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

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In the modern society...

- Constant growth of the amount of information
- New channels of information transmission

Informational transformations

- Increasing complexity of social structure

- Exponential growth of population during 20 century
- Diversification of population

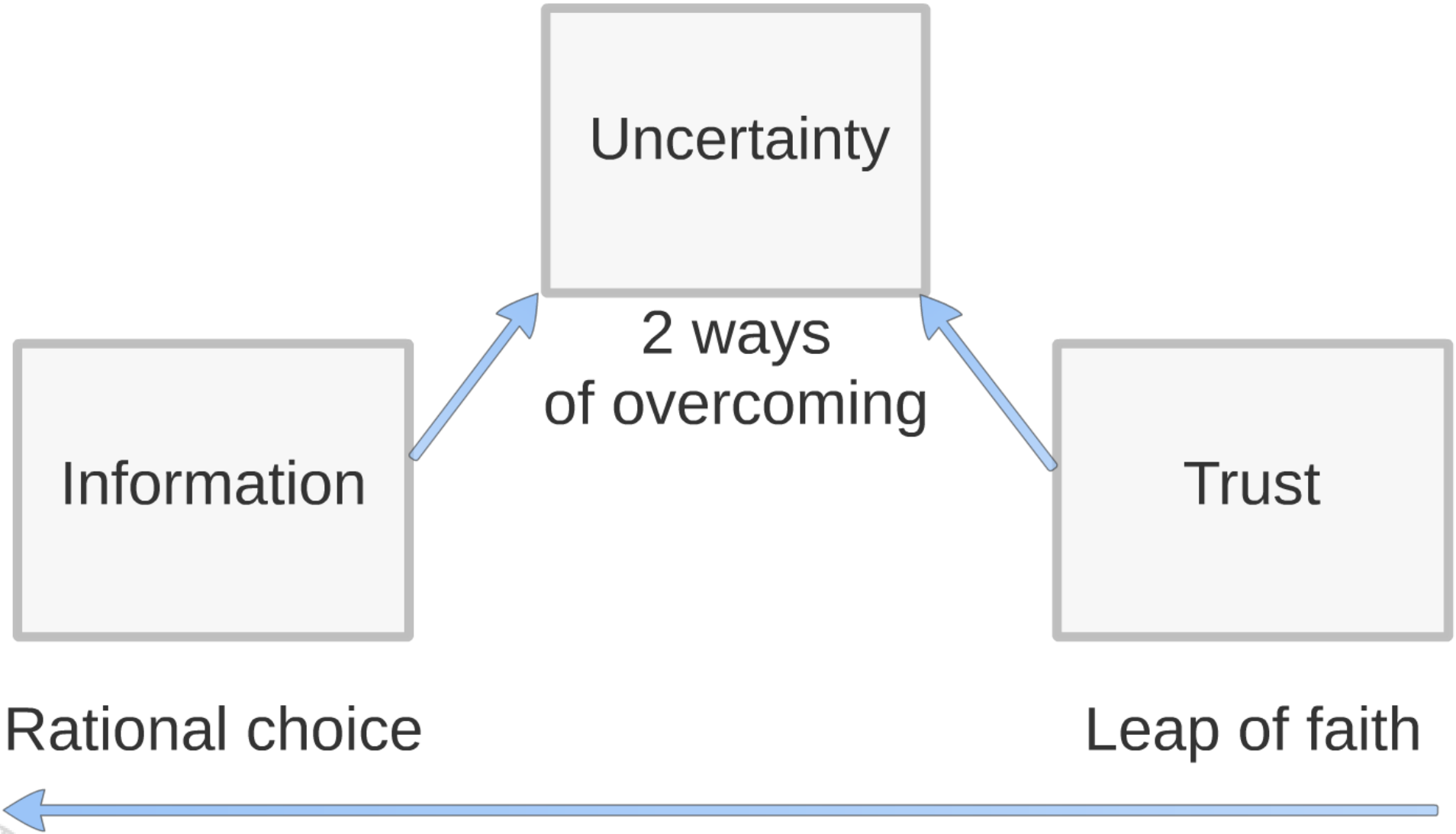
Trust transformations

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
Lewis and Weigert: Cognitive dimension of trust

