However, considering the cultural luggage that a particular migrant carries across borders, one may ask if the "average" indicator should not be further refined. Trust is not necessarily homogeneous within countries and can vary, for instance, with education. In this case, it would make sense to consider the average level of trust of in people from an immigrant's country of birth according to education level as an origin context⁴⁰. Values also depend on cohort⁴¹, and it would thus be logical to consider the average levels of trust of those with a similar education level within the same cohort. In summary, two types of contextual effects may be important: those derived from societal cultural norms, and the more specific effects consisting of cultural norms for respective education-age groups. The first refers to random daily interactions and shapes values as stated in (H1) and (H2). The second is likely to become more important when discussing the gap between the two contexts.

The dual-contextuality may produce stronger or weaker effects depending on structural conditions in the two societies. There are migrants who frequently follow news and television from their home country and frequently interact by

⁴⁰ P.T. Dinesen, M. Hooghe, "When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do:...cit."

⁴¹ M. Voicu, E. Bartolomé-Peral, "Socialization or Context? Patterns of Support for Democracy in Spain and Romania", *Studia UBB Sociologia*, vol. LVI, no. 1, 2011, pp. 95-113.

phone, internet, or in person with co-nationals. They will continue to be embedded within their culture of origin regardless of where they reside. Therefore (H4), *if one's connections with his/her society of origin are intense, one may expect the influence of that culture on current values to be stronger.*

In countries where migrants constitute a high proportion of the population, the collectivity is more likely to be diverse, leaving room for a variety of accepted social norms. Values of individual members of society would be less embedded in the social context of a dominant group, since it would be possible to find many such groups. For a specific value orientation, such as generalized trust, if the immigrant stock is large, one could expect to find a broader range of socially accepted levels that may be legitimated through cultural heritage (of origin). Individuals may opt for a reference group in which the norm is a high level of trust, but the opposite is also possible. In a trusting society, a large number of migrants would give citizens the opportunity to interact with more individuals from groups with higher levels of trust. If values are adaptive, and the variety of potential contacts increases knowledge about a variety of diverse groups which become predictable, the individual commitment to social trust would also be enhanced. In addition, the local culture, now more diverse, would become easier for any member of the society to accept, as it would be less likely to contain unfamiliar constructs or values. On the other hand, a small pool of migrants in a society that lacks trust is likely to propagate mistrust through daily interactions and contagion effects. Overall, *a very large stock of immigrants would further enhance the impact of the host culture of trust on the social trust a resident in that society is likely to have* (H5).

Time spent in different contexts may also matter when considering exposure to the respective cultures. In other words, controlling for all other determinants, (H6) *the longer one lives in a host society, the less he/she will be influenced by his/her culture of origin. Conversely, the older an individual was when migrating, the less he/she is impacted by the host culture.* In both cases, the relation decreases in strength over time, and a logarithmic shape should therefore be considered.

The Gap

Immigrants are subject to favorable self-selection⁴². This makes them having the same dominant status that is reported to associate with high trust⁴³. Therefore, the ones to travel from a culture of trust to another more likely to have higher levels of trust than their co-nationals, controlling for the individual characteristics.

⁴² B.R. Chiswick, "Are Immigrants Favorably Self-Selected?", *American Economic Review*, no.89, 1999, pp. 181-185.

⁴³ K. Newton, "Trust, Social Capital, Civil Society, and Democracy", *International Political Science Review*, vol. 22, no. 2, 2001, pp. 201-214.

Putnam⁴⁴ argues that “social distance” is something to consider when analyzing trust in people. In the case of migrants, this gap can be understood as the distance between the two levels of trust in the relevant two cultures (the trust gap).

