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ELECTORAL PARTICIPATION AND TRUSTWORTHINESS: THE MECHANISM OF EVALUATIVE ATTRIBUTION OF POLITICAL TRUST

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Introduction

Project summary

TRUEDEM is a 3-year multinational research project funded by the Horizon program of the European Commission with several core objectives. TRUEDEM aims to design and implement a complex research effort to collect comprehensive evidence on the perceptions of trust and judgments of trustworthiness in a range of European states. The project will create a robust and comprehensive knowledge base on long-term dynamics and predictors of trust in political institutions of a representative democracy (parties, governments, executives, parliaments, judiciary etc.) in the EU. TRUEDEM will examine the role of new patterns of electoral behaviour, the impact of socioeconomic transformations, the erosion of old and the emergence of new political cleavages for the inclusiveness, representativity and legitimacy in European democracies in particular, and political trust in general. TRUEDEM will identify specific and general strategies to address the demands and needs of citizens, as expressed via both electoral and non-electoral forms of political participation as means to enhance an active engagement and inclusion and thus booster inclusive and responsive decision-making and governance in Europe. TRUEDEM will distinguish clusters of values that can hinder or foster pro-democratic values and attitudes and thus contribute to the barriers and opportunities to re-invigorating and enhancing representative democratic systems in Europe. Finally, TRUEDEM will develop a comprehensive and transparent toolbox of policy interventions, including recommendations, toolkits and methodologies for enhancing trust in political institutions, boosting the transparency and the inclusiveness of representative democratic systems. TRUEDEM is coordinated in Austria with excellent partners in Czechia, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Sweden, and Ukraine. The three-year program ran from January 2023 to December 2025.

Summary of the Report (D2.5)

Electoral turnout is often presented as a normative good in the context of democratic governance. Participation is presumed to connect citizens with the representative institutions, to strengthen political legitimacy, and not lastly – to enhance political trust. However, interpreting turnout as inherently positive risks conflating participation as a behavioural act with changes in the public attitudes as its potential consequence. Numerous studies investigating the association between voting and political trust provide fragmented findings: the link is often weak, inconsistent, and conditional on self-selection and upon post-electoral satisfaction. Consequently, turnout should not be treated as intrinsically and 'automatically' increasing public trust in political authorities. Instead, an association between voting and political trust judgements is more plausibly rooted in what kind of new information about the electoral procedures and the political system is revealed by the elections, and how citizens translate this information into evaluative judgements of institutional trustworthiness.

This paper aims to test a mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust. It conceptualizes political trust as a dynamic evaluation grounded in citizens' assessments of institutional trustworthiness and procedural fairness. The central claim is that elections operate as information-producing events, the participation in which conditions the citizens' exposure to both electoral procedures and outcomes. This new evidence in turn shapes procedural evaluations of the electoral process on one hand and downstream assessments of whether political institutions are worthy of political trust on the other. Our analysis follows in three steps. First, we develop a sequential

theoretical model that distinguishes political trust from its proximate antecedents, placing perceived electoral integrity (operationalized via trust in elections) and trustworthiness evaluations between participation and an aggregated index of trust in political institutions. We base our analysis on the TRUEDEM survey data, which have been collected in 2025 across 24 European countries and where we estimate the proposed relationships using complementary modelling strategies. Both multi-level regression and structural equation modelling are employed allowing us to examine both direct associations and the implied indirect paths from participation through procedural and attributional evaluations to political trust. This mechanism is operationalized and tested at the national (political trust in national institutions) and the supranational (political trust in EU governing bodies) levels.

Our findings reveal four recurrent patterns. First, the direct effect of turnout on political trust is inconsistent. Voting frequency is negatively associated with national political trust at the highest participation level, whereas for European political trust for both higher participation categories are positively associated with trust relative to non-voting. When the national contexts are compared, the association gets often modest or not statistically significant once election-related beliefs and attributional evaluations are accounted for, indicating that participation is not a stand-alone explanans of institutional trust. Second, trust in elections emerges as the strongest and most uniform predictor of political trust across the studied contexts, and this association extends beyond national institutions to trust in EU governing bodies. Third, trustworthiness evaluations carry independent explanatory power: competence (national level) and impartiality (supranational level) exhibit comparatively robust associations with trust, while the integrity dimension is more uneven in magnitude and significance across European countries. Finally, the "winner-loser" status matters, but does not exhaust the variation in political trust.

Based on the pattern of association between electoral participation and political trust, the paper identifies three clusters of countries. First, in the electorally conditional political trust systems (Greece, Hungary, France, Slovakia, Portugal, and Czechia) political trust is strongly structured by a pronounced "winner-loser" effect, combined with a high salience of trust in elections. In institutionally anchored trust systems (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Estonia), political trust is primarily shaped by confidence in the fairness of electoral procedures and evaluations of high competence and high integrity. Finally, in performance- and representation-sensitive systems (Italy, Spain, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Croatia) trust reflects a combination of competence evaluations, moderate "winner-loser" effects, and a greater salience of ideological and sociodemographic groupings.

This paper contributed to the literature in three ways. First, the paper advances the conceptualization of political trust as a conditional, evaluative reliability judgement, rooted in asymmetry and uncertainty. The paper specifies the micro-foundational mechanism of trustworthiness evaluation, through which an experience of electoral participation is translated into trust judgements. By investigating the sequential logic of the path and the cross-country specifics of this mechanism, the paper clarifies, why participation may reinforce trust in some contexts, yet fail to do so in others. The paper tests the proposed sequential logic at national and supranational levels, demonstrating that the mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust functions robustly across national and supranational levels.

The paper is structured as follows. Section 1 reviews the state of the art on political trust, trustworthiness, and elections as information-producing events, including the role of electoral integrity and the so-called "winner-loser" dynamics. Section 2 presents the theoretical model.

Section 3 describes the TRUEDEM survey data, our measurement strategies, and the index construction. Section 4 reports the multi-level and structural equation results for national and supranational trust. Section 5 concludes with implications and policy recommendations.

1. Political Trust and Elections: The State of the Art

1.1. Political Trust: From Attitudes to Evaluations

The concept of political trust possesses a principal place in political science, given its role as the connecting cord between citizen orientations towards the state on the one hand and the functioning of the governance system on the other. Past research has found political trust to condition citizens' willingness to comply with laws and regulatory decisions and to cooperate with authorities, including, for example, an acceptance of court rulings or assistance to the police reporting crimes (Christensen & Lægreid, 2020; Esaiasson et al., 2021; Schraff, 2021; Goldfinch et al., 2021). Political trust has also been shown to increase tax morale and public support for redistributive policies, where trusting citizens express both a stronger acceptance of taxation and a lower tolerance for noncompliance (Algan & Cahuc, 2010; OECD, 2021; Algan et al., 2021; Busemeyer, 2022). In the same vein, studies conducted during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, demonstrate that higher political trust increases also the compliance with public health regulations and the support for restrictions on individual freedoms that were introduced under the emergency governance (Devine et al., 2021; Bol et al., 2021; Kritzinger et al., 2021; Han et al., 2023). These findings underscore the important role political trust plays to reduce the need for state coercion by shaping citizens' readiness to accept authoritative decisions.

Like other types of citizen orientations toward politics, political trust is subjective. Yet it is conceptually and analytically distinct from adjacent political orientations. Political trust is different from political satisfaction, which captures retrospective judgements about past government performance. Political trust is different from diffuse regime support, which refers to the attachment to democratic principles. Political trust is also distinct from generalized political cynicism or optimism, which reflect broad affective predispositions towards the political system. Unlike social or interpersonal trust, which refers to expectations of honesty and goodwill of other people and is often conceptualized as a horizontal (e.g. equal) relationship, political trust is embedded in a vertical relationship between citizens and institutions (or political actors). As such, political trust involves a certain combination of dependency, asymmetry, and uncertainty. Citizens must accept that the risks of political decisions will be made on their behalf, often without a possibility of immediate monitoring or an opportunity to sanction promptly. The act of granting their trust to political institutions and actors despite this uncertainty is therefore associated with citizens' belief that authority will be used responsibly, competently, and fairly (Zmerli & Newton, 2017).

How does this belief about the authority's competence, fairness, integrity etc. emerge on the citizens' side? Existing scholarship offers a range of conceptual frameworks for understanding and explaining political trust. Political culture theory links political trust to long-term processes of value change and social modernization. It conceptualized political trust as a culturally embedded orientation toward authority, shaped by three mutually reinforcing processes: the rising education levels, an expanding economic security, and the spread of postmaterialist values (Almond & Verba, 1963; Inglehart, 1997). Yet treating political trust primarily as a cultural effect risk understating the extent to which citizens update their trust judgements in response to new political information, an evidence of institutional performance, and the actual experience of political participation.

Longitudinal studies demonstrate that political trust fluctuates in response to perceived economic performance, administrative fairness, or corruption and misconduct (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012; Armingeon & Guthmann, 2014; Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Rothstein & Varraich, 2017; Van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017). These patterns suggest that trust is not solely inherited through socialization, but also responsive to institutional qualities and performance. A second cluster of research focuses more directly on institutional effectiveness. It interprets public trust as a response to public service delivery, specific policy outcomes, and the perceived impartiality of governance (Dalton, 2004; Rothstein & Stolle, 2008; Rothstein, 2011; Norris, 2022). In support of this perspective, numerous empirical studies show that evaluations of institutional performance and procedural fairness are indeed positively and significantly associated with political trust (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012; Dahlberg & Holmberg, 2014; Van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017). However, the focus on the output legitimacy as the core mechanism of trust formatting in this tradition underscores the significant within-country variation that cannot be explained by macro-economic indicators. Finally, a growing body of literature examines political trust through the lens of democratic legitimacy and the justification of political authority. In this perspective, trust is not merely an attitude or cultural trait, but a principled response to the manner, in which authority is exercised. This approach shifts the focus to the conditions under which trust is granted, including transparency, accountability, and responsiveness (O'Neill, 2002; Warren, 2004; Norris, 2022). Trust is therefore treated as contingent upon institutional trustworthiness rather than as an unconditional, diffuse orientation.

Taken together, these clusters of research suggest that political trust should not be understood merely as a generalized diffuse attitude to the political system. Empirical volatility, sensitivity and responsiveness of political trust judgements suggest that trust operates as an evaluation of institutional conduct, where citizens extend or withdraw trust in the light of judgments about competence, integrity, and impartiality. Political trust is therefore best conceptualized as a dynamic evaluation of how political authority is exercised within relationships, characterized by an asymmetry and uncertainty.

1.2. Trustworthiness as the Micro-Foundation of Political Trust

If political trust refers to the attitude of willingness to accept vulnerability and deference to political authorities, to comply with their policies and decisions, then political trustworthiness marks an evaluation of political actors and institutions as reliable, which underlies this trust judgement (Levi & Stoker, 2000; Hetherington & Rudolph, 2015; Van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017; Ouattara, 2023). Conceptually, therefore, trustworthiness precedes trust: studies investigating trustworthiness focus on an evaluation of qualities and attributes that in turn lead citizens to infer whether political institutions are in fact worthy of trust, while trust follows as an attitudinal response (Norris, 2022). Reflecting the plurality of qualities and attributes, which are associated with institutional performance and conduct, trustworthiness is being treated as a multidimensional phenomenon. The basic structure of trustworthiness distinguishes between a minimum of three main pillars: competence, integrity, and impartiality (Hardin, 2002; Flinders, 2012).

Competence refers to the perceived ability to govern effectively and is associated with such empirical manifestations as an administrative capacity of state institutions, policy expertise, and performance in delivering public goods. Studies on voting that focus on performance-based explanations, underscore the importance of competence serving as a signal of institutional reliability and responsiveness with citizens rewarding political actors that are perceived as capable

of delivery good public services, high economic stability, or managing the healthcare crisis successfully (Van Erkel & Van der Meer, 2016; Devine et al., 2021; Schraff, 2021). Integrity concerns both honesty and consistency: keeping promises, avoiding corruption, taking responsibility for failures. Existing studies should that perceptions of ethical misconduct, corruption or broken campaign commitments substantially undermine political trust – notably, irrespective of actual policy outcomes (Morris & Klesner, 2010; Bauhr & Grimes, 2014). Greater transparency and visible sanctioning of misconduct, on the other hand, can mitigate the trust erosion and reinforce the perceptions of political integrity (Kolstad & Wiig, 2016; Worthy, 2017). Finally, impartiality concerns a fair, equal, and non-discriminatory treatment and is manifested through political decisions, which are made in accordance with rules and public reasoning, rather than own political interest or favouritism. Empirical studies confirm that perceptions of procedural fairness and equal treatment are important predictors of political trust (Bovens & Wille, 2017; Zmerli & van der Meer, 2017; Rothstein & Varraich, 2017; Marien & Werner, 2019).

Existing studies suggest that the dimensions of trustworthiness carry different weight, and their relative importance differs across European societies. Evidence from cross-national conjoint experiments indicates that, typically, integrity is the most politically consequential dimension of trustworthiness, since ethical misconduct produces much larger and more consistent negative effects on trust than, for example, performance deficit. At the same time, the dimension of competence becomes particularly important under the conditions of an economic crisis, while impartiality plays a secondary, but stabilizing role in sustaining an overall positive evaluation of trustworthiness (Winsvold et al., 2024; Crepaz & Arikan, 2024; Devine, 2025). Furthermore, these three dimensions are not mutually exclusive: citizens might perceive the authorities as impartial – but lacking competence, or the other way around. For example, comparing seven European countries, Devine et al. (2024) show that respondents frequently rate their governments' crisis management as effective, while at the same time expressing doubts about the honesty and integrity of those politicians. Another study in Sweden finds that citizens evaluations of the capacity and fairness of governmental agencies often diverge and do not correlate, pointing to the fact that dimensions of trustworthiness are separable not only conceptually, but also empirically in the public minds (Rydén et al., 2024).

Importantly, as an evaluative judgement, perceptions of trustworthiness are dynamic and subject to revision, when citizens encounter new and credible evidence of how the political authorities act and perform. Depending on the salience and content of this new information, citizens can reaffirm or revise their evaluations of competence, integrity and impartiality of political institutions. Research on political trustworthiness demonstrates that citizens update their evaluations, when exposed to new information about performance, corruption, policy outcomes or shortcomings (Kalla & Broockman, 2020; Devine et al., 2021; Lupu & Warner, 2022; Bol et al., 2021). Political events therefore do not cause a direct boost or decline of public confidence or support but influence political trust primarily through altering citizens' evaluations of how the authorities perform and govern (Mauk, 2020; Schraff, 2021; Devine et al., 2021). Importantly, such informational effects are heterogenous and vary depending on citizens' attention, political interest, cognitive resources, and partisan predispositions, therefore explaining why the same political event might cause diverging evaluations in the same society and have different effects on political trust (Guess et al., 2020; Jerit & Zhao, 2020; Alessandro et al., 2021; Coppock, 2022). The experience of political participation (e.g. voting) operates through a similar logic. Attending a rally or voting in election can change trust attitudes insofar as the experience of participation strengthened or eroded individual's evaluation of trustworthiness. In the absence of such revision of trustworthiness

evaluations, acts of participation may produce limited or no attitudinal change. Trustworthiness thus constitutes the micro-level mechanism through which political information, events, and experiences are translated into downstream changes in political trust.

1.3. Elections as Information-Producing Events

Elections are often treated in Political Science and empirical studies as participatory mechanisms, which citizens may use to express their political preferences, select a political party or actor to represent them, and confer legitimacy on governing authorities (Verba et al., 1995; Norris, 2014; Dalton, 2017). At the same time, an interpretation of elections as moments of aggregation that translate individual preferences into collective decisions (Key, 1966), where retrospective evaluations of incumbents become consequential for the electoral choice (Fiorina, 1981), understate another, analytically distinct function of ***elections as sources of new political information***. This information is complex and may encompass details about the elite behaviour, their values and norms of conduct, specifics of organization of electoral process and quality of democratic procedures more broadly, details about the performance of political actors and bodies under contestation, the work of media, involvement of international actors and much more. Crucially, this information, whether positive or negative, can be used by citizens to evaluate the trustworthiness of political actors and institutions (Hetherington, 1998; Norris, 2011). In turn, political trust, understood as an evaluative judgment about the trustworthiness of authorities, rather than merely a diffuse generalized disposition toward the political system, can be reinforced, revised or withdrawn based on the new information obtained during the electoral campaign (Norris, 2022). Intensified exposure to dense, politically diagnostic information during the electoral campaign therefore makes elections an important instance for the assessment of trustworthiness of political actors, and thus a potential predictor of political trust (Popkin, 1994; Lupia & McCubbins, 1998).

The information-producing function of the electoral process has been explicitly or implicitly acknowledged across a great number of classical and modern studies of democracy and civic participation. In the Schumpeter's (1942) minimalist conception of democracy, elections emerge as areas for elite competition that generate information about the competing elites and their program commitments as well as governing capacities. In Downs' (1957) economic theory of democracy, voters act as rational actors, who rely on the electoral campaign as an opportunity to reduce an uncertainty about the policy standing and expected performance of political actors. Dahl's (1971) theory of polyarchy in turn highlights the freedom of expression, a pluralism of information, and a procedural fairness as important features of democracies and significant aspects of the electoral process. Subsequent studies have demonstrated that electoral campaigns act as intensified information environments that restructure the information flows (Popkin, 1994). Within a relatively short period of time, multiple messages are being distributed, which increases the probability of both intentional and incidental exposure of citizens to political information resulting in ***increased learning and enhanced political knowledge*** (Zaller, 1992; Finkel, 1995; Norris, 2000; Henderson, 2014). In this tradition, elections are not static moments of political choice, but dynamic periods of both information acquisition and an updating of the assessment of core political institutions (Holbrook, 1996; Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Norris, 2014). And while a large body of literature focuses on how the campaign influences a change of preferences and the perception of candidates (Gelman & King, 1993; Kahn & Kenney, 2002; Lau & Redlawsk, 2006; Hillygus & Shields, 2014), the role of media cues (Iyengar & Simon, 2000), party cues (Van Aelst & Walgrave, 2011), and even the influence of published opinion polls (Stoetzer et al., 2024) on how voters' ultimately contributing to a specific electoral outcome, it is important that all these informational

inputs, which are obtained during the elections, also change the general perceptions of the political system and the trustworthiness of political institutions as a whole.

Yet elections as the information-producing events expose citizens not only to details of policy positions or traits of individual political candidate. Additionally, elections offer a direct encounter of the specifics and quality of the election administration. Voter registration, the conduct of the poll workers, a perceived neutrality of the officials, the queue length or the design of the ballot – these elements provide a "first hand" information about the competence of the electoral authorities and the fairness of electoral procedures, which in turn affect the overall evaluation of the political system. More frequent exposure to this experience increases the chances to obtain a more intense and nuanced picture of a national ***political system operating "in practice"***. Respectively, abstention implies a systematically weaker experiential updating, not because abstainers are a priori apathetic or apolitical, but because it reduces the direct contract of citizens with the electoral system. While abstainers may still consume political information, their evaluations of institutional trustworthiness are more likely to rely on prior beliefs, partisan identities, or secondary information, obtained through the social environment, or media narratives. For instance, studies comparing voters and non-voters show that those who voted (whether for the winning or losing party), are more likely to perceive the outcomes of the election as legitimate, as compared to abstainers (Nadeau & Blais, 1993; Esaiasson et al., 2012). Voters as compared to abstainers tend to exhibit higher levels of satisfaction with democracy (Blais et al., 2004; Kostelka & Blais, 2021) and greater political learning, which is particularly relevant among young voters (Plescia & Kritzinger, 2017).

Importantly, the mechanism at the heart of the association between voting experience on the one hand and political trust on the other, is not a mere correlation through secondary socialization that reinforces civic norms and democratic identity as earlier studies pointed out (e.g., Almond & Verba, 1963). A great number of studies show no consistent support for the socialization thesis, with the effect of voting on political trust being weak or conditional, once selection into participation is being accounted for (Blais & Rubenson, 2013; Persson, 2015; Plescia & Kritzinger, 2017). Therefore, turnout shall not be treated as intrinsically increasing the public trust in the government or support for democracy. Instead, past research suggests that a causal path follows the logic of ***information updating*** and of a re-evaluation of political trustworthiness. Do political actors adhere to the rules? Is the political competition genuine? Do the political institutions function impartially? Political trust therefore is not a byproduct of participation but may be reinforced or withdrawn as a result of a cognitive inference, which is based on information revealed through an electoral campaign.

While elections generate a dense and politically diagnostic information, the effect of a voting experience on political trust is not uniform across societies or social groups within one country. Past research on information processing and political learning demonstrates that political sophistication, attention, prior political beliefs are among the factors that create heterogeneity and influence, how individuals perceive and interpret political information (Zaller, 1992; Lau & Redlawsk, 2006). Consecutively, similar levels of attention to election campaigns and similar experiences of electoral participation can still lead to divergent evaluations of trustworthiness and different updates of the trust judgements. Two more dimensions, which are relevant to the understanding of the link between electoral participation on the one hand and trustworthiness assessment on the other, are represented by process-based and outcome-based evaluations of electoral experience, which we discuss in the next section, which will be addressing the role of

perceptions of electoral integrity and the winner-loser post-electoral status. Another source of heterogeneity in the link between voting experience and political trust is associated with level of governance.

At the local level, trust has proven to be strongly affected by the direct experience with local electoral and democratic institutions, with citizens demonstrating higher levels of political trust in contexts, where electoral procedures are perceived as being accessible and responsive (Bhatti & Hansen, 2012; Denters et al., 2014; Holtkamp & Garske, 2021). At the European level, however, the link between voting in European Parliament (EP) and confidence in EU governing institutions is less pronounced: the overall effect is generally weaker and exhibits greater heterogeneity across the different EU member states (Anderson & Reichert, 1995 Hobolt & Tilley, 2014; Plescia et al., 2021;).

1.4. Electoral Integrity and the Procedural Evaluation of Elections

The role of elections as information events that may (or may not) enhance perceptions of trustworthiness and boost public trust, is closely associated with the quality of the electoral process itself. The extent to which formal rules and democratic standards guide political competition across the full electoral cycle, including the campaign conditions, the polling day administration, and the vote counting, is described by the concept of ***electoral integrity*** (Norris, 2014, 2015, 2017). As an extensive body of research shows, procedural fairness, administrative competence, and rules adherence are among the key criteria citizens use to judge about the quality of the electoral process. For instance, a perceived fairness of elections administration has proven to be positively associated with institutional trust, alongside with the effect of immediate partisan outcomes of the elections (Anderson et al., 2005). Characteristics of the electoral management bodies such as their independence and professionalism, an equal treatment of candidates, the accuracy of vote counts and an absence of irregularities, are positively associated with trust in elections at the level of citizens and voters (Fortin-Rittberger et al., 2017). Respectively, reported cases of vote buying, intimidation, ballot stuffing, or a lack of transparency in counting the votes, are highly associated with lower levels of trust in the electoral process (Birch, 2010; Kerr & Luhrmann, 2017). An absence of post-electoral violence, annulments, and the uncontested acceptance of results have also proven to be positively associated with public trust (Moehler & Lindberg, 2009). An adherence to rules by political actors during elections also exhibit positive associations with political trust (Mauk, 2022). Interestingly, even comparatively minor obstacles such as long queues, inconsistent rules or malfunctioning equipment at the polling station, can also lead to a lower confidence in electoral institutions (Claassen, 2020). Crucially, these perceptions can be shaped by being reported in media or by second hand experience or by being experienced personally and directly by the citizens. Taken together, these findings imply that the salience and credibility of an electoral integrity (or it's lack) become more consequential for voter as compared to abstainers.

Amid its multidimensional nature, empirical research measures an electoral integrity through a set of statements, where each is discussing a particular aspect of the electoral process. Importantly, it is not the salience, but an adherence to these normative ideals that is being recorded (Mozaffar & Schedler, 2002; Elklit & Reynolds, 2005). Two complementary sources of evidence on electoral integrity originate from expert-based assessments on the one hand, and population surveys on the other. Expert evaluations, most notably the Electoral Integrity project, draw on election observers or specialist surveys to assess the impartiality, capacity, integrity, and the autonomy of electoral management bodies, including any influences from incumbents (Schedler, 2002; Hyde & Marinov,

2012; van Ham, 2015). Expert evaluations are typically treated as "semi-objective" characteristics in a way that they are independent from the individual experiences of voters and represent an aggregated election-specific and country-level characteristic. Contrary to this, post-election population surveys are designed to capture citizens' subjective assessment of elections. Rooted in specific experiences, individual perceptions of electoral integrity often vary substantially within the same country (Alvarez et al., 2008; Bowler & Donovan, 2016). The two approaches therefore capture distinct aspects of the same phenomena, which are not always aligned. Citizen judgements, often shaped by partisan cues, particular administrative encounters, and outcome-related interpretations often diverge from more comprehensive, informed and balanced expert assessments, based on the factual knowledge of electoral procedures (Schaffer & Schedler, 2022; Cantu & Garcia-Ponce, 2015). As a result, elections that score highly on expert indicators of procedural quality, may still fail to uniformly generate a broad public trust.

From the perspective of elections as information producing political events, the electoral integrity is what shapes the informational environment, in which elections take place. At the same time, electoral participation becomes an experiential mechanism that updates integrity perceptions. This mechanism is particularly important, because electoral integrity operates as a critical inferential bridge between exposure to the new political information, which is obtained in the context of electoral campaign on the one hand – and subsequent ***evaluations of the trustworthiness*** of political institutions on the other. Perceptions of an electoral integrity transform the fragmented procedural and informational cues into cognitively tractable evaluations about whether the political authorities are competent, comply with the rules, behave in a predictable and impartial manner, and thus whether they are trustworthy or not. In this sense, electoral integrity serves as an interpretative lens, through which citizens translate observed procedures, obtained new information and lived experiences into broader evaluative conclusions about the conduct and reliability of political institutions (Grimes, 2017; Rothstein & Stolle, 2008; van der Meer, 2017). Two theoretical frameworks help to explain this process. First, the signalling theory posits under conditions of information asymmetry, actors credibly communicate unobservable qualities through signals that are differentially costly to produce for actors lacking those qualities (Spence, 1973; Connelly et al., 2011). Because sustained imitation is infeasible over time, such signals allow audiences to infer underlying institutional characteristics. Applied to the case of elections, this framework suggests that citizens, who cannot directly observe the competence or impartiality of political actors or electoral authorities, rely on perceived electoral integrity as a signal of institutional trustworthiness, insofar as a consistent rule adherence across electoral procedures and electoral cycles is more costly for non-rule-bound institutions to maintain (Mungiu-Pippidi, 2015; van Ham & Lindberg, 2015). The second theoretical framework that enables translation of credibility signals into trustworthiness evaluations is heuristic shortcuts. Because evaluating political institutions across multiple policy domains and criteria of conduct is cognitively demanding, citizens use the perceived integrity of the electoral process as a low-cost cue for broader expectations concerning institutional reliability (Lodge & Taber, 2013; Esaiasson et al., 2019; Marien & Werner, 2019). The interplay of the two mechanisms enables an evaluation of the institutional trustworthiness, that in turn becomes a foundation for a positive (or negative) judgement about institutional political trust.