Negative relation



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

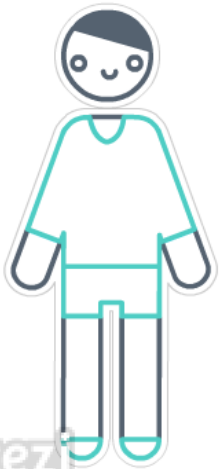
Overabundance of vague information

Contradiction #2

Trust - Information Consumption Relation

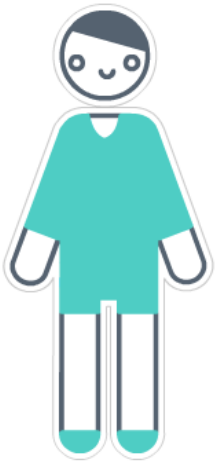
Negative

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

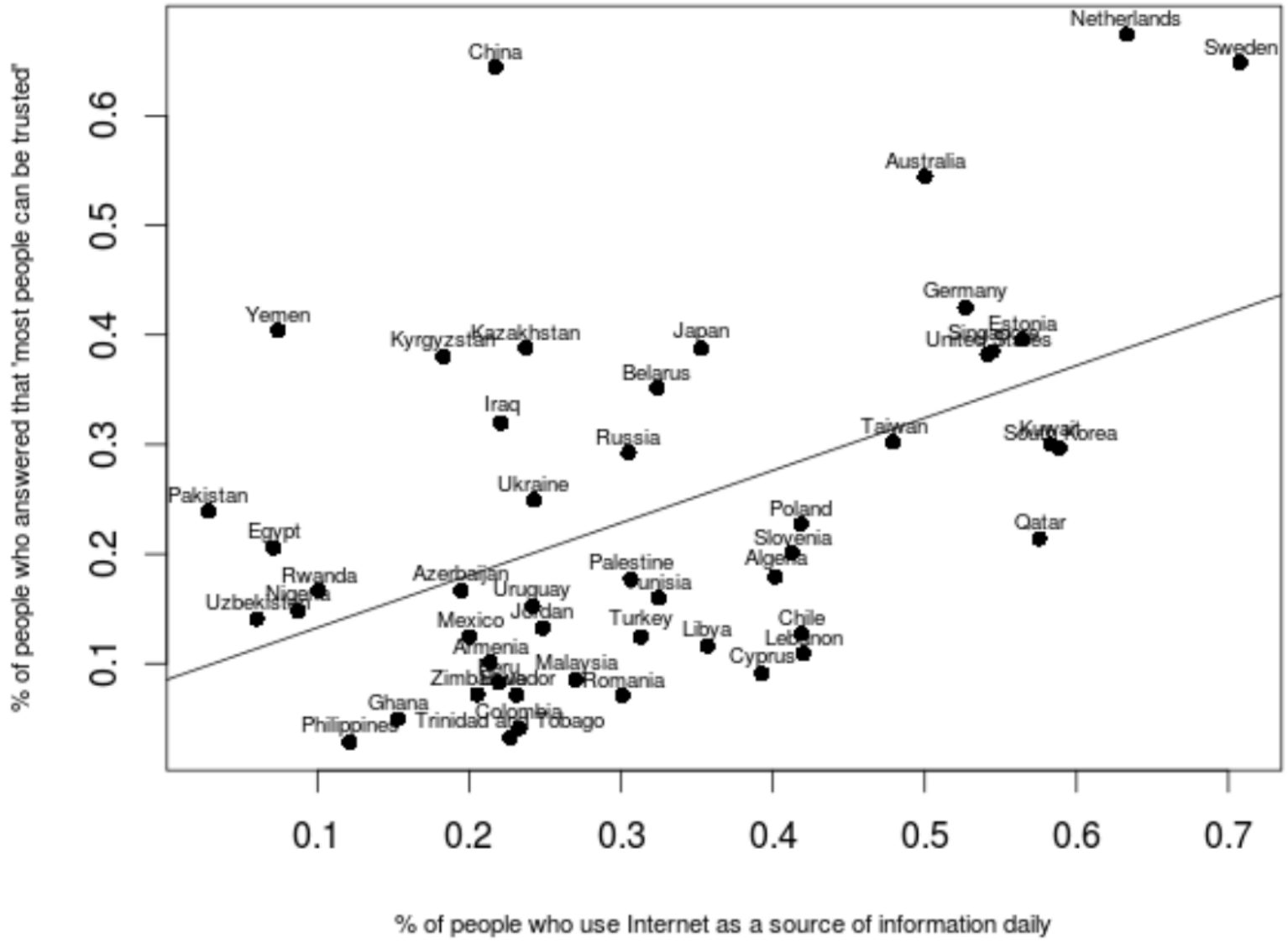


Positive

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

