

# Relation between Trust and Information Consumption: Disentangling Cross-country Variation

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# Informational Approach towards Trust

Trust is a way of overcoming ambiguity

**Luhman:** Trust is always based on extrapolation of information that individual already has

**Giddens:** Trust as a weak inductive knowledge

**Gambetta:** Trust as an unsure answer on a lack of information

**Sztompka:** Trust lies between the past that cannot be undone and the future that cannot be known

**Elster:** One of the reasons to trust (or to distrust) is the high cost of information

# Contradiction #1

## How does informational growth affects certainty?

Growing amounts of information and information channels



Cheap and clear information

Complication of social structures, growth of uncertainty and informational entropy



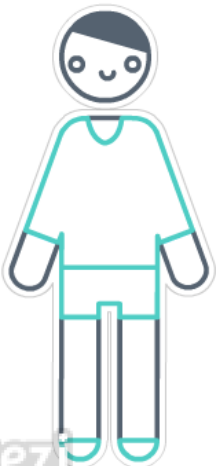
Overabundance of vague information

# Contradiction #2

## Trust - Information Consumption Relation

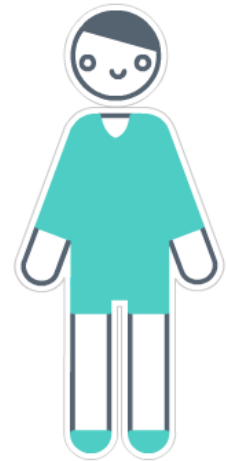
