

Explaining the Relationship between Value Similarity and Social Trust

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Human Values

- This study relies on Schwartz's (1992) conceptualisation of human values.
- According to Schwartz, every individual value in any culture is locatable under 10/19 universal, motivationally distinct basic values.

Social Trust

- Social trust: The willingness to trust others, even total strangers, without the expectation that they will immediately reciprocate that trust or favour (Putnam, 2000; Whiteley 2000).

Human Values and Social Trust

- The effect of values on the generation of social trust has been researched both at the national and at the individual level.
- Siegrist and colleagues (2000): People tend to trust people who share similar values.
- We test whether value similarity may foster social trust in society.

Hypothesis

- People find it easier to trust total strangers if their values are similar to the prevailing values in the society.

Data

- The European Social Survey (the ESS) round 6 (2012)
- 29 European countries
- 51,308 respondents

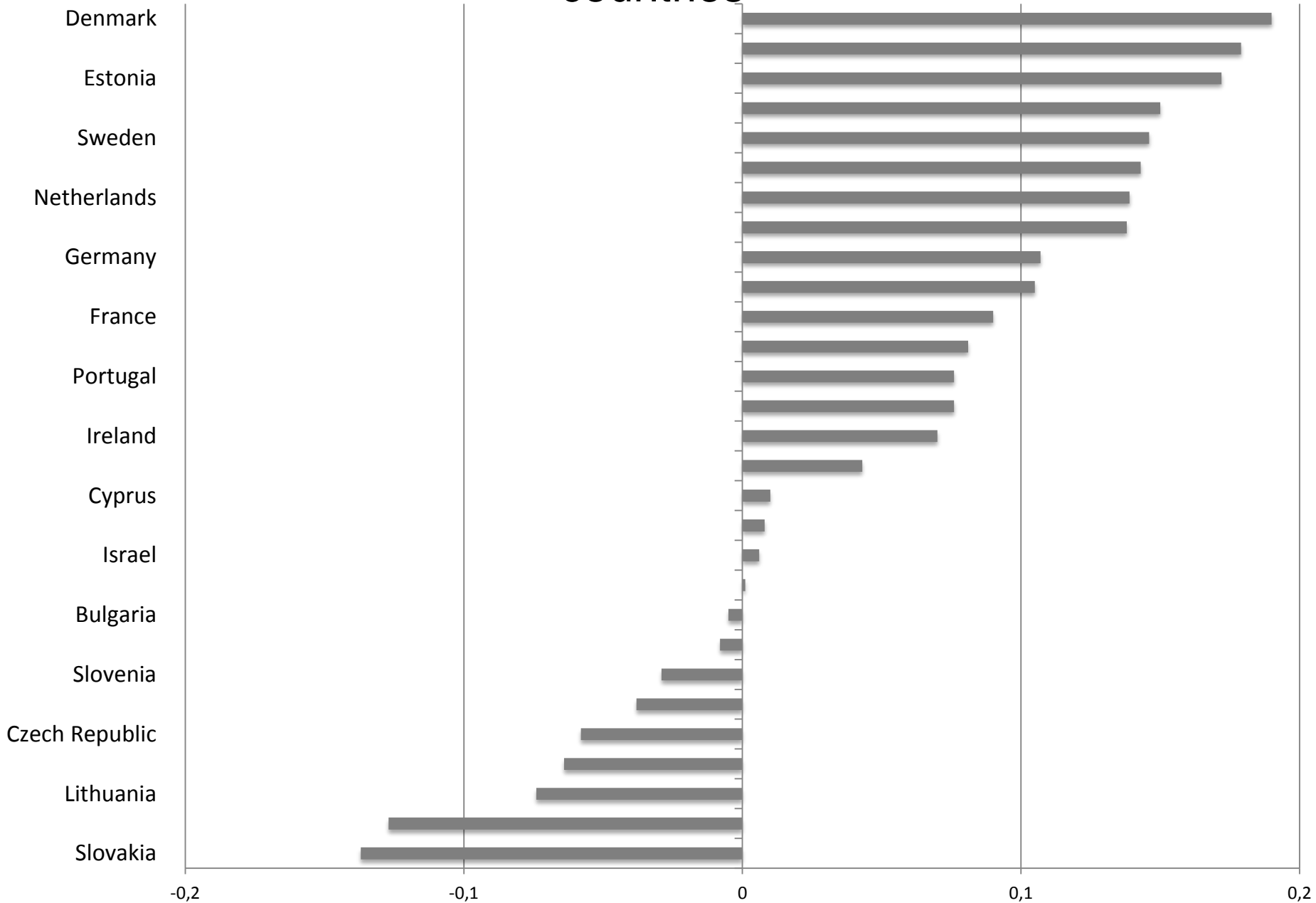
Measures: Social Capital Index

- Social trust index: Computed based on the average of the standardised scores of three generalized trust items in ESS questionnaire.

Value Similarity Measure

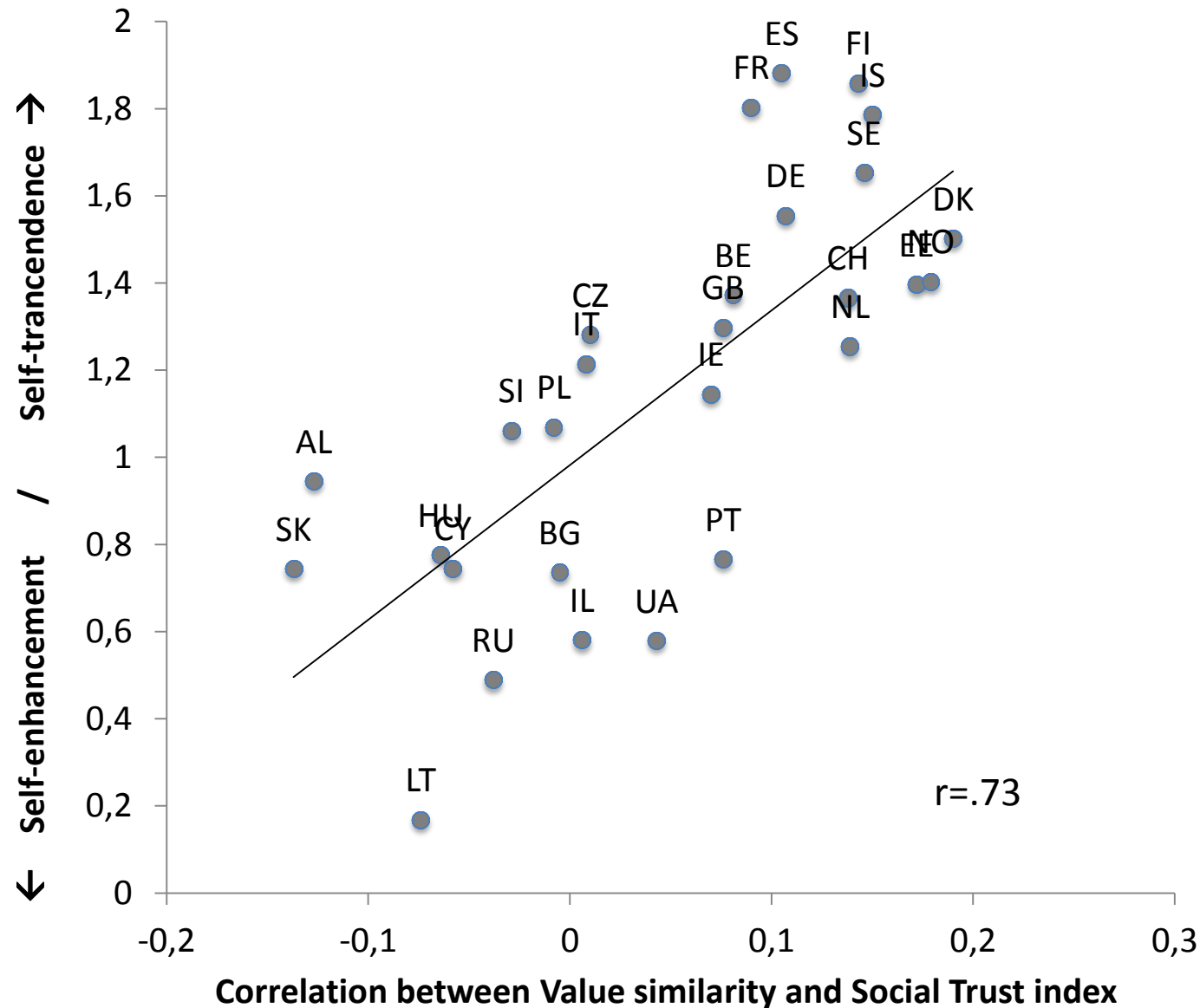
- Schwartz's value scale
- An individual level Value similarity measure:
For each individual, a rank order values for all the 21 value indicators were estimated, which were then correlated with the value hierarchy based on country-level average scores. The Spearman correlation coefficient of each calculation was then used as a Value similarity measure for each respondent.