Let us imagine a person who grew up in an environment with a low level of trust and who now lives in an environment in which people promote and exercise a high level of trust in daily life. I will label such case as a “negative gap”: the place of origin is less trustful than the host country. According to the institutionalization hypothesis, the trustworthiness of the environment will act as a catalyst to increase the social trust of the person in question. This environment will also contain an important challenge. It is a highly different setting and therefore more difficult to control and predict than the person’s familiar environment marked by low trust. Random people with whom one interacts on a daily basis are likely to be more helpful in this new context than those in the individual’s place of origin (defined as a society with low trust). In low-trust societies, the expectation is that such interactions will more likely lead to harm than to help. Mistrusting others in the new context might be likely immediately following migration due to the complete lack of familiarity with the host society. However, it would soon become irrational; even very early experiences would show the migrant that the new society is at least slightly friendlier. This makes immigrants which are likely to have more trust than the average co-national, to come in an environment where their higher trustfulness becomes worthier, and where they experience positive-trust experiences that strengthen their social trust. Therefore (H7) *a negative trust gap is likely to increase the odds of generalized trust.*

Now let us change perspectives and consider a person socialized in a society rich in social trust who now interacts with random people with low levels of trust on a daily basis. The new social context will fail to meet that person’s expectations, and his/her level of trust may decrease slightly. However, the effect is likely to be prevented by his/her initial supplementary trust that led to the migration, and the fact that the respective migrant may hold a better status in the host society. This further specifies (H7), indicating that, when comparing immigrants to similar natives, it is more likely that the negative gap produce effects, while positive cultural distances have less impact.

Controls

In order to avoid describing spurious relationships, control variables at both country and individual levels should be considered. I have already pointed to education as an individual predictor of trust. Better knowledge about a society, resulting from experiences involving direct interaction, is also important.

⁴⁴ R.D. Putnam, “E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century”, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2007, pp. 137-174/p. 159.

This may come from more frequent contact⁴⁵, particularly within voluntary associations. Past negative experiences deter trust, while positive experiences reflected in higher levels of life satisfaction are likely to increase it⁴⁶. Religious upbringing is another source of increased predictability as a general explanation of the existential order of things⁴⁷. However, trust is a modern value⁴⁸ related to a secular evaluation of the world, which, compared to religious faith, is more likely to allow a better understanding of others, regardless of their background. Trusting may be risky, and the risk is easier to bear when you are richer⁴⁹.

Individuals build their trust in social contexts that are safer, being wealthier and having lower crime rates, and which are less corrupt⁵⁰. Since the impact of diversity is subject of a lengthy debate in the literature⁵¹ and immigration tends to increase diversity, one needs to control for the size of the immigrant group in the total population and for the ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity of the host society.

Data and Methods

A comprehensive test of how international migrants change their levels of social trust when migrating should involve following them over a long period of time, recording how much trust they display at various moments before leaving their country of origin and after spending different lengths of time in their host society. One should also include a variety of origin and host countries, in order to appropriately assess the impact of the two contexts. Stayers in the origin societies should be included as a control group to ensure that change is not an inherent transformation of people in the corresponding country of birth. The same is valid for natives in the host societies with whom one needs to compare the migrants. I am not aware of the existence of such large-scale panel data. However, cross-sectional data allow immigrants from various societies to be compared to both stayers and natives.

⁴⁵ J. Coleman, *Foundations of Social Theory*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1990.

⁴⁶ A. Alesina, A. La Ferrara, "Who Trusts Others?", *Journal of Public Economics*, vol. 85, no. 2, 2002, pp. 207-234; P. Paxton, "Association Memberships and Generalized Trust: A Multilevel Model Across 31 Countries", *Social Forces*, vol. 86, no. 1, 2007, pp. 47-75.

⁴⁷ P. Paxton, "Association Memberships and Generalized Trust:...cit."

⁴⁸ R. Inglehart, *Modernization and Post-Modernization...cit.*

⁴⁹ J. Delhey, K. Newton, "Predicting Cross-National Levels of Social Trust: Global Pattern or Nordic Exceptionalism?", *European Sociological Review*, vol. 21, no. 4, 2005, pp. 311-27.

⁵⁰ P.T. Dinesen, "Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit."; R. Hardin, *Trust*, Polity Press, Malden, 2006; P. Paxton, "Association Memberships and Generalized Trust:...cit."

⁵¹ M. Hooghe, "Social Capital and Diversity. Generalized Trust, Social Cohesion and Regimes of Diversity", *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2007, pp. 709-732; A. Portes, E. Vickstrom, "Diversity, Social Capital, and Cohesion", *Annual Reviews of Sociology*, no. 37, 2011, pp. 461-479; R.D. Putnam, "E Pluribus Unum:...cit."