### Negative

*"I know everything about the world, so I don't need to trust anyone"*



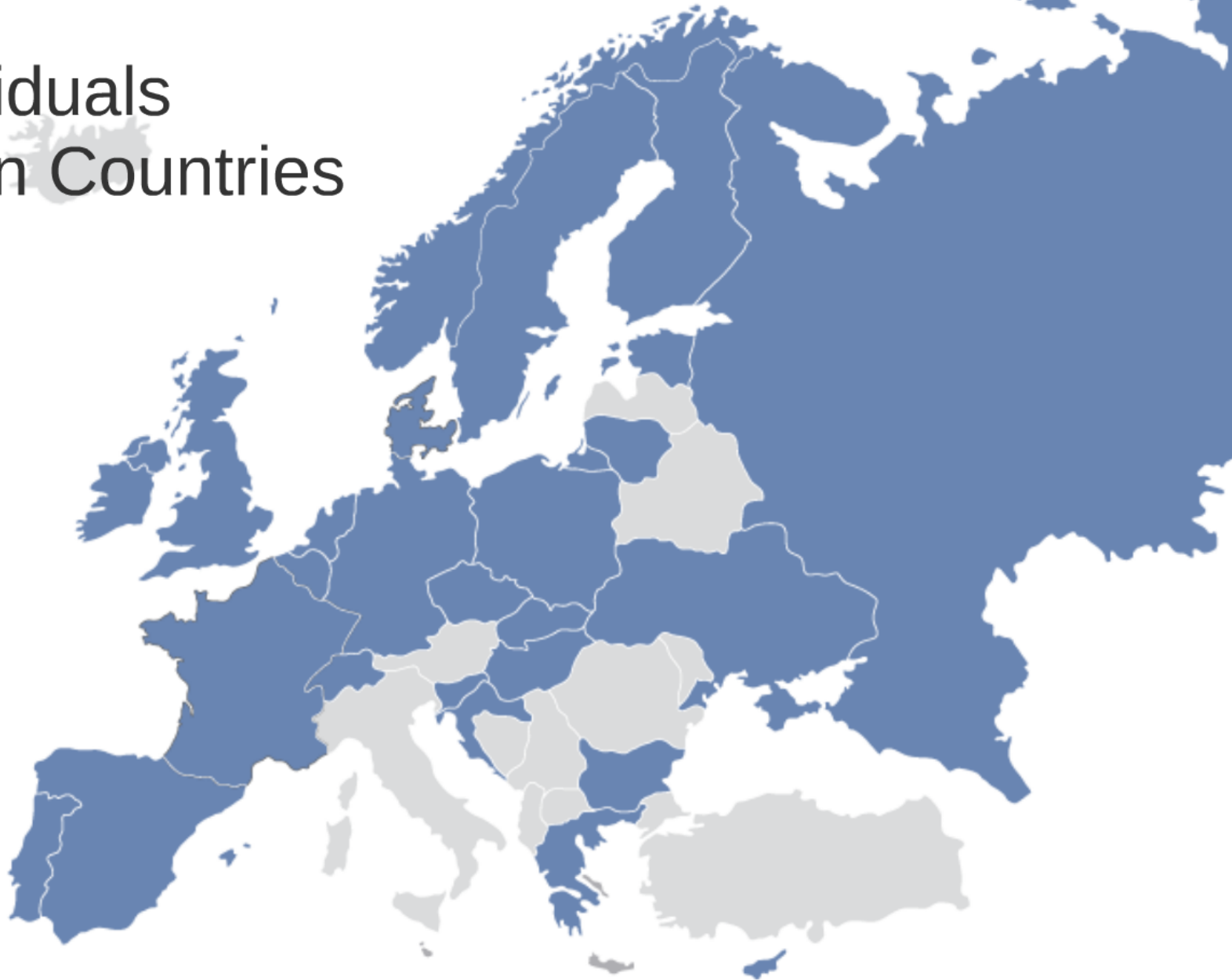
### Positive

*"I know everything about the world, so it is safe for me to trust everyone"*



# European Social Survey (ESS) Round 5 (2010-2011)

47717 Individuals  
27 European Countries

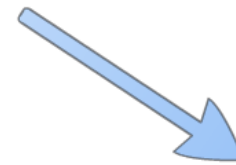


# Generalized Trust Index

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

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?



**Index**  
**(from 0 to 10)**

Cronbach's Alpha  
0.79

# Variables

## *Predictors*

- Internet
- TV
- newspaper
- social interaction

## *Controls*

- age
- subjective well-being
- education

# Model 1 (Fixed Effects)

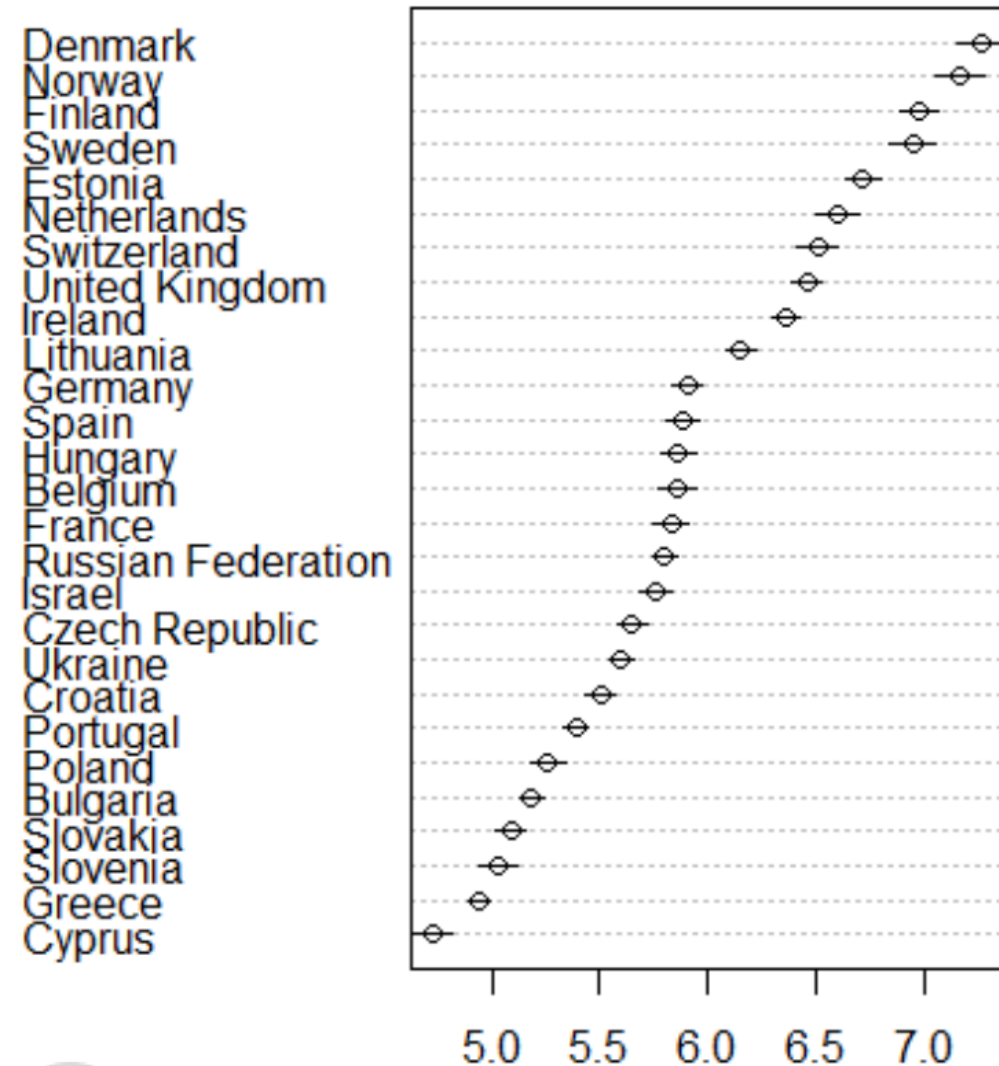
	Estimate	Std. Error	t value
Intercept	5.94	0.13	45.95
newspapers	<u>0.04</u>	0.04	4.24
Internet	<u>0.16</u>	0.02	7.44
television	<u>-0.03</u>	0.01	-3.59
social interaction	0.08	0.01	9.11
education	0.14	0.01	15.22
subjective well-being	0.51	0.01	56.99
age	0.16	0.01	15.91



