

Trust and local context of life: A cross-national comparative analysis of Scandinavian and East European countries

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Social capital



General trust –

trust in strangers, implying expectations that individuals with whom we are not previously acquainted are trustworthy.

Theoretical framework

Determinants of trust (Delhey&Newton):



Community theory: trust in others is fostered by individual perceptions or features of the local context in which people live.

Research question:

***Is the influence of local context
on levels of trust
the same
in Scandinavian and East European countries?***

Research design & Data

Units of analysis:
4 countries



The empirical data are based on the 2010 (fifth round) version of the *European Social Survey*

Indicators and data preparation

Dependent variable - Index "Level of trust"

- «Generally speaking, do you think that most people can be trust or you can't be too careful?»;
- «Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the chance, or would they try to be fair?»;
- «Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?».

Indicators and data preparation

Independent variables:

Core characteristics of local context

- Domicile location
- Citizen of country
- Born in country
- Member of a group discriminated against
- Belonging to minority ethnic group

Additional characteristics (perception of immigration, crime)

- Index "Immigration policy" (whether more immigrants should be allowed to come)
- Index "Immigration impacts" (effects of immigration)
- Index "Worry about becoming a victim of crime" (perception of crime and victimization)
- Index "Worry about crime effects quality of life" (effects of crime perception)

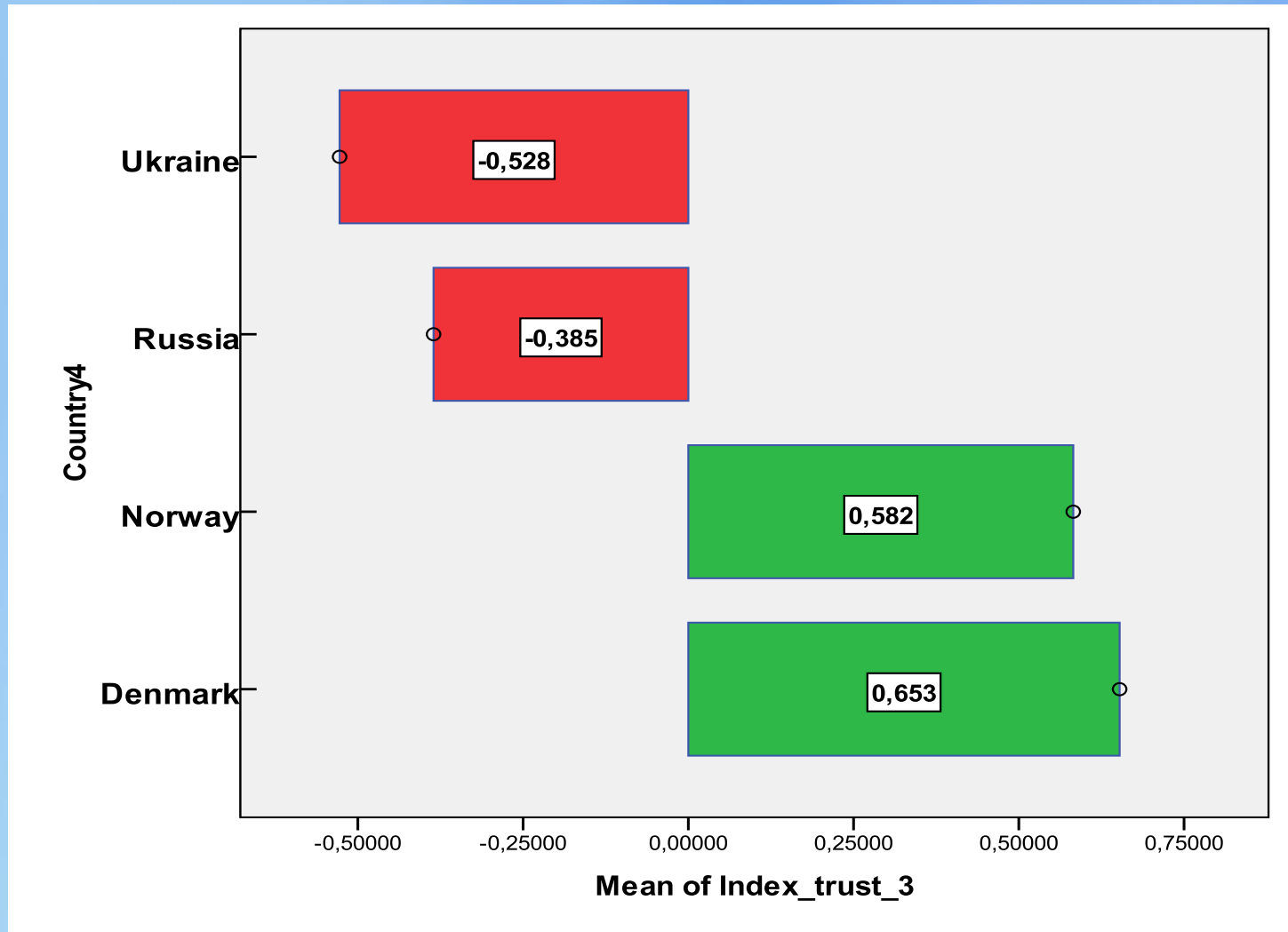
For all indexes: CFI >0.95 (ideal) and RMSEA <0.6/0.5 (ideal)
according to **Confirmatory factor analysis**