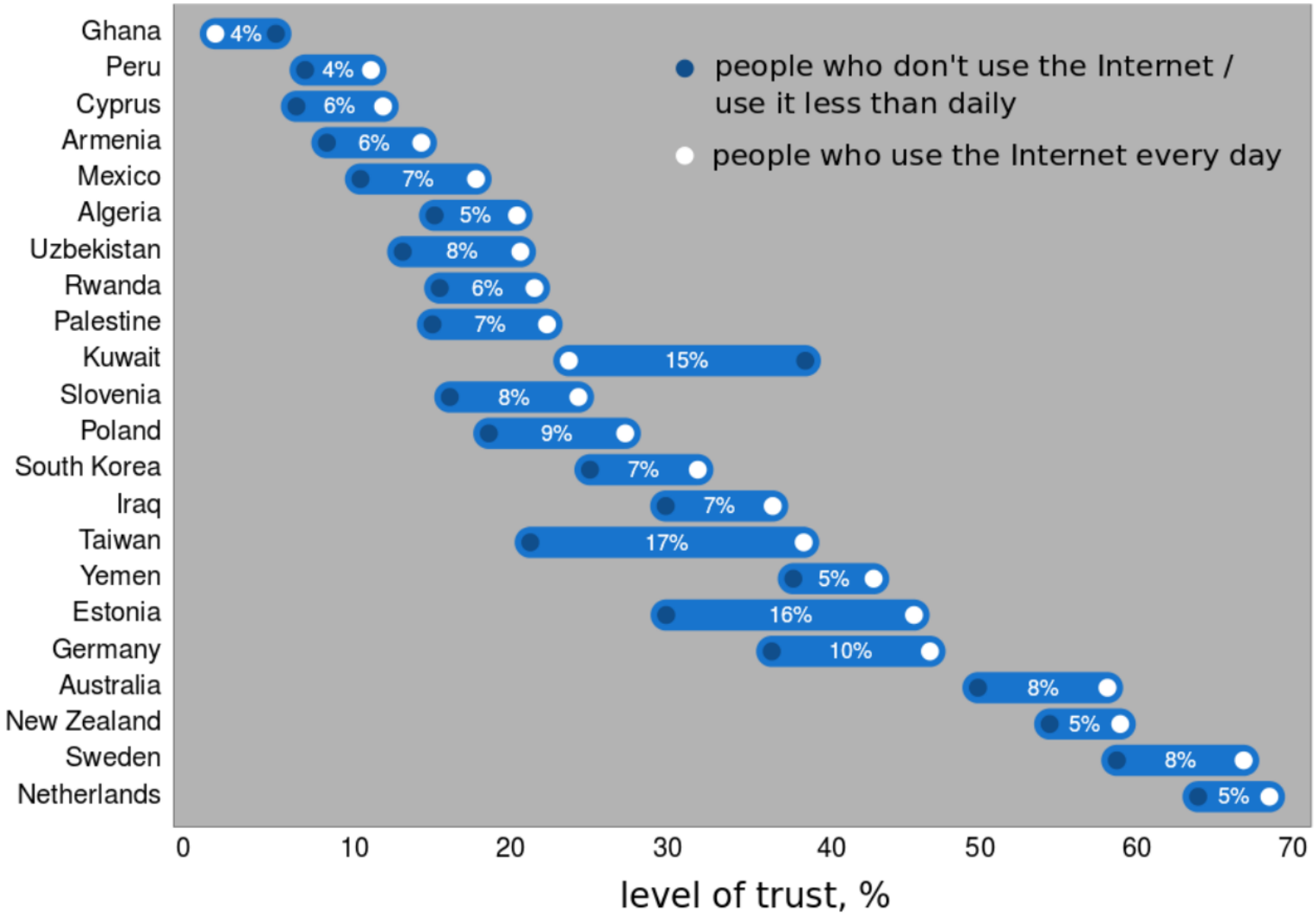


Trust and Internet Use: General Trends



Data from the WVS wave 6th. Country average for answer for a question "Generally speaking most people can be trusted" taken as a level of trust.

Trust and Internet Use: General Trends



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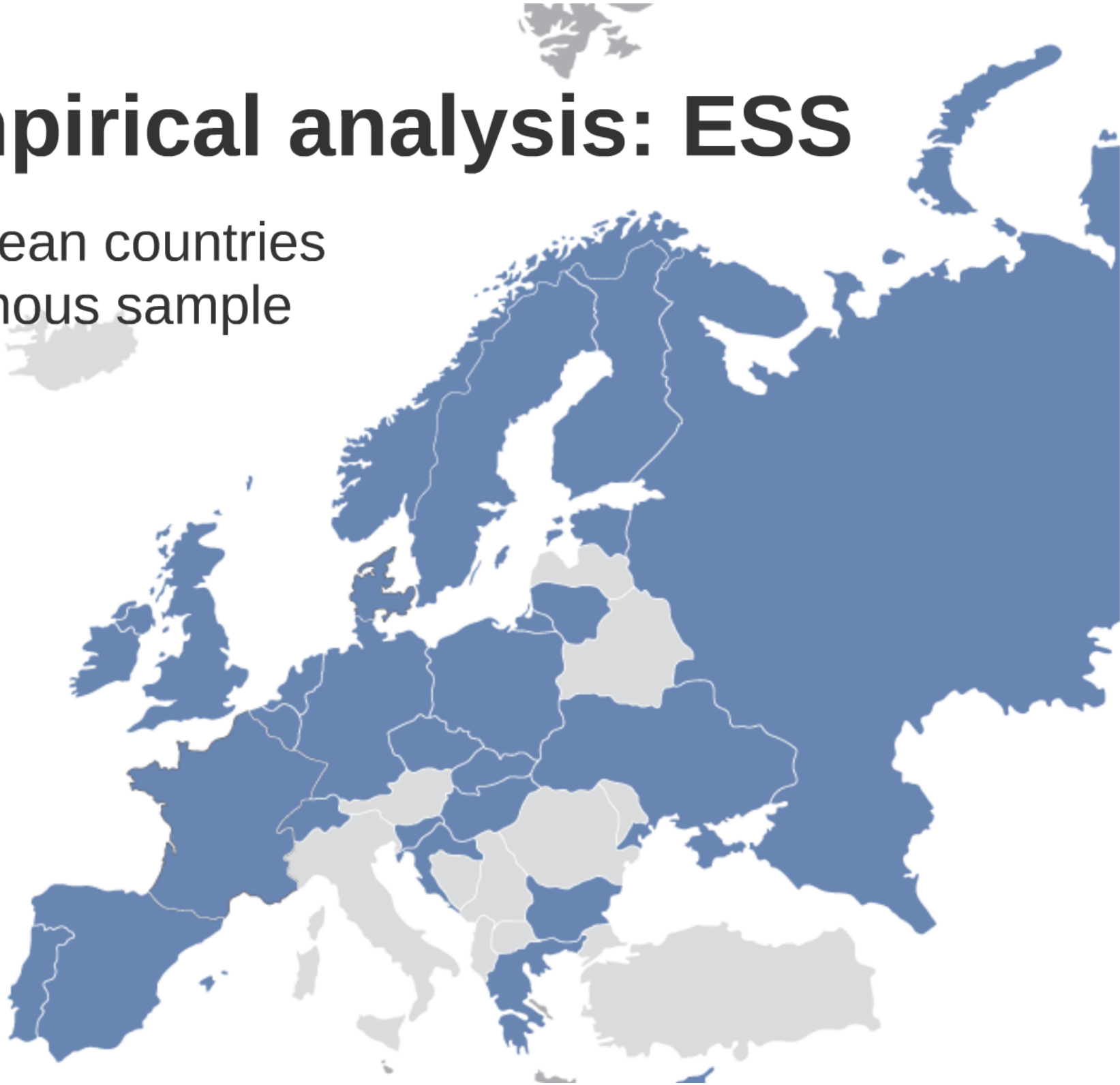
Empirical analysis: ESS