Table 1

Variables in the Analyses

Variable	min	max	mean	N	source
Individual level					
Social trust (<i>dependent variable</i>)	0	1	30%	66603	EVS 2008
Age	16	108	45,5	67322	
Gender (1=female)	0	1	52%	67322	
Education	0	6	3,10	66781	
Religious faith	1	10	6,48	65068	
Civic participation	0	15	0,80	65914	
Negative experiences	0	6	1,08	67185	
Life Satisfaction	1	10	7,00	66755	
Income	1	12	4,52	55235	
born in another country	0	1	8%	67322	
time spent at destination (years)*	1	93	27,7	5015*	
age when arriving to host country*	1	93	20,8	5015*	
Trust distance origin-host (DistTC _g)	-91	90	-0,34	66746	
Trust distance origin-host DistTC _g *	-91	90	-4,63	4854*	
Negative gap*	0	1	61%	4854*	
Positive gap*	0	1	39%	4854*	
Host country					
Trust levels (TCH)	5%	75%	30%	47	EVS/WVS 1999-2009
Fractionalization 2003	0,04	0,75	0,43		Alesina et al, 2003**
GDP per capita 2007 (PPP, thou)	1,900	84,487	24,592		World Development Indicators (WDI)
Immigrant stock, 2005	0,6%	43,6%	9,6%		WDI & Eurostat
GINI 2008	23,4	44,2	31,2		Transparency International
Corruption Perception Index, 2007	2,1	9,4	5,6		
Origin country					
Trust levels (TCO)	5%	75%	29%	87**	EVS/WVS 1999-2009
Remittances 2008	0%	50%	4,5%	130***	World Bank (2009)***

*international migrants only; **66865 respondents; ***63971 respondents.

** A. Alesina et al., "Fractionalization", *Journal of Economic Growth*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2003, pp.155-194.

*** World Bank, *World Bank staff estimates based on the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook 2008, 2009*, Retrieved 25 October 2012 ([http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/RemittancesData_Nov09\(Public\).xls](http://siteresources.worldbank.org/INTPROSPECTS/Resources/334934-1110315015165/RemittancesData_Nov09(Public).xls))

The European Values Study (EVS) and the World Values Survey (WVS) suit this purpose. Both are well-known comparative studies that are fully described on their respective websites. EVS 2008 includes country of birth data for respondents from all European societies, except for Andorra, Vatican, San Marino, Monaco, and Lichtenstein. There are distinct subsamples for Northern Cyprus and Northern Ireland. There are 67.489 respondents residing in 47 host societies who were born in 144 (origin) countries; 5.236 of the respondents are foreign-born. There are least 20 of them in each of the host societies, except for Georgia, Poland, Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania. I use this dataset as raw information at the individual level. The respondents are nested in their countries of residence, in a multilevel setup. The country of origin provides another level-two layer, that is not hierarchically related to the one defined by the host country. This reproduces the typical cross-classified multilevel design.

The dependent variable is derived from the well-known general trust question, a dichotomous item which differentiates those who think “most people can be trusted” from those who instead believe that they “can’t be too careful in dealing with people”. For a majority of the respondents, the item taps into generalized trust⁵², but this seems to have slightly different meanings for some respondents⁵³. Consequently, in some countries, mainly outside Europe, the measure overestimates social trust. However, it has the advantage of having been applied in a variety of countries, thus allowing for an effective comparison.

Altogether, the 1999, 2005, and 2008 waves of the mentioned value surveys may be employed for deriving the indicator for cultures of trust in the 47 host societies included in the EVS 2008 survey and for 91 of the societies in which the respondents were born. I use the same trust item to build an independent variable, at the country level, indicating the percentage of those who responded that most people can be trusted. This constitutes the trust context (TC). TC may be computed for the country of origin (TCO), for the country of current residence (TCH), or it may be specific to the age-education group in country of origin (TCOg) or residence (TCHg). In the latter case, education is coded as low (maximum lower secondary), middle (upper secondary completed), or high (university degree). Age is divided into four large cohorts, based on year of birth (before 1949, 1950-1964, 1965-1979, and after 1980). The intervals are chosen as such to make it possible to compute

⁵² P. Sturgis, P. Smith, “Assessing the Validity of Generalized Trust Question: What Kind of Trust Are We Measuring?”, *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, vol. 22, no. 1, 2010, pp. 76-92; E. Uslaner, “Where You Stand Depends on Where Your Grandparents Sat:...cit.”.