1.5. Outcomes of Elections: Winners and Losers, and the Limits of Participation

A large body of the scholarly debate about the influence of elections on political trust (and citizen attitudes towards political institutions more broadly) underscores the role of the election outcome. The effect is positive and straightforward: individuals, whose preferred party or candidate win in the elections, typically tend to report higher levels of political trust, greater satisfaction with the political system and democratic governance, as compared to those whose preferred political force loses. Coined as the ***"winner-loser effect"***, this association between victory versus loss in the elections and the subsequent evaluation of the political system by the voters is among the most robust findings in the literature (Anderson & Guillory, 1997; Anderson et al., 2005; Curini et al., 2012). Importantly, the winner-loser framework conceptualizes political trust as an election outcome, which is based on evaluation rooted in instrumental considerations. Electoral winners tend to perceive institutions as responsive, effective, and legitimate, because electoral outcomes align with their own preferences and expectations. Electoral losers, on the other hand, can experience frustration and alienation, linked with the perceived lack of representation and exclusion from power, which results in lower levels of trust to political institutions and the political system as a whole (Anderson et al., 2005; Singh et al., 2012).

The explanatory power of the election-outcome based trust is well documented in the literature, even though many studies report a nuanced rather than a uniform picture. For instance, Esaiasson (2011) finds that across several established democracies, winners became more supportive after the elections, whereas losers did show some decline of trust, but the effect was heterogenous across countries. A pre-post-election design study in Belgium found that overall levels of political trust did increase after the election, however, the gap between winners and losers was not strongly pronounced (Hooghe & Stiers, 2016). A three-wave panel study in the United States found that electoral losers were significantly more likely to downgrade their evaluations of electoral integrity after the elections, also reporting lower levels of political trust in the political system as a whole (Daniller & Mutz, 2019). Singh et al. (2012) documented that the magnitude of the winner-loser effect does vary by institutional context, but the overall direction of the gap holds constant: an alignment of election outcome with one's own political preferences consistently predicts higher trust in representative institutions. A post-election study in Germany shows a similar finding concerning the sceptical assessment of electoral integrity by the electoral losers, confirming also that especially pronounced scepticism was found among repeated losers (Schnaudt, 2023). In the same vein, Kern & Kolln (2022) report that in a longitudinal study of European democracies, a loss in elections is associated with a decline of political trust, however, this process is cumulative in nature rather than representing a one-off disappointment. At the European level, Hobolt (2014) documented that supporters of parties that perform well in European elections, tend also to report higher trust in EU institutions, confirming that the winner-loser effect does extend beyond the national arena to the supranational governance in Europe. In the same vein, the winner-loser effect was also found to travel down to the local elections level: individuals on the losing side of local referendums in Belgium and a number of Nordic countries were found to report lower political trust within the local community as compared to the winners (Brummel, 2020; Karv et al., 2023).

While the outcome of the election has proven important for citizen trust, judgements across all electoral and governance levels, this relationship does have its limitations. First, the winner-loser effect is inherently contingent on election outcomes – and therefore fluctuates substantially across

the election cycles. Over time, individual alternate between winner and loser positions, depending on each specific election outcomes. However, as empirical research shows, political trust exhibits relative stability over time, which means that election outcome alone cannot account for enduring patterns of political trust (Zmerli & Newton, 2008; van der Meer, 2017; Dassonneville et al., 2024; Devine et al., 2024). Second, the winner-loser effect does not take into account the informational content of elections. Electoral process and outcome cannot be reduced to the distributive component only. Each campaign also produces salience information about the performance of electoral management bodies and the political system as a whole, rule adherence among the candidates, and the procedural fairness of the electoral process, which systematically influence public judgements of political trust. Empirical studies consistently demonstrate that trust in political institutions is strongly associated with procedural evaluations that are not reducible to electoral success or failure. For example, Atkeson et al. (2014) demonstrate that voter confidence is empirically distinguishable from broader trust in the government and can be meaningfully predicted by perceptions of electoral administration. Hooghe & Stiers (2016) find that political trust tends to exhibit an overall increase around the elections time, including among those who supported losing parties, thus confirming that political trust dynamics in association with elections is not purely outcome driven. Frank et al. (2017) demonstrate that citizens' perceptions of electoral integrity are shaped by specific election dynamics at various stages of the electoral process rather than merely by who won. Finally, Coffe (2017) shows that informational environments affect the accuracy of citizens' integrity perceptions as compared to expert assessments, highlighting that trust-relevant evaluations are not mere reflections of outcomes but are produced through the processing of election-related information. Taken together, these findings shows that citizens distinguish between approval or disapproval of electoral outcomes per se versus good or poor performance of political institutions more broadly, and these evaluations do not necessarily correlate. Citizens can maintain their trust in political institutions, despite their party not winning an election – or lose trust in the system despite supporting the winning candidate, depending on how they perceive the fairness and integrity of the overall electoral process.

These findings are particularly important for an understanding of the limits of explanations of political trust, which are centred on election outcome on the one hand – and the accounts that use participation act (voting) as a stand-alone explanans on the other. Studies that explicitly account for the winner-loser status, show that there is still a substantial residual variation in political trust remaining, indicating that additional factors beyond the election outcome continue to structure trust judgements (Hooghe & Stiers, 2016; van der Meer & Steenvoorden, 2018; Devine & Valgarðsson, 2024). At the same time, studies that model account for the winner-loser effect status and related confounders show that the direct effect of turnout on political trust is often modest, inconsistent or conditional, once the political alignment, the political interest, the cognitive resources, and sociodemographic variables are accounted for (Persson et al., 2016; Blais & Kostelka, 2016; Stockemer & Sundtrom, 2019). To summarize, the analysis of the winner-loser effect on trust in political institutions suggest that such an effect is widespread and thus must be accounted for in models, which are linking voting to political trust. A failure to account for winner–loser effects risks to conflate an outcome satisfaction with an institutional trustworthiness. At the same time, the election outcome does not exhaust the variation in political trust and therefore should not be treated as a conceptual equivalent of trust in post-election studies or empirically as a single sufficient predictor of trust judgements.

2. Theoretical Model

The proposed theoretical model (Figure 1) elaborates the sequential mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust. In this framework, political trust is interpreted as citizen's belief that political actors and political institutions, including government, parliament, and political parties, will exercise their power responsibly that means, that they will act in accordance with democratic norms and respecting public interests. Amid its attitudinal nature, political trust is conceptualized as a dynamic evaluation, which is in itself grounded in citizens' assessments of institutional trustworthiness. Central to this understanding is the distinction between political trust and the evaluations and beliefs that precede it. The model treats political trust as the cumulative result – outcome of a sequence of evaluative processes – rather than as a direct consequence of electoral participation, institutional arrangements, or individual predispositions.

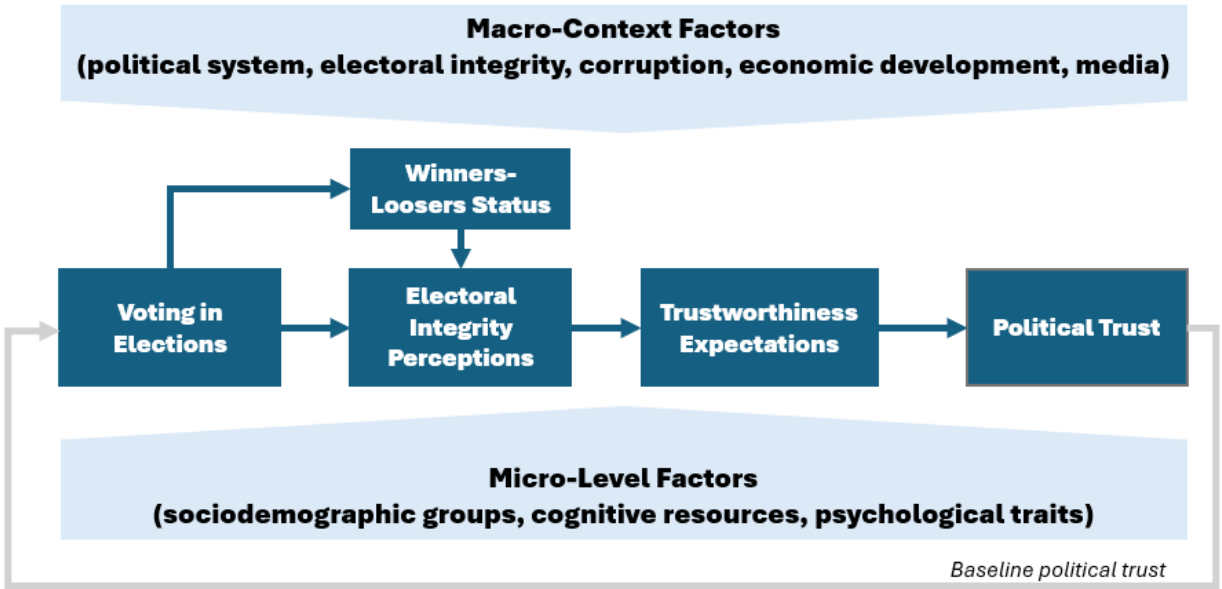
The first building block of the sequential model is represented by electoral participation. The latter is understood broadly and encompasses activities and engagement throughout the whole electoral cycle, including seeking political information, attending campaign events, contacting political candidates among others, registering to vote, and finally casting the ballot on election day. The approach emphasizes interpreting electoral participation from the perspective of experiential exposure rather than merely making a distributive choice. Electoral participation, however, is not interpreted in normative categories as "good" (if one voted) or "bad" (if one did not vote). Instead, the election is conceptualized as an information-generating process, which provides citizens with new evidence concerning the substantive positions of the candidates, but also concerning the functioning of election management bodies, the fairness of electoral procedure, the handling of the vote count, and the occurrence of political scandals or violence. Through an experience of electoral participation, citizens encounter how elections are organized, how political competition unfolds, and how outcomes are produced and justified. This information is employed for evaluating the integrity of the electoral process. Importantly, the model does not assume that participation necessarily produces positive evaluations. Electoral participation may reinforce confidence about procedural fairness and integrity and competence of institutions, when democratic norms are respected. Alternatively, electoral experience might lead to a greater disappointment or cynicism, when procedures or outcomes are perceived as problematic of unfair. Abstention, in contrast, limits the direct exposure to electoral processes and leaves citizens to rely on indirect information sources, such as media narratives or prior beliefs or prior experiences. An electoral participation thus conditions the informational basis, on which subsequent evaluations procedures and institutions take place and build upon.

The next building block in the model is represented by individual perceptions of electoral integrity, that is, whether citizens believe that elections function properly as a mechanism of political representation and democratic accountability. This belief should be understood more narrowly than political trust and is explicitly procedural in nature – it concerns specifically elections as institutions, rather than representative institutions more broadly. Participation in elections is expected to shape confidence in elections by structuring citizens' exposure to electoral procedures and simultaneously build the basic expectation concerning the integrity and conduct of political actors and political institutions. If elections are run in accordance with norms and principles of a free and fair democratic competition, this gives good reasons to believe that the elected parties (or actors) are legitimate and can be held accountable. Individual perceptions of electoral integrity

therefore provide a procedural reference point that informs expectations about how political actors are selected and constrained by electoral rules.

The model also accounts for an outcome-based effect on the perceived integrity of the electoral process. As summarized in the previous section, attitudes about elections typically depend not only on procedural evaluations, but also on whether citizens' preferred parties or candidates are in power. As already discussed, the size of the effect varies substantially across national contexts, and belonging to the "winners" versus "losers" camp does not equate to immediately high or low evaluations of procedural fairness. Nevertheless, as the mainstream literature in the field shows, supporters of winning parties tend to exhibit higher evaluations of elections and more frequently deem elections free and fair. To avoid conflating procedural evaluations with outcome satisfaction, the model incorporates a "winner-loser" status as a separate individual-level factor affecting political trust. This effect can be mediated through the path of cognitive evaluations: supporters of winning parties receive more positive signals about elections, evaluate political trustworthiness more favourably, and thus are more likely to trust political institutions. Alternatively, another possibility is that supporters of winning parties may express stronger trust in national political institutions via a direct effect, which is based on an affective attachment. At the stage of model estimation, we include both mediated and direct effects of a "winner-loser" status. Including a winner–loser status allows the analysis to distinguish between trust, which is grounded in evaluations of electoral functioning and political actors' behaviour on the one hand, and trust driven by proximity to political power on the other. This distinction is essential for isolating the mechanisms of interest and for preventing outcome effects from being misinterpreted as evidence of procedural legitimacy.

Figure 1. Political Trust as an Outcome of Evaluative Processes: Heuristic Model



Source: authors.

In this model, citizen perceptions of the level of fairness of elections serve as an intermediate belief, which is linking electoral experience to broader evaluations of institutional trustworthiness. Trustworthiness refers to citizens' forward-looking expectations that political actors will behave

honestly, competently, and accountably, once they are in office. These expectations concern actors, who are likely to conduct under conditions of uncertainty and are conceptually distinct from general approval of political institutions or citizens satisfaction with political outcomes. The model identifies expectations about political actors' trustworthiness as the immediate antecedent of political trust. It posits that trust emerges, when participation and electoral experiences lead citizens to believe that political actors are worthy of their trust. This step is essential for explaining why similar levels of participation can be associated with different levels of political trust across social groups and national contexts. Positive evaluations of trustworthiness, respectively, translate into positive judgements about political trust. Importantly, trustworthiness is conceptualized as a multi-dimensional phenomenon, with competence, integrity, and impartiality having varying salience for the outcome – the trust judgement.

The core steps of the sequential mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust are supplemented by macro- and by micro-level factors. At the macro-level, the formation of election-related beliefs and trustworthiness expectations takes place within an institutional context, which is defined by the type of political regime, the prevailing type of political culture, societal values and norms in the field of governance and public administration, economic development, and corruption, among others. A domain-specific macro-level factor is represented by electoral integrity, which at this stage is treated as a country-level characteristic, which is capturing the procedural quality of elections, typically measured through expert-based assessments. At the macro-level, it is conceptualized as an attribute of the political system as a whole, rather than an individual attitude, and it is also not assumed to be directly or accurately perceived by citizens. In the proposed model, electoral integrity defines the environment, in which the electoral participation occurs and within which citizens interpret their electoral experiences. While higher levels of integrity may facilitate the formation of positive evaluations, the model does not assume an immediate strong correlation between objective electoral quality and citizen beliefs. Instead, integrity operates as a contextual condition that shapes the informational content and credibility of electoral experiences of citizens.

Mirroring the macro-level, micro- or individual-level factors comprise another set of contextual variables that mediate access to and processing of information. Characteristics such as age, education level, income group, settlement pattern, and most importantly cognitive resources (civic knowledge, interest in politics) influence all stages of the logical sequence. Specific effects include the amount of information, which an individual acquires during the electoral process (e.g. searching for more political information, following the campaign closely – or not), the frequency of exposure to electoral experience (voting always, occasionally, or never), knowledge and expectations about the political system. In addition, individual values and normative beliefs about the conduct of political institutions, as well as psychological predispositions (e.g. cynicism, altruism) are among the many individual-level factors that introduce variation at each stage of the mechanism.

3. Data and Measurement

3.1. TRUEDEM Online Survey

To examine the influence of voting, the confidence in elections, and trustworthiness evaluations upon political trust, we employ data from the TRUEDEM survey, which has been conducted by us in May-July 2025 in 24 European countries. Within each country, a representative sample of permanent residents of 18 years and above was surveyed, using an online questionnaire in self-completion mode. The sample size in each country was 1200 respondents (except for France and Germany, where 1500 persons were surveyed, taking into consideration a greater population size and diversity). For each country, the most up-to-date Eurostat official population statistics was used to determine the stratification targets by sociodemographic characteristics (age, gender, education, region). In all countries, respondents were recruited from access panels, mostly using opt-in technics. Quality control included soft-launch checks, verification of script, speed and straight lining monitoring, geolocation, and consistency checks among the others. The survey received its ethical approval from the Ethics Committee of the Austrian Academy of Sciences, confirming a full compliance with GDPR.

Figure 2. TRUEDEM Online Survey: Country Coverage (2025)

Conceptually, the survey replicates the thematic structure of the research project, covering a broad spectrum of domains that influence the process of trust-building. The questionnaire therefore features modules on social and political trust attitudes, including national and European bodies; perceived trustworthiness (integrity, competence, accountability) of the national institution; information sources, frequency and patterns of media use; evaluations of institutional performance;

democratic norms and support for authoritarian or populist leadership; political culture and participation; socioeconomic cleavages, as well as civic knowledge.

As an online panel survey, TRUEDEM survey faces the challenges of coverage and self-selection, which have been briefly listed in the previous section. In every surveyed country, the unweighted sample distribution approximates closely the national benchmark on gender and region, amid the strict quotas. However, distributions by age and education reveal a slight bias, which is common across all online panels: those with higher education and younger and middle-aged respondents tend to be somewhat over-represented (see Haerpfer et al., 2025[1]). While post-stratification and design weights, based on Eurostat data, provide the necessary correction at the level of these core sociodemographic characteristics, they cannot fully eliminate the selection effects related to unobserved features such as political interest, baselines trust level, or evaluations of trustworthiness criteria. Consecutively, the weighted data can be treated as generally representative to the adult population at the national level, but descriptives for specific sociodemographic groups, hard to reach populations, and inferences about absolute levels of trust should be interpreted with caution.

3.2. Political Trust (National Level)

The main dependent variable in our analysis is represented by the aggregated TRUEDEM political institutions trust (PIT) index. In the sections below, we justify the selection of the individual trust items, the choice of the response scale, and provide robustness tests of the index.

3.2.1. Measuring Political Trust in Survey Research

Empirical survey research typically operationalizes the concept of political trust through evaluative questions that ask the respondents how much they do (or do not) trust a set of political actors and political institutions. The most common institutional targets are national government, national parliament, and political parties. The list is sometimes expanded to include politicians as a collective category, the head of state or head of government, as well as other political bodies. This approach is common across many cross-national survey infrastructures, and divergences mainly come from the different scale size and the use of the term "trust" versus the term "confidence". For instance, the Eurobarometer of the European Commission relies on a 2-point scale, asking the respondents whether they tend to trust or not to trust the institution; the European Social Survey asks how much the respondents trust political institutions on a 0–10-point scale, while the World Values Survey employed a 4-category ordinal scale. The use of concept label "trust" versus "confidence" is often interchangeable. English language dictionaries typically define trust in terms of reliance on integrity, competence, and character of the agent in conditions of uncertainty, whereas confidence refers to assurance and feeling of certainty of trust in an actor or institution. These distinctions might become more (or less) pronounced in cross-national studies, when the questionnaire is being translated in other languages. Translation protocols and equivalence testing are employed to prevent potential data incomparability (Marien, 2017).

When it comes to the response scale, the selection is usually guided by pursuing a balance between the reliability associated with the variation of the studied phenomena (public trust in our case) on the one hand and the cognitive load associated with processing the question by the respondent on the other. Revilla et al. (2014) used a multitrait-multimethod analysis to compare different types of

[1] Haerpfer, C., Norris, P., Kizilova, K., Palt, C., Diez-Medrano, J. (2025). *Online Survey Codebook and Technical Report. Working paper no. 8.1.* TRUEDEM: Trust in European Democracies Project (www.truedem.eu).

response formats across survey items. Their first finding is that the agree/disagree format of the questions *("I trust the government". Do you agree or disagree with the statement?*) tends to produce a larger acquiescence bias as compared to item-specific format *("How much do you trust the government?")*. Their analysis also shows that increasing the number of response categories improves reliability up to an approximately 7-point scale format. After that, any further increase results in greater cognitive burden and response-style effects. Aybek and Toraman (2022), on the other hand, employed the item response theory to compare different formats of a so-called 'Likert Scale' and concluded that the most efficient balance between measurement precision and the respondent's ability to differentiate between response categories is provided by the 5-point scale. In case of a longer scale, there is a risk of an increased "extreme response style", where the respondents turn to clearly labelled endpoints (Revilla & Saris, 2013). Most recent studies, reflecting the expansion of the share of online and mobile surveys in the post-pandemic era, also highlight that a greater number of response categories becomes more problematic amid the limited screen size of smaller devices like mobile phones (Koo & Yang, 2025).

Another strand of research in this area focuses on the phenomena of the "middle point" and of a mitigation of the "neutral response bias". In political trust research, some respondents might feel uninformed or hold ambivalent assessment of the political actors. On an odd-numbered scale with 5 or 7 points, such respondents often tend to select the middle category. Analysis of these responses suggests that "neutral" response may reflect satisficing, uncertainty, or lack of motivation to commit, rather than a true neutrality toward the political body (Chyung et al., 2017). Finally, another cluster of scholarly analysis suggests that while 7, 9 and 11-point scales provide more nuances, they often suffer from "noise", a phenomenon particularly pronounced in cross-cultural surveys, where different groups interpret numbers 2, 3, 4 or 6, 7, 8 differently (Ulitzsch et al., 2024). Therefore, even-numbered scales (e.g. a 4-point scale) may provide higher discriminative validity and can be more efficient for classification. Consecutively, based on the rationale summarized above, the TRUEDEM survey employed a 4-point scale to document the respondents' trust in the political actors and institutions. When responding to the survey questionnaire, the respondents could choose between *"completely", "somewhat", "not very much", and "none at all"*. The choice of the scale has been justified by 1) the cross-national scope of the survey, which requires such a response scale format to improve a cross-country interpretation and comparability; 2) a motivation to reduce the ambiguity associated with midpoint; 3) sufficient discriminative power for classifying respondents; and 4) practical advantage of a compact scale format in self-administered survey mode.

Finally, another and arguable the most important source of variation in the investigation of political trust concerns the choice of institutional targets, which are used to operationalize this concept. There is a great variation across studies, including analysis that rely on single-item measures, often trust in the government or parliament (Hetherington, 1998) and studies that feature composite indices of political trust constructed by aggregating trust assessments across few to multiple institutions (Norris, 1999; Zmerli & Newton, 2008; Marien, 2011). The main rationale for using index-based measures is that they capture more stable orientations toward political authority (Devine, 2024). The motivation behind using a leaner set of institutions is to capture the essence of political trust in a narrower sense – as evaluation of the core representative institutions which are responsible for political decision-making (van der Meer & Van Erkel, 2024). Another widespread approach relies on the combination of trust in representative democratic institutions: government, parliament, and parties or politicians (Christmann et al., 2026; Revtiuk & Zelinska, 2026). Other justifications include context-specifics: for instance, when analysing trust during the

pandemic, Demertzis & Klironomos (2026) combine trust in government, parliament, parties, legal system, and the police as the institutions most relevant for crisis governance. Finally, recent analysis suggests a multidimensional nature of political trust, with the two clusters of evaluations being treated separately: trust in representative political institutions (government, parliament, occasionally political parties), and security and order-maintaining institutions (policy, army). Two dimensions of trust attitudes have proven to be responding to different determinants and featuring different outcomes. In particular, evaluations of political trust are influenced by democratic performance indicators such as perceptions of corruption, democratic responsiveness, while trust in security institutions is more closely associated with perceptions of safety and social order within society (Hetherington & Rudolph, 2015; Bol et al., 2021; Newton et al., 2018).

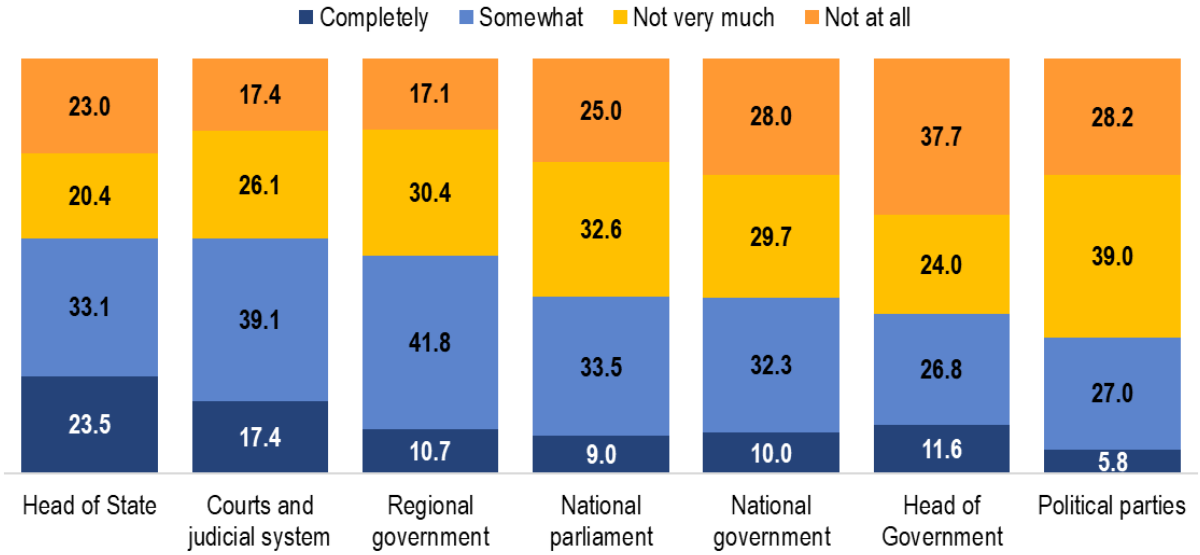
For the present analysis, we employed an aggregated multi-component index, which is consisting of trust measures towards seven political institutions: the national government, the regional government, the national parliament, political parties, the courts and judicial system, the Head of State, and the Head of Government, as all being measured in the TRUEDEM survey. The selection of the seven components is based on the theoretically grounded representation of the State featuring a) institutional breadth (the scale combines trust in the executive (national government, Head of Government, Head of State), legislative (national parliament, political parties), and judicial (courts and judicial system) branches); and 2) multi-level governance (regional and national governance levels). We intentionally focus the PIT index on civilian political institutions. Consequently, the military is excluded, as trust in the armed forces often reflects national identity or security concerns rather than support for democratic governance. Furthermore, we include both the Head of State and Head of Government to ensure the index is applicable to both parliamentary republics and constitutional monarchies. We acknowledge that the Head of State represents a monarch in some surveyed European countries and a president in others, yet its inclusion becomes important vital for capturing the full scope of executive legitimacy across diverse constitutional frameworks.

3.2.2. Political Institutional Trust (PIT) Index and Robustness Checks

For the present analysis, we employed an aggregated 7-component index of trust political institutions (PIT), combining trust in the national government, the regional government, the national parliament, political parties, the courts and judicial system, the Head of State, and the Head of Government as measured in the TRUEDEM survey. The resulting index captures a generalized orientation of the individual respondents toward the political system in each country, reflecting their average level of political trust, that is the extent to which respondents believe that political authority is exercised responsibly, competently, and fairly across core political institutions in their home country.