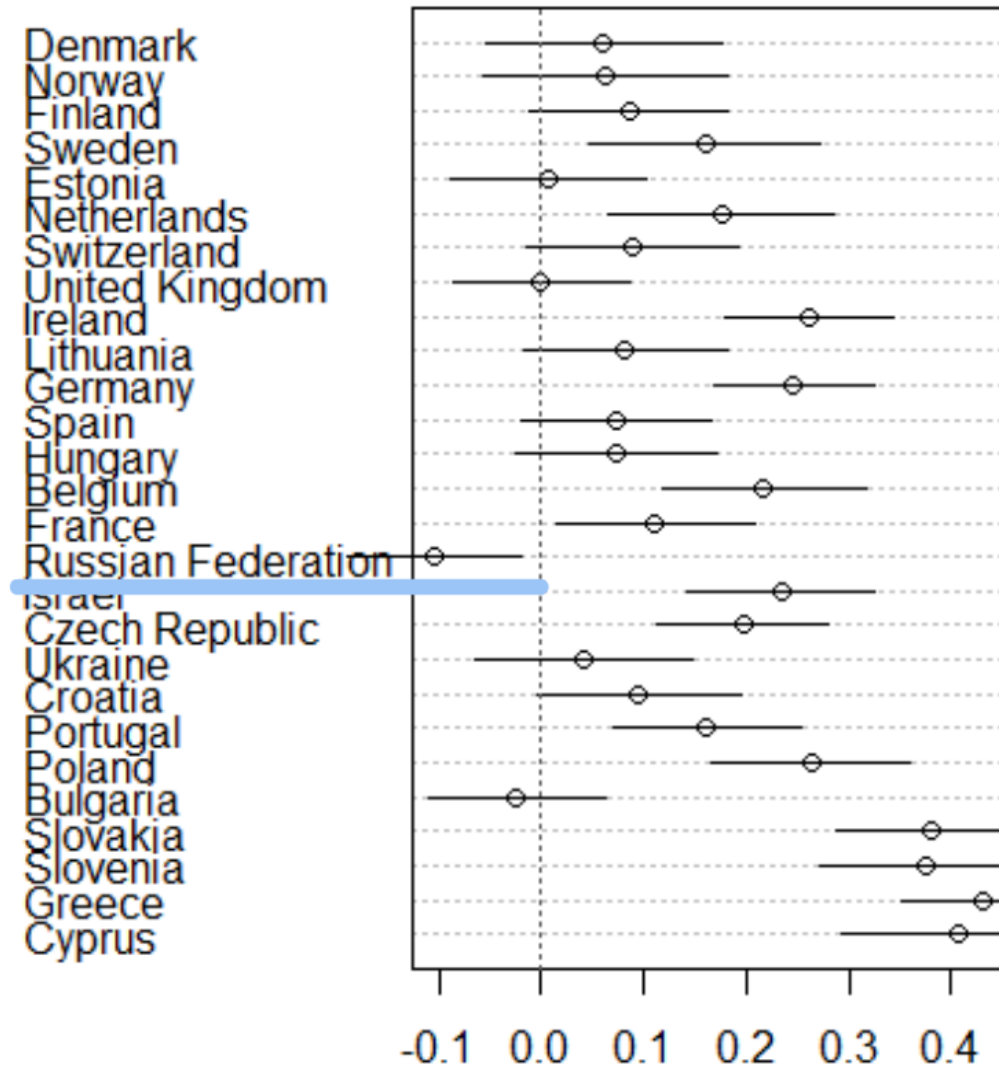
# Model 1

## (Random Coefficients across Countries)