Correlations between value similarity and social trust across countries

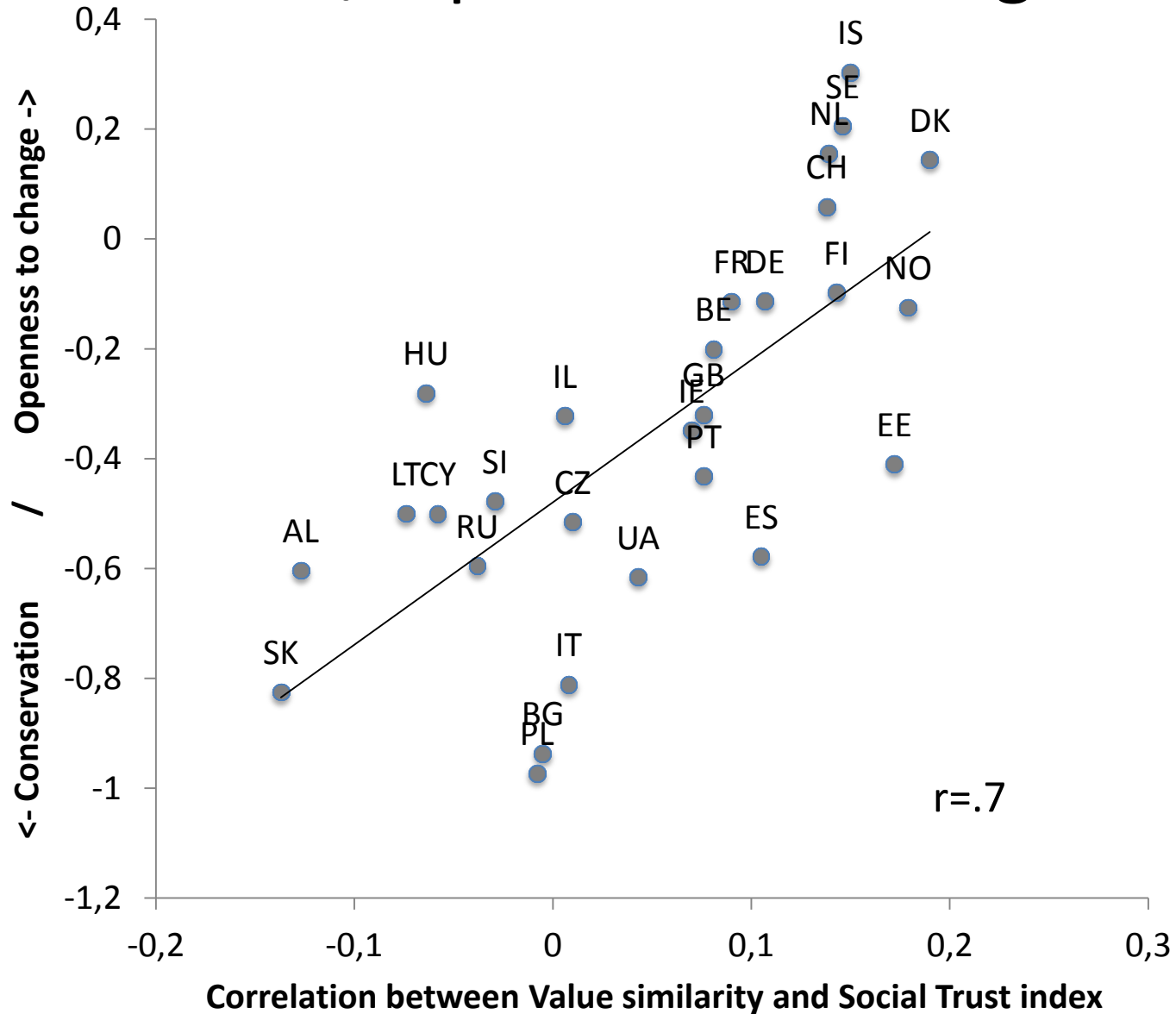


- There is clear positive relationship between value similarity and social trust in Scandinavian countries and in Western Europe, while in some of the Eastern European countries, the congruity of personal value structure with the country level value structure tends to decrease the individuals trustfulness.