Across the seven core institutions trust, which constitutes the PIT index, there is a great variation of positive versus negative trust judgements. On average, across all 24 surveyed countries, the most trusted political institution appears to be the Head of State: 24% of the respondents trusting them “completely” and 33% “somewhat”. Followed by the courts and the judicial system (17% trust “completely” and 39% “somewhat”) and the regional government (11% trust “completely” and 42% “somewhat”), these three institutions on average receive the trust of over 50% respondents in the pooled sample. More critical evaluations concern other core representative institutions – the government, the parliament, and the head of the government – who are trusted “completely” by 9-12% of respondents and somewhat by further 27-34%. Finally, the least trusted political institution is political parties (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Distribution of Trust Levels Across Political Institutions (Pooled Sample)



The standard deviations, which range from 0.88 to 1.08 on a 4-point scale, indicate a substantial dispersion in levels of political trust across respondents. Such values suggest that attitudes are widely spread across response categories (levels of trust) rather than concentrated around the mean. Dispersion is particularly pronounced for the Head of State and the Head of Government, pointing to more heterogeneous and potentially polarized trust evaluations of executive actors. On the other hand, lower standard deviations for political parties and regional government indicate comparatively more uniform patterns of trust (or mistrust) (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Trust in Political Institutions and Actors (Pooled Sample of 24 Countries)

Institution	Observations	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Min	Max
National government	29,520	2.24	2	0.97	1	4
Regional government	29,447	2.46	3	0.90	1	4
National parliament	29,434	2.26	2	0.94	1	4
Political parties	29,465	2.10	2	0.88	1	4
Courts and judicial system	29,457	2.56	3	0.97	1	4
Head of State	29,272	2.57	3	1.08	1	4
Head of Government	29,287	2.12	2	1.05	1	4

Across individual countries, the levels of trust vary substantially. The highest levels of trust in the national government have been found in Denmark (63%), Sweden (62%) and Ireland (58%). More than half of respondents in Poland (54%), the Netherlands, Finland (52% each) and Portugal (51%) also report high levels of trust in their national government. The highest levels of distrust to the national government on the other hand are recorded in Romania (84%), Slovenia (79%) and Greece (76%). High levels of distrust were also recorded in France (69%), Bulgaria (68%), the Czech

Republic and Slovakia (65% each), Spain (64%), Hungary (63%) and Lithuania (59%). In addition, respondents appeared more decisive when expressing distrust—frequently selecting "not at all"—whereas expressions of trust were more cautious and were more often articulated through the intermediate category "somewhat trust".

The highest levels of trust in national parliaments were recorded in Scandinavian countries, for example in Sweden (68%) and Denmark (66%). High levels of trust in national parliaments were also recorded in Ireland (57%), Finland (56%), Poland (53%) and the Netherlands (52%). The lowest levels of trust in national parliaments were observed in Eastern European countries such as Romania (86% do not trust), Slovenia (80%), Bulgaria (73%), as well as in Greece (80%) and France (68%). Similar to the pattern observed in responses concerning the national government, when speaking about the parliament, the respondents tended to express distrust in a more decisive manner, frequently choosing "not at all," while positive evaluations were more tentative and were more often conveyed through the category "somewhat."

Likewise, there are varying levels of trust in regional authorities in different countries. The highest levels of trust in regional authorities were recorded in Finland (69%), Estonia (66%), Denmark, Latvia and Sweden (64% each). Respondents in the Netherlands (63%), Poland (62%) and Ireland (60%) also expressed a high level of trust in regional authorities. In countries such as Greece (75% do not trust), Romania (73%), Slovenia (67%) and Bulgaria (60%), the majority of respondents do not trust their regional authorities.

Trust in the courts and the judicial system is quite high in most countries. Denmark (81%), Finland, Sweden (both 77%) and the Netherlands (73%) have the highest levels of trust in the judicial system in Europe. Trust in the judicial system is also quite high in Estonia (71%), Austria (68%) and Ireland (67%). Respondents from Romania (75% do not trust), Bulgaria (65%) and Greece (63%), as well as Croatia (61%) and Slovenia (59%) have the least trust in the courts.

The highest level of trust in political parties was recorded in Denmark (54%) and Sweden (54%). Trust in political parties is also quite high in Ireland, the Netherlands (46% each) and Finland (43%). The lowest levels of trust in political parties are observed in Romania (90% do not trust them), Greece (88%) and Slovenia (87%). Political parties are also largely distrusted in France, Croatia (76% each) and Bulgaria (77%).

In a majority of countries, more than half of respondents trust the Head of State. The highest level of trust is recorded in Denmark (80%), Finland and Ireland (78% each). A fairly high level of trust can also be observed in Belgium (70%), Sweden (70%) and Italy (67%). It should be noted that in some countries, the Head of State is a monarch without political power (Denmark, Sweden, Belgium), where the level of trust is somewhat higher. High levels of distrust in the Head of State are observed in Greece (76% do not trust), France (71%) and Slovenia (65%), as well as in Hungary (63%) and Romania (65%).

Finally, the level of trust in the Head of Government is generally somewhat lower than the level of trust in the Head of State. The Head of Government is most trusted in Denmark, Ireland (53% each), Sweden (52%), Belgium (51%), the Netherlands and Poland (49% each). In the other countries, less than half of respondents say that they trust the Head of Government. The lowest levels of trust are in Romania (89% do not trust), Slovenia (79%), the Czech Republic (76%), Greece (75%) and France (72%). Answers distribution to individual questions (components of the index) for each country are accessible in Annex 1 of this report.

Consequently, the seven individual trust items were averaged into a single composite PIT index, rescaled to 1-10, with "1" corresponding to lowest level of trust, and "10" – the highest level of trust. The PIT index serves as the main dependent variable in analysis. The internal consistency of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.882, which exceeds the standard threshold of 0.700, indicating high reliability. Analysis of the alpha (if item deleted) scores confirmed that all seven items contributed positively to the scale's consistency, as no individual item's removal would have significantly improved the total alpha (Table 2).

Table 2. Internal Consistency and Reliability Analysis of the PIT Index

Item (trust in…)	Obs	Sign	Item–test correlation	Item–rest correlation	Average interitem covariance	Alpha
National government	29,520	+	0.8482	0.7784	0.4609891	0.8514
Regional government	29,447	+	0.7454	0.6502	0.5058372	0.8682
National parliament	29,434	+	0.8468	0.7802	0.4674670	0.8519
Political parties	29,465	+	0.7456	0.6521	0.5083880	0.8681
Courts and judicial system	29,457	+	0.7238	0.6127	0.5031873	0.8727
Head of State	29,272	+	0.6993	0.5651	0.4992930	0.8806
Head of Government	29,287	+	0.7737	0.6691	0.4764686	0.8660
Test scale					**0.4888061**	**0.8827**

Note: N = 29,520 (maximum). The 'Alpha' column indicates the Cronbach's alpha of the scale if that specific item were removed. The 'Item-rest correlation' measures the correlation between an individual item and the scale formed by all other items. The final test scale alpha of 0.882 indicates internal consistency.

Table 3. Inter-Item Correlation Matrix for PIT Index Components

	National government	Regional government	National parliament	Political parties	Courts and judicial system	Head of State	Head of Government
National government	1.000						
Regional government	0.579***	1.000					
National parliament	0.725***	0.585***	1.000				
Political parties	0.574***	0.507***	0.615***	1.000			
Courts and judicial system	0.510***	0.499***	0.551***	0.468***	1.000		
Head of State	0.489***	0.418***	0.492***	0.403***	0.460***	1.000	
Head of Government	0.693***	0.472***	0.615***	0.505***	0.415***	0.430***	1.000

Note: Coefficients represent Pearson's *r*. Statistical significance is denoted as: *** $p < 0.001$.

Before aggregation, the PIT index was subjected to a two-stage validation process in order to ensure its uni-dimensionality and cross-national reliability. First, an exploratory factor analysis was conducted on the seven individual components using the using the maximum likelihood estimation method. This approach was selected to account for measurement error and to ensure that the observed variables effectively map onto a single latent construct of institutional support. The analysis yielded a highly distinct factor structure, with only one factor returning an eigenvalue (3.81) significantly above the Kaiser criterion threshold of 1.0. This primary factor accounted for

90.25% of the common variance, providing strong evidence of the scale's uni-dimensionality. Factor loadings for the individual items were robust, ranging from of 0.59 to 0.88. All loadings therefore substantially exceed the conventional 0.40 threshold, indicating strong convergent validity across the scale. These results statistically validate the aggregation of seven individual trust items into a composite index.

To ensure that the PIT index is functionally equivalent across the 24 countries included in this analysis, internal consistency was evaluated for each national sample individually. Using country-specific Cronbach's alpha as a metric for reliability, the index demonstrated high stability across all surveyed countries. The alpha coefficients ranged from a minimum of 0.787 (Spain) to a maximum of .914 (Ireland), which exceeds the standard threshold of 0.700 required for scale reliability. The high level of consistency across diverse European regions and political systems provides evidence of measurement invariance, which justifies the use of aggregated index across all studied countries and treating it as a single composite mean score for use in the subsequent structural models.

Table 4. Internal Consistency of PIT Index by Country

Country	Cronbach's Alpha	Country	Cronbach's Alpha	Country	Cronbach's Alpha
Austria	0.897	France	0.909	Netherlands	0.878
Belgium	0.878	Germany	0.908	Poland	0.812
Bulgaria	0.830	Greece	0.898	Portugal	0.866
Croatia	0.855	Hungary	0.910	Romania	0.877
Czechia	0.882	Ireland	0.914	Slovakia	0.874
Denmark	0.857	Italy	0.841	Slovenia	0.870
Estonia	0.880	Latvia	0.896	Spain	0.787
Finland	0.863	Lithuania	0.864	Sweden	0.862

Note: Figures represent Cronbach's alpha calculated separately for each national sub-sample

Country-level distributions of the PIT index point to pronounced cross-national differences in both the average level and the distribution of political trust. National mean values vary from 3.72–3.73 in Romania and Greece to 6.31 in Denmark and 6.12 in Sweden. This spread of approximately 2.6 index points suggests that the average respondent's generalized trust in political institutions is substantially higher in the Nordic countries than in several Southern and Eastern European cases. Similarly, the median values reach 6.57 in Denmark and Sweden and 6.50 in Ireland, indicating that at least half of respondents in these contexts locate in the upper-middle part of the index scale. By contrast, medians are 3.57 in Greece and Romania, and 4.00 in Bulgaria, France, Hungary, and Slovenia, suggesting that in these countries the "typical" response falls below the midpoint of the index scale. Dispersion is sizeable across all national samples. Standard deviations lie between 1.89 (Romania) and 2.49 (Hungary), with many countries clustering around ≈2.0–2.3, indicating that institutional trust is far from uniform within countries. Similar standard deviations values characterize countries with both higher and lower levels of trust.

Finally, skewness further differentiates low- and high-trust contexts. Countries with lower mean trust commonly show positive skewness pointing to a large concentration of respondents at the lower end of the scale (e.g., Romania, Greece, France, Bulgaria), High-trust countries tend to exhibit responses shifted upward the scale (e.g., Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Ireland) (Figure 4, Table 5).

Figure 4. Distribution of the Political Trust Index by Country (%)

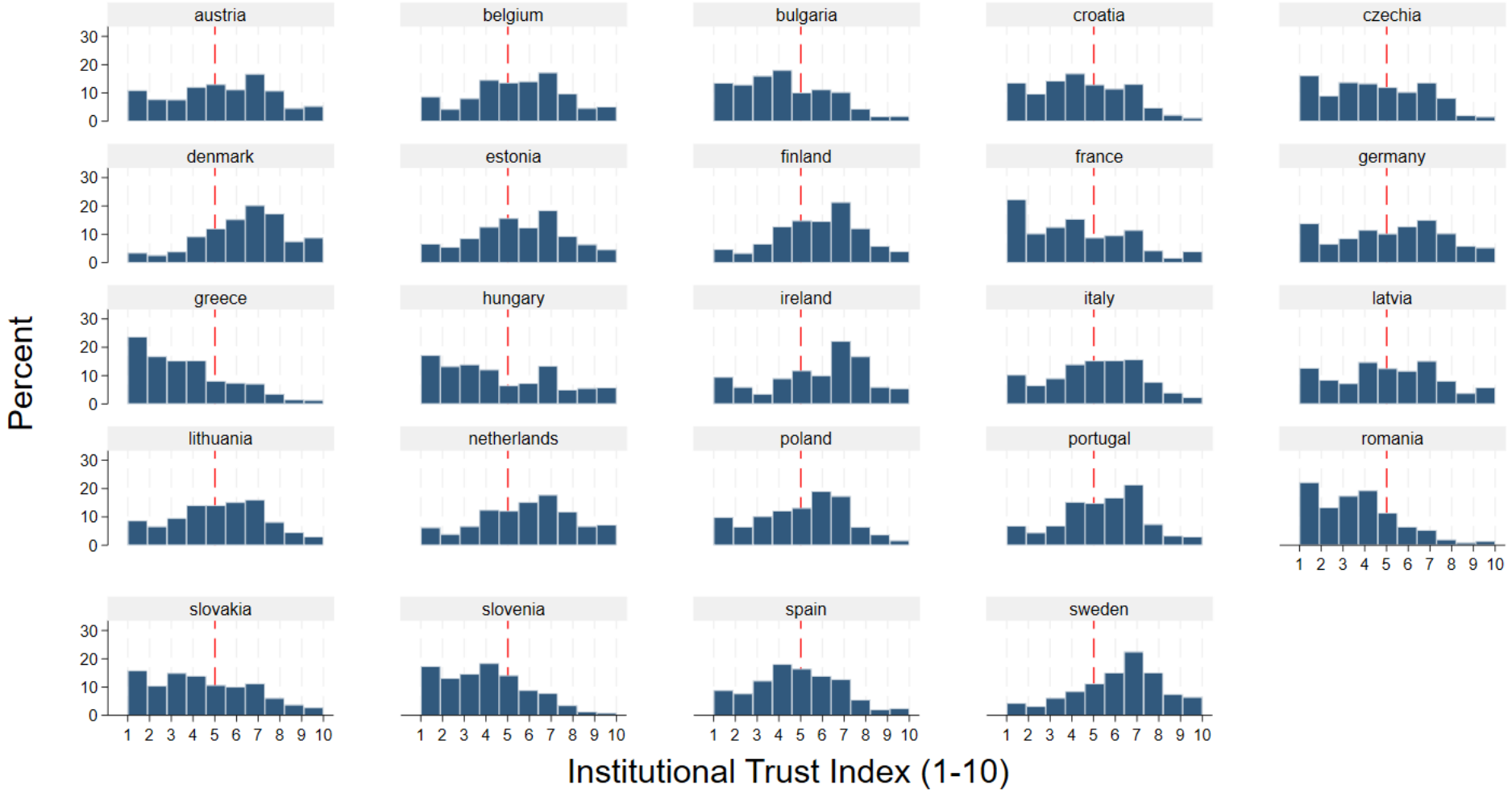


Table 5. Descriptive Statistics for the PIT Index (1–10), by Country

Country	N	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness
Austria	1,220	5.28	5.29	2.29	−0.15
Belgium	1,216	5.44	5.71	2.15	−0.16
Bulgaria	1,199	4.34	4.00	2.02	0.38
Croatia	1,206	4.50	4.43	2.02	0.14
Czechia	1,216	4.58	4.43	2.15	0.11
Denmark	1,199	6.31	6.57	1.95	−0.45
Estonia	1,200	5.52	5.71	2.09	−0.16
Finland	1,202	5.76	6.07	1.94	−0.36
France	1,495	4.24	4.00	2.34	0.41
Germany	1,500	5.21	5.29	2.40	−0.11
Greece	1,200	3.73	3.57	2.05	0.65
Hungary	1,207	4.62	4.00	2.49	0.37
Ireland	1,202	5.79	6.50	2.25	−0.52
Italy	1,212	5.09	5.29	2.08	−0.16
Latvia	1,222	5.10	5.29	2.31	0.04
Lithuania	1,373	5.21	5.29	2.08	−0.05
Netherlands	1,200	5.82	6.14	2.15	−0.25
Poland	1,201	5.08	5.29	2.04	−0.24
Portugal	1,202	5.41	5.71	1.94	−0.27
Romania	1,201	3.72	3.57	1.89	0.68
Slovakia	1,200	4.52	4.43	2.24	0.29
Slovenia	1,219	4.07	4.00	1.90	0.37
Spain	1,211	4.84	4.86	1.95	0.09
Sweden	1,209	6.12	6.57	2.00	−0.45

3.3. Political Trust (Supranational Level)

To assess the robustness and scope of the proposed mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust beyond the national level, the same model is replicated with trust in European institutions as the outcome. For this, in the similar manner, an aggregated index of trust in European political institutions (EPIT) is developed. For this purpose, we rely on three individual components: levels of trust expressed by the respondents towards to the key governing bodies of the EU – the European Parliament, the European Commission, and the European Council. Similar to national political trust institutions, when responding to the survey questionnaire, the respondents could choose between *"completely", "somewhat", "not very much", and "none at all"*.

The three European governing bodies exhibit very similar average levels of public trust: roughly 50-51% of the respondents trust them, while the remaining half – tend not to trust. Unlike national governing bodies, majority of the respondents avoided selecting a side position on the scale, with "somewhat trust" being the most widespread answer for all three institutions (Figure 5). The comparison of means, medians, and standard deviations very similar patterns of evaluation of the three bodies among the European public (Table 6).

At the national level, some variation can be observed in the levels of trust expressed by the public to the European governing bodies. In countries such as Portugal (67% trust), Ireland, Sweden (64% each) and Latvia (63%), the majority expressed trust in the European Commission. In countries such as Slovenia (73% do not trust), Greece (65%), France (65%), the Czech Republic (64%), and Romania (61%), there is a high level of distrust in the European Commission. Similarly, the highest

levels of trust in the European Parliament are recorded in Portugal (66%), Ireland (64%), Sweden (64%), Latvia (62%) and Denmark (60%). The lowest levels of trust to the European Parliament are recorded in Slovenia (28%), the Czech Republic (35%), Greece (36%), France (36%) and Romania (38%). Finally, largely replications the above patterns, the quite high level of trust in the European Council was recorded in Portugal (66%), Ireland (65%), Sweden (64%), Denmark (61%), Latvia (60%), Estonia and Hungary (both 59%). Trust in the European Council is also high in Finland (58%), the Netherlands (57%), Spain and Poland (55% each). The highest levels of distrust in the European Council are recorded in Slovenia (72% do not trust it), Greece (65%), France (64%), the Czech Republic (62%) and Romania (61%). Answers distribution to individual questions for each country are available in Annex 2.

Figure 5. Distribution of Trust Levels to European Political Institutions (Pooled Sample)

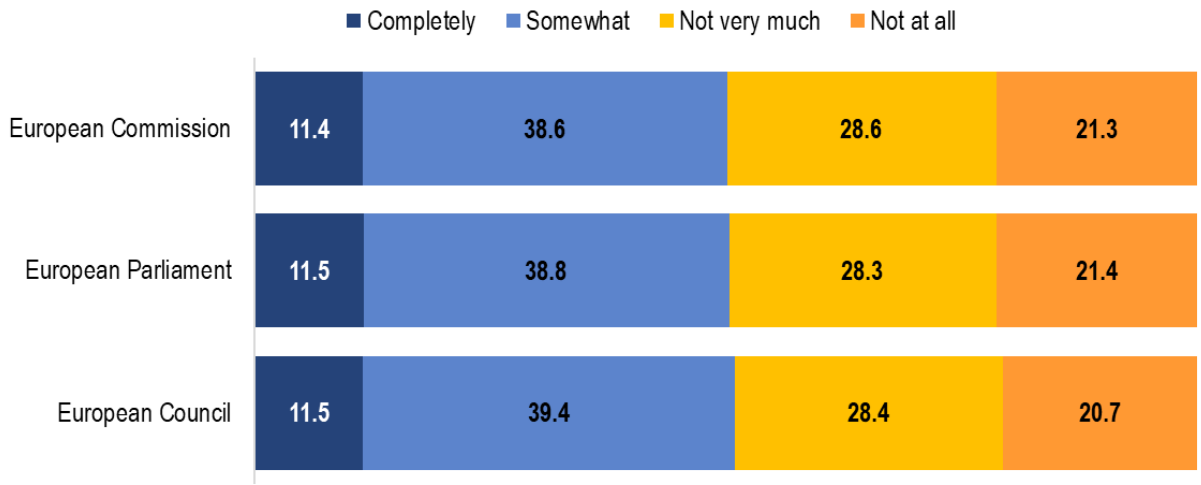


Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Trust in European Political Institutions (Pooled Sample)

Institution	Observations	Mean	Median	Standard deviation	Min	Max
European Commission	29,295	2.40	3	0.95	1	4
European Parliament	29,361	2.41	3	0.95	1	4
European Council	29,227	2.42	3	0.94	1	4

Consequently, the three individual trust items were averaged into a single composite EPIT index, rescaled to 1-10, with "1" corresponding to lowest level of trust, and "10" – the highest level of trust. The EPIT index serves as the second dependent variable in analysis. Similar to the national political trust index, the internal consistency of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha, yielding a coefficient of 0.942, which indicated a very high reliability of the scale. Inter-item correlations also yielded high values of Person's *r* of 0.844-0.845 across all items (Table 7). Before aggregation, the EPIT index was also subjected to a validation check to ensure cross-national reliability. Internal consistency was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha for each national sample individually. The index demonstrated high stability across all surveyed countries; the alpha coefficients ranged within 0.916 to 0.945, which exceeds the standard threshold of 0.700. The high level of consistency across diverse European regions and political systems provides evidence of

measurement invariance, which justifies the use of aggregated index across all studied countries and treating it as a single composite mean score for use in the subsequent structural models.

Table 7. Inter-Item Correlation Matrix for EPIT Index Components

	European Commission	European Parliament	European Council
European Commission	1.0000		
European Parliament	0.8435***	1.0000	
European Council	0.8463***	0.8491***	1.0000

Note: Coefficients represent Pearson's *r*. Statistical significance is denoted as: *** $p < 0.001$.

Distributions of trust across the three EU institutions exhibit a high degree of internal consistency. For all three institutions, the modal response is "somewhat trust," accounting for about four in ten respondents. This indicates that the dominant orientation toward the EU institutions is of moderate, rather than strong, trust. Mean EPIT scores vary from a low of 4.25 in Slovenia to a high of 6.15 in Portugal. Median values generally align closely with the means and cluster between 4 and 7. Standard deviations are relatively similar across countries (approximately 2.3 to 2.9), pointing to comparable levels of within-country dispersion. Skewness values are mostly small in magnitude, indicating broadly symmetric distributions, though several countries in Northern and Western Europe exhibit modest negative skewness, with higher concentrations of responses at the upper end of the scale (Table 8).

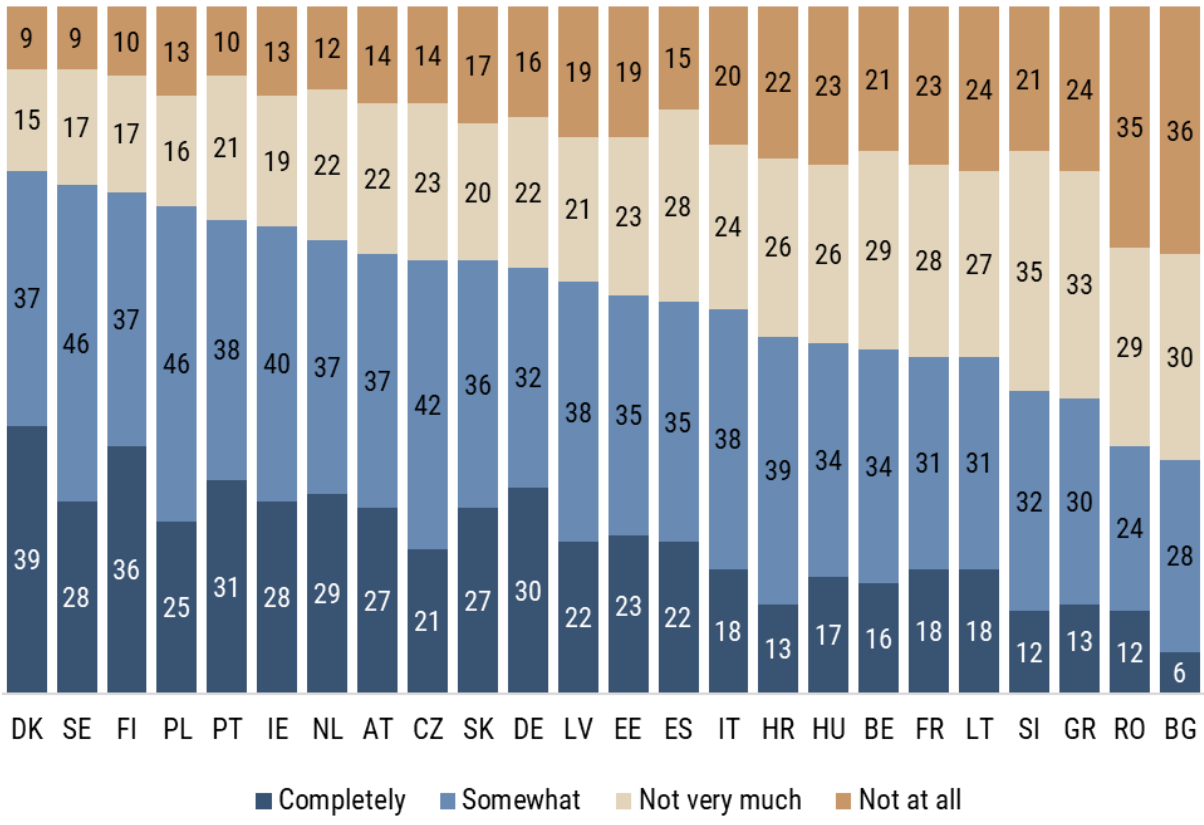
Table 8. Descriptive Statistics for the EPIT Index (1–10), by Country

Country	N	Mean	Median	SD	Skewness
Austria	1,211	4.80	4	2.72	0.02
Belgium	1,213	5.11	5	2.68	-0.10
Bulgaria	1,196	4.82	5	2.88	0.07
Croatia	1,195	5.01	5	2.55	-0.18
Czechia	1,210	4.34	4	2.57	0.19
Denmark	1,183	5.85	7	2.48	-0.45
Estonia	1,181	5.64	7	2.57	-0.33
Finland	1,192	5.66	7	2.36	-0.45
France	1,489	4.34	4	2.66	0.24
Germany	1,490	4.92	5	2.64	0.01
Greece	1,193	4.52	4	2.48	0.15
Hungary	1,195	5.74	7	2.86	-0.29
Ireland	1,189	5.96	7	2.41	-0.58
Italy	1,211	5.01	5	2.76	-0.09
Latvia	1,211	5.22	5	2.78	-0.08
Lithuania	1,362	5.86	7	2.61	-0.38
Netherlands	1,191	5.46	6	2.66	-0.25
Poland	1,197	5.48	7	2.85	-0.25
Portugal	1,198	6.15	7	2.36	-0.59
Romania	1,192	4.99	4	2.73	0.07
Slovakia	1,196	5.40	6	2.91	-0.13
Slovenia	1,215	4.25	4	2.31	0.24
Spain	1,210	5.49	6	2.62	-0.25
Sweden	1,197	5.92	7	2.59	-0.49

3.4. Trust in Elections

In our theoretical model, the individual perception of electoral integrity represents the citizen's subjective evaluation of the procedural fairness and serves as the primary mediator, through which institutional performance and outcomes are assessed. As past research demonstrated, the subjective belief that an election is free and fair, is as critical as its objective quality (operationalized through country-level PEI index). Due to practical constraints on questionnaire length within the TRUEDEM survey, it was not feasible to include a full electoral integrity perceptions module or multi-dimensional indicators of electoral malpractice. Due to this, to operationalize this construct at the micro-level in our model, we utilize the measure of trust in elections. Therefore, trust in elections is employed as a parsimonious, but robust proxy for perceived integrity. Conceptually, this variable captures the essential "outcome" of electoral integrity: the degree to which an individual believes that the electoral process is free from manipulation and capable of translating the popular will into a meaningful political representation. This captures the primary meaning of subjective perceptions of electoral integrity, that is whether the voters deem the electoral mechanism to be trustworthy. As our survey data demonstrates, there is substantial variation in the degree of trust in elections across the 24 studied countries, with the share of those "trusting" varying from 71-76% in Denmark, Sweden, Finland, and Poland to only 34-36% in Romania and Bulgaria.