- 27 European countries
- Homogenous sample



Variables

Predictors

- Internet
- TV
- newspaper
- social interaction

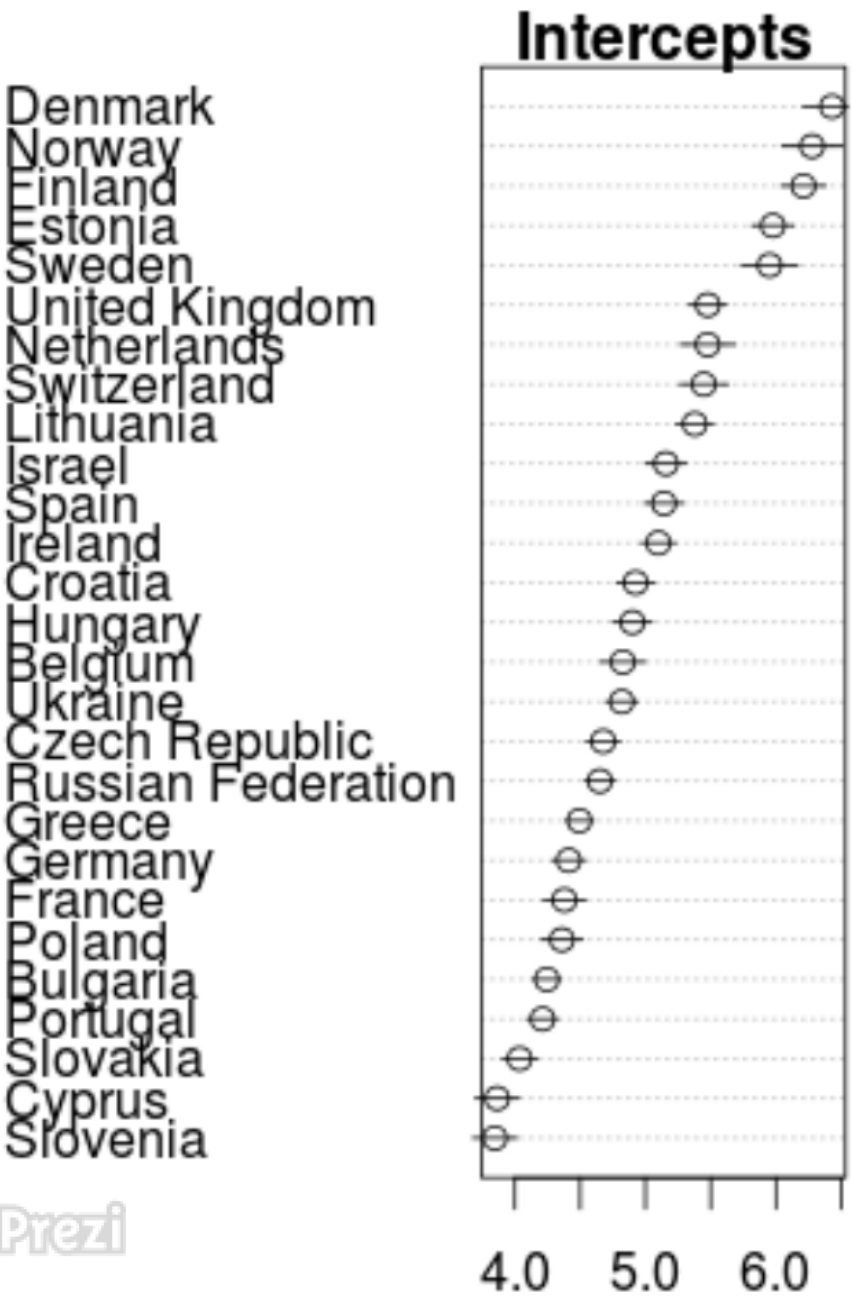
Controls