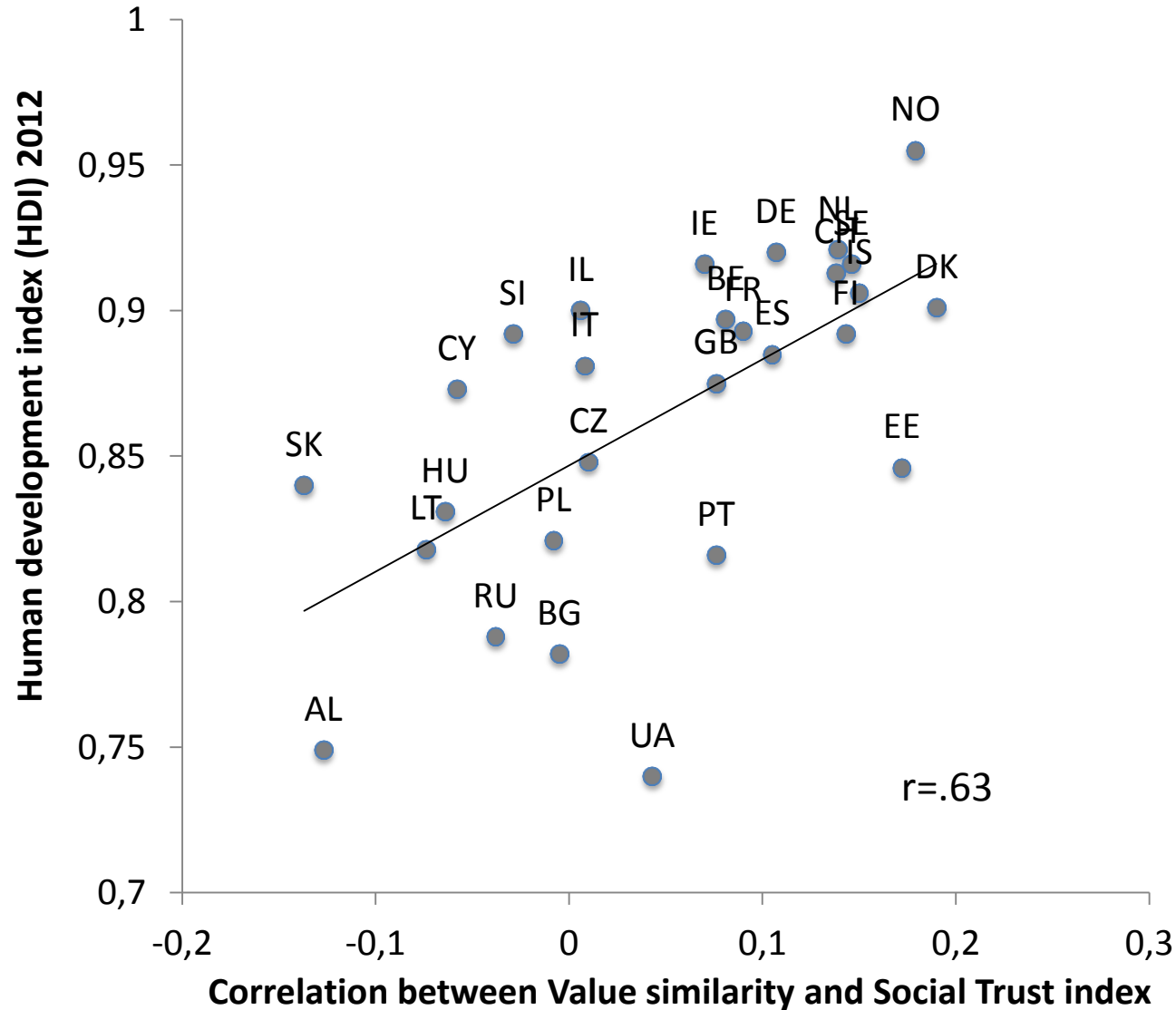
Correlations across countries and Self-enhancement/ Self-transcendence values