Figure 6. Trust in Elections (%)



It is essential to acknowledge that employing trust in elections as a proxy for an aggregated individual assessment of electoral integrity is associated with the potential risk of endogeneity, represented by the lack of discriminant validity between the predictor (trust in elections) and the

dependent variable (aggregated political trust index). This might create a simultaneity bias, as trust in the electoral process and trust in political institutions -often resulting from the very same electoral process- are likely to reinforce one another in a reciprocal relationship. Additionally, this raises the concern of a tautology, where one form of trust is used to explain another without sufficient discriminant validity. To address the issue of discriminant validity and to verify that trust in elections functions as a distinct procedural media rather than merely a redundunt indicator of generalized political trust, a series of diagnostic tests were conducted to analyse the relationship between the PIT index and the trust in elections variable. First, the Pearson *r* correlation index between the two constructs comprises r = 0.639 (p < .001$). While the association is positive and statistically significant, the coefficient remains below the common methodological threshold for redundancy (r > 0.850). This result indicates that trust in elections shares approximately 40% of its variance with broader political trust index ($R^2 = 0.4087$), leaving nearly 60% of its variance unique to the specific evaluation of the integrity of the electoral process. Further collinearity diagnostics yielded a Variance Inflation Factor of 1.00. This score confirms the absence of multicollinearity, demonstrating that trust in elections provides independent information to the model. These statistical parameters justify the treatment of trust in elections variable as a separate procedural construct, distinct from substantive institutional evaluations.

Furthermore, employing trust in elections as a proxy for an aggregated individual assessment of the quality of elections is also associated with the potential risk of partisan bias, where respondents' evaluations of the electoral process are affected by their satisfaction with the immedaite outcome of the elections, frequently coined as the "winner-loser" gap. To mitigate this risk and isolate the evaluation of electoral process from mere partisan affect, we include a "winner-loser" status individual-level control variable in our model (see section 3.7). By accounting for whether a respondent supports a party currently in the overnment or in the opposition, we can more accurately estimate the independent effect of perceived electoral integrity on political trust. Preliminary analysis confirms the presence of a significant "winner-loser" gap in the perception of electoral integrity. Results from a two-sample t-test (N = 29,368) indicate that respondents who support a government party exhibit significantly higher trust in elections (mean = 2.99) compared to those aligned with the opposition (mean = 2.49; t = -38.01, p < 0.001). Finally, multivariate regression confirmed that trust in elections remains a robust and independent predictor of aggregated political trust index (beta = 1.32, p < 0.001) even when partisan alignment is controlled. These results suggest that while plitical alignment shifts the baseline of trust, the cognitive evaluation of electoral integrity remains the consistent predictor of institutional trust.

Table 9. Construct Validity and Structural Stability of the Quality of Elections Proxy

Group	N	Correlation (r) with PIT Index
Pooled sample	29,368	0.630***
Supporters of opposition parties	21,288	0.622***
Supporters of parties in the government	8,080	0.598***

*Note: *** p < 0.001.*

Table 10. Multivariate Regression Results: PIT Index

Predictor Variable	Coeff. (B)	Std. Error	t-statistic	Beta (β)
Trust in Elections	1.323***	0.009	134.20	0.602
Winner-Loser Status	0.871***	0.022	38.85	0.174
Constant	1.280****	0.027	47.16	—
Adjusted R^2	0.4376	—	—	—
N	29,365	—	—	—

*Note: *** p < 0.001.*

3.5. Trustworthiness Evaluation

3.5.1. Measuring Trustworthiness in Survey Research

A large share of recent studies that rely on survey research operationalizes trustworthiness of politicians (and institutions) as a set of expectations about whether the officeholders will act competently, ethically, and in the interest of the public. A common approach is therefore to survey multi-item batteries that map onto established dimensions of trustworthiness (usually, 3-5 dimensions are operationalized, depending on the approach). The multi-item batteries then feature statements that provide descriptive information in present tense that concerns specific aspects of conduct of organizations or governmental bodies – or forward-looking statements that describe various situations, asking the respondent to evaluate how likely a certain outcome is to happen. As a rule, the provided statements are not drawn at random and are designed to represent specific dimensions of trustworthiness. Moreover, a greater number of items is usually included, based on the assumption that some of them might not perform as well as others. Hence the development of exact measurement tools or indices usually follows at least two steps: scale development, followed by empirical validation whether the items indeed reproduce the intended structure.

Past research specifically stresses the importance of using present or future tense statements amid the nature of trust as the willingness to be vulnerable based on the expectation that another actor or institution will perform. While past experiences matter for developing expectations about the future actions of political actors and institutions, trustworthiness evaluations should not be framed in past tense to avoid confounding trustworthiness with performance evaluation or episodic one-time experiences. Instead, generalized current beliefs or anticipated future conduct should be reflected in measurement instrument (Grimmelikhuijsen & Knies, 2017; PytlikZillig et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2022). Grimmelikhuijsen & Knies (2017), when validating a scale for citizen trust in government organizations, employed a number of present tense statements to illustrate competence, benevolence, and integrity, such as: *"the municipality of XX carries out its duty very well", "if citizens need help, the municipality of XX will do its best to help them", "the municipality of XX is genuinely interested in the wellbeing of citizens", "the municipality of XX approaches citizens in a sincere way"*. Similarly, a study developing a scale to measure trust in public health authorities employed present tense statements highlighting beneficence and competence: *"they do everything they should to protect the health of the population", "they come up with new ideas to solve health problems"*. Additionally, the study included statements referring to "negative trustworthiness": *"they keep trying the same things to help the public, even when they don't work very well", "they are more concerned about some racial and ethnic groups than other groups"* (Holroyd et al., 2021). In the same vein, PytlikZillig et al. (2016) distinguish between positive and negative trustworthiness: *"The Lincoln Police Department cares about people like me", "The Lincoln Police Department is not representative of the community"*.

The OECD Drivers of Trust survey features forward-looking empirical measures capturing dimensions of trustworthiness such as integrity, responsiveness, reliability, openness, and fairness. In this context, OECD approach distinguishes between more generalized (and simultaneously vague) character judgements (e.g., "the government is competent / fair / transparent) and behavioural measures that anchor evaluations in concrete, rule-governed institutional conduct. Character judgements are considered cognitively underspecified and culturally elastic, allowing respondents to draw on heterogeneous considerations such as recent performance, partisan alignment, or affective feedback. This makes character judgement format of trustworthiness assessment questionnaires more volatile, especially in cross-national setting. Behavioural measures instead ask respondents to assess whether public authorities are likely to act in normatively

prescribed ways under specific situations. This design improves the cross-national comparability of individual and aggregated measures and in turn allows trustworthiness to be assessed as expectation of compliance with institutional obligations and constraints, rather than as a generalized evaluation across multiple foundations (Nguyen et al., 2022; OECD, 2024). Some examples of trustworthiness assessment judgements from the 2024 OECD Survey on Drivers of Trust in Public Institutions include: "*Government employee was offered money by a citizen or a firm for speeding up access to a public service, how likely do you think it is that they would refuse it?*", *"If the national government takes a decision, how likely do you think it is that it will draw on the best available evidence, research, and statistical data?"*, *"If a decision affecting your local community is to be made by the local government, how likely do you think it is that you would have an opportunity to voice your opinion?"*.

3.5.2. Trustworthiness Indices and Robustness Checks

To measure citizen evaluations of trustworthiness of political actors and institutions in TRUEDEM survey, we rely on a 9-items module of forward-looking behavioural measures. In the questionnaire, the respondents were provided with a list of statements (appearing one by one), where they were asked to estimate how likely or unlikely this situation is to happen. The 10-point response scale varies from "1" – "Extremely unlikely" to "10" – "Extremely likely". The set of statements was designed to capture a broad scope of real-world situations, including design of new policies, response to citizens' demands, keeping electoral promises, involvement in scandals, cases of corruption among the others. The order of the items was randomized to reduce order effects. Collectively, the statements operationalize the three core dimensions of trustworthiness: (1) competence that is the ability to deliver results in economy, security, services provision etc.; (2) integrity that the commitment to moral and legal rules, including anti-corruption norms and ethics; (3) impartiality, that is treating everyone equally, adhering to the norms of fairness and transparency (Table 11).

Table 11. Trustworthiness Evaluation and Dimensions of Trustworthiness

Statement	Dimension
If the government promised to reduce inflation, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be able to do so?	Competency
If you shared your personal data with a government department, how likely or unlikely do you think that it would be protected?	Competency
If many people complained about a public service that is working badly, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that it would be improved?	Competency
If a member of parliament in this country were offered a bribe, how likely or unlikely is it that they would accept it?	Integrity
If a government minister was found by the courts to have mishandled public funds, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would resign voluntarily?	Integrity
If a politician in your country engaged in sexual misconduct, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be disciplined for their actions?	Integrity
If considering new tax policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that your government would act in the interests of all citizens?	Impartiality
If a newspaper published a story about government policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that this would be accurate and reliable?	Impartiality
If an official inquiry found government ministers failed in their duties, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be held accountable? (q31)	Impartiality

Table 12. Trustworthiness Evaluations by Individual Items and by Country (mean values)

	NL	DK	SE	BE	IE	FI	DE	ES	PT	PL	AT	FR	EE	CZ	LT	IT	RO	LV	SK	HU	SI	HR	GR	BG	Total
If you shared your personal data with a government department, how likely or unlikely do you think that it would be protected?	6.6	6.5	6.6	6.2	6.0	6.8	6.1	5.6	5.7	5.6	6.2	5.5	5.6	5.9	5.3	5.2	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.1	5.4	5.0	4.6	4.9	5.7
If a politician in your country engaged in sexual misconduct, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be disciplined for their actions?	6.8	6.9	6.8	5.9	5.7	6.2	5.9	5.9	5.3	5.5	5.7	5.4	5.6	5.9	5.2	4.1	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.3	4.5	4.5	3.7	3.7	5.3
If a newspaper published a story about government policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that this would be accurate and reliable?	6.2	5.9	5.7	5.9	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.3	5.7	5.1	5.3	5.4	5.1	4.7	4.9	5.0	4.8	4.5	4.9	4.1	4.6	4.6	4.4	4.2	5.1
If many people complained about a public service that is working badly, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that it would be improved?	5.8	5.4	5.6	5.2	5.2	5.2	4.8	5.7	5.3	5.1	4.6	4.9	5.3	4.8	5.3	4.8	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.5	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.5	5.0
If an official inquiry found government ministers failed in their duties, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be held accountable?	6.1	5.4	5.6	5.2	4.9	5.2	4.8	5.0	4.3	4.7	4.4	4.9	4.5	4.2	4.1	4.4	4.2	3.6	3.8	3.6	3.3	3.6	3.2	3.2	4.4
If a government minister was found by the courts to have mishandled public funds, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would resign voluntarily?	6.3	5.7	5.8	5.2	5.4	5.2	5.2	3.9	5.0	4.4	4.8	4.3	4.6	3.8	4.0	3.6	3.8	3.9	3.6	3.4	3.4	3.3	3.4	3.6	4.4
If a member of parliament in your country were offered a bribe, how likely or unlikely is it that they would accept it?	5.2	5.7	5.3	4.5	5.0	5.3	5.3	5.4	4.6	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.6	3.7	3.7	4.2	3.1	4.0	3.4	3.8	3.5	2.8	3.2	2.9	4.3
If the government promised to reduce inflation, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be able to do so?	5.0	5.2	4.9	4.8	4.8	4.2	4.5	4.7	4.7	4.8	4.1	4.4	3.7	3.8	3.9	4.2	4.4	3.5	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.6	4.0	3.4	4.3
If considering new tax policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that your government would act in the interests of all citizens?	5.4	4.8	4.8	4.9	5.1	3.9	4.4	4.7	4.9	4.7	4.2	4.7	3.7	3.7	3.6	4.4	3.7	3.7	3.9	3.7	3.5	3.7	3.7	3.6	4.2
Average across all dimensions (mean)	5.9	5.7	5.7	5.3	5.3	5.3	5.2	5.1	5.1	4.9	4.9	4.9	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.4	4.4	4.3	4.2	4.1	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8	4.7

Note: All items were harmonized to a uniform 1–10 scale, where greater values correspond to higher levels of perceived trustworthiness. Individual items and countries are presented in descending order based on the respective mean values of each trustworthiness dimension evaluated.

Analysis of individual answers distributions suggests that there is substantial variation both across countries and dimensions. Items related to administrative competence and service delivery tend to receive comparatively higher mean values, especially in Northern and Western European countries. In contrast, items tapping the dimensions of integrity and impartiality generally receive lower scores. The highest (on average) trustworthiness score was assigned in relation to safe management of personal data (5.7); the lowest – concerning the impartiality of the new tax policy (4.2). On average, across all evaluated dimensions, the highest scores were assigned by the respondents in the Netherlands (5.9), followed by Denmark (5.7) and Sweden (5.7). The lowest evaluations of trustworthiness were given by the respondents in Croatia (3.9), Greece (3.8), and Bulgaria (3.8) (Table 12). Country-specific answers distributions are available in Annex 1.

To further test the theoretical proposition that trustworthiness is a multidimensional construct and to distinguish the core dimensions of trustworthiness, we conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) on the cited above nine survey items. The Maximum Likelihood extraction was utilized because it allows for a formal test of the model's "goodness-of-fit" and provides information criteria to compare potentially different constellations of individual components. To account for the expected relationships between the different facets of trust, we employ oblique Promax rotation, allowing the factors to correlate while preserving their conceptual clarity. All items were harmonized to a uniform 1–10 scale, where greater values correspond to higher levels of perceived trustworthiness.

Models containing one to five factors were compared to determine the most parsimonious fit for the data. While the single-factor model (representing "Generalized Trustworthiness") is widely used in Political Science, our analysis suggests it is statistically insufficient for the TRUEDEM sample, yielding the highest error rates as measured by Akaike Information Criterion (AIC = 5939.30). As shows in the table below, compared to this, the 3-factor model yielded a major improvement in fit: the AIC dropped from 5939.30 in the 1-factor model to 261.53 in the 3-factor model, and the Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC), went down from 6013.40 to 459.13 from 1-factor to 3-factor model. The results demonstrate that a unidimensional model (1-factor) is statistically insufficient, yielding the highest error rates (AIC = 5939.30$). While the AIC continues to decrease in 4-factor and 5-factor models, the more conservative criterion BIC provides a more rigorous text and increases as a penalty for over-complexity. This provides strong empirical evidence that, on one hand, the respondents distinguish between different government attributes rather than holding a monolithic view of trust, and on the other – that for the particular set of statements employed in TRUEDEM survey, a 3-factor or a 4-factor model of trustworthiness is optimal. To maintain the conceptual clarity and to align the measures with out three-factor theoretical model, we employ the 3-factor model of trustworthiness. Specifically, the three-factor model distinguishes the core dimensions of Competency, Integrity, and Impartiality, without further fragmentation of the data into dimensions that lack clear theoretical meaning. and use it to develop 3 indexes subsequently included as independent predictors.

Table 13. Model fit statistics for alternative factor solutions

Number of Factors	Log-Likelihood	AIC	BIC
1 Factor	-2960.65	5939.30	6013.40
2 Factors	-1068.27	2170.53	2310.50
3 Factors	-106.77	261.53	459.13
4 Factors	-25.55	111.10	358.09
5 Factors	-6.38	82.77	370.93

The rotated factor loadings revealed three distinct clusters that broadly align with the three theoretical dimensions of trustworthiness: competency, integrity, and impartiality. The factor structure (table 14) is used to guide index construction

1) **Competence (Performance):** This factor captures perceptions of the political actors' ability to delivery effective policy outcome. It is comprised of acting in the interest of all citizens when developing tax policy (factor loading 0.844), complemented by the government's ability to deliver social and economic outcomes, including reduction of inflation (0.580) and public service improvement (0.495). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for this index is 0.80
2) **Integrity (Ethics):** This factor refers to the adherence to moral and legal standards. It is comprised of elements related to sanctioning of misconduct, such as ministers resigning voluntary following mishandling public funds (0.711), being disciplines for sexual misconduct (0.695), and being held responsible for failures in duties (0.572). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for this index is 0.83
3) **Impartiality (Fairness):** This dimension captures the neutrality and reliability of the state institutions. It is comprised by the expectations regarding the protection of personal data (0.713) and the accuracy and reliability of news information regarding government policy (0.463). Cronbach's alpha coefficient of internal consistency for this index is 0.68.

Table 14. Rotated factor loadings and uniqueness for the three-factor trustworthiness model

Statement	Factor 1 (Competence)	Factor 2 (Integrity)	Factor 3 (Impartiality)	Uniqueness
If a member of parliament in this country were offered a bribe, how likely or unlikely is it that they would accept it? (q26)	0.002	0.363	−0.0405	0.884
If many people complained about a public service that is working badly, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that it would be improved? (q27)	0.495	0.099	0.157	0.531
If considering new tax policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that your government would act in the interests of all citizens? (q28)	0.844	0.026	−0.0043	0.261
If the government promised to reduce inflation, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be able to do so? (q34)	0.580	0.244	−0.0181	0.428
If an official inquiry found government ministers failed in their duties, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be held accountable? (q31)	0.287	0.572	0.031	0.329
If a government minister was found by the courts to have mishandled public funds, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would resign voluntarily? (q32)	0.142	0.711	−0.0137	0.351
If a politician in your country engaged in sexual misconduct, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be disciplined for their actions? (q33)	−0.0455	0.695	0.172	0.390
If a newspaper published a story about government policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that this would be accurate and reliable? (q29)	0.250	0.053	0.463	0.517
If you shared your personal data with a government department, how likely or unlikely do you think that it would be protected? (q30)	−0.0133	0.102	0.713	0.404

Note: Table entries show rotated factor loadings (pattern matrix) from a maximum-likelihood exploratory factor analysis with a Promax rotation. The analysis extracts three factors corresponding to competence, integrity, and impartiality. Uniqueness values are reported in the final column.

Finally, one item (acceptance of a bribe) has been excluded from further analysis due to consistently weak loadings (maximum loading 0.363, which is below 0.400 commonly accepted threshold) and very high uniqueness (0.884). Both values indicate that this item comprises a distinct component that does not contribute meaningfully to any latent dimension.

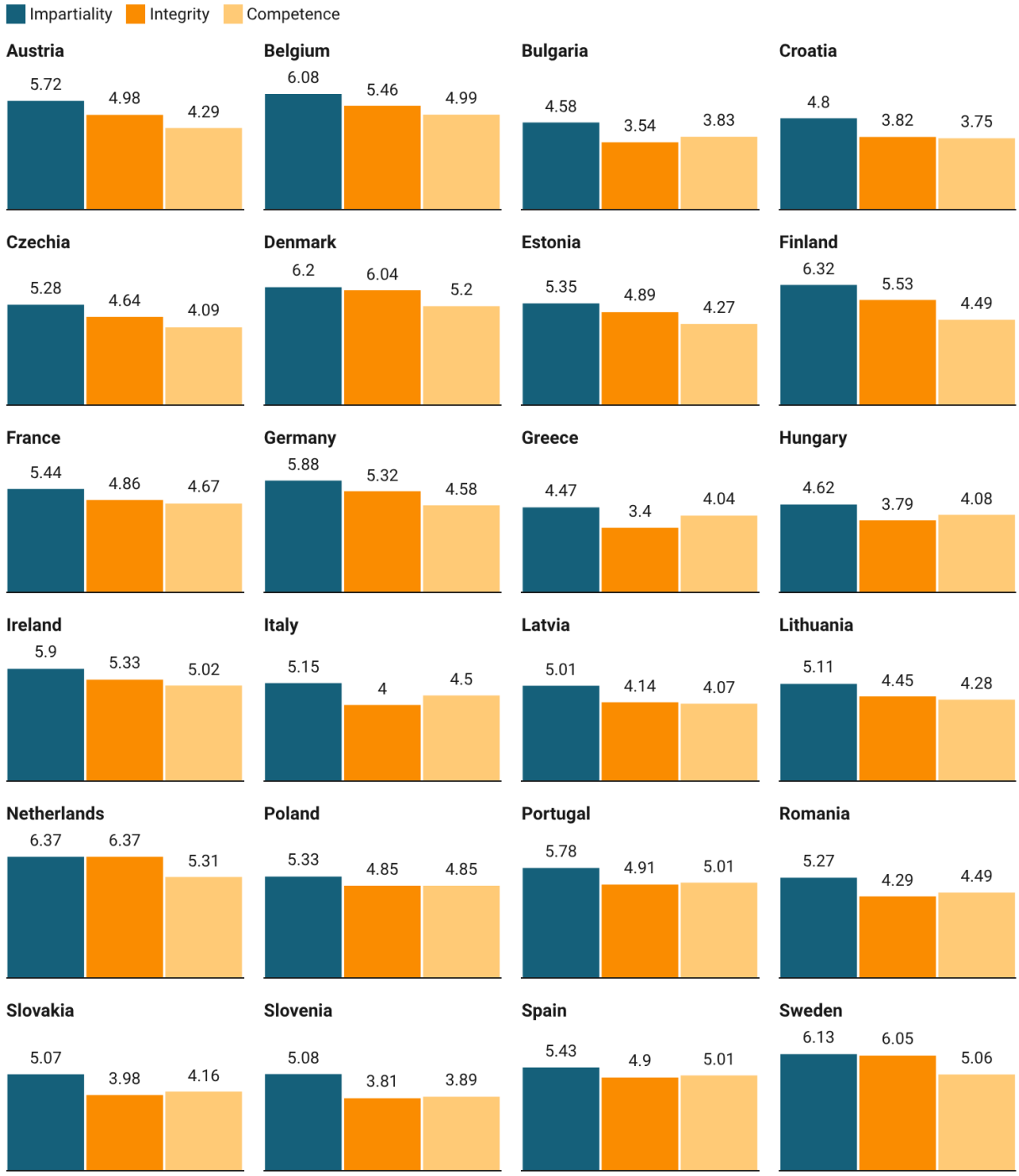
Country-specific EFA indicate that the pooled structure as described above is replicated fully in 9 out of 24 surveyed countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Finland, France, Portugal, Slovenia, Sweden). In all these cases, items load on the same factors as in the pooled model with clear primary factor loadings and limited cross-loading. Importantly, the countries in which the pooled structure fully replicates belong to different parts of Europe. This indicates that the items capture dimensions of trustworthiness that are meaningful across diverse national contexts, rather than reflecting a biased, one-region-specific understandings. In the remaining countries, deviations primarily concern the instability of the impartiality dimension, which either loads on the same factor as competence or splits between competence and integrity. In a few cases (Estonia, Greece, Romania and Slovakia), the competence dimension itself fragments between integrity and impartiality factors. In contrast, integrity emerged as the most stable dimension, with the same three items clustering together in nearly all countries.

Our findings point to three patterns recurrent across the empirical research of trustworthiness. First, while the dimensions of trustworthiness are distinguishable conceptually, empirical analysis consistently shows that they are often closely correlated, suggesting that citizen judgements tend to be guided by the general perceptions of the government/ politicians being “good” or “bad”. Lee et al. (2022) find that dimensions such as competence, benevolence, and integrity exhibit high intercorrelations indicating that the respondents frequently rely on overarching evaluative judgment rather than clearly differentiating between specific attributes. Similar, van der Meer & Hakhverdian (2017) conclude that survey items tapping fairness, honesty, and competence load on closely related latent dimensions, highlighting the fact that citizens often do not sharply separate procedural integrity from performance competence in their survey responses. Second, while alternative specifications are widely explored, the three-factor structure (typically distinguishing competence, integrity, and impartiality) remains most commonly recommended and theoretically grounded. Studies show that three-factor models repeatedly outperform one- or two-factor models in terms of model fit and interpretability (PytlikZillig et al., 2016; Grimmelikhuijsen & Knies, 2017; Lee et al., 2022; Burns et al., 2023). Third, a growing body of research points out that the composition and salience (factor loadings) of trustworthiness dimensions is not always stable across various national contexts. While similar dimensions can often be identified, their relative importance, intercorrelations, and empirical separability differ across cultural and political contexts (van der Meer & Hakhverdian, 2017; Grimmelikhuijsen & Knies, 2017; Devine et al., 2024).

Despite the observed cross-national variation in country-specific factor solutions, the use of three-dimensional measurement of trustworthiness is justified for comparative analysis. First, the proposed 3-indices structure replicates fully in a substantial subset of countries, with deviations elsewhere being systematic rather than random and concentrated primarily in the impartiality dimension. Second, the integrity-related factor exhibits high stability across countries, and the competence-related cluster is consistent in most cases. Finally, several country-specific models also display Heywood cases, meaning that the factor solutions are statistically unstable at the national level. Taken together, these results support the use of pooled indices as comparable summary measures of trustworthiness, while acknowledging heterogeneity in how individual items relate to these dimensions across national contexts. Consequently, we generate three composite indices by

calculating the mean score of the components within each factor; each index values vary from 1 (less trustworthy) to 10 (most trustworthy) (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Mean evaluations of trustworthiness dimensions by country



3.6. Voting in Elections

To measure participation in elections at the individual level, we employ the self-reported frequency of voting as documented in the TRUEDEM survey. The respondents were asked: *"When elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never?"* The respondents were asked to evaluate their voting experience in national elections (without further differentiation between parliamentary and presidential contests) and European parliamentary election. For each of the categories, the respondents could choose one response option between *"Always", "Usually", "Never"* or report that they are "not allowed to vote" amid foreign citizenship or other potential reasons. The latter group is excluded from subsequent analysis.

The frequency of voting in elections is employed as a measure of repeated engagement with and experience of political participation. Unlike dichotomous indicators of turnout (voted or not in the most recent election), this measure captures habitual and longitudinal patterns of electoral participation. This interpretation corresponds to our conceptualization of voting as a form of political experience rather than as a single, stand-alone event. Frequency-based indicator therefore reflects cumulative exposure to electoral procedures, campaigns, and outcomes, which is central for the interpretation of participation as experiential input, which is employed in our theoretical model. In accordance with it, citizens who report "always" voting have likely repeatedly encountered electoral process over time. Respectively, those who "usually" vote have more of an intermittent exposure to electoral campaign. Finally, those who report to "never" vote lack such direct experience altogether. While this group might remain familiar with campaign dynamics and election outcomes through media exposure or social interaction with family and friends, the absence of direct participation implies a more limited and indirect engagement with the electoral process itself. Consecutively, evaluations formed by non-voters are likely to rely more on mediated information, prior beliefs, and some generalized attitudes toward the political system.