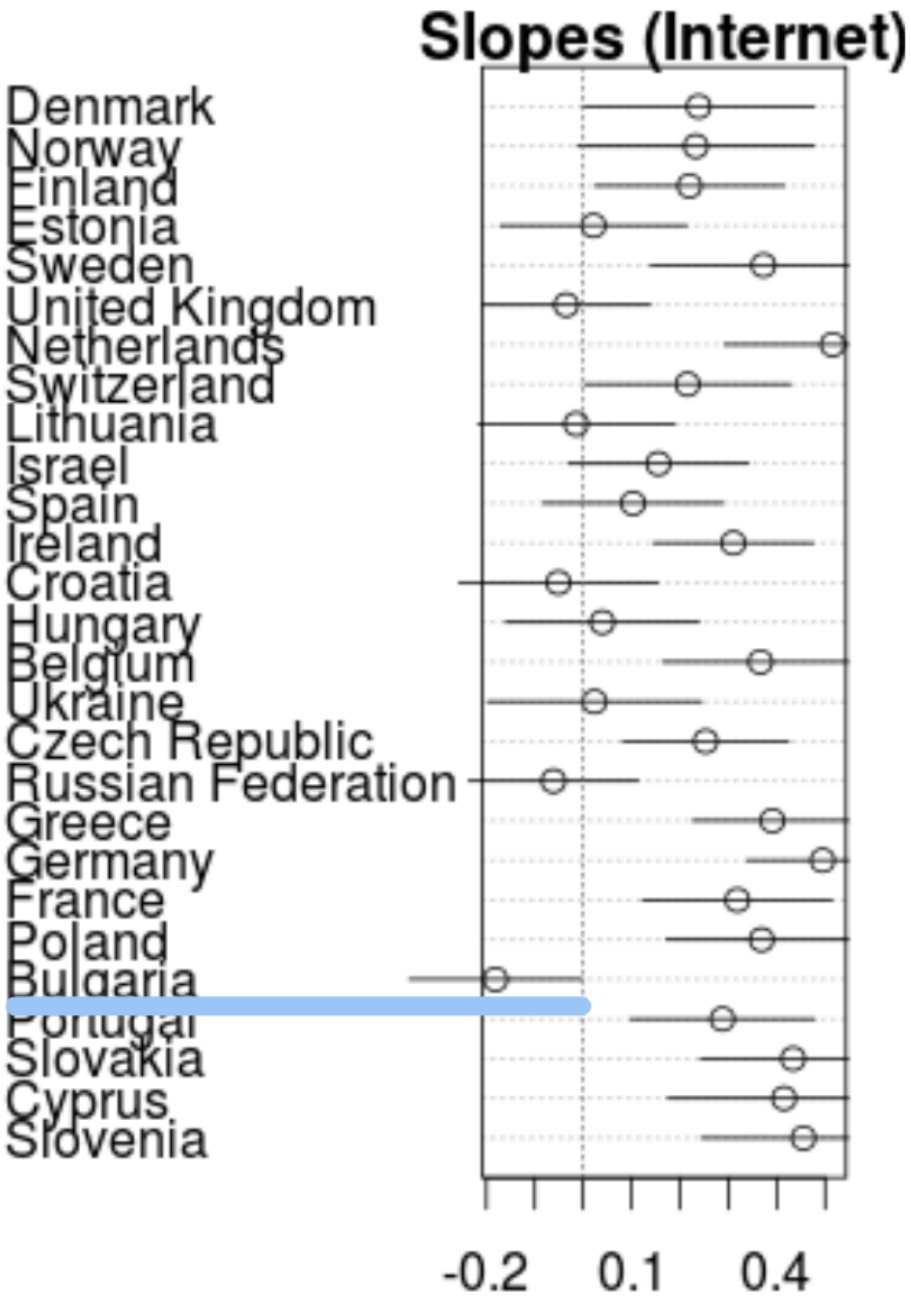
- age
- gender
- crime victim
- type of place of residence
- subjective well-being
- education
- 2nd generation migrant

Model Coefficients (Fixed Effects)