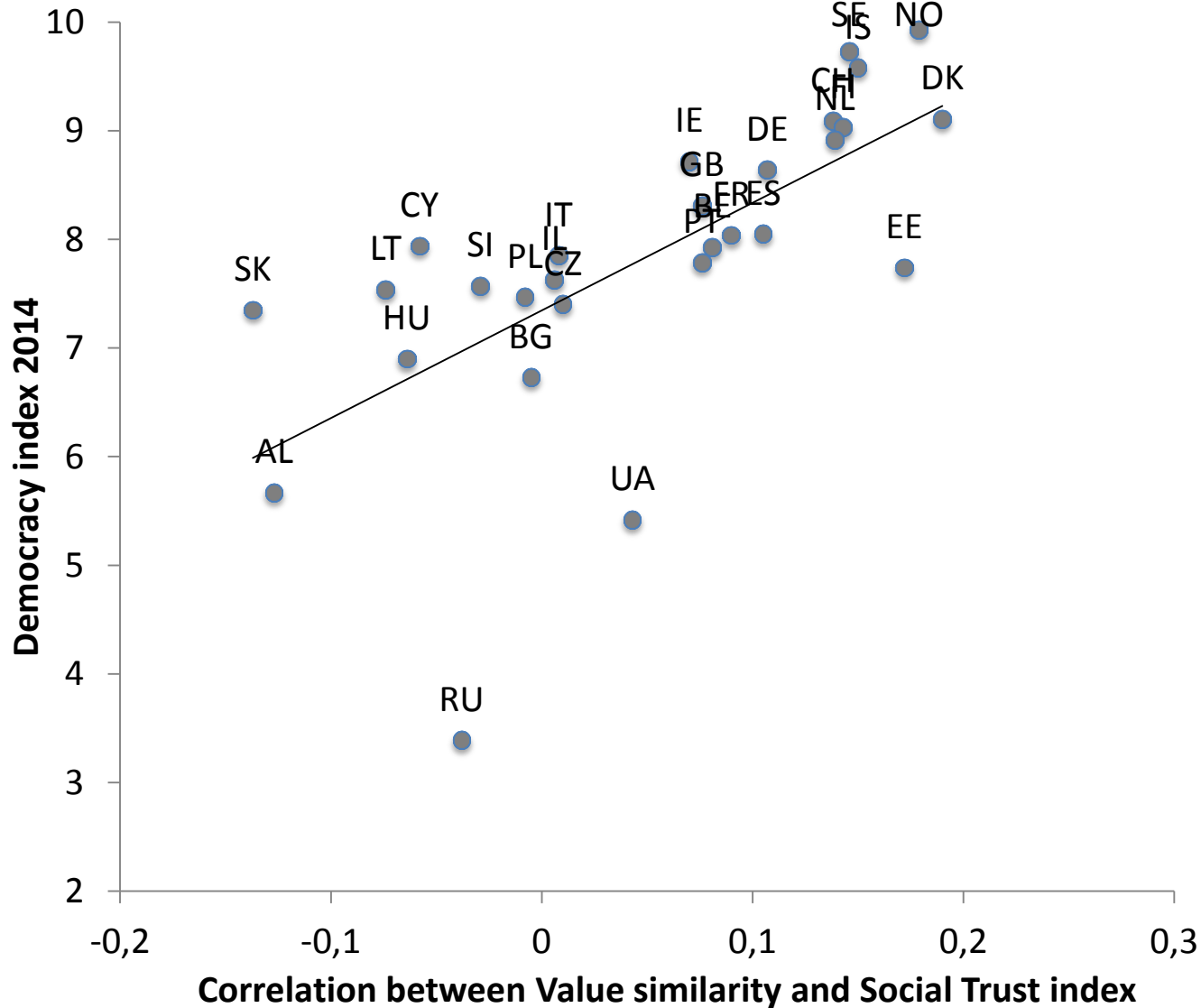
Correlations across countries and Conservation/ Openness to change values