At the same time, there are some limitations associated with this measure. Same as the retrospective turnout questions, such a frequency-based indicator is also subject to recall error and social desirability bias (e.g. over-reporting). Second, the categories "always" and "usually" do not map onto any fixed number of elections and may be interpreted somewhat differently across respondents, social groups, and national contexts (does 'voted in 4 out of 5 last elections' stand for "always" or "usually"?). Finally, the way how the question is worded, it captures participation propensity rather than actual turnout in the latest or any specific contest. Notwithstanding, the frequency-based indicator of voting provides a theoretically appropriate and empirically practical indicator of electoral participation as cumulative political experience, which is the respective construct for the mechanism, which is examined in this study.

Subsequent analysis employs two indicators. For the part that focused on trust in national political institutions, voting frequency in national elections is used as the primary indicator of participation. To assess the robustness and scope of the proposed mechanisms beyond the national arena, the same model is replicated with trust in European institutions as the outcome. In these analyses, voting frequency in European Parliament elections is used as the corresponding predictor. This parallel operationalization ensures conceptual consistency across models by aligning the level of participation with the institutional level of trust under consideration. As the distribution of answers suggests (Figure 8), the share of respondents who report to vote "always" exceeds 60% in Greece, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Italy, Belgium, France, Sweden, and Denmark, and falls below 50% in Finland, Slovenia, Lativa, Estonia, and Lithuania. The share of respondents who reported to "never" vote largely mirrors this pattern, but in the opposite direction. The proportion of those who votes "usually"

varies between 20% and 35% on average. In contrast, self-reported participation in EP elections is somewhat lower (Figure 9). Voting experience in EP elections is somewhat less frequent: 30-40% vote "usually" and 10-30% - "never".

Figure 8. Voting Frequency in National Elections (%)
When national elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never?

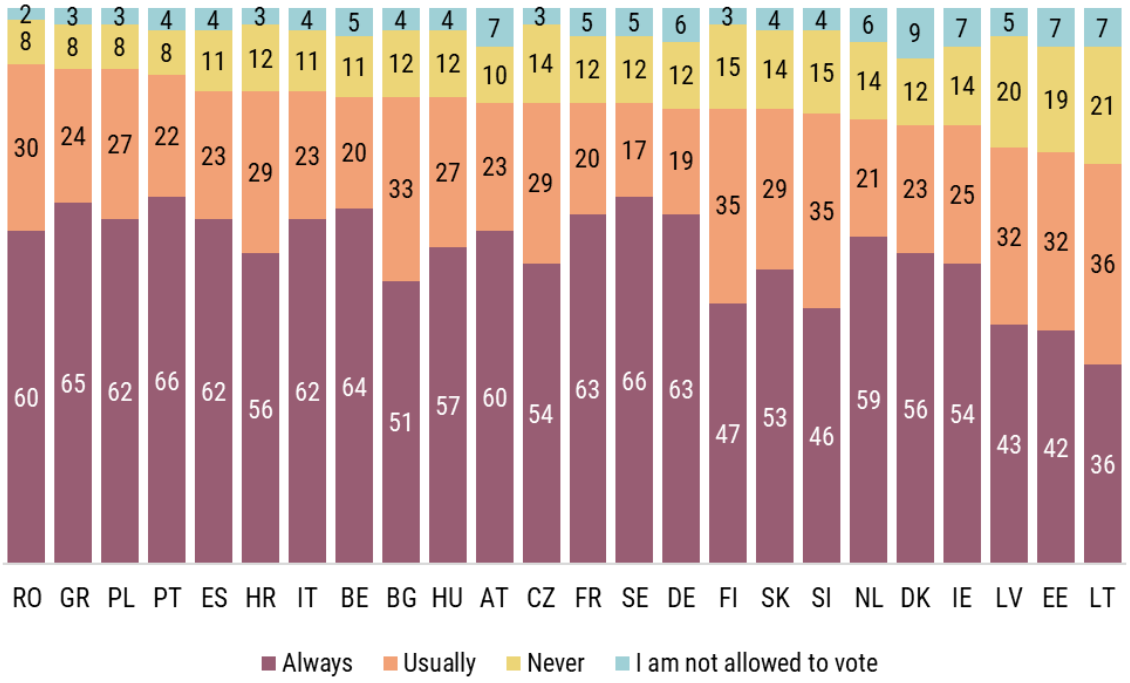


Figure 9. Voting Frequency in European parliamentary Elections (%)
When European parliamentary elections take place, do you vote always, usually or never?

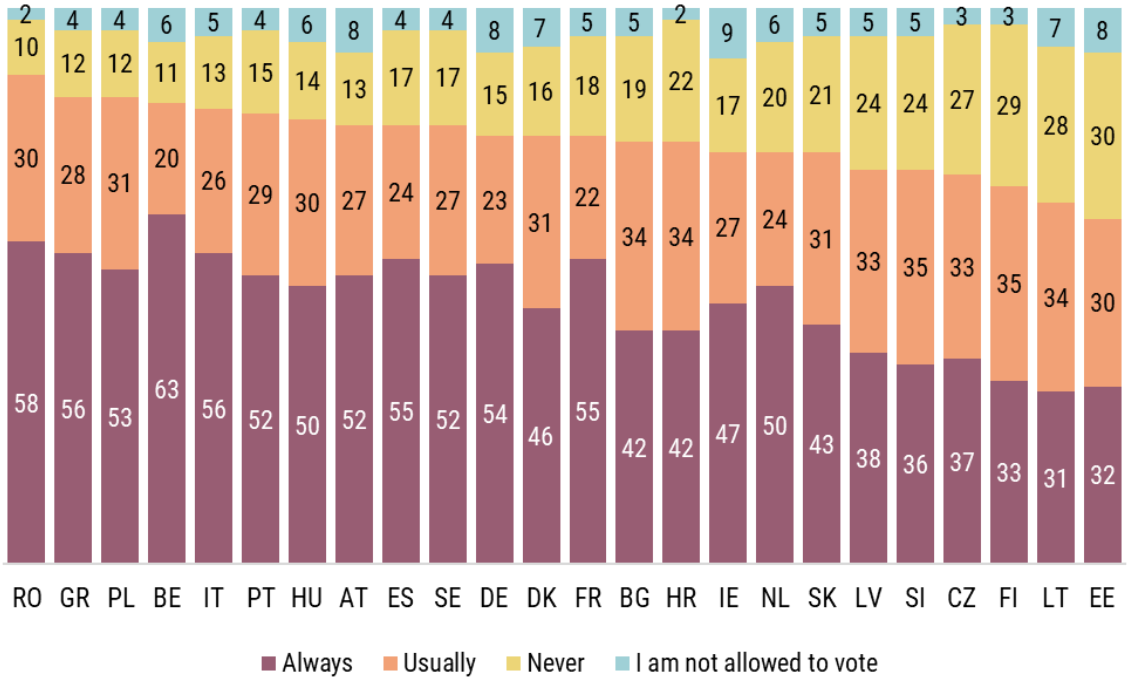


Table 15. Descriptive Statistics of Self-Reported Voting in National and European Parliament Elections, by Country

	National Elections				European Elections			
Country	**N**	**Mean**	**Median**	**SD**	**N**	**Mean**	**Median**	**SD**
Austria	1,117	2.53	3	0.69	1,112	2.41	3	0.73
Belgium	1,141	2.58	3	0.68	1,125	2.57	3	0.68
Bulgaria	1,138	2.42	3	0.69	1,122	2.26	2	0.76
Croatia	1,165	2.44	3	0.71	1,161	2.19	2	0.78
Czechia	1,168	2.42	3	0.72	1,165	2.12	2	0.80
Denmark	1,069	2.47	3	0.72	1,078	2.31	2	0.76
Estonia	1,095	2.23	2	0.77	1,084	2.01	2	0.83
Finland	1,142	2.32	2	0.74	1,133	2.05	2	0.80
France	1,414	2.54	3	0.71	1,401	2.39	3	0.78
Germany	1,394	2.54	3	0.71	1,342	2.41	3	0.76
Greece	1,163	2.60	3	0.63	1,150	2.47	3	0.69
Hungary	1,146	2.47	3	0.70	1,124	2.38	3	0.73
Ireland	1,102	2.43	3	0.74	1,073	2.32	3	0.77
Italy	1,169	2.58	3	0.67	1,153	2.49	3	0.70
Latvia	1,120	2.17	2	0.77	1,100	2.02	2	0.79
Lithuania	1,279	2.24	2	0.78	1,264	2.14	2	0.79
Netherlands	1,120	2.51	3	0.73	1,117	2.34	3	0.80
Poland	1,155	2.57	3	0.64	1,138	2.44	3	0.70
Portugal	1,149	2.62	3	0.62	1,139	2.41	3	0.73
Romania	1,173	2.61	3	0.61	1,170	2.56	3	0.64
Slovakia	1,137	2.38	3	0.74	1,115	2.20	2	0.79
Slovenia	1,171	2.34	2	0.72	1,150	2.15	2	0.77
Spain	1,160	2.57	3	0.68	1,159	2.43	3	0.75
Sweden	1,151	2.60	3	0.69	1,149	2.38	3	0.76

3.7. Winners-Losers Status

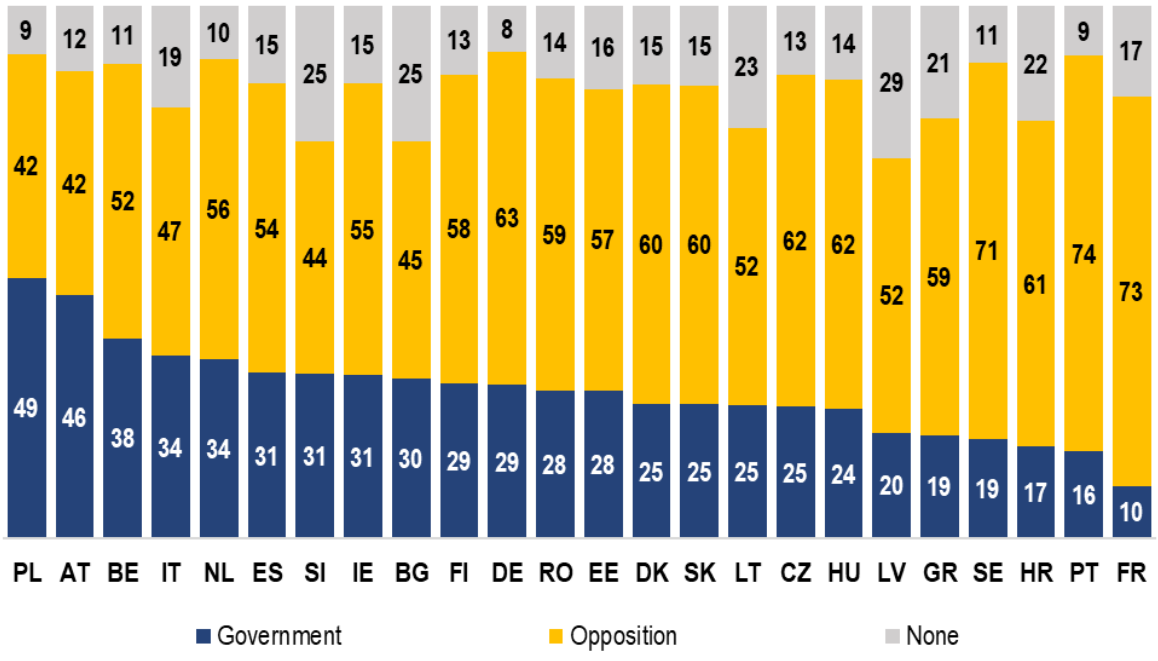
As discussed in theoretical section, political trust (and more widely evaluation of and satisfaction with the performance of political institutions) can be influenced by the status of the political force that citizens identify themselves with. Those whose preferred political party is a member of the incumbent government, may form their trust judgements toward the incumbent government and other political bodies differently as compared to those whose preferred political party is in opposition and thus has limited opportunities to influence the immediate political decisions. To account for respondents' own political position in relation to the governing power, we include a measure of "winner–loser status" based on party alignment. This variable is constructed using respondents' reported vote intention in the TRUEDEM survey, where they were asked: *"If there were a national parliamentary election tomorrow, which party on this list would you vote for, if any?"*

To operationalize the winner–loser status variable, for each country, all relevant political parties were coded according to their government status as of July 2025. Coding has been implemented based on the party-level information from the ParlGov database using cabinet_party variable. According to ParlGov codebook, a "cabinet party" refers to a political party that participates in a government

coalition as a member of the cabinet at a specific point in time, meaning it holds one or more ministerial positions in the executive branch (Doring & Manow, 2024). ParlGov defines a new "cabinet" every time when the government formation changes, including after the new election, or after a change in the involving parties, or when a new Head of Government takes office. Based on ParlGov dataset, parties that were part of the national governing coalition as of July 2025 were coded as governing parties (1), while parties outside the executive were coded as opposition parties (0). Because government compositions changed in several countries in late 2024 and 2025, after the most recent ParlGov update, this information was manually updated to reflect current cabinet participation at the time of the survey. Respondents were then classified as political "winners" or "losers" based on the government status of the party they reported intending to vote for. Respondents who indicated that they have not decided yet about their vote at the next elections or said they would vote "against everyone" or would not vote at all, were also coded as (2) "none" and are expected to exhibit no strong winner/loser effect as absence of the readiness to support any political party indicates lack of alignment or political distancing.

As summarized in Figure 10, the distribution of winner-loser status varies substantially across countries, with the proportion of respondents coded as aligned with governing parties often well below a majority and in some cases close to one fifth of the sample. This pattern reflects the operationalization of winner-loser status based on prospective (potential) vote intention rather than retrospective (actual) ballot casted. Prospective vote intention captures the respondent's current political alignment and expectations, which are potentially more volatile than the past electoral choice. Additionally, this group includes a sizable share of undecided voters, non-voters, and respondents who do not identify with any of the existing in their country parties, which mathematically lowers the observed share of governing-party supporters. As a result, low values should not be interpreted as indicators of unusually weak government support, but rather as reflecting phenomena such as political disengagement, party system fragmentation, and electoral volatility that vary across national contexts.

Figure 10. Respondent alignment with governing parties versus non-governing categories by country (%)



Additionally, we acknowledge that the prospective vote intention might not be equivalent to retrospective voting behaviour and does not necessarily capture whether respondents previously supported the very same political force (and thus falling under the category "winner") or another one. Nevertheless, a vote intention provides a meaningful indicator of respondents' current political alignment and whether they expect their preferred political party to be represented in government, which is the core mechanism underlying the winner-loser effects in political attitudes. Finally, using a prospective vote intention becomes particularly appropriate in cross-national analysis, where election timing varies across countries and where relying on past electoral choice may conflate outdated political alignments with the current position. At the same time, we treat this measure as a proxy rather than a perfect indicator and interpret the results accordingly.

3.8. Individual-Level Controls

The main predictors in the model examining the mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust are complemented by individual-level control variables. As past research suggests, political trust evaluations typically tend to vary by major social and demographic groups, foremost those distinguished by age and education level. For instance, comparative studies of Southern European democracies find that older respondents exhibit higher levels of trust in national political institutions as compared to young people, with the effect remaining robust after controlling for other variables such as education and socioeconomic status (Christmann et al., 2026). Age-period-cohort models data likewise indicate a persistent variation of political trust levels by age, with trust increasing with age after accounting for period and cohort effects (Devine & Valgarðsson, 2024). Key mechanisms behind the observed differences the scholarly debate attributes to life cycle socialization and institutional habituation which increase with age (Mishler & Rose, 2001; Jennings & Stoker, 2004); status security and material embeddedness, which also increase as life cycle progresses (Busemeyer & Garritzmann, 2017; Stegmueller, 2013); and political learning when individuals tend to adjust their expectations and evaluate the institutions more pragmatically rather than normatively (Norris, 2011). Beyond secondary socialization and age, education has a major influence on a wide range of individual political attitudes and evaluations, including political trust. Existing studies demonstrate that higher educational attainment is positively associated with political trust across a broad scope of national contexts, including in Europe (Brunkert et al., 2023; Noordzij et al., 2021). Multilevel regression models also confirm the presence of educational gradient, after accounting for other sociodemographic controls and country-level characteristics (Revtiuk & Zelinska, 2026). Cognitive mobilization (Van der Meer & Dekker, 2011) and enhancement of internal political efficacy through boosted competence and understanding of the political system (Hooghe & Marien, 2013) are among the core mechanisms behind the observed correlations, foremost the effect associated with tertiary education attainment. Other studies, however, point that higher education does not increase political trust blindly: instead, education citizens become more critical in their judgements and more differentiative in their evaluations of various political actors and institutions (Zmerli & Newton, 2008; Norris, 2011). TRUEDEM survey covers European residents in the age 18 years and older. In our models, we include both age (numeric, continuous variable) and education (ordinal variables coded using international ISCED-2011 classification of education levels varying from ISCED-0 – early childhood/ no education to ISCED-8 – doctoral degree or equivalent).

While age and gender frequently serve as the key individual-level control variables in trust models, relationship between the evaluation of political institutions has been established to social groups positioning themselves on different sides of the left-right political ideology scale. Although the effect is often asymmetrical and does not exhibit linear association, individuals with moderate ideological

orientations who place themselves closer to the middle of the scale tend to demonstrate higher levels of political trust as compared to those located at the ideological extremes, whether left or right (Dalton, 2004; Zmerli & Newton, 2008). Additionally, populist attitudes have proven to have negative effect no political trust (Akkerman et al., 2014; Van Hauwaert & Van Kessel, 2018). While our model already accounts for the "winner-loser" status, we additionally control for ideological position to capture variation in political trust associated with ideological extremity and the uneven distribution of populist attitudes across the ideological spectrum.

Furthermore, socioeconomic status, operationalized in TRUEDEM survey through subjective income group membership, is another correlate of political trust. Scholarly research confirms that individuals who perceive themselves as belonging to lower income groups tend to report lower levels of political trust as compared to middle- and high-income groups (Anderson & Hecht, 2012; Revtiuk & Zelinska, 2026). Public trust discourse has explained this relationship by greater vulnerability and exposure to social and economic risks among low-income groups (Stegmueller, 2013) on one hand and sense of relative deprivation on the other (Gidron & Hall, 2017). Finally, studies on inequality perceptions also show that larger perceived gaps in fairness and sense of distributive injustice contribute to lower levels of political trust (Bobzien, 2023; Palmisano et al., 2024).

Additionally, gender differences in political trust have been documented within the European context. Analyses show that females typically tend to report lower trust in political institutions compared with males in several European countries, pointing to gender as a modest but persistent correlate of trust (Donat & Lenhart, 2025). Rather than persistent gaps, however, other studies point to differences in political trust evaluations between the gender groups that are conditional and can be mediated by political interest or perceived quality of political representation (Noordzij et al., 2021; Christmann et al., 2026). Finally, empirical research on political trust also confirms variation in trust levels across urban and rural populations within the same society. Residents of rural and peripheral areas overall tend to report lower trust in political institutions amid factors such as spatial inequalities and uneven state presence (Rodríguez-Pose, 2018) and weaker perceptions of political representation and voice outside large metropolitan areas (Rico et al., 2025). In our model we control for settlement type by differentiating between two broad groups: those residing in large or medium-sized cities over 100,000 residents (coded as "urban"), and residents of villages and small towns (classified as "rural"). As the TRUEDEM survey relies on an online self-administered questionnaire as the data collection mode, we anticipate potential inconsistencies in respondents' self-classification of settlement type, which may introduce additional measurement noise. Individual answers distributions by country for all sociodemographic control variables are presented in Annex 5.

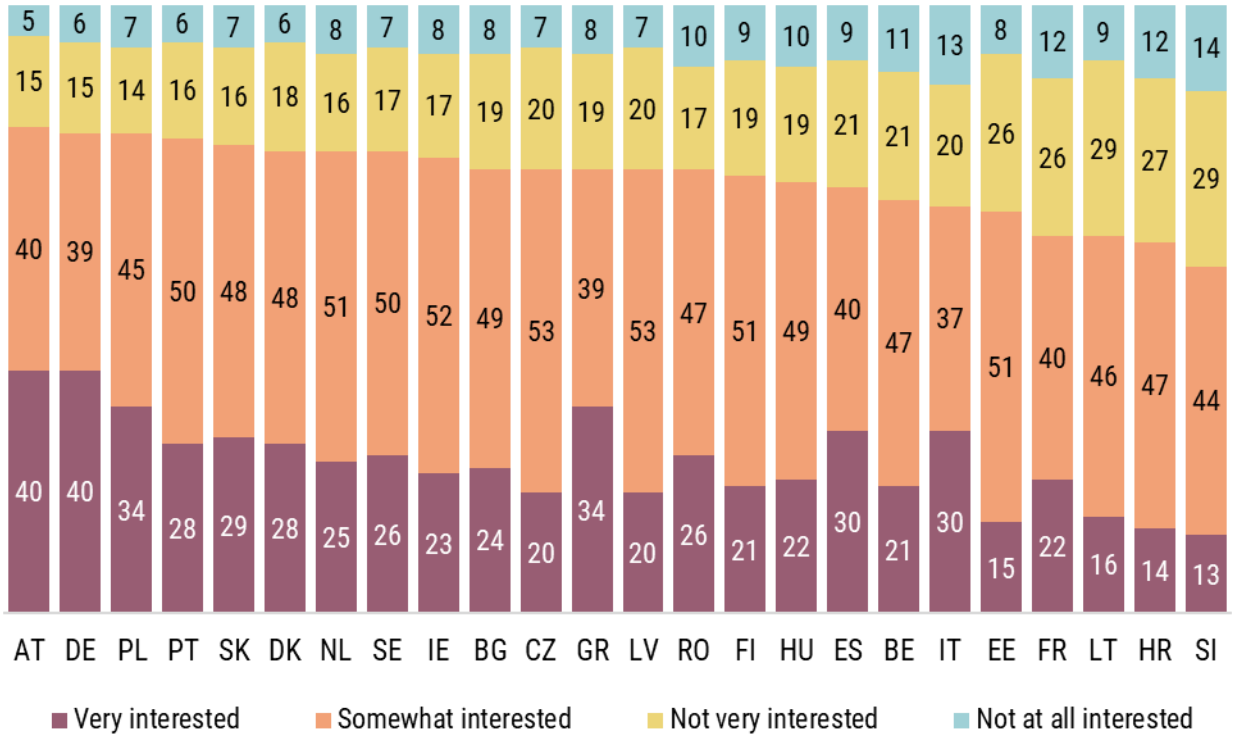
3.8.1. Interest in Politics

Across multiple political trust studies, the 'interest in politics' has been shown to serve as a conditioning mechanism of how citizens form their trust judgements. Interest in politics increases attention to political information, facilitates evaluation of political institutions and events, and therefore is treated as a motivational component of political sophistication. While political interest does not establish a linear correlation with political trust, it shows conditions, under which trust changes. In particular, politically more attentive citizens tend to be more responsive to changes in political context and update their trust judgements, when new and meaningful information enters the political environment (Devine & Valgarðsson, 2024). During a period of crisis or of poor institutional performance, political interest might lead to a decline of political trust, as citizens are better equipped to react to political failures (Muñoz, Anduiza, & Gallego, 2016; Bertsou, 2019). Conversely, when

governments are perceived as responsive and congruent, political interested citizens are more likely to react positively and maintain or increase their trust (Torcal & Christmann, 2021).

In our TRUEDEM survey, political interest was measured through a standard question: "*How interested would you say you are in politics?*" The respondents could choose between four answer options: "very interested", "somewhat interested", "not very interested", "not at all interested". As the answer distributions suggest, overall, more than half of respondents in all countries report of being interested in politics. The highest levels of political interest are observed in Austria (80%) and in Germany and Poland (79% each). The lowest levels of interest in politics are recorded in Slovenia (57%) and Hungary (61%) (Figure 11). In our model of the mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust, political interest serves as an important control variable capturing citizens' motivational capacity to attend to political information and translate it into trust evaluations.

Figure 11. Interest in Politics (%)

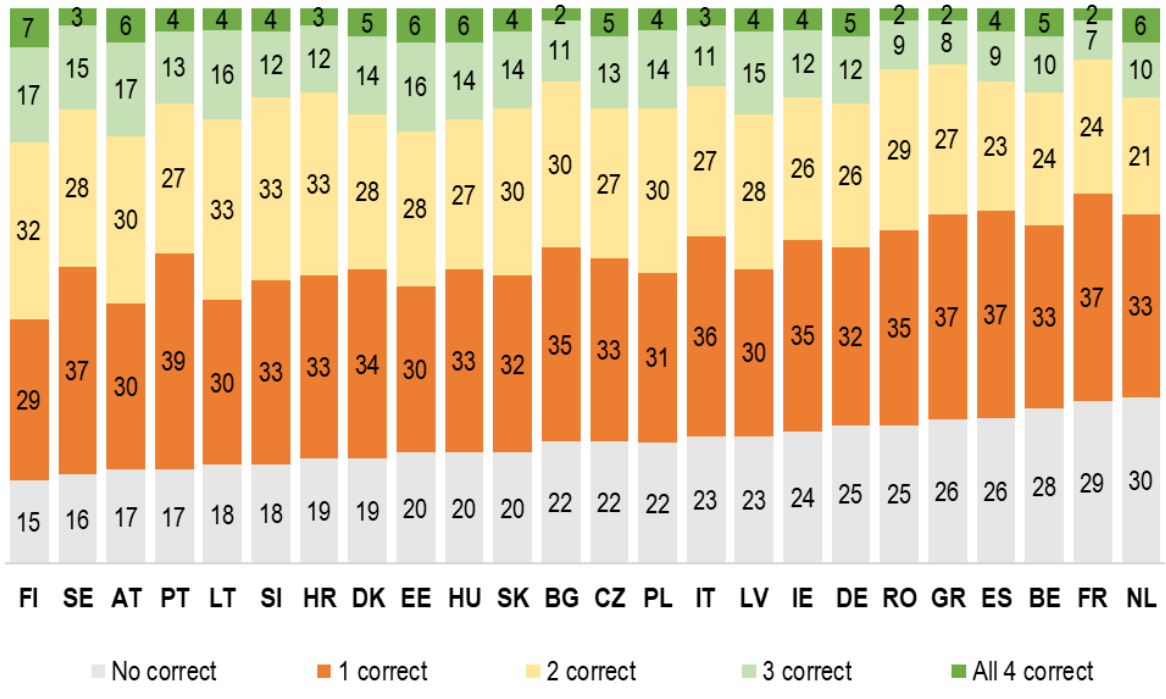


3.8.2. Civic Knowledge Index

Civic (factual) political knowledge also plays a structuring role in the formation of political trust, primarily by enabling citizens to evaluate political actors and institutions on the basis of an informed, sceptical attribution rather than based upon diffuse or affective orientations. Similar to interest in politics, civic knowledge does not establish a direct linear correlation with political trust evaluations, however, it conditions the extend, to which citizens respond to new political information. In particular, as a core element of political sophistication, civic knowledge amplifies responsiveness to governance quality and specific outcomes (Christensen & Lægreid, 2020; Dassonneville & McAllister, 2020). In the TRUEDEM survey, respondents were invited to respond to a short list of civic knowledge questions. Unlike the standard attitudinal questions, for each question the answer options deliberately included one correct and 3 incorrect answers. In particular, the respondents were

asked *"Which institution is responsible for proposing EU legislation?"* with response options: European Parliament, European Commission, European Council, and Council of the European Union; *"What is the primary function of the European Parliament?"* with response options: to elect the President of the European Council; to pass and amend EU laws; to oversee national governments; and to manage EU monetary policy; *"Which of the following countries is NOT a member of the European Union?"* with response options:: Norway, Croatia, Portugal, Finland; and *"Which of the following is the largest item of expenditure in the European Union's budget?"* where possible answers included: administrative costs; agriculture and rural development; defence and security; education and research. Based on the individual responses, an aggregated index was calculated varying from 0 (equivalent to no correct responses given) to 4 (equivalent to all responses correct) (Figure 12). In our model of the evaluative attribution of political trust, the civic knowledge index serves as an indicator of citizens' cognitive capacity to recognize institutional competence and evaluate political performance. One of the potential limitations of the index is that all questions in the civic knowledge module concern the EU – rather than national political bodies. This is caused by the cross-national scope of the survey where, amid the numerous discrepancies in national political context, equally relevant indicators could only be derived at the supranational level. Due to this, we treat the index as a proxy of civic knowledge rather than a comprehensive measure.