### Intercepts

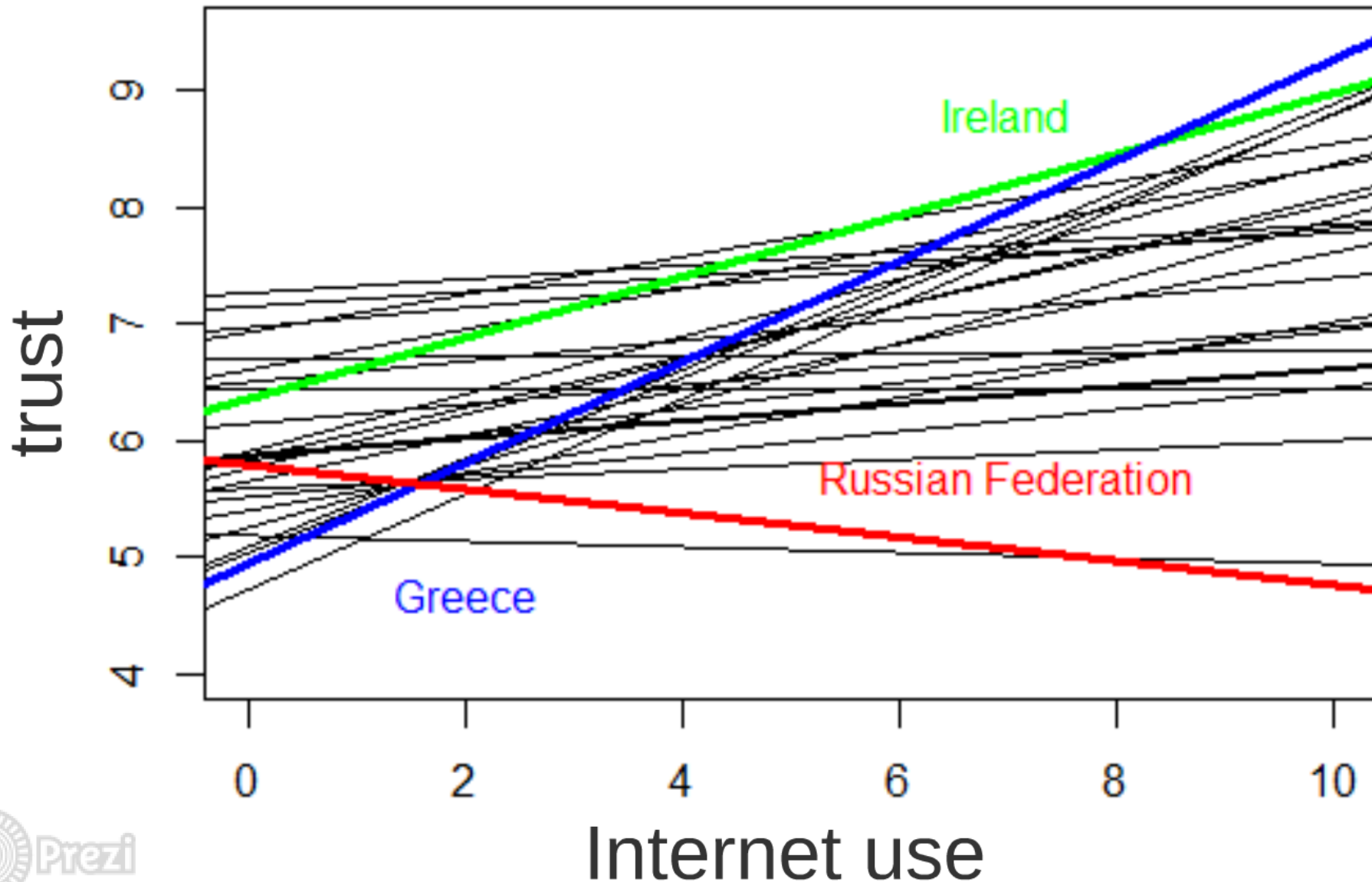


### Slopes (Internet)



# Model 1