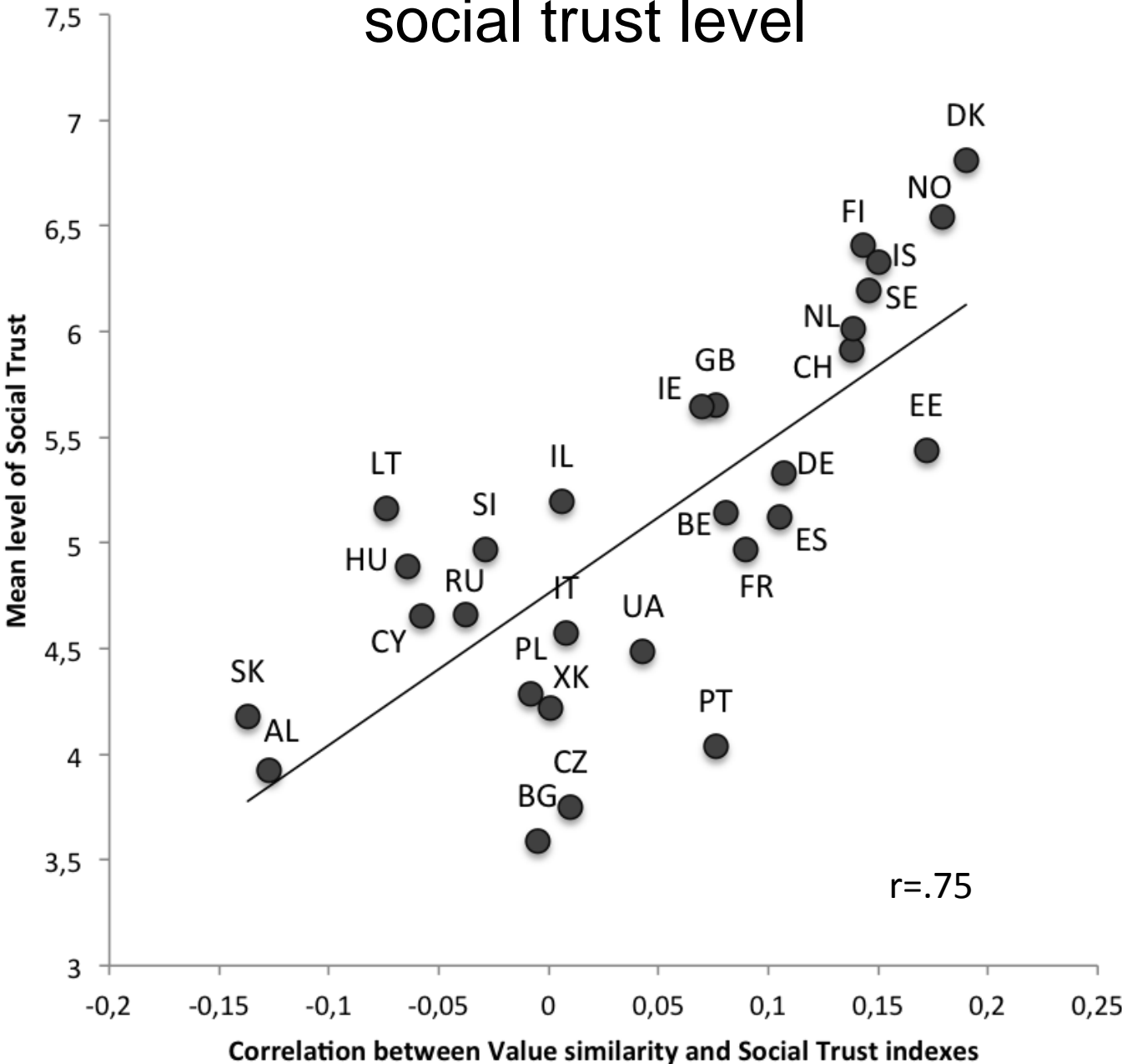
Correlations across countries and the human development