**Analysis and results:
comparison of the countries
on the group level**

Analysis and results. The group level

Level of trust

(means are significantly different, $p < 0,01$ according to ANOVA)



Analysis and results. The group level

Indicators	Denmark	Norway	Russia	Ukraine
Percentage of immigrants	7,7%	8,02%	8,44%	11,44%
Index “Immigration impacts” (mean)	0,44	0,38	-0,46	-0,23
Index “Immigration policy (allow many/few)” (mean)	0,05	-0,04	0,08	-0,14
Index “Worry about crime has NO effect on quality of life” (mean)	0,671	0,624	-0,324	-0,287
Index “Worry about becoming a victim of crime” (mean)	-0,237	0,044	0,112	-0,031
Member of a group discriminated against in this country (%)	4,3%	5,4%	8%	4,1%
Domicile location, respondent description (% respondents living in a big city)	17,5%	14,7%	37,4%	30,5%
Belong to minority ethnic group in country (%)	2,7%	4,6%	14,2%	5,3%

**Analysis and results:
comparison of the countries
on the individual level**

Analysis and results. The individual level

The first stage

«Do the variables at the individual level (local context) influence the level of trust of respondents (independent of which country they are from)?»

2 regression models

(the dependent variable -the level of trust)

The first model ***$R^2=27,9\%$***

3 dummy-variables for countries

The second model ***$R^2=36,2\%$***

3 dummy-variables for countries +

variables describing local context of life + several socio-demographic characteristics

Analysis and results. The individual level

The second stage

"How does the local context of life influence the level of trust at the individual level in each country?"

4 regression models (*for each country separately*).

the dependent variable - the level of trust;

independent variables include characteristics of local context and socio-demographic variables.

	all		Denmark		Norway		Russia		Ukraine	
	coef	t-value	coef	t-value	coef	t-value	coef	t-value	coef	t-value
Index Immigration impacts	,230	12,839	,192	5,369	,200	4,685	,255	8,463	,173	4,505
Index Immigration policy (allow many/few)	-,074	-4,541	-,132	-3,687	-,107	-2,890	-,070	-2,664	-,054	-1,543
Index "Worry about crime has no effect on quality of life"	,100	5,394	,023	,569	,147	3,140	,122	4,068	,067	1,734
Index "Worry about becoming a victim of crime"	,097	5,740	,100	3,258	,042	,944	,065	2,226	,160	4,639
Member of a group discriminated against in the country	,258	4,218	,187	1,686	,242	1,781	,304	3,182	,116	,670
Age of respondent, calculated	,003	3,040	,009	5,568	,005	2,758	-,001	-,614	,002	,731
Domicile location, respondent's description	,037	2,736	,036	1,437	,016	,663	-,002	-,067	,135	4,285
Years of full-time education completed	,002	,458	-,001	-,207	,015	1,728	-,033	-3,193	,042	3,348
Citizen of country	,106	,794	-,069	-,344	,119	,638	,223	,493	,411	,917
Born in country	-,046	-,665	-,012	-,078	-,157	-1,005	-,039	-,272	,002	,016
Belong to minority ethnic group in country	,116	1,787	,068	,306	-,087	-,477	,106	1,193	,291	1,709

Discussion

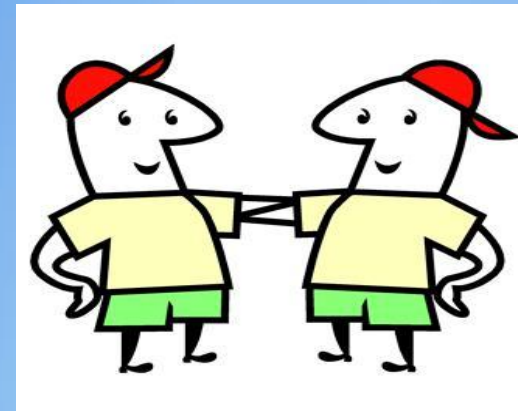
- **Group level**

Scandinavian and Eastern European countries differ

(levels of trust, in levels of individual subjective perceptions of immigrants, crime, domicile)

- **Individual-level**

the Scandinavian and East European countries cannot be contrasted with one another.



Thereby the level of indicators of local context of life can be different in four countries, but the interconnection between them and the level of trust is mostly the same in all countries.

Next steps:



**Add more
countries
?**

**Test other
theories?**

What else?



Thank you for your attention!





- No effect

«citizen of country», «born in country», «belong to minority ethnic group in country»

The location of domicile

- Some effect (in 2 countries)

index variable “Worry about crime affects quality of life” ,
belonging to a group discriminated against in the country ,
age, Level of education

- Effect (in 3-4 countries)

individual perceptions related to immigration

perspectives related to immigration policy and worrying about becoming a victim of crime have a significant influence on the level of trust in three of the countries.