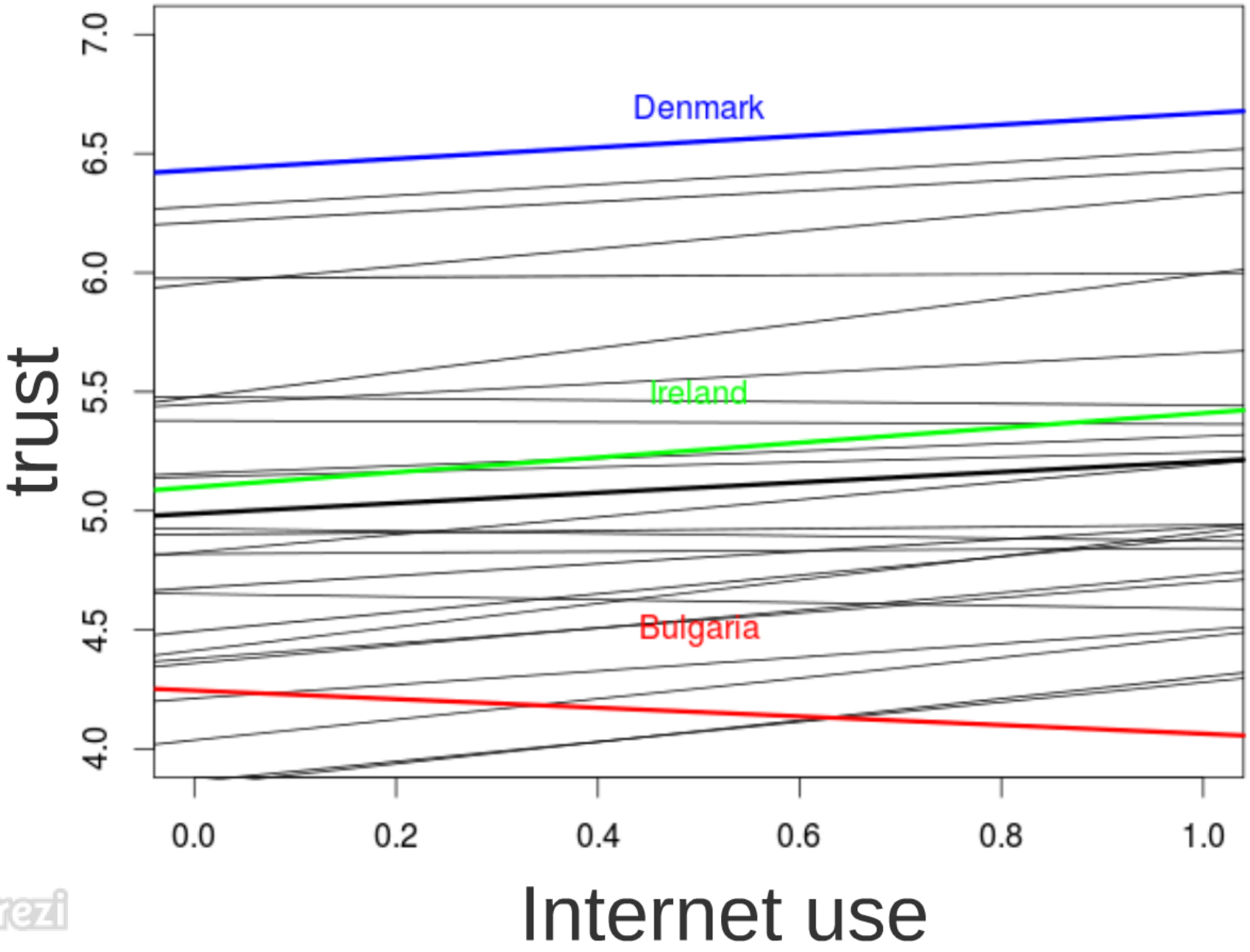
Constant	4.988***
Frequency of reading newspapers	0.019**
Internet use: Yes	0.218***
Frequency of watching TV	-0.026***
Frequency of social interaction	0.075***
Subjective well-being	0.529***
Years of full-time education	0.056***
Age	0.007***
2nd generation migrant: Yes	-0.142***
Type of place of residence: small city	-0.087***
Type of place of residence: countryside or farm	0.137***
Gender: Female	-0.024
Crime victim: Yes	-0.251***
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01	

Model Coefficients (Random Effects)