Figure 12. Civic Knowledge Index (%)



3.8.3. Generalized Social Trust

Generalized social trust, frequently employed as an operationalization of the concept of social capital, has long been identified as an attitude that shapes also political orientations, including political trust. Classical accounts conceptualize social trust as a generalized expectation that others in society will behave in a fair and cooperative manner, even in the absence of repeated interaction, direction information or a possibility for immediate sanctioning (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 2000; Uslaner, 2002). From the perspective of this theoretical framework, social trust is not limited to interpersonal

(horizontal) relations and reflects a broader moral and cognitive orientation towards the social world. As such, the influence of social trust extends (or "spills over") also to the political sphere and conditions how citizens evaluate political actors and political institutions. A large body of empirical research has confirmed a strong and positive association between generalized trust and trust in political institutions. Dellmuth and Tallberg (2020) demonstrated that social trust is positively associated with political trust at both national and international levels. Similarly, Kaasa and Andriani (2022) show that generalized trust remains a robust predictor of political trust, even after including macro-level and cultural factors in the model. In the same vein, Bargsted et al. (2023) confirm the presence of a positive association between social and political trust, also in national contexts, which are characterized by low baseline institutional trust. Finally, Dinesen et al. (2022) -when using quasi-experimental design- demonstrated that social trust exerts an independent causal influence on political trust, rather than merely reflecting specific institutional experiences. Findings from the scholarly research in this field become particularly important in the context of our analysis as they point that failing to control for generalized trust risks conflating institutional trust with broader social dispositions. In the TRUEDEM survey, generalized social trust was measured using the classical item on the agreement with the dual statement that *"Most people can be trusted vs One needs to be careful when dealing with people"*. Responses were recorded on a 10-point scale, with the greater score corresponding to a higher amount of generalized trust. The variable is included as a control in the model.

3.9. Country-Level Controls

As we proceed to examine the relationship between voting in elections and political trust, it is essential to account for cross-national variation in the quality and integrity of the electoral process. To this end, we include a country level measure of electoral quality represented by the expert-coded Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) index for 2024 (Garnett et al., 2024). The primary goal of this country-level control variable is to account for structural differences in electoral environments that may systematically share citizens 'trust in elections independents from their individual-level evaluations and experiences. This country-level measure complements the individual-level evaluation of the quality of elections, in our analysis operationalized by the individual trust in elections variable. The national PEI index is measured on a 0-100 scale, with higher values indicating higher perceived electoral integrity. Across the 24 countries included in our analysis, PEI scores display moderate, but meaningful variation ranging from 44 in Hungary (lowest value in our dataset) to 88 in Denmark (highest value in our dataset), with most countries clustering between 75-85 points. Nordic countries exhibit highest scores (in addition to Denmark, Finland – 86, Sweden – 83), while Central and Eastern European cases exhibit lower values (e.g., Romania – 50, Bulgaria – 51). While we recognize that other macro-level factors, such as perceptions of corruption index or economic development (e.g., GDP per capita) have been proven, both theoretically and empirically, as relevant determinants of political trust, from the modelling standpoint, amid the limited number of level-2 units (24 countries only) and potential risks of overfitting and unstable estimates, we restrict the model to a single country-level control variable.

4. Analysis and Results

To examine the evaluative attribution of institutional trust mechanism, this study employs a two-step analytical framework designed to capture both the hierarchical data structure represented by individuals nested within 24 national contexts, and the complex causal pathway through which electoral experience is translated into political trust. Accordingly, this analysis adopts a dual-modelling strategy, progressing from multi-level modelling to structural equation modelling. The first part establishes the existence and cross-national stability of the relationship between electoral experience on one hand and institutional trust on the other, while the second part models the mediating mechanisms underlying this relationship.

4.1. Multi-Level Model of Political Trust

4.1.1. Multi-Level Model Specification

Institutional trust is modelled using a two-level random-intercept specification in which individuals (level 1) are nested within countries (level 2). This modelling strategy has been employed amid the clustered structure of the data and the expectation that baseline levels of trust in political institutions vary systematically across European countries. All models are estimated using Stata's "mixed" command under restricted maximum likelihood. Country-level random intercepts are included to capture unobserved heterogeneity in baseline levels of trust across countries, while fixed effects are estimated for all individual- and country-level predictors, except for trust in elections and "winner-loser" status. This specification captures cross-national heterogeneity in baseline trust without imposing excessive demands on the data, given the limited number of level-2 units. The fixed-effects specification includes electoral participation, evaluations of political trustworthiness (competence, integrity, and impartiality), sociodemographic characteristics, cognitive resources, ideological self-placement, and a country-level index of electoral integrity. The inclusion of both individual-level perceptions of electoral fairness and a macro-level electoral integrity index allows the model to distinguish between subjective evaluations of the electoral process and the broader institutional context in which elections take place. By utilizing random slopes for trust in elections and "winner-loser" status, the MLM tests whether the effect of these core legitimacy-related elements on political trust vary significantly across national contexts. Statistical inference for fixed effects is based on Wald tests. Where applicable, model comparisons are conducted using likelihood-ratio tests based on maximum likelihood estimation and information criteria. Observations with missing data are excluded via listwise deletion. All continuous individual-level predictors were group-mean centred within countries, such that coefficients represent within-country associations between predictors and political trust index. Country-level predictors were grand-mean centred. This centring strategy isolates individual-level effects from contextual differences and facilitates interpretation of random slopes and cross-level interactions. The model thus provides a conservative test of whether the association between electoral experience and institutional trust is robust across countries, serving as a baseline assessment of the generalizability of the proposed evaluative attribution mechanism. The formal specification of the model is decomposed into its level-specific components.

Individual level (1). At the individual level, institutional trust is a function of the electoral experience and evaluative assessments of elections and political trustworthiness:

$$TrustIndex_{ij} = \beta_{0j} + \beta_1 V_{ij} + \beta_2 F_{ij} + \beta_3 W_{ij} + \beta_t T_{ij} + \beta_4 I_{ij} + \beta_5 S_{ij} + \beta_c C_{ij} + \beta_d D_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij}$$

Where:

- $\mathbf{TrustIndex_{ij}}$ is a composite index measuring generalized, aggregated institutional political trust. It represents the final output of the evaluative process for individual *i* in country *j*. The outcome is represented by PIT index in models investigating impact of electoral participation on institutional trust at national level and EPIT index in models examining the role of voting in EP elections on confidence in European institutions.
- $\boldsymbol{\beta_{0j}}$ is random intercept, which represents the country-specific baseline of institutional trust. It is modelled as a function of macro-level predictors (electoral integrity).
- $\mathbf{V_{ij}}$ is frequency of voting – the measure of the habitual engagement with the electoral system for individual *i* in country *j*. Frequency of voting in national vs EP elections is used interchangeably in models employing PIT or EPIT as outcome.
- $\mathbf{F_{ij}}$ is the perceived fairness of elections that captures the assessment of whether elections are conducted in a trustworthy manner and thus can be trusted for individual *i* in country *j*.
- $\mathbf{W_{ij}}$ is the partisan outcome – categorical variable identifying whether the respondent is a political "winner" (supporting a government party) or a "loser" (supporting the party in opposition) for individual *i* in country *j*.
- $\boldsymbol{T_{ij}}$ is individual assessment of politician trustworthiness, a three-component cluster capturing the perceived Competence, Integrity, and Impartiality of political actors and institutions, for individual *i* in country *j*.
- $\boldsymbol{I_{ij}}$ is the individual ideological position measured as self-placement on the left-right political scale for individual *i* in country *j*, to control for general political orientation.
- $\boldsymbol{S_{ij}}$ is perceived generalized social trust (to other people) for individual *i* in country *j*, to control for the influence of respondent's inherent trusting disposition on political trust.
- $\boldsymbol{C_{ij}}$ is a cluster measures referring to individual cognitive resources, including civic knowledge and political interest, for individual *i* in country *j*. It accounts for the individual's capacity and motivation to process political information and perform evaluative attribution.
- $\boldsymbol{D_{ij}}$ is a cluster of individual-level sociodemographic variables including age, gender, education, income, and urban/rural residence to isolate the specific effects of the political and electoral experience, or individual *i* in country *j*.
- $\boldsymbol{\epsilon_{ij}}$ is the random intercept which accounts for country-level variation.

County level (2). At the country level, the random intercept (country-specific baseline of institutional trust) is modelled as a function of the national electoral integrity index.

$$\beta_{0j} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(PEI_j) + u_{0j}$$

Where:

- $\boldsymbol{\gamma_{00}}$ is the intercept of the country level equation, representing the estimated average level of trust across all countries when the PEI index and all individual predictors are at zero.
- $\boldsymbol{\gamma_{01}}$ is the macro-level coefficient for the PEI index, which estimates the effect of electoral integrity on the national baseline of trust.
- $\boldsymbol{PEI_j}$ is the Perceptions of Electoral Integrity (PEI) index, representing the expert-coded (semi-objective) quality of the electoral process at the country level in country *j*.
- $\boldsymbol{u_{0j}}$ is between-country residual variance, capturing the deviation of a country's *j* baseline trust from the level predicted by the PEI.

The full multi-level model specification is as follows:

$$TrustIndex_{ij} = \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(PEI_j) + \beta_1 V_{ij} + \beta_2 F_{ij} + \beta_3 W_{ij} + \beta_t T_{ij} + \beta_4 I_{ij} + \beta_5 S_{ij} + \beta_c C_{ij} + \beta_d D_{ij} + \epsilon_{ij} + u_{0j}$$

Modelling follows a stepwise strategy. The ***baseline*** specification (Model 1) includes random intercepts for countries and fixed slopes for all individual-level predictors and country-level PEI index. Model 1 captures cross-national differences in average political trust while constraining all covariate effects to be identical across the 24 included countries. Given the strong theoretical expectations of cross-national heterogeneity, subsequent models modify this assumption for two key predictors. First, while trust in elections is anticipated to be a core covariate of generalized political institutions trust, its substantive effect is likely to vary across political systems with different quality of elections and performance of institutions. Model 2 therefore allows the ***random slope of trust in elections*** across countries. Secondly, the electoral "winner-loser" status comprises a second mechanism that is expected to be highly context-dependent, reflecting polarization, variation in party systems, coalition traditions among the other. Model 3 therefore introduces a ***random slope for "winner-loser" status***, permitting its effect on political trust to differ across all countries. Finally, Model 4 includes ***both random slopes*** (trust in elections and "winner-loser" status) alongside country-level random intercepts. This specification captures heterogeneity in both partisan alignment and perceived electoral quality effects simultaneously. Comparison of the models suggests that model fit improves as random slopes are introduced. Allowing the effect of trust in elections on generalized political institutions trust to vary across countries substantially improves fit relative to the random-intercept-only model, pointing to meaningful cross-national heterogeneity in this relationship. Introducing a random slope for "winner-loser" status yields an even greater improvement, consistent with pronounced variation in "winner-loser" dynamics across the political systems. The full specification (Model 4), which allows both effects to vary, achieves the lowest AIC and BIC and is therefore selected as the preferred model (table 16).

Table 16. Model Comparison: Multilevel Specifications

Model	Random effects structure	Log Likelihood	df	AIC	BIC
M1	Random intercept (country)	−42,106.57	21	84,255.13	84,424.99
M2	Random intercept; random slope: trust in elections	−42,037.73	22	84,119.46	84,297.41
M3	Random intercept; random slope: "winner-loser" status	−41,948.32	22	83,940.64	84,118.59
M4	Random intercept; random slope: trust in elections, "winner-loser" status	−41,888.06	19	83,814.11	83,967.79

Note: Lower values indicate better model fit.

4.1.2. Multi-Level Model of Political Trust (National Level)

Our findings suggest that across all countries, trust in elections appears as the most powerful individual-level correlate of political trust. The average within-country association is quite large and statistically significant (B = 0.888, SE = 0.026, p < .001). This indicates that individuals who express higher confidence in the integrity of electoral processes also report notably higher levels of political trust relative to their national context. The random-slope variance for trust in elections is statistically meaningful (var = 0.013), demonstrating substantial cross-national heterogeneity in the strength of this relationship. Consistent with the "winner-loser" framework logic, alignment with the government party is associated with higher political trust relative to the reference category (politically unaligned respondents) (B = 0.628, SE = 0.071, p < .001). At the same time, the inclusion of a random slope reveals cross-national variation in the magnitude of this effect (var = 0.092). This suggests that the effect of individual alignment with the incumbent authorities on political trust is not constant across contexts. Moreover, the covariance between the random slope for government alignment and the country-level intercept is not statistically distinguishable from zero (cov = −0.057), indicating that the magnitude of the "winner" effect does not systematically depend on baseline national levels of political trust. To sum up, partisan status matters most where overall political trust is comparatively lower. Individuals reporting no party affiliation do not differ systematically from electoral "losers" (B = −0.007, SE = 0.047, n.s.) once other factors are controlled for.

Perceptions of institutional trustworthiness further demonstrate strong associations. The competence dimension shows a robust positive relationship (B = 0.237, SE = 0.007, p < .001), followed by integrity (B = 0.123, SE = 0.006, p < .001) and impartiality (B = 0.072, SE = 0.006, p < .001). These results confirm the previous findings that, first, trustworthiness is multidimensional in nature and, second, political trust is grounded in both the procedural confidence and the evaluations of how effectively, honestly, and fairly the institutions perform their conduct. The electoral participation, on the other hand, demonstrates only modest association, once trust in elections and "winner-loser" status have been accounted for. Voting "usually" is positively related to political trust (B = 0.075, SE = 0.032, p < .05, as compared to group of non-voters), while voting "always" shows only marginal significance and a weak negative coefficient (B = −0.052, SE = 0.032, p < .10). This pattern suggests that habitual participation per se does not uniformly translate into higher trust.

Ideological self-placement on the left–right scale displays a small but statistically significant positive association (B = 0.011, SE = 0.004, p < .05), indicating that, on average, movement to the right is associated with somewhat higher political trust within countries. Interest in politics is positively associated with political trust (B = 0.028, SE = 0.012, p < .05), suggesting that greater engagement with political affairs corresponds to more a favourable evaluation of political institutions. At the same time, higher civic knowledge is associated with lower political trust (B = −0.002, SE < 0.001, p < .001), a pattern consistent with "critical citizens" arguments when more politically informed

individuals adopt more sceptical evaluations of institutional performance. Social trust shows a positive and statistically significant association with political trust (B = 0.030, SE = 0.004, p < .001). Age is negatively associated with political trust (B = −0.003, SE = 0.001, p < .001), indicating that younger respondents tend to express higher trust relative to older cohorts within countries, once other predictors have been accounted for. Gender differences persist net of controls, with men reporting lower political trust than women (B = −0.049, SE = 0.018, p < .01). Education, income, and urban residence do not display statistically significant associations once other factors have been accounted for. At the country level, the PEI index exhibits a positive and statistically significant association with political trust (B = 0.030, SE = 0.007, p < .001), pointing that individuals living in countries with higher overall electoral integrity tend to report higher political trust, even after controlling for their own evaluation of elections and political authorities.

Table 17. Multilevel Linear Regression of National Political Trust Index (PIT)

Predictor Cluster	Level 1 (individual)	DV: PIT
Electoral Experience	Vote: usually (ref. never)	0.071 (0.032)*
	Vote: always (ref. never)	−0.054 (0.032)†
Electoral Outcome	Status: winner (ref. none)	0.628 (0.070)***
	Status: loser (ref. none)	−0.007 (0.047)
Quality of Elections (ind)	Trust in elections	0.888 (0.026)***
Trustworthiness Evaluations	Competence	0.236 (0.007)***
	Integrity	0.123 (0.006)***
	Impartiality	0.072 (0.006)***
Ideology	Left–right scale	0.011 (0.004)*
Cognitive Resources	Interest in politics	0.028 (0.012)*
	Civic knowledge	−0.002 (0.000)***
Social capital	Generalized	0.030 (0.004)***
Sociodemographic Controls	Age	−0.003 (0.001)***
	Male (ref. female)	−0.049 (0.018)**
	Education	0.015 (0.013)
	Income	−0.004 (0.004)
	Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.019 (0.018)
	Level 2 (country)	
Quality of Elections (nat)	PEI index (country level)	0.030 (0.007)***
	Constant	4.867 (0.117)***

Random Effects (country level)

Component	Variance / Covariance (SE)
Variances	
Var(Trust in elections slope)	0.013 (0.004)
Var(Status: winner slope)	0.031 (0.016)
Var(Status: loser slope)	0.092 (0.034)
Var(Intercept)	0.234 (0.076)
Covariances	
Cov(Trust in elections, Winner)	0.007 (0.006)
Cov(Trust in elections, Loser)	0.001 (0.009)
Cov(Trust in elections, Intercept)	0.019 (0.014)
Cov(Winner, Loser)	-0.026 (0.016)
Cov(Winner, Intercept)	0.028 (0.024)
Cov(Loser, Intercept)	-0.057 (0.038)
Residual Variance	1.883 (0.017)

Model Fit: Observations = 24,061; Countries = 24; Log-likelihood = −41,876.32; AIC = 83,800.64; BIC = 83,994.40. The likelihood-ratio test comparing the multilevel specification to a single-level linear model is statistically significant ($chi^2(10) = 3046.35$, p < .001). Two-level mixed-effects linear regression with individuals nested within countries. Trust in elections and "winner–loser" status are specified as random slopes at the country level with an unstructured covariance matrix. Individual-level continuous variables are group-mean centred; the country-level PEI index is grand-mean centred. Standard errors are shown in parentheses.

† $p < .10$, $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

In this section, we also address the previously mentioned conceptual overlap between trust in elections employed in the present analysis as the individual-level measure of the perceived quality of elections, and aggregated index of public trust in political institutions employed as the main outcome (PIT). Trust in elections represents an integral evaluation of a core democratic procedure, while trust in national political institutions comprises a broader orientation towards the incumbent political authorities. In principle, individuals may express confidence fairness and integrity of elections and still question the trustworthiness and conduct of executive or judicial bodies. On the other hand, citizens who perceive elections as fair and properly administered are also more likely to express confidence in political authorities, thus introducing a certain degree of conceptual and empirical overlap. To estimate whether this overlap is empirically problematic and whether exclusion of trust in elections would substantially undermine our findings, we estimate and compare multilevel models with and without the "trust in elections" variable.

If "trust in elections" were absorbing substantively identical variance to the dependent variable, its exclusion would be expected to destabilize the remaining coefficients and substantially degrade the model fit. However, this is not what we observe. In the reduced model (M5), alignment with the governing party remains strongly associated with political trust (B = 0.817, SE = 0.101, p < .001), with significant cross-national heterogeneity in this effect (random-slope variance = 0.233). The three trustworthiness dimensions continue to exhibit large and statistically significant associations: competence (B = 0.280, SE = 0.007, p < .001), integrity (B = 0.159, SE = 0.006, p < .001), and impartiality (B = 0.169, SE = 0.006, p < .001). The country-level electoral integrity index also remains positively related to political trust (B = 0.038, SE = 0.008, p < .001). Comparing model fit, the exclusion of "trust in elections" predictor results in a deterioration of log likelihood (−41888.06 vs. −45291.79) and higher information criteria (AIC = 83814 vs. 90628), indicating that "trust in elections" does explain additional variance rather than duplicating existing components of the model. Crucially, however, the magnitude and significance of the core coefficients beyond "trust in elections" remain intact.

Furthermore, ICC for the full model (M1) is 13.8%, while for the restricted model (M2), which excludes electoral trust, it stands at 10.3%. Comparing these two configurations reveals that removing "trust in elections" are a predictor only moderately reduces the total explained variance (from approximately 56% in M1 to 46% in M2). This indicates that even in the absence of "trust of elections" evaluation, the model continues to explain over half of the variation in political trust through alternative predictors. At the same time, the inclusion "trust in elections" in the full model (M1) still leaves a substantial unexplained residual variance of 1.886. This significant margin of individual-level variation demonstrates that electoral trust is not a tautology for institutional trust. Instead, it suggests that while the fairness of the electoral process is a vital pillar, it does not exhaust the conceptual scope of the aggregated institutional trust index.

Table 18. Comparative Model Parameters and Variance Components

Parameter	Full Model (M4)	Reduced Model (M5)
Log-Likelihood	-41,888.06	-45,291.79
Wald chi²	10,415.68	14,092.65
BIC	83,967.7$	90,805.69
Residual Variance (Individual)	1.886	2.432
Intercept Variance (Country)	0.302	0.278
Total Unexplained Variance	2.188	2.710
ICC (Intraclass Correlation)	13.8%	10.3%

4.1.3. Country-Specific Models (National Level)

To address the potential variability in associations, beyond the random slopes tested in MLM, and to examine the consistency of predictors across countries, we proceed to estimate country-specific OLS regressions with the same set of variables. This analysis allows us to estimate whether the discussed theoretical mechanism of evaluative attribution of political trust exerts comparable influence across political systems, or whether the strength and relevance of components depend on national political contexts. Across the 24 country-specific regressions, several predictors exhibit consistent effects, while others vary substantially in both sign and magnitude (Table 19; coefficient plots are available in Annex). First, the ***electoral "winner" status*** is one of the strongest and at the same time the most heterogeneous predictor in the model. Being aligned with the governing party is associated with significantly higher political trust in the vast majority of countries, however the slope size varies substantially across countries. The largest positive effects are observed in Greece, France, Slovakia, Ireland, and Germany (B = 0.94.-1.20). In these samples, political trust appears polarized, highly partisan – and potentially fragile, as it is very much contingent upon electoral victory. Moderate positive effects of the "winner status" appear in Bulgaria, Croatia, Czechia, Denmark, Hungary, Latvia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden (B = 0.52–0.86). Smaller, though still statistically significant positive effect of the "winner" status is observed in Austria, Belgium, Estonia, Italy, Poland, and Romania (B = 0.32–0.50). By contrast, the "winner" effect is absent in Finland, Lithuania, the Netherlands, and Portugal. Smaller or no effect of the "winner" status suggests that these political systems have institutionalized trust and that citizens on the "losing side" of an election do nevertheless maintain a baseline level of trust in the governing institutions.

The category of respondents identified as neither "winners" nor "losers" (those who reported no political alignment with any party) serves as the reference category in the models; thus, both "winner" and "loser" coefficients are interpreted relative to politically unaligned respondents. The evidence suggests that across a number of countries, ***electoral "losers"*** **report** significantly lower trust than the unaligned group – a phenomenon coined the "penalty of defeat." The most prominent examples of this pattern occur in Czechia, Hungary, and Austria (B = –0.47 to –0.41). In contrast, several countries exhibit a positive and significant coefficient for "loser" status, pointing to cases where electoral losers express higher trust than the politically unaligned. This is observed most clearly in Germany and Ireland (B = 0.38–0.39), and in Latvia (B = 0.26). For the remainder of the countries, the effect of the "loser" status does not significantly differ from the unaligned reference group. This finding suggests that in many studied European states, the primary trust cleavage is not between politically active and disengaged citizens, but rather between those supporting the political actors in power and everyone else, with defeat producing a measurable decline in political trust only in a handful of countries.

Trust in elections is the most robust and positive predictor across all 24 countries, though the coefficients vary allowing to differentiate between strong and moderate effect. The largest positive effects are observed in Ireland, Estonia, Italy, the Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany (B = 0.96-1.11). In these contexts, the quality and integrity of the electoral process as perceived by the citizens acts as the fundamental prerequisite for political trust in governing institutions. Moderate to high positive effects of "trust in elections" appear in France, Austria, Croatia, Lithuania, Finland, Hungary, Spain, Bulgaria, and Greece (B = 0.84 …0.92). In these nations, while confidence in the quality of elections remains the most powerful predictor in the model, its influence is partially balanced by other factors such as the "winner" status or perceived government competence. Finally, by contrast, the effect of trust in elections on overall political trust is comparatively lower in Poland, Portugal, Denmark, Sweden, Slovenia, Romania, Slovakia, and the Czech Republic (B = 0.67-0.81). The finding suggests that in these countries, political trust is more transactional and multidimensional,

and citizens consider the governmental outputs or alignment with the party more heavily than the procedural fairness of the election itself.

The effect of the ***frequency of electoral participation***, after inclusion of other factors in the models, is generally weak and inconsistent. In Czech Republic, the effect for "always" voting is marginally significant (B =0.29); small positive effects for "usually" voting appear in Estonia (B=0.27) and Spain (B=0.37). In these countries, the habit of participation, net of the evaluations of elections and other predictors, appears to reinforce a sense of institutional connection that marginally boosts the political trust index. A notable exception is Greece, where more frequent voting ("usually" (B=−0.58) and "always" (B=−0.67)) is strongly and negatively associated with political trust as compared to the experience of non-voters. This finding suggests a unique political culture in Greece where the most politically active citizens are also its most cynical or dissatisfied critics.

Turning to trustworthiness evaluations, the ***competence*** dimension is positive and statistically significant in all countries. The slopes are the largest in Hungary, Slovakia, and Sweden (B=0.30…0.32), where citizens put a lot of emphasis on the capacity of the government to deliver results. Contrary to this, competence has the lowest impact on political trust index in a number of Southern and Eastern European countries (Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Greece, Portugal and Romania with B=0.13…0.19), where citizens more frequently look at other trustworthiness dimensions or the "winner" status when deciding about their trust judgement. In the remaining countries, competence remains a strong and significant predictor, but is balanced by other dimensions of trustworthiness

While competence is significant across all 24 countries, ***integrity*** and ***impartiality*** dimensions show greater variation. Integrity shows statistically significant positive effect on political trust index in all countries except for Italy, where competence rather than the perceived ethical stance of the politicians is attributed a greater weight. The impartiality dimension is moderately and positively associated with political trust in all countries, through a regional pattern of the salience of the effect is pronounced: in Northern and Western European countries this dimension exhibits greater influence on political trust index as compared to Eastern and Southern states.

The ***left–right position on the ideological scale*** exhibits limited explanatory power. The largest positive effects are observed in Finland, Italy, and Sweden (B= 0.06…0.12), where individuals who self-identify further to the right of the ideological spectrum report higher levels of political trust. Moderate ideological effects appear in Bulgaria, Croatia, France, Greece, Hungary, Lithuania, and Spain, where the impact of the left-right scale is slightly positive (right-leaning trust pattern), but at the same time closer to zero in substantive terms. By contrast, the left-leaning pattern bias is observed in Austria, Germany, and Slovakia (B=-0.06…-0.08), where trust decreases as respondents move toward the right of the scale. Finally, the effects of ideological positions are absent in Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Latvia, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, and Slovenia, meaning citizens' position on the left-right spectrum has no impact on their overall confidence in the state institutions.