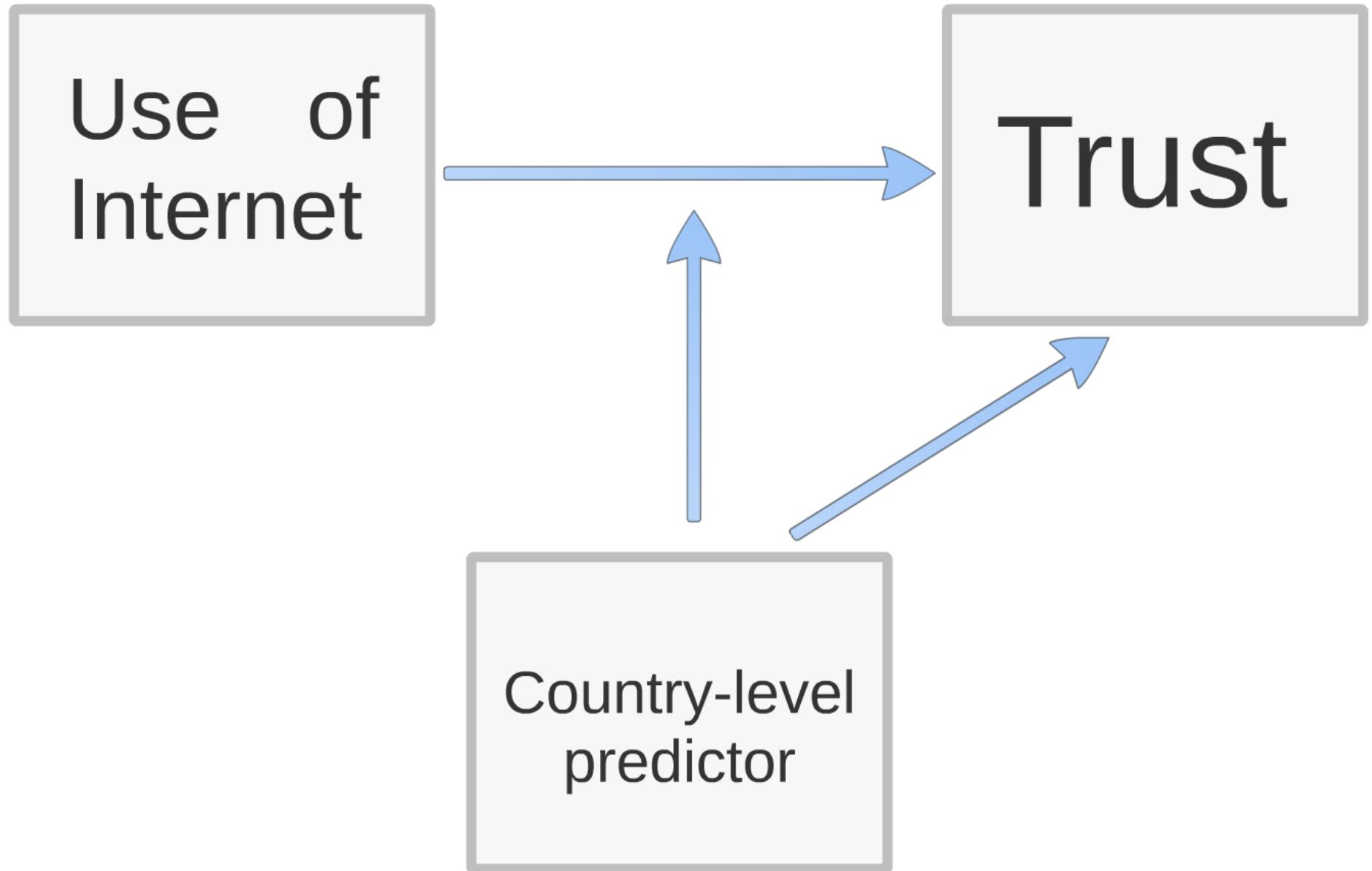
## (Internet Use on Trust Randomized for Different Countries)