Internet Use on Trust Randomized for Different Countries

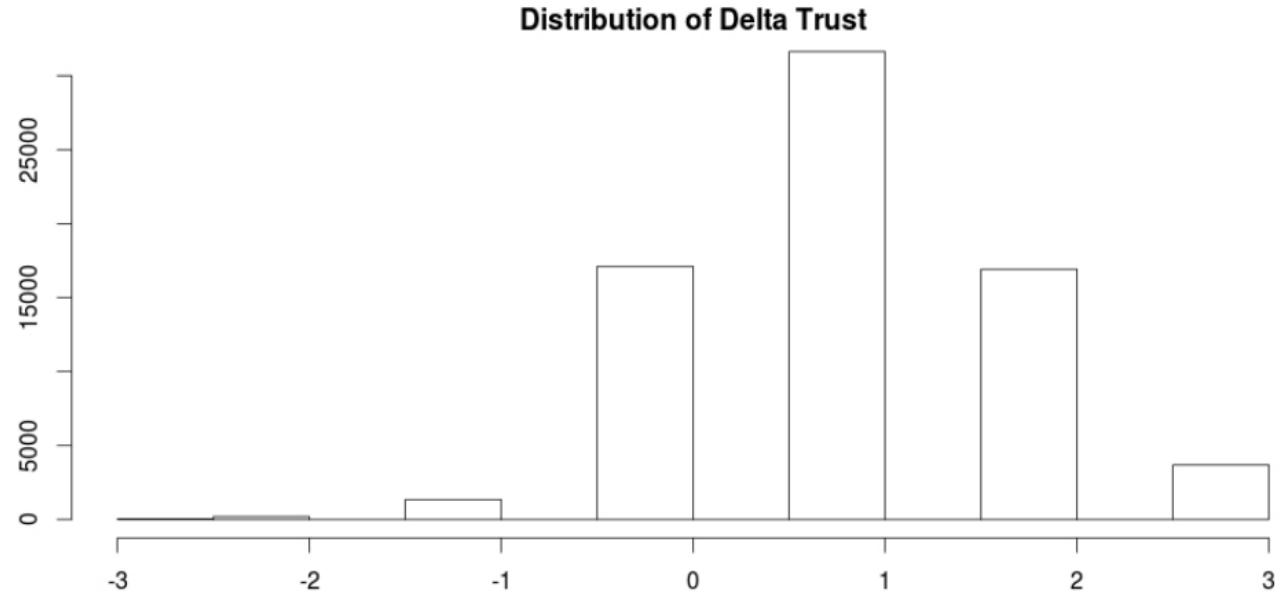


Empirical analysis: WVS

- **52 countries** – no Bayesian approach is required for multilevel modeling
- **Non-homogenous sample** – from wealthy, highly-developed European countries to underdeveloped African countries
- More **relevant measurements** for information consumption – not just “using” but using as information source
- More **relevant measurements** for trust

New Dependent Variable: Δ Trust

Δ trust = trust to known people – trust to unknown people



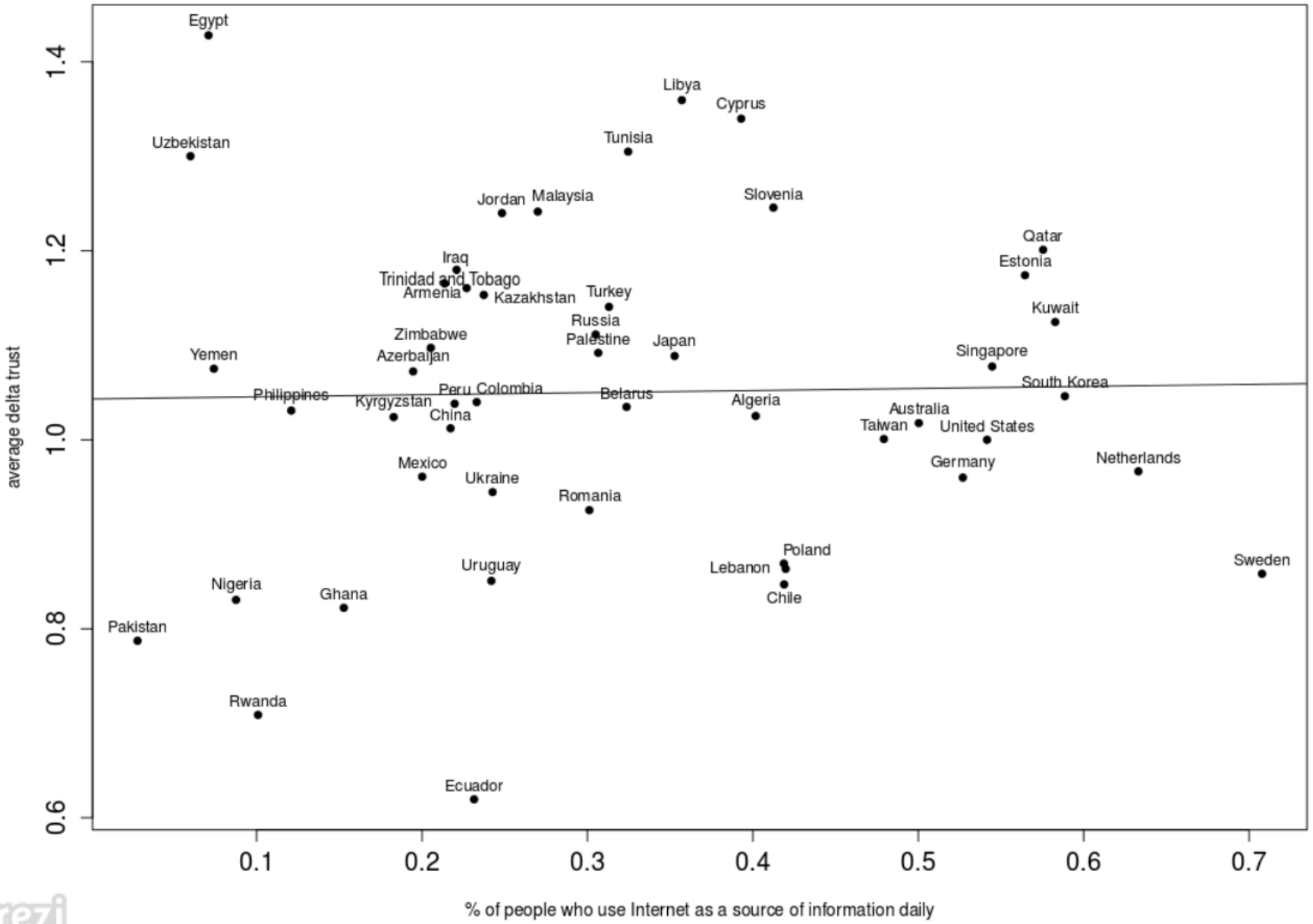
WHY?