⁵³ J. Delhey, K. Newton, C. Welzel, “How General is Trust in Most People? Solving the Radius of Trust Problem”, *American Sociological Review*, vol. 76, no. 5, 2011, pp. 786-807; L. Torpe, H. Lolle, “Identifying Social Trust in Cross-Country Analysis: Do We Really Measure the Same?”, *Social Indicators Research*, no. 103, 2010, pp. 481-500.

statistics on social trust for the twelve resulting age-education categories. The distance between the two contexts is then given by $\text{DistTCg} = \text{TCOg} - \text{TCHg}$, computed at age-education level. If TCH directly measures the current culture of trust, TCO is rather a current reflection of the climate of trust existing in the country of origin during the formative years. Controlling for age and education only partially corrects for the imprecision of the measure, but the lack of comparative retrospective data makes TCO the best available proxy for the conditions during early socialization.

Individual-level independent variables include age, gender, education (seven categories), relative income (12 categories), religious faith (how important God is in one's life, 10-point scale), civic participation (number of types of associations a respondent belongs to), past negative experiences (experiencing divorce or loss of partner, the death of a child, the death of a parent, divorce of own children; divorce of parents), life satisfaction (10-point scale), being an immigrant (not born in the host country), age at migration, and time spent in the host society.

Country-level predictors include measures of maximal fractionalization (the maximum value of the ethnic and religious fractionalization indexes), remittances as a share of GDP, international migrants' share in total population, GDP per capita, and Transparency International's corruption perception index. The reference years (Table 1) aim to be as close as possible to the period when EVS 2008-2009 was collected, taking into account the usual availability constraints. Gaps in the data were filled in using sources other than those indicated in the table. Full details are available from the author.

Using the *lmer* package in R, I designed a series of logistic cross-classified analyses, constantly adding independent variables to test the hypotheses. I started with models that employed the entire sample, including both migrants and non-migrants, such as to allow comparisons with stayers and natives. The first three hypotheses were tested using TCH and TCO as the independent variables. The fourth hypothesis required indicators for the intensity of contact of respondents with their birth society. Since the database does not provide such measures, I employed the share of remittances in the origin's GDP as a rough indicator for the average tendency of those born in the respective country to maintain contact with their homeland. The implicit assumption is that the higher the remittances, the more the "average emigrants" from a specific country of origin keep in touch with their respective culture. The interaction effect between TCO and remittances provided a test for (H4). The interaction between TCH and the immigrant stock was used to validate (H5).

To avoid eventual circular effects due to the computation procedure for the TCH, I repeated the models for the subsample of international migrants. This permitted the inclusion of the effect of age when migrating to the host

society, and of the interaction effects between TCH and age when migrating, respectively between TCO and the time spent in the host country. The interactions test for (H6). All models include the effect of the distance between host and origin countries, implied by (H7).

I reran all models in two different scenarios. First, I excluded the 99 migrants from China, Indonesia, Iran, and Iraq for which the TCO indicator might either overestimate social trust or be unreliable⁵⁴. Second, since the dependent variable has a more homogeneous meaning within Europe⁵⁵, the models were ran on the reduced subsamples of European-born respondents.

For each variable, 2% or less of cases have missing answers. The exception is income, with more than one-fifth of the cases lacking information. I have run all models without this variable, and then, as a robustness check, I have redone the analyses including it as well. Listwise deletion was employed.

Findings

According to EVS 2008 data, across European countries, those born abroad differ little from native residents with regard to levels of trust. In Belgium, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Norway, Spain, Sweden, and Switzerland, immigrants have less social trust than native residents. In Luxembourg, Portugal, and Kosovo, the opposite holds true. In the remaining 36 societies, there is no significant difference between the two groups. However, there are large differences in average levels of trust: three-quarters of the Danes and Norwegians were trustful; the figure is lower than 10% in Cyprus.

Table 2 shows the most important results. The first two reported models refer to the entire sample. The rest use the subsample of international migrants. Due to space constraints, findings from some models are only referred to in the text.