Social trust is significantly associated with higher political trust only in about a half of the studied countries: Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia, and Sweden (B=0.03…0.08), where the belief that "most people can be trusted" also partially extends towards the political institutions. It is not significant elsewhere. Cognitive resources, such as interest in politics and civic knowledge, have diverse effects across the studied 24 countries. First, ***interest in politics*** is positive associated with higher level of political trust in Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Finland, Hungary, Poland, Romania, and Spain (B=0.08…0.19). By contrast, negative effect occurs uniquely in Germany (B=-0.09), where higher interest in politics is associated with lower trust in political institutions. The variable is not significant elsewhere. The effect of ***civic knowledge*** is highly fragmented and significant in only seven countries. Positive effects appear in

Austria, Belgium, and Italy (B= 0.04…0.08), where a better factual understanding of the political sphere reinforces trust. By contrast, negative effects are observed in Croatia, France, Slovakia, and Slovenia (B=-0.01…-0.07), suggesting that in these contexts, a more informed citizenry is in fact a more critical or sceptical one. The variable is not significant elsewhere.

The influence of sociodemographic controls is inconsistent. Men are less trusting than women in Austria, Italy, Poland, Portugal, and Slovenia, but elsewhere gender has no statistically significant influence on political trust. Older citizens report lower political trust in Latvia, Netherlands, Portugal, and Romania, but the effect is non-significant elsewhere. Education has a strong positive effect on political trust in Czech Republic and Ireland and is negatively associated with political trust in Poland. It remains non-significant in the rest of the dataset, which is an expected result given the inclusion of cognitive resources predictors. Income on the other hand has positive and statistically significant effect on political trust in about a half of the studied countries, including Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, and Spain. It is not significant elsewhere. As for the settlement patterns, political trust is lower among the residents of rural areas in Austria, Belgium, France, and Germany. Conversely, in Greece and Romania, rural residents are more trusting the political institutions than their urban counterparts, where medium-sized and larger citizens are populated by more sceptical public. The effect is not significant elsewhere.

The analysis of country-specific regression models reveals several configurations of predictors shaping political trust, defined by how electoral outcome, trust in elections, and political sophistication jointly structure trust. The first cluster of countries can be described as ***electorally conditional political trust systems*** (Greece, Hungary, France, Slovakia, Portugal, and Czechia), where political trust is more strongly affected by a combination of a large "winner" effect and high sensitivity to trust in elections. In these countries, trust is notably differentiated by electoral status: supporters of governing-party(s) exhibit substantially higher trust, while electoral "losers" display pronounced distrust. At the same time, trust in elections exerts a large positive effect, pointing that confidence in the electoral procedures also amplifies trust. In these systems, political trust is contingent on both being represented and believing the electoral process to be fair. Civic knowledge in this group is often negatively associated with political trust, suggesting a more politicised and evaluative citizenry.

The second cluster consists of ***institutionally anchored trust systems*** and includes Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden, the Netherlands, and Estonia. Here, political trust is primarily structured by confidence in the integrity of the electoral procedures and perceived competence and integrity of the politicians. While the "winner" effect remains, it is less pronounced and does not dominate the trust function. Interestingly, in this group, civic knowledge is often either not statistically significant or weakly related to political trust, indicating that less cognitive resources do not systematically erode confidence in political institutions. This configuration of predictors suggests that political trust in these countries is a relatively durable orientation, less exposed to short-term electoral outcomes.

Finally, the configuration is the ***performance- and representation-sensitive systems*.** This group of countries includes Italy, Spain, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Croatia. The salience of political trust predictors here combines strong effects of competence with moderate "winner" effects, and greater sensitivity to socio-demographic and ideological positioning. Political trust in this cluster therefore reflects a mixture of institutional evaluations and individual political positioning. Trust in elections retain its important in this cluster either, however, its positive effect is less dominant, and dimensions of trustworthiness such as competence and integrity play a comparatively larger role. These cluster appears to occupy an intermediate position between politicised and institutionalised trust.

Table 19. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for National Political Trust Index (1)

Predictors	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia	Finland
Vote: usually (ref. never)	−0.012 (0.163)	0.089 (0.172)	0.110 (0.161)	0.171 (0.148)	0.242 (0.149)	0.011 (0.144)	0.272* (0.125)	0.191 (0.127)
Vote: always (ref. never)	−0.043 (0.161)	0.045 (0.161)	−0.051 (0.163)	0.023 (0.148)	0.288† (0.156)	0.108 (0.142)	0.082 (0.132)	−0.004 (0.133)
Status: winner (ref. none)	0.443 (0.163)**	0.362 (0.189)†	0.522 (0.136)***	0.728 (0.154)***	0.697 (0.170)***	0.674 (0.162)***	0.323 (0.157)*	0.160 (0.153)
Status: loser (ref. none)	-0.434 (0.163)**	-0.156 (0.184)	0.136 (0.125)	-0.052 (0.121)	-0.470 (0.149)**	0.150 (0.146)	-0.032 (0.139)	0.048 (0.143)
Trust in elections	0.912*** (0.053)	0.976*** (0.054)	0.863*** (0.057)	0.911*** (0.053)	0.672*** (0.057)	0.806*** (0.055)	1.023*** (0.054)	0.881*** (0.050)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.224*** (0.031)	0.292*** (0.034)	0.156*** (0.037)	0.229*** (0.034)	0.263*** (0.034)	0.203*** (0.031)	0.156*** (0.033)	0.244*** (0.026)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.164*** (0.026)	0.102*** (0.029)	0.110*** (0.030)	0.117*** (0.027)	0.081** (0.029)	0.157*** (0.027)	0.147*** (0.026)	0.103*** (0.022)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	0.109*** (0.027)	0.056† (0.030)	0.113*** (0.031)	0.036 (0.028)	0.146*** (0.029)	0.114*** (0.033)	0.015 (0.030)	0.084*** (0.024)
Left-right scale	−0.074** (0.023)	0.059** (0.019)	0.027 (0.021)	−0.035† (0.021)	0.071*** (0.022)	−0.025 (0.018)	0.014 (0.021)	0.120*** (0.020)
Interest in politics	0.065 (0.060)	0.048 (0.056)	0.012 (0.062)	−0.027 (0.055)	−0.043 (0.065)	−0.021 (0.060)	0.054 (0.060)	−0.036 (0.052)
Civic knowledge	0.003 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	−0.004* (0.002)	−0.006*** (0.002)	−0.003† (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	−0.001 (0.002)	0.001 (0.001)
Generalized trust	0.040† (0.021)	0.020 (0.020)	0.010 (0.020)	0.051** (0.019)	0.037† (0.021)	0.020 (0.020)	0.059** (0.019)	0.040* (0.018)
Age	0.007* (0.003)	0.004 (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	−0.012*** (0.003)	0.001 (0.003)	0.000 (0.003)	0.001 (0.002)
Gender: male (ref. female)	−0.339*** (0.090)	−0.139 (0.089)	−0.005 (0.093)	0.111 (0.088)	0.001 (0.087)	0.081 (0.087)	0.187* (0.090)	−0.030 (0.080)
Education	0.007 (0.074)	0.001 (0.065)	0.006 (0.074)	−0.038 (0.065)	0.307*** (0.082)	0.094† (0.054)	−0.065 (0.066)	−0.044 (0.058)
Income	−0.001 (0.016)	0.012 (0.019)	−0.029 (0.020)	0.019 (0.018)	−0.008 (0.015)	−0.043** (0.016)	0.008 (0.017)	0.027† (0.015)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.041 (0.087)	0.192* (0.096)	0.010 (0.095)	−0.072 (0.086)	0.134 (0.093)	0.092 (0.089)	0.003 (0.088)	−0.078 (0.077)
Const.	−0.363 (0.297)	−0.441 (0.279)	0.897** (0.304)	0.659* (0.296)	−0.399 (0.301)	0.896*** (0.277)	0.679* (0.278)	−0.002 (0.253)
N	**971**	**956**	**976**	**1,005**	**1,046**	**869**	**941**	**977**
R^2	**0.666**	**0.630**	**0.505**	**0.557**	**0.596**	**0.579**	**0.599**	**0.618**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 19. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for National Political Trust Index (2)

Predictors	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Lativa	Lithuania
Vote: usually (ref. never)	−0.057 (0.177)	0.086 (0.154)	−0.583*** (0.176)	0.241 (0.150)	−0.069 (0.144)	−0.235 (0.175)	0.135 (0.141)	0.054 (0.137)
Vote: always (ref. never)	−0.304† (0.167)	−0.114 (0.147)	−0.666*** (0.170)	0.033 (0.149)	−0.128 (0.140)	−0.113 (0.167)	0.081 (0.157)	−0.076 (0.144)
Status: winner (ref. none)	1.123 (0.198)***	0.937 (0.194)***	1.195 (0.146)***	0.767 (0.180)***	0.971 (0.173)***	0.476 (0.161)**	0.823 (0.164)***	0.034 (0.156)
Status: loser (ref. none)	0.021 (0.152)	0.394 (0.183)*	0.013 (0.113)	-0.406 (0.153)**	0.384 (0.158)*	0.108 (0.142)	0.262 (0.133)*	0.103 (0.136)
Trust in elections	0.916*** (0.053)	0.960*** (0.048)	0.847*** (0.050)	0.882*** (0.052)	1.110*** (0.058)	1.014*** (0.052)	0.952*** (0.061)	0.902*** (0.052)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.221*** (0.034)	0.275*** (0.030)	0.187*** (0.030)	0.306*** (0.034)	0.258*** (0.032)	0.282*** (0.038)	0.262*** (0.043)	0.222*** (0.035)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.197*** (0.028)	0.136*** (0.026)	0.108*** (0.027)	0.105*** (0.028)	0.112*** (0.026)	0.048 (0.030)	0.145*** (0.034)	0.105*** (0.029)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	−0.000 (0.029)	0.120*** (0.026)	0.125*** (0.027)	0.123*** (0.027)	0.035 (0.031)	0.092** (0.030)	0.076* (0.035)	0.038 (0.029)
Left-right scale	−0.031† (0.017)	−0.077*** (0.021)	0.030 (0.020)	0.060** (0.020)	−0.031 (0.022)	0.060** (0.022)	0.080** (0.027)	−0.048* (0.023)
Interest in politics	−0.015 (0.054)	0.052 (0.054)	−0.061 (0.050)	−0.030 (0.057)	−0.026 (0.059)	0.077 (0.052)	−0.044 (0.066)	0.098 (0.067)
Civic knowledge	0.002 (0.002)	−0.000 (0.002)	−0.003 (0.002)	−0.000 (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)	0.001 (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)	−0.006** (0.002)
Generalized trust	0.075*** (0.020)	0.036* (0.018)	−0.018 (0.019)	0.016 (0.018)	0.020 (0.018)	−0.008 (0.020)	0.017 (0.024)	0.061** (0.020)
Age	−0.007* (0.003)	−0.002 (0.003)	−0.003 (0.003)	−0.004 (0.003)	−0.002 (0.003)	−0.001 (0.003)	−0.013** (0.004)	−0.007† (0.003)
Gender: male (ref. female)	0.058 (0.092)	−0.001 (0.084)	−0.097 (0.085)	−0.267** (0.087)	−0.006 (0.090)	−0.050 (0.086)	−0.122 (0.104)	−0.077 (0.095)
Education	0.052 (0.065)	−0.003 (0.063)	−0.057 (0.056)	−0.074 (0.069)	0.152* (0.064)	0.031 (0.069)	0.095 (0.085)	−0.100 (0.069)
Income	0.007 (0.018)	0.037* (0.017)	−0.025 (0.017)	−0.027† (0.014)	−0.002 (0.017)	0.016 (0.017)	−0.064** (0.021)	−0.033† (0.018)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.010 (0.098)	0.008 (0.085)	−0.019 (0.085)	0.177* (0.085)	0.181* (0.091)	−0.087 (0.087)	−0.086 (0.103)	−0.063 (0.095)
Const.	0.164 (0.294)	−0.232 (0.271)	1.066*** (0.277)	0.067 (0.262)	0.411 (0.295)	−0.101 (0.324)	1.050** (0.324)	2.053*** (0.299)
N	**1,156**	**1,237**	**1,010**	**1,007**	**939**	**982**	**883**	**1,058**
R^2	**0.585**	**0.648**	**0.623**	**0.731**	**0.664**	**0.591**	**0.596**	**0.463**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 19. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for National Political Trust Index (3)

Predictors	Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden
Vote: usually (ref. never)	0.067 (0.167)	0.028 (0.190)	−0.105 (0.205)	−0.015 (0.190)	0.114 (0.157)	0.140 (0.133)	0.369* (0.167)	−0.057 (0.163)
Vote: always (ref. never)	−0.195 (0.157)	−0.166 (0.190)	−0.137 (0.198)	−0.175 (0.185)	−0.151 (0.164)	0.155 (0.139)	0.095 (0.160)	0.105 (0.149)
Status: winner (ref. none)	0.117 (0.204)	0.430 (0.213)*	0.204 (0.216)	0.557 (0.156)***	0.986 (0.183)***	0.621 (0.122)***	0.862 (0.163)***	0.620 (0.195)**
Status: loser (ref. none)	0.130 (0.199)	0.017 (0.211)	0.167 (0.194)	0.014 (0.146)	-0.053 (0.165)	-0.103 (0.114)	0.009 (0.148)	0.267 (0.171)
Trust in elections	0.980*** (0.058)	0.815*** (0.056)	0.814*** (0.055)	0.768*** (0.046)	0.714*** (0.055)	0.770*** (0.049)	0.863*** (0.050)	0.798*** (0.054)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.248*** (0.037)	0.168*** (0.033)	0.226*** (0.033)	0.138*** (0.026)	0.324*** (0.037)	0.243*** (0.031)	0.158*** (0.032)	0.321*** (0.029)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.124*** (0.032)	0.137*** (0.027)	0.121*** (0.027)	0.124*** (0.022)	0.177*** (0.032)	0.094*** (0.026)	0.057* (0.028)	0.070** (0.025)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	0.085* (0.038)	0.136*** (0.030)	0.099** (0.029)	0.041† (0.023)	−0.031 (0.030)	0.071** (0.025)	0.089** (0.028)	0.078** (0.029)
Left-right scale	0.006 (0.022)	0.010 (0.021)	0.046* (0.020)	0.024 (0.017)	−0.069** (0.023)	−0.062** (0.020)	0.038† (0.020)	0.091*** (0.018)
Interest in politics	0.052 (0.062)	0.190** (0.057)	−0.054 (0.064)	0.158** (0.055)	0.141* (0.066)	0.020 (0.053)	0.024 (0.053)	0.064 (0.055)
Civic knowledge	−0.002 (0.002)	0.000 (0.002)	−0.001 (0.002)	−0.004* (0.002)	−0.007*** (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)	−0.004* (0.002)	−0.002 (0.002)
Generalized trust	0.050* (0.024)	0.035† (0.020)	0.056** (0.020)	0.009 (0.015)	0.056* (0.022)	0.013 (0.018)	0.006 (0.019)	0.027 (0.020)
Age	−0.009** (0.003)	−0.004 (0.003)	−0.011*** (0.003)	−0.009** (0.003)	0.003 (0.003)	−0.002 (0.003)	−0.004 (0.003)	0.000 (0.003)
Gender: male (ref. female)	0.016 (0.097)	−0.271** (0.089)	−0.380*** (0.092)	−0.104 (0.082)	0.006 (0.099)	0.152† (0.083)	−0.020 (0.085)	−0.003 (0.087)
Education	−0.051 (0.062)	−0.198** (0.068)	0.006 (0.058)	−0.027 (0.075)	0.084 (0.082)	0.088 (0.063)	−0.001 (0.055)	0.029 (0.063)
Income	0.061** (0.021)	−0.027 (0.017)	−0.017 (0.017)	−0.015 (0.016)	−0.031† (0.018)	0.020 (0.017)	0.013 (0.018)	0.037* (0.017)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.017 (0.095)	−0.001 (0.086)	0.183* (0.091)	−0.020 (0.082)	0.070 (0.108)	0.066 (0.092)	−0.028 (0.089)	−0.125 (0.084)
Const.	0.374 (0.328)	0.630† (0.328)	1.289*** (0.317)	0.710* (0.301)	0.320 (0.333)	0.191 (0.306)	0.512 (0.315)	0.186 (0.286)
N	**969**	**998**	**1,048**	**989**	**999**	**990**	**1,062**	**993**
R^2	**0.549**	**0.565**	**0.452**	**0.563**	**0.550**	**0.568**	**0.488**	**0.574**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

4.1.4. Multi-Level Model of Political Trust (Supranational Level)

To examine whether the mechanisms identified in the national political trust model extend beyond the domestic arena, we re-estimate the multilevel specification using trust in EU institutions (EPIT) as the dependent variable and vote frequency in EP elections as the core indicator of electoral participation. This design allows us to test whether the same factors structure political trust when the object of trust is supranational rather than national. Importantly, while the dependent variable shifts to the EU level, the majority of explanatory variables such as the perceived trustworthiness of political institutions, trust in elections, and the integrity of electoral procedures (PEI index) remain anchored in the national context. On the one hand, this mismatch suggests that weaker associations between the predictors and the outcome variable shall be expected in the EU model. At the same time, EP elections, even though they concern supranational governance level, in practical terms are organized, administered, and regulated by national authorities. Therefore, citizens' experiences concerning the integrity of the electoral process in the EP election are largely filtered through the domestic political system, making quality of elections as characterized at the country level through the PEI index and as perceived at the individual level through subjective evaluations of the respondents relevant also in the context of EP elections and the EU trust level.

As our findings suggest, there are several contrasts between the national and supranational trust models. First, electoral participation in EP elections exhibits a substantially stronger association with EU trust than national voting does with domestic political trust. Citizens who vote "usually" ($B = 0.275$, $SE = 0.042$, $p < .001$) or "always" ($B = 0.318$, $SE = 0.042$, $p < .001$) exhibit higher level of trust in EU institutions as compared to those who "never" vote. Unlike in the national model, where the effects of electoral participation were rather weak and inconsistent, electoral participation at supranational level appears a clear marker of political engagement and attachment. Second, as anticipated, the "winner-loser" effect weakens substantially at the EU level. Alignment with the governing party shows only a marginally significant association with EU trust ($B=0.231$, $SE=0.120$, $p<0.1$). The large random-slope variance (var = 0.309), however, points to pronounced cross-national heterogeneity in the magnitude of this effect. By contrast, electoral "losers" do not significant differ from the reference category ($B = 0.081$, $SE = 0.094$, n.s.). Third, citizens' trust in elections as aggregated measure of perceive electoral integrity at the individual level remains a central explanatory factor, although its substantive weight is reduced relative to the national model ($B = 0.752$, $SE = 0.053$, $p < .001$). This finding suggests that confidence in electoral procedures, as rooted in national experience, partially extends to trust judgments about EU institutions. At the same time, the random-slope variance for trust in elections is substantially larger than in the national model (var = 0.063), indicating that the extent to which trust in elections is associated with trust in EU governing institutions varies considerably across countries. Furthermore, the salience of the trustworthiness dimensions was reshuffled in the EU mode: while competence ($B = 0.178$, $SE = 0.010$, $p < .001$) and integrity ($B = 0.080$, $SE = 0.009$, $p < .001$) remain positively associated with trust in EU institutions, impartiality emerges as the strongest correlate ($B = 0.202$, $SE = 0.009$, $p < .001$). The country-level PEI index retains a marginally significant association with EU trust ($B = 0.016$, $SE = 0.008$, $p < .10$), pointing that electoral environments characterized by greater integrity are weakly, but systematically related to somewhat higher level of trust in EU institutions.

Among the individual-level controls, ideological position remains relevant: moving to the left side of the scale is associated with greater EU trust ($B = -0.053$, $SE = 0.006$, $p < .10$). Cognitive and informational resources display mixed effects. Civic knowledge is not significantly associated with trust in EU institutions ($B = 0.001$, $SE = 0.001$, n.s.), while interest in politics shows a marginally

positive association (B = 0.009, SE = 0.005, p < .10). Generalized social trust is positively related to EU trust (B = 0.080, SE = 0.006, p < .001), in fact with a larger coefficient than in the national model. Age exhibits a pronounced negative association with EU trust (B = −0.012, SE = 0.001, p < .001), indicating that younger respondents express higher confidence in EU institutions. Men report lower trust in EU institutions than women (B = −0.201, SE = 0.028, p < .001). Education does not exhibit a statistically significant association with EU trust (B = 0.017, SE = 0.020, n.s.), amid inclusion of cognitive resources cluster and interest in politics. Settlement context retains a significant effect: individuals residing in urban areas report higher levels of EU trust than those in rural areas (B = 0.072, SE = 0.070, p < .05).

Table 20. Multilevel Linear Regression of European Political Trust Index (EPIT)

Predictor Cluster	Level 1 (individual)	DV: EPIT
EP Electoral Experience	Vote: usually (ref. never)	0.276 (0.042)***
	Vote: always (ref. never)	0.319 (0.042)***
Electoral Outcome	Status: winner (ref. none)	0.231 (0.120)†
	Status: loser (ref. none)	0.080 (0.093)
Quality of Elections (ind)	Trust in elections	0.751 (0.053)***
Trustworthiness Evaluations	Competence	0.178 (0.010)***
	Integrity	0.080 (0.009)***
	Impartiality	0.202 (0.009)***
Ideology	Left–right scale	−0.053 (0.006)***
Cognitive Resources	Interest in politics	−0.049 (0.018)**
	Civic knowledge	0.001 (0.001)
Social capital	Generalized trust	0.080 (0.006)***
Sociodemographic Controls	Age	−0.012 (0.001)***
	Male (ref. female)	−0.200 (0.028)***
	Education	0.017 (0.020)
	Income	0.010 (0.005)†
	Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.070 (0.028)*
	Level 2 (country)	
Quality of Elections (nat)	PEI index (country level)	0.016 (0.008)†
	Constant	5.034 (0.147)***

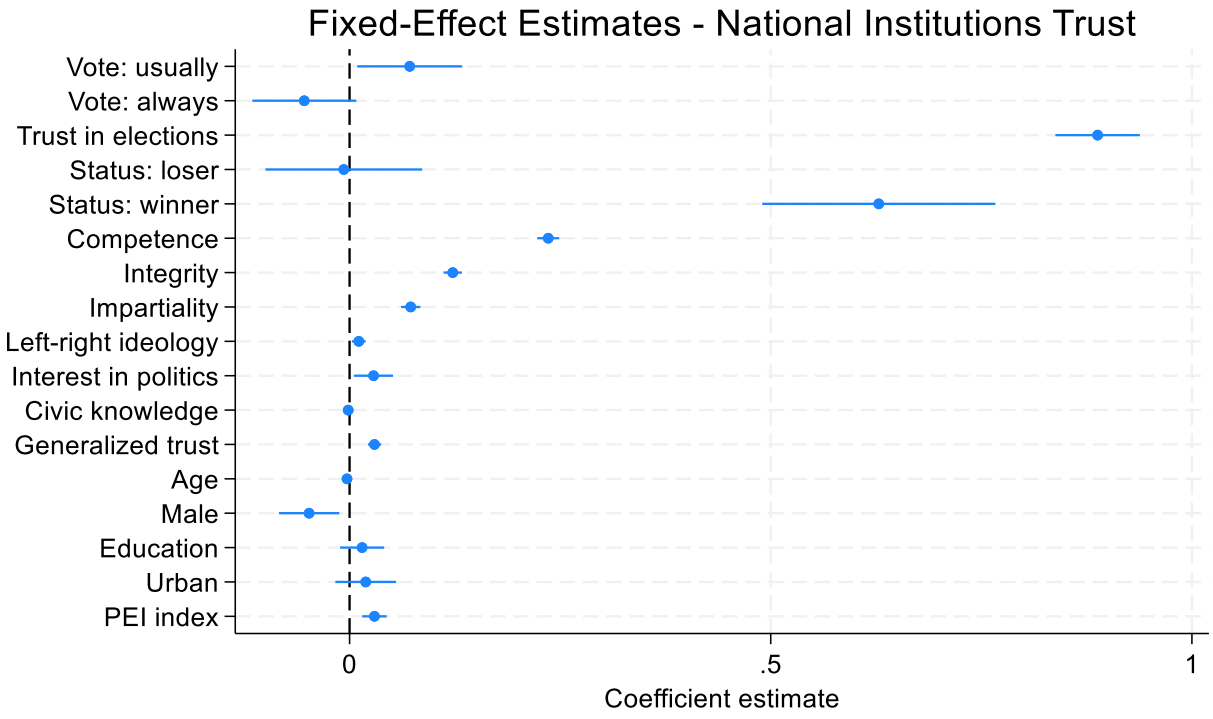
Random Effects (country level)

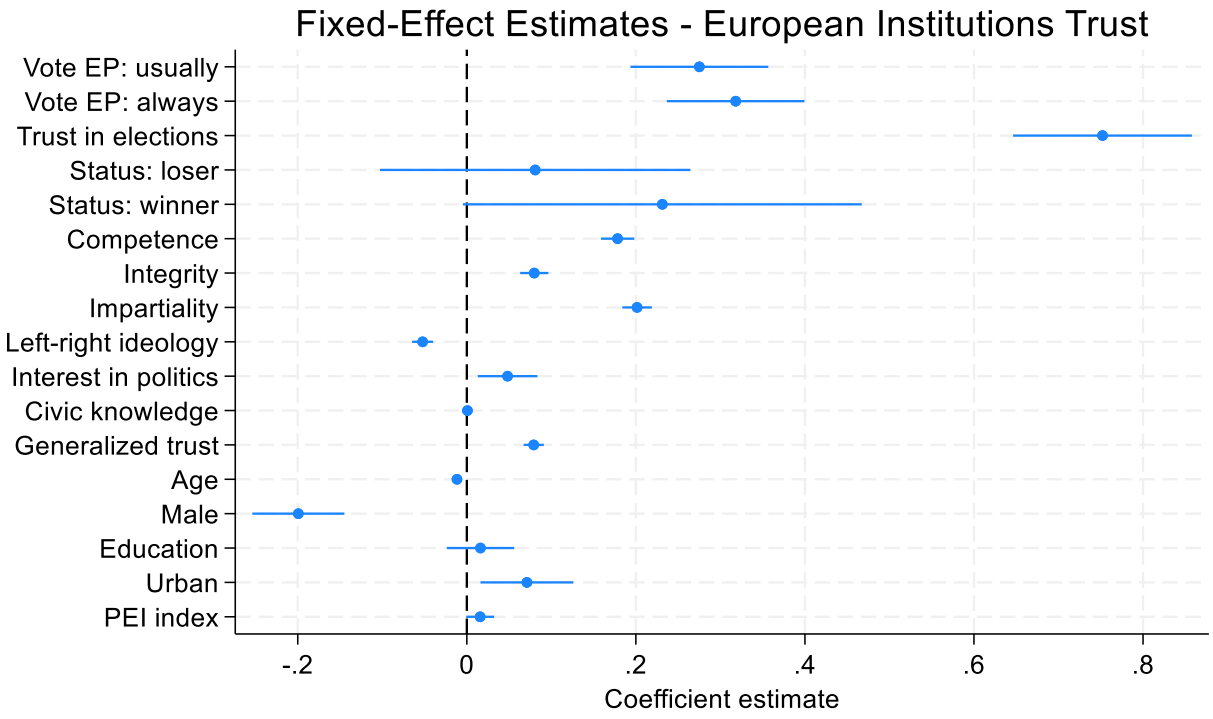
Component	Variance (SE)
Var(Trust in elections slope)	0.065 (0.020)
Var(Status: loser slope)	0.217 (0.077)
Var(Status: winner slope)	0.309 (0.106)
Var(Intercept)	0.240 (0.139)
Residual variance	4.305

Model Fit: Observations = 23,727; Countries = 24; Log-likelihood = −51,137.08; AIC = 102,320.16; BIC = 102,504.10. The likelihood-ratio test comparing the multilevel specification to a single-level linear model is statistically significant ($\chi^2(4) = 2539.42$, $p < .001$).