Information makes **unknown** people more understandable and therefore trustworthy

→

Δ trust decreases

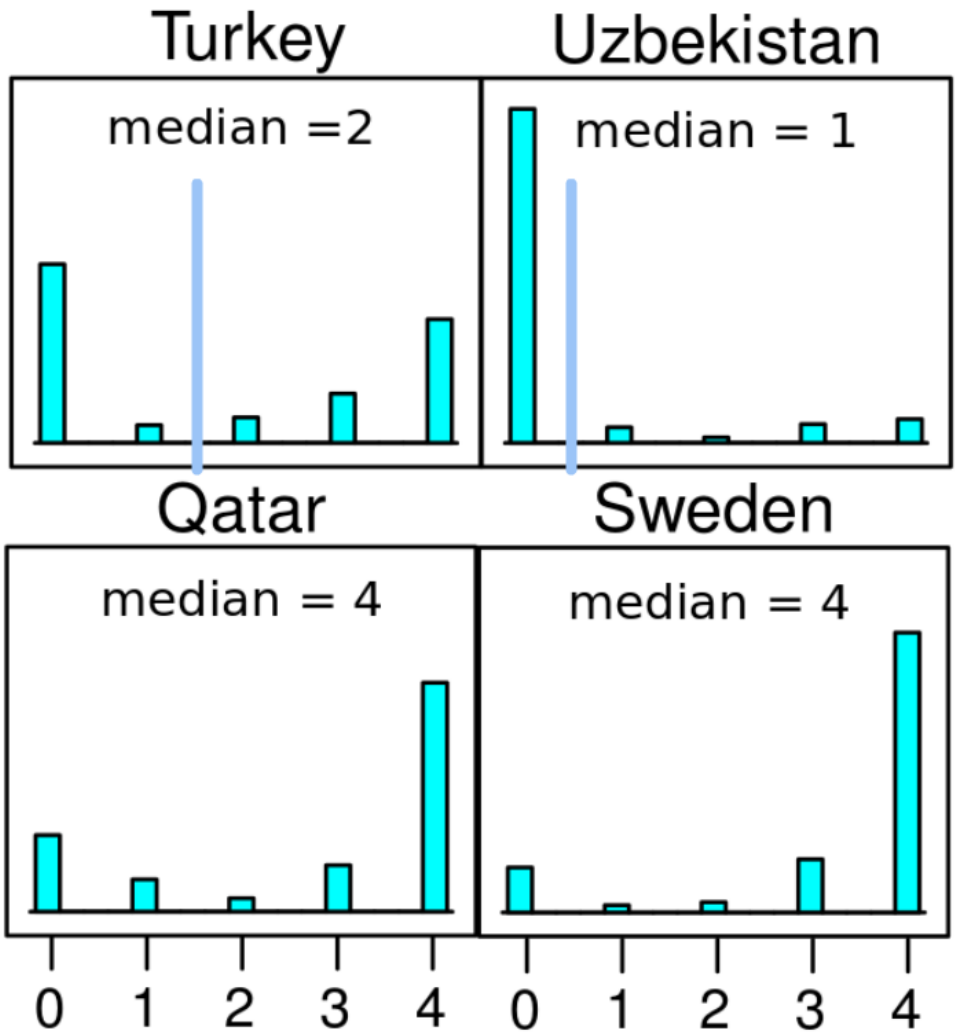
Δ Trust and Internet Use: general trend



Measurement for Information Consumption

A set of questions:
Information source: Daily newspaper
Information source: Printed magazines
Information source: TV news
Information source: Radio news
Information source: Mobile phone
Information source: Email
Information source: Internet
Information source: Talk with friends or colleagues

Measurement for Information Consumption



Information source: Internet
0 – Never
1 – Less than monthly
2 – Monthly
3 – Weekly
4 – Daily

What if I'll consider median value as a threshold for distinguishing "Internet-users"?

Model Coefficients (Fixed Effects)

Dependent variable:	**trust** generalized linear mixed-effects (1)	**Δ trust** linear mixed-effects (2)
Subjective well-being	0.275***	0.018***
Perceived safety	-0.125***	-0.035***
Gender: Female	-0.04	0.009
Age (scaled)	0.064***	-0.008
City size Baseline: under 10000		
10000 – 100000	-0.024	-0.017
100000 and bigger	0.051	0.009
Education Baseline: primary		
secondary	0.106***	0.009
tertiary	0.464***	-0.014
2nd generation migrant: Yes	-0.044	-0.023
Use the Internet as information source: Yes	0.151***	0.007
Use newspapers as information source	0.079***	-0.014***
Use TV as information source	-0.084***	0.030***
Use talks as information source	0.004	0.051***
Constant	-1.709***	1.029***
*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01		

Thank you for your attention!

This report was presented at the training methodological workshop
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http://lcsr.hse.ru/en/seminar_m2015

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