Table 2

Parameters of the Models Predicting Social Trust

		M0	M1	iM0	iM1	iM2	iM3
Individual level							
Trust gap (Origin- host)	Negative (distTCg<0)		0.25 *		0.30 *	0.29 *	0.29 *
	Positive (distTCg>0)		- 0.14				

⁵⁴ P.T. Dinesen, 2013. "Where You Come From or Where You Live?...cit."; J. Delhey, K. Newton, C. Welzel, "How General is Trust in Most People?...cit."; L. Torpe, H. Lolle, "Identifying Social Trust in Cross-Country Analysis:...cit.".

⁵⁵ J. Delhey, K. Newton, C. Welzel, "How General is Trust in Most People?...cit.".

	Size (distTCg)		-		0.00	-	-
			0.20				0.01
<i>Ln(Age at migration)</i>					0.37 *	0.27 †	0.32 †
<i>Ln(Years in host society)</i>							-
							0.03
<i>One year or less</i>						-	
						0.63	
<i>2-3</i>						0.14	
<i>4-5</i>						0.01	
<i>6-10</i>						0.30	
<i>11-15</i>						0.11	
<i>16-20</i>						0.14	
Origin							
Trust Culture (TCO) (%)			0.01 *		0.01 *	0.03 †	0.02
Remittances(%)*100			-		-	-	-
			4.23 **		0.80	0.85	0.72
TCO*Remittances*100			0.15 *		0.04	0.04	0.04
Host							
Trust Culture (TCH) (%)			0.03 ***		0.03 *	0.04 **	0.03 *
Immigrant Stock(%)			-		-	-	-
			1.63 **		4.39 **	4.32 **	4.38 **
TCH*Immigrant Stock			0.04 *		0.13 *	0.13 *	0.13 *
Cross-level interactions							
TCO*Ln(Years@host)/10						-	-
						0.05	0.02
TCH*Ln(Age@migration)					-	-	-
					0.01 *	0.01 *	0.01 *
deviance		32878	29145	3045	2202	2195	2201
variance	host	0.566	0.004	0.456	0.054	0.054	0.054
	origin	0.066	0.002	0.059	0.030	0.030	0.030
Sample size	Respondents	60494	60494	4443	4443	4443	4443
	Hosts	47	47	47	47	47	47
	Origins	87	87	85	85	85	85

***p≤0.001; **p≤0.01; *p≤0.05; †p≤0.10.

All models, except for M0 and iM0 control at individual level for: Gender, Age, Age-squared, Education, Religious Faith, # Memberships, Negative Experiences, Life Satisfaction. Corruption Perception Index, GDP/capita (logarithm), and Maximal Fractionalization were controlled at the host level. 'Positive gap' is the reference category in iM2-iM4. In M1 comparison is done to natives. In the upper part of the table, the figures are logged-odd ratios.

The empty models indicate that variance between host countries is about ten times larger than that between origin countries, regardless of whether the

entire sample is taken into account or only the international migrants are included. To test the first hypothesis, stating the impact of the exposure to the culture of the host society, TCH is used as independent variable. (H2) assumed the socialization effect, implying that TCO should also determine individual levels of social trust.

The first tests were already encouraging. For the overall sample, if adding only TCO and TCH as predictors, the variance computed at origin-level decreases to 0.006, while that of the host is 0.027. Compared to the empty model, the reduction is important, more than ten times in both cases, suggesting that TCO and TCH do contribute to explaining how much social trust an individual has. Similar findings result from the models that employ the subsample of immigrants.

Moreover, the culture of trust in the host country maintains its significant positive influence in all the models, and proves to be an important predictor for individual-level social trust, regardless of which other country-level factors are controlled for. Trustful societies leave an imprint on their residents, whether they are native residents or immigrants. TCO has a weaker effect than TCH, but the impact exists nevertheless. Trustful countries of origin pack social trust into the cultural baggage of their emigrants. According to M1 results, an increase of one percent point of those who trust others in the country of origin leads to a direct maximal growth of 0.3% of the probability to trust others. A similar increase in the host's culture of trust leads to a maximal 0.6% growth in the individual probability to trust. The discrepancy is larger if considering the models run on immigrants. For instance, in iM1, the maximal marginal effects are 0.3% for TCO, and 0.8% for TCH.