# Finding Explanation

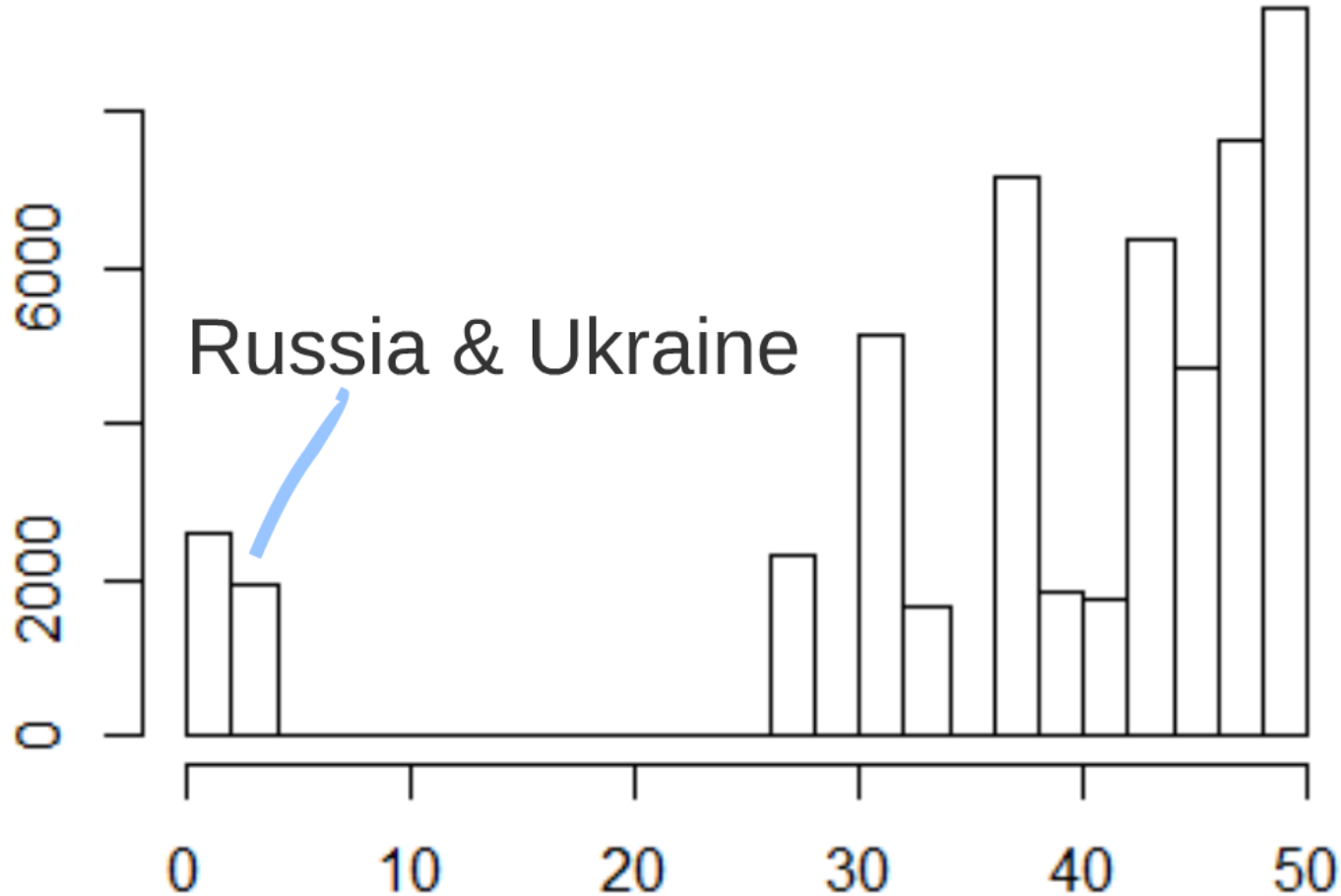
- For the case of Russia
  - use country-level predictors
- For the difference between TV and internet effect
  - use values as predictor

