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HUNGARIAN UNIVERSITY
OF TRANSYLVANIA



LCSR

Laboratory for Comparative Social Research

Fluctuation in time of interpersonal trust

- a cross-country analysis -

Balázs Telegdy

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Problematization

- ▶ The analysis of generalized social trust is not new.
- ▶ BUT its change over time is not well developed.
- ▶ The aim of my study is to identify the explanatory variables of the changes in social trust over time.

The known interconnections

- ▶ The interconnections with social trust:
 - ▶ Trust and wealth (Inglehart 1999, Putnam 2000, Uslaner 2002)
 - ▶ Trust and democracy (Putnam 1993, Inglehart 1999, Newton 2001, Paxton 2002)
 - ▶ Trust and corruption (Uslaner 2003)

Other theoretical considerations

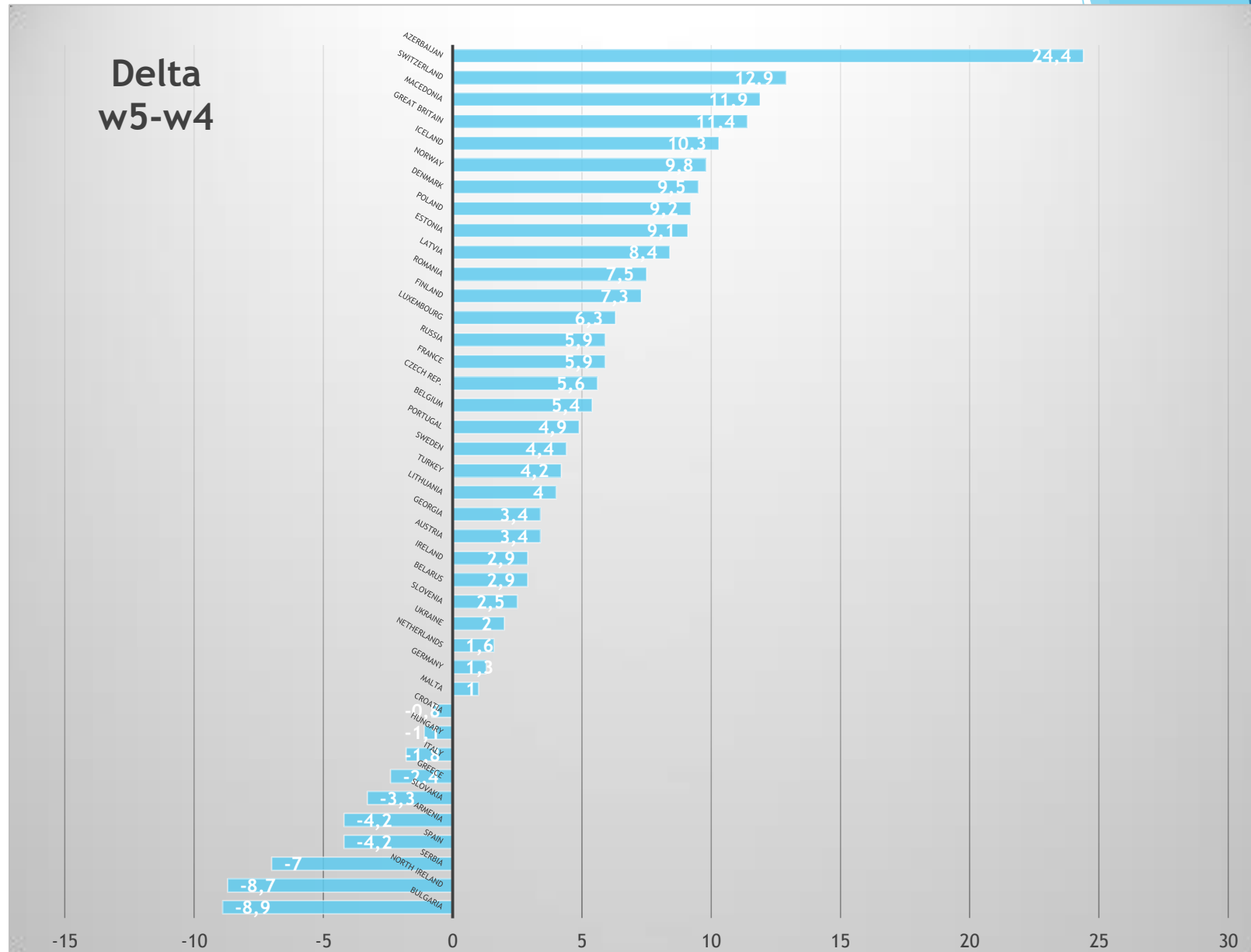
- ▶ The level of the analysis:
 - ▶ Micro vs. macro level - in my current research I use country level indicators
- ▶ The problem of cause and effect:
 - ▶ The level of generalized social trust is a cause or an effect?
 - ▶ => the level of generalized social trust within a society is the effect

Data and method

- ▶ WVS and EVS
- ▶ Europe
- ▶ W4 (completed in some cases with w3) and w5
- ▶ W4: 1998-2002
- ▶ W5: 2007-2009

- ▶ “Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can’t be too careful in dealing with people?”

Dependent variable (GST)



Independent variables

- ▶ Economic indicators: (World Bank)
 - ▶ GDP and GDP_PPP
- ▶ Democratization: (Freedom House)
 - ▶ Freedom Rating (FR)
 - ▶ Civil Liberties (CL)
 - ▶ Political Rights (PR)
 - ▶ Status of the country
- ▶ Corruption: (Transparency International)
 - ▶ Corruption Perception Index

Descriptive results (w4)

	Corruption Perception Index 1999	Freedom Rating 1999	Civil Liberties 1999	Political Rights 1999	Status 1999	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	GDP per capita (current US\$)	Internet users (per 100 people)
W4_trust	.747	-.446	-.518	-.351	-.327	.523	.670	.826
	.000	.006	.001	.036	.052	.001	.000	.000
	37	36	36	36	36	39	39	38

Descriptive results (w5)

	Freedom Rating 2008	Civil Liberties 2008	Political Rights 2008	Status 2008	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	GDP per capita (current US\$)	Internet users (per 100 people)	GINI index (World Bank estimate)
W5 trust	-.343	-.366	-.316	-.316	.637	.694	.670	-.364
	.026	.017	.041	.041	.000	.000	.000	.025
	42	42	42	42	42	41	41	38

	W4 trust	Corruption Perception Index 1999	Civil Liberties 1999	GDP per capita, PPP (current international \$)	GDP per capita (current US\$)	Internet users (per 100 people)
W5 trust	.926	.731	-.438	.512	.664	.807
	.000	.000	.006	.001	.000	.000
	40	38	38	41	41	40

Changes in trust ($\Delta t = tw5 - tw4$)

		Delta Freedom Rating	Delta Civic Liberties	Corruption Perception Index 2008
Change of trust w5-w4 (in %)	Pearson Correlation	.386	.434	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.022	.009	
	N	35	35	
Change (dummy variable)	Pearson Correlation	.343	.341	.358
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.044	.045	.027
	N	35	35	38

Possible answers

- ▶ A bit tighter regulation - without exceeding the limits of democratic institutional frame - can lead to a higher level of generalized social trust, as the frames are more visible in the daily life.
- ▶ The decrease of the level of corruption increase the level of generalized social trust within a society.

Thank you for your
attention!

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