The above computations of point estimates consider only the direct effects of the cultures of trust. However, all models include interaction effects that shape the impact of TCO and TCH. The signs of the two interaction terms included in M1 confirm hypotheses (H4) and (H5). The impact of the culture of origin is higher when people tend to remain closely connected to their home country. More exactly, as I have not disposed of an appropriate measure, this holds true *at least* when the "average" migrant from a certain origin keeps contact with his/her birthplace. In the models run only on the sample of immigrants, although the sign of the relation remains positive, the impact is not significant. The interaction between TCH and the stock of immigrants is significant when considering only immigrants as well as when comparing them to natives. In trustful host societies, the diversity brought about by a higher share of immigrants increases trust, probably due to better knowledge about non-similar people and greater familiarity with diversity.

Considering the interaction effects, one may reassess the total impact of TCO and TCH. When, for the country of origin, remittances are less than 0.1% of the GDP, the point estimate of the maximal total effect of TCH is lower than that of TCO for hosts where immigrants comprise less than 15% of the total

population. If remittances are 0.2%, the effect of trust in the host society equals that of the origin only if immigrants are more than half of the population, a situation that does not occur in any of the studied European countries. The higher the remittances, the higher the total effect of the country of origin, which surpasses that of the host. However, these are only the point estimates. Inspecting the confidence intervals shows that in most cases the total effect size for TCO and TCH is similar. This changes only when remittances are higher than 2.5%, no matter the share of immigrants in the host country. In such situations, the culture of origin becomes salient in determining social trust. High remittances are also likely to indicate a large enough diaspora, with a higher probability that co-nationals are located in the same region of immigration. In such cases, migrants may have more frequent contact with co-ethnics sharing the same culture of trust, boosting the effect of the culture of origin.

The models run only on immigrants allow further refinement considering length of exposure to origin's and to host's culture. Though the interaction effect of TCO with the length of stay has the expected direction stated by (H6a), this relation is also insignificant. On the other hand, (H6b) is supported: age at migration have a slight negative effect on the influence of the culture of trust in the host society. Older migrants are less likely to be influenced with respect to their values.

One may reassess the relative impact of TCO and TCH also considering age of migration. Their relation will depend on the age of migration and on the stock of immigrants in the host society. For instance, if immigrating at the age of 25 to a country where immigrants account for 10% of the total population, the point estimate for the total maximum effect of TCH on the individual probability to trust others will be 0.55%. The corresponding figure for TCO is stable and equals 0.34%. If migrating when older, in a country with fewer migrants, the TCH effect becomes lower than the effect of TCO. Immigrating at the age of 40 in a country where the percentage of foreign-born in the host's population is smaller than 7%, maintain the impact of the origin stronger than the one of the host. In other words, younger immigrants in countries where migration is prevalent are more likely to be influenced by the culture of trust in their host society than by that of their country of origin. Conversely, older migrants in countries with fewer immigrants have a higher propensity to be influenced by their birth culture than by their new society of residence.

In all models, there are controls for the trust gap specified in (H7). Their effects show that when the destination is more trustful than their country of origin, immigrants are likely to display more social trust. Such migration may be seen as a huge step that involves taking a sort of bet that requires confidence as a prerequisite. It is also important to notice that the actual distance does not matter, and that only the sign of the gap is important. The effect is significant

both in the pooled sample and in the migrant-only samples.

When not controlling for TCO and TCH (model not shown), the positive gap becomes significant as well. Specifically, when the host country is less trusting than the country of origin, the odds to trust others decrease. This suggests that these migrants also adapt to social context. As compared to what they have been used in their society of birth, they experience more frequent negative outcomes in their daily interactions in the host society and tend to accordingly adjust their level of trust. However, as mentioned, the effect is not significant after controlling for TCO and TCH.

The impact of the presence of immigrants on the level of social trust was recently addressed in the literature with controversial findings⁵⁶. Although the relation is beyond the purpose of this paper, the findings may help to understand the process that underlies this relationship. According to the models run on the overall sample, when TCH is lower than 33%, the total effect of the immigrants stock becomes negative. Otherwise, in cultures richer in social trust, the migrants seem to bring no harm to the propensity that a resident trust others. Therefore the impact of the presence of immigrants on social trust should be analyzed keeping under control the pre-existing trustfulness of the host society.