# The Case of Russia



# The Case of Russia freedom of press index

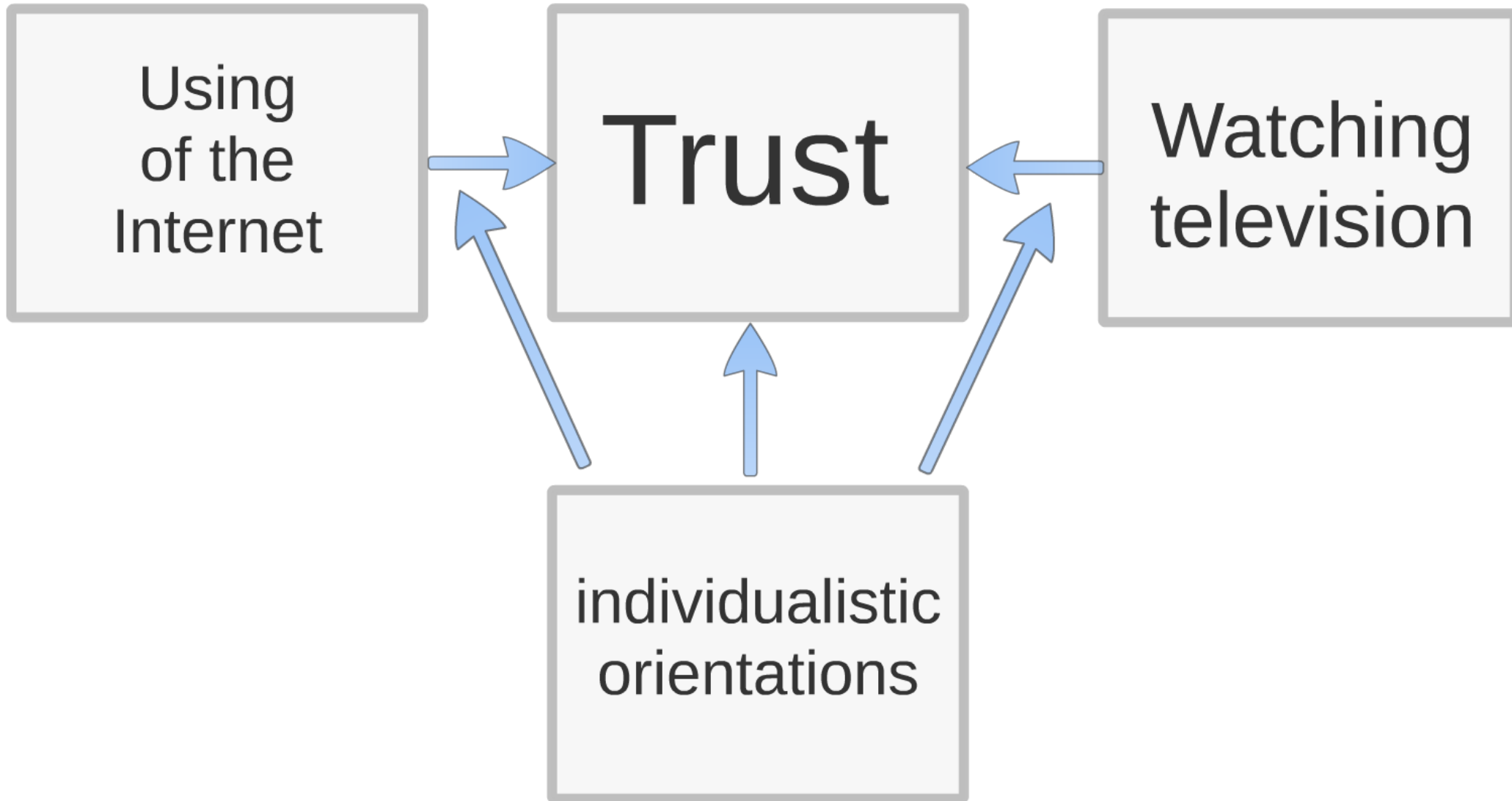
**Distribution of  
Freedom of Press Index over Sample**



# Model 2

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value
Intercept	3.23	0.72	4.49
newspapers	0.04	0.01	4.66
Internet	0.26	0.21	1.21
television	-0.04	0.01	-4.06
social interaction	0.08	0.01	8.28
education	0.15	0.01	16.05
subjective well-being	0.50	0.01	54.14
age	0.16	0.01	15.48
<b>freedom of press</b>	0.07	0.02	3.88
<b>freedom of press : internet</b>	0.00	0.01	-0.44