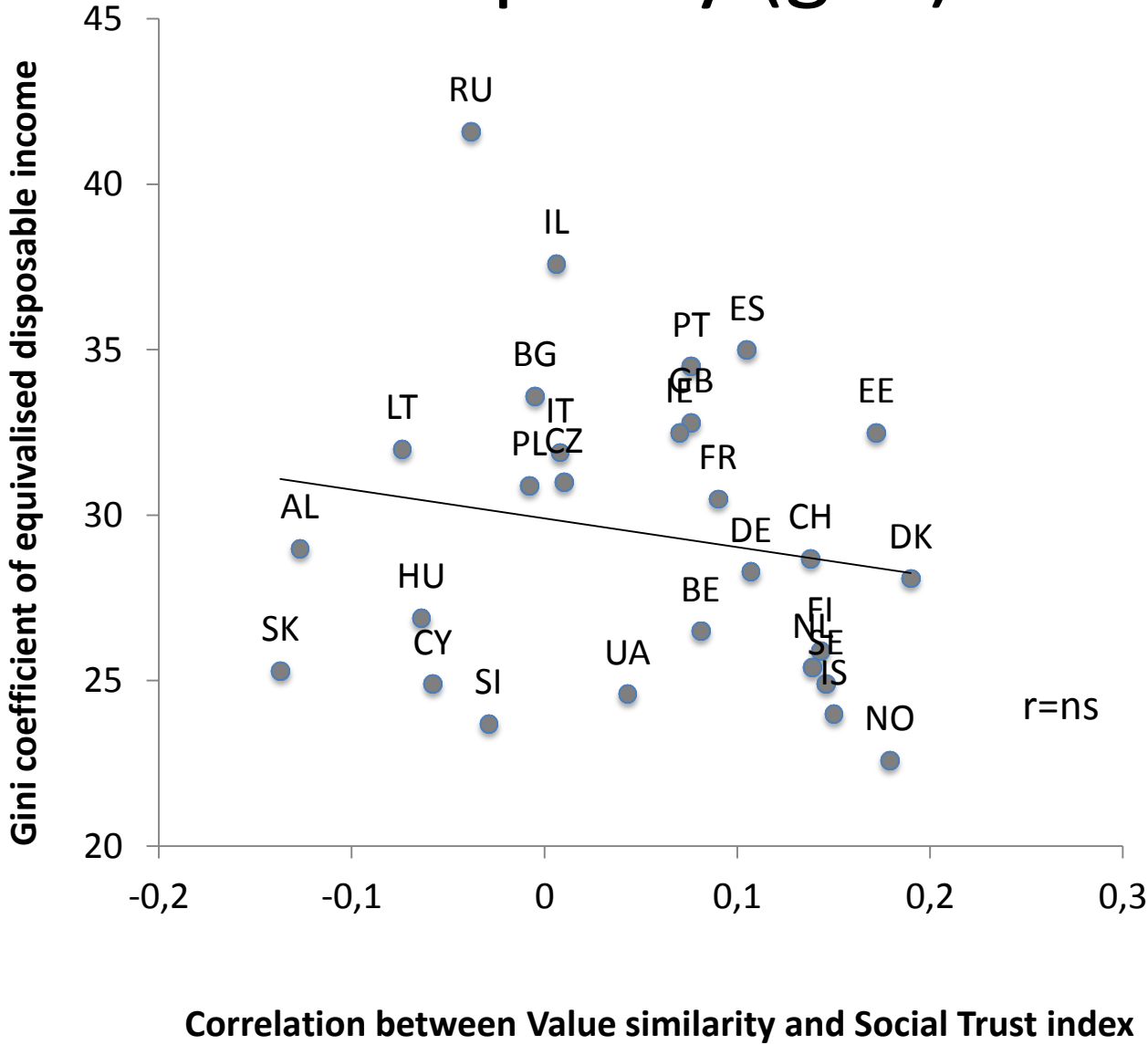
Correlations across countries and Democracy index