All results remain almost unchanged when performing robustness checks, such as including income among predictors, restraining the sample to European-born individuals, or removing some cases that might be problematic, as previously indicated. Thus, one can conclude that the findings are stable and can be trusted.

Implications

The analysis shows that social trust is both stable and adaptive. It simultaneously depends on the context of early socialization and on the current context, defined as cultures of trust in the host and origin societies. The influence of double-contextuality is shaped by structural conditions that exist both in the society of origin and the current society, as well as by an individual's age of migration. This creates a complex and fluid social environment where change may occur more easily.

The cultural gap of trust is not especially important per se, but rather through the pervasive influence of formative socialization throughout one's entire life. This may contribute to the debate surrounding assimilation⁵⁷. The

⁵⁶ A. Portes, E. Vickstrom, "Diversity, Social Capital, and Cohesion", *Annual Reviews of Sociology*, no. 37, 2011, pp. 461-479.

⁵⁷ H. Esser, "Assimilation, Ethnic Stratification, or Selective Acculturation? Recent Theories of the Integration of Immigrants and the Model of Intergenerational Integration", *Sociologica*, no. 1, 2010, pp. 1-29.

findings contradict the classical assimilation theory, showing that migrants remain influenced by their country of origin no matter when or where they migrated; however, in other respects, the findings also confirm the theory. The host culture plays a homogenization role, with various groups within society adapting their levels of trust according to the average TCH. This may be considered a sign of integration; if migrants do not adjust their levels of trust to the (superior) trustworthiness in their host society, this may degrade the overall level of social trust, thus hindering social cohesion and threatening the fundamental basis of the welfare state, for which generalized trust acts as a prerequisite⁵⁸. Overall, the results are closer to a segmented version of assimilation, in which society is diverse due to diverse origins, but is somehow homogeneous due to the effect of the host culture.

In the long term, I would expect European societies to change slightly under the impact of migration from various regions with lower levels of social trust. However, the change will likely be invisible and may not necessarily be negative. In less trustful societies, structural conditions, such as increasing migrant populations, will tend to discourage people from trusting others. Migrants themselves, even when they inherit low generalized trust from their society of origin, will be more trustworthy than expected due to individual characteristics, as a consequence of the fact that migration constitutes a wager of trust in the destination. On the other hand, if the trend towards reflexive modernity continues, one should also note that it comes with higher levels of generalized trust. Therefore, all of these tendencies may compensate for one another. Supplementary simulation should be carried out before finding a definitive answer regarding the impact of international migration on country-level averages of generalized trust, considering the changes in migrants themselves, in the native population, and all transformations within the social structure of the host society. More, regions within the both origin and host societies may have slightly different cultures of trust, but currently available data does not allow such testing.

Further attention should be also paid to the strength of the country of origin's context. The gap might be larger or narrower depending on how much the society of origin continues to be a reference framework for the migrant. As argued, I have employed only a weak measure for immigrant embeddedness in the context given by the country of origin. Better measures would include frequency of in-group contact, exposure to TV channels from the society of origin, and the size of the ethnic group at the local level. The last indicator may already be available, and adding it to the databases provided by large-scale surveys is one of the proposals for future research. From a different perspective,

⁵⁸ P.T. Dinesen, M. Hooghe, "When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do:...cit.", pp. 699-700.

language proficiency or similarity of the known languages to the ones in the host society may be another mediator to boost the impact of the host and to decrease the influence of the origin. In a world of increasing free movement, including these other indicators should become a priority when designing comparative surveys.

Fractionalization effects due to large numbers of immigrants in host countries are not supported when considering the above models. More precisely, they depend on the context and exist only in societies with levels of trust that are lower than 33%. When more than a third of the population is trusting, the implication is that the larger the immigrant population, the higher the level of trust of each individual. I would expect that, following the double-contextualization argument, there is a need to control for fractionalization in both origin and host societies. Also, segregation and local conditions are more likely to produce effects as compared to country-level contexts⁵⁹. This stresses the need to further extend the analysis by considering the structural conditions that exist at the local level.

⁵⁹ E.M. Uslaner, "Trust, Diversity, and Segregation in the United States and the United Kingdom", *Comparative Sociology*, vol. 10, no. 2, 2011, pp. 221-247.