# Internet / TV

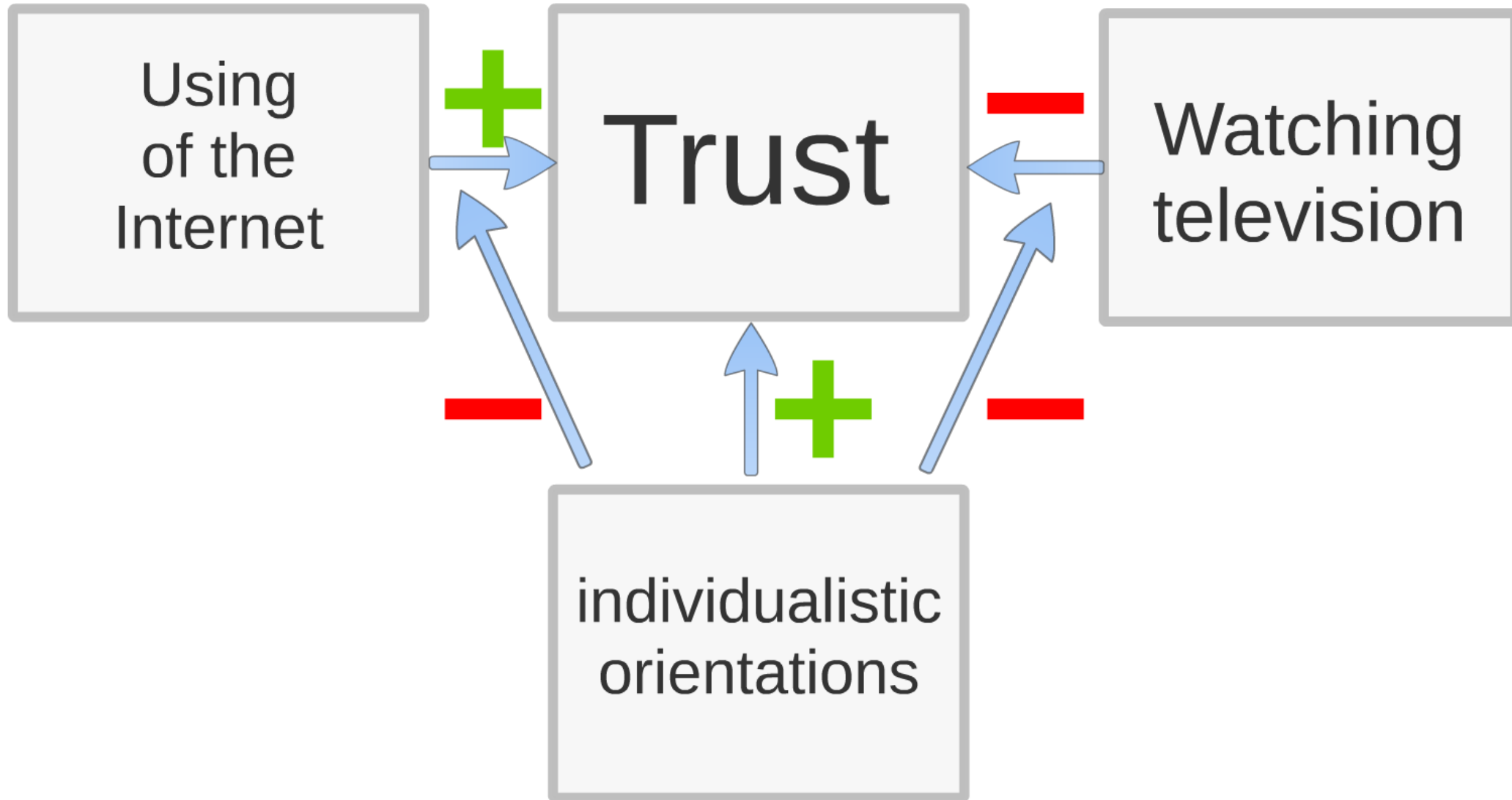


# Model 3

	Estimate	Std. Error	t value
Intercept	5.96	0.12	49.24
newspapers	0.04	0.01	4.20
Internet	0.15	0.02	7.36
television	-0.03	0.01	-3.69
social interaction	0.08	0.01	8.95
education	0.14	0.01	15.18
subjective well-being	0.51	0.01	57.08
age	0.16	0.01	15.93
individualism	0.30	0.10	3.15
individualism : tv	-0.01	0.00	-2.69
individualism : internet	-0.07	0.02	-4.43



# Internet / TV



# Some conclusions

How does information consumption affects trust?

There is a strong positive relation between trust and the spread of Internet on country level.

Internet use and newspaper reading have positive effect on trust, meanwhile watching TV has a negative.

There is a variance in internet use effects in different countries.

# Further steps

- Find another database?
- Find MORE country-level predictors
- Tell the story about trust, internet, TV and individualism using SEM

**Thank you for  
your attention!**