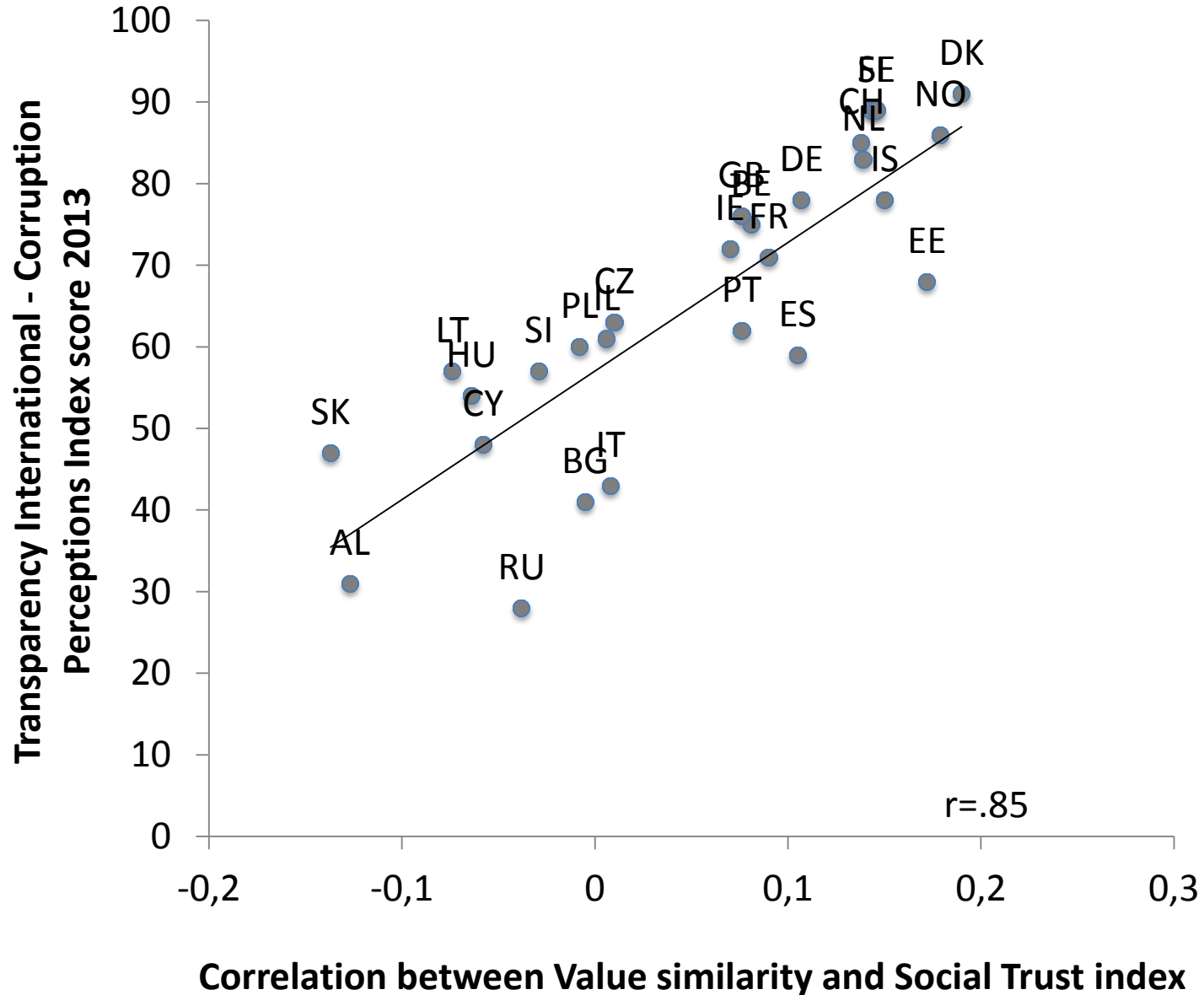
Correlations across countries and the overall social trust level



Correlations across countries and inequality (gini)



Correlations across countries and the corruption perceptions index



Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

Positive correlation between value similarity and social trust:

Low ethnic fractionalization and lower inequality (gini) and lower corruption

or

Low ethnic fractionalization and lower inequality (gini) and high social trust

Qualitative Comparative Analysis (QCA)

Negative correlation between value similarity
and social trust:

OPEN*SELF*ethnicFrac*gini*CORRUPT*TRUST

DK,FI,IS,NL,NO,SE

EE?

Conclusions

- In countries with higher level of social trust (and lower level of corruption), people tend to trust more if their value structure is more similar for the prevalent structure.
- If trustfulness is less prevalent, people who share societal core values tend to trust others less.

Thank you!

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