Notes: Two-level mixed-effects linear regression with individuals nested within countries. Trust in elections and "winner–loser" status are specified as random slopes at the country level with an unstructured covariance matrix. Individual-level continuous variables are group-mean centred; the country-level PEI index is grand-mean centred. Standard errors are shown in parentheses. † $p < .10$, $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Figure 13. Multilevel Regression Coefficient Estimates for Trust in National and European Institutions.





4.1.5. Country-Specific Models (Supranational Level)

As the next stage, in order to investigate the nuances of the salience of electoral experience and evaluations for the political trust at supranational level, we proceed to test the predictors of trust in European political institutions within the country-specific regression models. The dependent variable is represented by the aggregated EPIT index, combing trust in European Parliament, European Council, and the European Commission. The first cluster of predictors includes reported frequency of ***voting in EP elections***. Past participation in EP elections demonstrates considerable cross-national variation and is more consequential than previously suggested. Voting "usually" is positively and significantly (B=0.545-0.877) associated with EU trust in Austria, Croatia, Czechia, and Spain. Marginally significant positive effects (B=0.305-0.446) are observed in France, Latvia, and Portugal. In all remaining countries, the coefficient is not statistically significant. Voting "always" displays a similar pattern. Positive and statistically significant (B=0.394-0.657) effects appear in Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Czechia, Estonia, Romania, Slovenia, and Spain. A marginal positive effect (B=0.354-0.425) is observed in Denmark and Lithuania. Elsewhere, the relationship is not statistically significant.

The ***"winner-loser" status*** in the country-specific EU trust models reveals pronounced cross-national asymmetry, both in terms of magnitude and direction. The alignment with the governing party displays three groups of countries. A strong positive effect between the "winner" status and EU trust (B = 0.52–0.83) is observed in Austria, France, Greece, Latvia, and Poland, where government supporters exhibit substantially higher EU trust. A moderate positive effect (B = 0.36–0.46) characterizes Slovenia and Bulgaria. A moderate negative effect appears in Slovakia and Hungary (B = −0.56 to -0.74), where supporters of the governing party report significantly lower EU trust. In all remaining countries, "winner" status does not reach statistical significance. Electoral "loser" status also exhibits variation. A moderate positive effect (B = 0.42–0.56) is present in Denmark, Finland, Italy, and Slovakia, indicating that opposition supporters in these contexts report higher EU trust relative to the baseline (i.e. citizens who do not support any political party). A moderate negative effect (B = −0.38 to −0.45) emerges in Austria, Czechia, and Poland, where respondents aligned with the opposition party report deficit of trust in the EU compared to non-politically aligned reference group. In all other countries, loser status does not attain statistical significance.

Trust in elections emerges as a the strongest and most uniform predictor of trust in EU governing bodies across all contexts. In most countries, the coefficients are within a high range (B = 0.70–0.95), indicating strong association. Exceptionally large effect (B > 1.00) appears in Romania, while moderate but still substantial effects (B = 0.55–0.69) are observed in Slovakia, Austria, and Czechia. Nowhere does the effect approach triviality. This finding suggests that national-level procedural fairness and electoral legitimacy is strongly associated also with supranational political trust. Perceived impartiality of political institutions constitutes the second most robust predictor. Strong positive association between ***impartiality evaluations*** and EU trust (B = 0.23–0.52) are observed in Slovakia, Italy, Latvia, Spain, Sweden, Portugal, Romania, and Germany. Moderate effects (B = 0.15–0.22) are common across much of Western and Northern Europe, while only a few cases exhibiting weaker or non-significant associations. The second trustworthiness dimension, ***competence***, shows greater dispersion. Strong positive effects (B = 0.27–0.39) between competence of political institutions and EU trust are recorded in Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, Poland, Austria, and Latvia. Moderate effects (B = 0.14–0.24) characterize France, Ireland, Slovenia, Spain, Greece, Finland, Czechia, and Lithuania. Negative effects emerge only in Hungary (B ≈ −0.24) and in Slovakia. The role of competence dimension of trustworthiness therefore differentiates between institutionalized Western countries and more polarized Central European cases. Finally, the perceived ***integrity*** is more uneven and generally smaller in magnitude. Moderate positive effects (B = 0.12–0.22) are recorded in France, Poland, Austria, Belgium, Ireland, Slovenia,

and the Netherlands. Smaller but still positive coefficients (B = 0.05–0.10) appear in Germany, Sweden, Italy, Lithuania, and Greece. A negative effect is present in Slovakia (B = −0.11). In several remaining countries the association does not reach significance.

Ideological self-placement reveals moderate negative effects (B = −0.19 to −0.08) in Poland, Hungary, Austria, France, Germany, Sweden, Italy, and the Netherlands, indicating that movement towards the right side of the ideological scale is associated with lower EU trust in these countries. Positive effect of the ideological position (i.e. right-side trusting more than left) appears only in Bulgaria and Latvia (B = 0.11–0.20), as. In the remaining cases, ideology does not structure EU trust significantly. ***Interest in politics*** displays a polarized pattern. Strong positive effects (B = 0.21–0.45) on EU trust is observed in Hungary, Slovakia, Germany, Romania, and Lithuania. Moderate positive effects (B = 0.09–0.19) appear in Poland and Bulgaria. In most other countries, political interest is not statistically significant. ***Civic knowledge*** rarely exerts significant influence. A moderate positive effect (B = 0.008) appears in Bulgaria, while smaller positive tendencies (B = 0.004–0.005) emerge in Greece, Portugal, and Italy. A small negative effect is observed in Czechia. In most other countries, civic knowledge is not statistically significant. ***Generalized social trust*** shows moderate positive effects (B = 0.10–0.26) in Hungary, France, Denmark, Slovakia, Lithuania, Austria, Finland, and Romania. Smaller but positive associations (B = 0.04–0.07) occur in Portugal, Spain, Italy, Germany, Sweden, Greece, and Belgium. Elsewhere, the relationship does not reach significance.

Age most often displays negative influence on EU trust of moderate magnitude (B = −0.010 to −0.031). The effect is particularly pronounced in Slovakia, Czechia, Austria, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Latvia, Slovenia, and Romania. In several other cases, the association is weaker or not significant. This pattern suggests a generational divide in EU trust in a number of countries. ***Gender*** effects are heterogeneous. Strong negative coefficients for men (B = −0.39 to −0.50) appear in Portugal, Germany, Greece, Austria, Poland, and Slovakia, indicating lower EU trust among men in these contexts. Moderate negative effects (B = −0.20 to −0.24) occur in France and Italy. In remaining countries, gender differences are not significant. ***Education and urban residence*** do not demonstrate consistent cross-national structure. Education shows isolated effects (positive in Belgium; negative in Croatia, Lithuania, and Sweden), while urban residence is positive in Poland, the Netherlands, and Romania, but not systematically elsewhere. In the same vein, ***income*** does not emerge as a statistically significant of EU trust in most of countries. A moderate positive association (B = 0.04) appears in Romania; a moderate negative association (B = −0.04) is observed in Czechia. In all remaining countries, the income coefficient is statistically indistinguishable from zero.

Based on the dominant structuring mechanism of trust in supranational institutions, the studied 24 countries can be divided into four clusters, similar to those identified for the national political trust variable. The key distinction can be drawn between patterns of procedural-institutional anchoring on one hand, partisan-politicized translation on the other, or a hybrid configuration of factors. In the first group comprising Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Netherlands, Germany, Austria, and Ireland, EU trust is primarily anchored in trust in elections and perceived impartiality of institutions, jointly characterized as mechanism of generalized institutional legitimacy. In the second group (Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Italy) exhibiting politicized partisan structuring, EU trust is filtered through domestic political conflict – the winner-loser effects emerge in large magnitude. The hybrid group, where patterns are moderately pronounced, includes Spain, Portugal, Latvia, Lithuania, Estonia, Croatia, Czechia, France, Belgium, Greece, Romania, Slovenia.

Table 21. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for European Political Trust Index (1)

Predictors	Austria	Belgium	Bulgaria	Croatia	Czech Republic	Denmark	Estonia	Finland
Vote EP: usually (ref. never)	0.637** (0.208)	0.402 (0.261)	0.434† (0.227)	0.874*** (0.184)	0.730*** (0.163)	0.082 (0.208)	0.140 (0.167)	−0.073 (0.157)
Vote EP: always (ref. never)	0.501* (0.202)	0.527* (0.245)	0.313 (0.232)	0.604** (0.187)	0.641*** (0.173)	0.335 (0.207)	0.393* (0.180)	−0.042 (0.175)
Status: winner (ref. none)	0.601** (0.236)	-0.136 (0.294)	0.787*** (0.229)	0.459† (0.241)	0.495* (0.243)	0.625* (0.268)	0.417† (0.238)	-0.073 (0.237)
Status: loser (ref. none)	-0.380 (0.235)	-0.346 (0.286)	0.075 (0.210)	-0.075 (0.189)	-0.09587	0.423† (0.244)	-0.104 (0.210)	0.538* (0.219)
Trust in elections	0.613*** (0.077)	0.690*** (0.082)	0.549*** (0.096)	0.791*** (0.083)	0.557*** (0.081)	0.590*** (0.088)	0.848*** (0.082)	0.680*** (0.079)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.279*** (0.045)	0.398*** (0.052)	0.157* (0.062)	0.127* (0.053)	0.238*** (0.048)	0.312*** (0.050)	0.131* (0.051)	0.237*** (0.042)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.111** (0.038)	0.176*** (0.044)	0.082 (0.051)	0.032 (0.042)	0.100* (0.041)	0.031 (0.044)	0.170*** (0.040)	0.054 (0.035)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	0.150*** (0.040)	0.085† (0.046)	0.239*** (0.052)	0.198*** (0.043)	0.262*** (0.042)	0.166** (0.054)	0.136** (0.045)	0.195*** (0.039)
Left-right scale	−0.200*** (0.034)	−0.074* (0.030)	0.200*** (0.036)	−0.143*** (0.033)	0.034 (0.032)	−0.095** (0.030)	−0.014 (0.031)	−0.036 (0.032)
Interest in politics	−0.042 (0.087)	0.097 (0.086)	0.163 (0.104)	−0.130 (0.085)	−0.108 (0.093)	0.050 (0.098)	−0.049 (0.089)	−0.022 (0.083)
Civic knowledge	0.004 (0.003)	0.001 (0.002)	0.008* (0.003)	−0.000 (0.003)	−0.005* (0.002)	−0.000 (0.003)	0.004† (0.003)	−0.001 (0.002)
Generalized trust	0.124*** (0.030)	0.039 (0.031)	0.082* (0.034)	0.108*** (0.029)	−0.002 (0.030)	0.102** (0.033)	0.040 (0.029)	0.085** (0.029)
Age	−0.013** (0.004)	−0.001 (0.004)	−0.011† (0.006)	−0.001 (0.004)	−0.023*** (0.004)	−0.016*** (0.004)	−0.005 (0.004)	−0.007† (0.004)
Gender: male (ref. female)	−0.398** (0.132)	−0.156 (0.137)	−0.304† (0.156)	−0.353* (0.136)	−0.006 (0.125)	−0.070 (0.141)	0.007 (0.134)	−0.124 (0.127)
Education	0.121 (0.109)	0.292** (0.100)	−0.005 (0.126)	−0.242* (0.101)	0.209† (0.118)	0.098 (0.087)	−0.122 (0.100)	0.048 (0.092)
Income	0.018 (0.024)	0.038 (0.029)	0.020 (0.034)	0.027 (0.029)	−0.045* (0.021)	−0.017 (0.027)	−0.018 (0.025)	0.025 (0.023)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.157 (0.128)	−0.114 (0.147)	0.103 (0.161)	0.204 (0.134)	−0.016 (0.132)	0.149 (0.142)	0.087 (0.132)	−0.156 (0.123)
Const.	0.277 (0.438)	−1.400** (0.426)	−0.489 (0.496)	2.006*** (0.460)	0.578 (0.421)	1.379** (0.440)	1.399*** (0.414)	1.317*** (0.392)
N	**963**	**943**	**965**	**999**	**1,038**	**873**	**920**	**966**
R^2	**0.518**	**0.459**	**0.347**	**0.338**	**0.433**	**0.339**	**0.426**	**0.368**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 21. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for European Political Trust Index (2)

Predictors	France	Germany	Greece	Hungary	Ireland	Italy	Latvia	Lithuania
Vote EP: usually (ref. never)	0.126 (0.192)	0.162 (0.181)	−0.011 (0.233)	0.410 (0.268)	0.148 (0.190)	0.167 (0.254)	0.306† (0.187)	0.060 (0.174)
Vote EP: always (ref. never)	0.216 (0.182)	0.058 (0.173)	−0.046 (0.229)	0.396 (0.271)	0.113 (0.185)	0.316 (0.242)	0.226 (0.210)	0.345† (0.181)
Status: winner (ref. none)	0.521* (0.259)	0.184 (0.261)	0.516* (0.229)	-0.592† (0.346)	0.410† (0.240)	-0.001 (0.260)	0.563* (0.235)	0.386† (0.213)
Status: loser (ref. none)	-0.121 (0.198)	-0.259 (0.244)	0.139 (0.178)	0.335 (0.293)	0.095 (0.219)	0.826*** (0.232)	0.191 (0.193)	-0.142 (0.184)
Trust in elections	0.786*** (0.069)	0.709*** (0.065)	0.920*** (0.079)	0.127 (0.101)	0.920*** (0.082)	0.948*** (0.085)	0.773*** (0.089)	0.778*** (0.070)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.188*** (0.044)	0.290*** (0.040)	0.217*** (0.048)	−0.245*** (0.066)	0.146** (0.044)	0.117† (0.062)	0.276*** (0.060)	0.199*** (0.047)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.217*** (0.036)	0.103** (0.034)	0.050 (0.043)	0.073 (0.055)	0.105** (0.037)	0.119* (0.048)	0.048 (0.048)	0.071† (0.039)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	0.120** (0.037)	0.218*** (0.035)	0.096* (0.043)	0.103* (0.052)	0.190*** (0.044)	0.303*** (0.049)	0.274*** (0.050)	0.164*** (0.039)
Left-right scale	−0.131*** (0.023)	−0.092** (0.028)	−0.022 (0.032)	−0.347*** (0.039)	−0.047 (0.030)	−0.122** (0.036)	0.112** (0.038)	0.056† (0.031)
Interest in politics	−0.056 (0.070)	0.218** (0.074)	−0.022 (0.079)	0.454*** (0.111)	0.070 (0.084)	−0.013 (0.085)	−0.064 (0.093)	0.212* (0.088)
Civic knowledge	−0.000 (0.002)	−0.003 (0.002)	0.006* (0.003)	−0.001 (0.003)	0.002 (0.002)	0.005† (0.003)	−0.001 (0.003)	−0.004 (0.003)
Generalized trust	0.135*** (0.025)	0.072** (0.024)	0.065* (0.030)	0.262*** (0.036)	0.016 (0.026)	0.065* (0.032)	−0.006 (0.034)	0.119*** (0.027)
Age	−0.011** (0.004)	−0.014*** (0.004)	−0.013** (0.005)	−0.009† (0.005)	−0.012** (0.005)	−0.014** (0.005)	−0.015* (0.006)	−0.007 (0.005)
Gender: male (ref. female)	−0.246* (0.119)	−0.438*** (0.113)	−0.460*** (0.133)	0.005 (0.168)	−0.092 (0.128)	−0.197 (0.140)	−0.017 (0.149)	−0.042 (0.128)
Education	0.064 (0.084)	−0.131 (0.085)	−0.014 (0.089)	−0.090 (0.134)	−0.021 (0.091)	0.024 (0.113)	−0.006 (0.120)	−0.198* (0.093)
Income	0.023 (0.023)	0.014 (0.023)	0.030 (0.027)	−0.017 (0.027)	0.009 (0.024)	0.017 (0.028)	−0.009 (0.030)	−0.011 (0.024)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	−0.153 (0.128)	0.015 (0.115)	−0.148 (0.135)	0.149 (0.165)	0.159 (0.129)	0.106 (0.142)	−0.121 (0.147)	0.235† (0.129)
Const.	0.476 (0.377)	0.234 (0.360)	1.529*** (0.421)	5.736*** (0.507)	1.219** (0.416)	1.030* (0.518)	0.886† (0.460)	0.927* (0.402)
N	**1,140**	**1,188**	**996**	**982**	**904**	**971**	**866**	**1,053**
R^2	**0.483**	**0.507**	**0.361**	**0.242**	**0.464**	**0.412**	**0.429**	**0.395**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

Table 21. Country-Specific OLS Regression Estimates for European Political Trust Index (3)

Predictors	Netherlands	Poland	Portugal	Romania	Slovakia	Slovenia	Spain	Sweden
Vote EP: usually (ref. never)	0.068 (0.198)	0.267 (0.226)	0.377† (0.218)	0.276 (0.258)	0.188 (0.220)	0.241 (0.162)	0.559* (0.218)	0.094 (0.204)
Vote EP: always (ref. never)	0.301 (0.186)	0.185 (0.230)	0.166 (0.209)	0.553* (0.249)	0.166 (0.225)	0.405* (0.173)	0.627** (0.205)	0.137 (0.198)
Status: winner (ref. none)	0.291 (0.286)	0.834** (0.309)	0.235 (0.316)	0.207 (0.236)	-0.21904	0.356* (0.175)	0.428† (0.249)	0.097 (0.299)
Status: loser (ref. none)	0.079 (0.280)	-0.412 (0.303)	-0.030 (0.283)	-0.138 (0.221)	0.558* (0.263)	-0.064 (0.164)	0.152 (0.227)	-0.403 (0.262)
Trust in elections	0.823*** (0.081)	0.723*** (0.083)	0.636*** (0.079)	1.394*** (0.069)	0.548*** (0.089)	0.827*** (0.071)	0.927*** (0.078)	0.824*** (0.084)
Trustworthiness: Competence	0.364*** (0.051)	0.277*** (0.048)	0.120* (0.048)	0.065† (0.039)	−0.108† (0.060)	0.132** (0.044)	0.143** (0.050)	0.314*** (0.044)
Trustworthiness: Integrity	0.121** (0.044)	0.172*** (0.040)	0.058 (0.040)	0.051 (0.033)	−0.112* (0.051)	0.121** (0.038)	0.042 (0.042)	0.075† (0.039)
Trustworthiness: Impartiality	0.178*** (0.053)	0.136** (0.044)	0.202*** (0.043)	0.123** (0.035)	0.520*** (0.048)	0.184*** (0.036)	0.231*** (0.043)	0.224*** (0.044)
Left-right scale	−0.120*** (0.031)	−0.187*** (0.031)	−0.052† (0.029)	0.039 (0.025)	0.066† (0.037)	0.017 (0.028)	0.012 (0.030)	−0.080** (0.028)
Interest in politics	−0.061 (0.086)	0.092 (0.085)	−0.026 (0.092)	0.192* (0.083)	0.279** (0.106)	−0.027 (0.075)	−0.026 (0.080)	−0.006 (0.086)
Civic knowledge	0.004† (0.002)	−0.001 (0.002)	0.004† (0.003)	0.002 (0.003)	0.001 (0.003)	0.002 (0.002)	−0.003 (0.003)	−0.003 (0.003)
Generalized trust	0.099** (0.034)	0.019 (0.029)	0.046 (0.029)	0.054* (0.022)	0.121*** (0.036)	−0.012 (0.026)	0.055† (0.030)	0.059† (0.030)
Age	−0.014** (0.004)	0.005 (0.004)	−0.008† (0.004)	−0.015** (0.004)	−0.031*** (0.005)	−0.018*** (0.004)	0.002 (0.004)	−0.007 (0.004)
Gender: male (ref. female)	−0.341* (0.134)	−0.412** (0.131)	−0.500*** (0.133)	−0.128 (0.124)	−0.412* (0.161)	0.040 (0.119)	0.018 (0.132)	−0.072 (0.135)
Education	0.040 (0.085)	−0.031 (0.100)	0.085 (0.084)	−0.068 (0.112)	0.013 (0.132)	0.110 (0.089)	0.029 (0.085)	−0.137 (0.095)
Income	0.016 (0.028)	−0.000 (0.024)	0.006 (0.025)	0.040† (0.023)	0.024 (0.029)	−0.007 (0.024)	0.018 (0.028)	0.011 (0.025)
Settlement: urban (ref. rural)	0.263* (0.130)	0.253* (0.126)	−0.015 (0.132)	0.027 (0.123)	0.045 (0.175)	0.039 (0.133)	0.075 (0.137)	−0.087 (0.129)
Const.	−0.134 (0.447)	0.304 (0.457)	2.451*** (0.430)	−0.198 (0.436)	2.122*** (0.537)	0.658 (0.429)	−0.241 (0.479)	0.798† (0.444)
N	**962**	**983**	**1,036**	**981**	**982**	**971**	**1,058**	**987**
R^2	**0.470**	**0.548**	**0.222**	**0.536**	**0.318**	**0.404**	**0.354**	**0.423**

Notes: Entries are unstandardized OLS coefficients. Standard errors in parentheses. Two-tailed p-values reported in the second row. The dependent variable is a political trust index ranging from 1 to 10. † p < .10, * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001.

4.2. Structural Equation Model of Political Trust

4.2.1. Structural Equation Model Specification

While the multilevel models establish the presence of effects, they treat the evaluative attribution of political trust as a direct linear outcome. To unpack the sequential nature of the mechanism itself, we employ a recursive covariance-based structural equation model (SEM). The central objective of the model is to formalize and empirically test a sequential mechanism in which electoral participatory experience and political alignment shape citizens' perceptions of electoral integrity, these procedural evaluations in turn inform broader expectations regarding the trustworthiness of political institutions, and those expectations ultimately structure generalized political trust. Rather than conceptualizing political trust as an immediate consequence of turnout or partisan alignment, the model treats it as the most distal outcome in a layered attitudinal process. The model integrates (1) a measurement component specifying latent attitudinal constructs and (2) a structural component capturing the sequential transformation of electoral participatory experience into political trust through intermediate evaluative processes.

The SEM framework is particularly appropriate for this purpose because it permits the simultaneous estimation of measurement and structural components within a unified system. Both trustworthiness and political trust are modelled as latent constructs, thereby allowing explicit correction for measurement error and ensuring that structural relations are estimated at the level of underlying dispositions rather than observed indicators. Moreover, the recursive structure of the model makes it possible to decompose total effects into direct and indirect pathways, which is essential for evaluating whether participation influences political trust primarily through intermediate evaluative channels.

The first stage of the model concerns electoral participation. Participation is operationalized using two dummy variables capturing whether respondents report voting "usually" or "always", with non-voters (vote "never) serving as the reference category. Participation is modelled as a function of age (AGE) and political interest (PI), two well-established determinants of turnout behaviour, and country-level characteristic of electoral integrity (PEI). Age and interest in politics are included exclusively at the participation stage in order to avoid over-conditioning subsequent evaluative processes and to preserve the interpretability of mediated pathways. The structural equations for this stage are specified as single-line expressions:

$$V_{U_i} = \alpha 1 + \beta 11 * PI_i + \beta 12 * AGE_i + \beta 13 * PEI_i + u1_i$$

$$V_{A_i} = \alpha 2 + \beta 21 * PI_i + \beta 22 * AGE_i + \beta 23 * PEI_i + u2_i$$

The second stage captures evaluation of procedural quality in the form of perceived electoral integrity (EI), which is treated as the first endogenous attitudinal mediator. Electoral integrity reflects respondents' overall assessment of the fairness and quality of elections, measured through reported trust in elections conducted in their country. In this specification, integrity perception is modelled as a function of participation experience, political alignment with governing or opposition parties (AL_G, AL_O), civic knowledge (CK), and country-level electoral integrity (PEI). The inclusion of alignment variables at this stage reflects the "winner-loser" logic: individuals who support the incumbent party, are more likely to evaluate electoral processes favourably, whereas those aligned with opposition parties may evaluate the same processes more critically. However, because alignment in our dataset is based on present party preference rather than verified past vote choice, it is modelled as parallel to electoral participation rather than as its consequence. This distinction preserves conceptual clarity between participatory experience and political alignment.

$$EI_i = \alpha 3 + \gamma 1 * V_{U_i} + \gamma 2 * V_{A_i} + \gamma 3 * AL_{O_i} + \gamma 4 * AL_{G_i} + \gamma 5 * CK_i + \gamma 6 * PEI_i + u3_i$$

The third stage introduces the latent construct of institutional trustworthiness (η1), which captures citizens' expectations regarding how political institutions and actors behave across a range of projective scenarios involving policy performance, corruption resistance, accountability, impartiality, and reliability. Trustworthiness is modelled reflectively using nine indicators (see section 3.5.2). One loading is fixed to unity for identification. Structurally, trustworthiness is specified as a function of subjective perceptions of electoral integrity (EI), political alignment (AL_G, AL_O), and country-level electoral integrity (PEI). This equation operationalizes one of the theoretical claims of the model. Citizens who perceive elections as clean and legitimate are more likely to attribute competence, integrity, and accountability to political institutions. At the same time, political alignment with incumbents may directly enhance perceptions of trustworthiness through affective or partisan mechanisms, independently of procedural evaluations. By allowing both pathways, the model captures the coexistence of cognitive evaluation and partisan alignment effects.

$$q26r_i = 1 * \eta 1_i + e1_i$$
$$q27_i = \lambda 2 * \eta 1_i + e2_i$$
$$q28_i = \lambda 3 * \eta 1_i + e3_i$$
$$q29_i = \lambda 4 * \eta 1_i + e4_i$$
$$q30_i = \lambda 5 * \eta 1_i + e5_i$$
$$q31_i = \lambda 6 * \eta 1_i + e6_i$$
$$q32_i = \lambda 7 * \eta 1_i + e7_i$$
$$q33_i = \lambda 8 * \eta 1_i + e8_i$$
$$q34_i = \lambda 9 * \eta 1_i + e9_i$$
$$\eta 1\_i = \alpha 4 + \delta 1 * EI\_i + \delta 2 * AL\_O\_i + \delta 3 * AL\_G\_i + \delta 4 * PEI\_i + u4\_i$$

The final stage models generalized political trust (η2) as a latent construct measured by seven institutional confidence items (q1–q7). This final equation allows political trust to depend simultaneously on attributional evaluations (trustworthiness), procedural evaluations (electoral integrity), electoral participatory experience, political alignment ("winner-loser" effect), and generalized interpersonal trust. Including both integrity and trustworthiness enables a test of partial mediation: electoral integrity may shape political trust directly as a procedural anchor of institutional confidence, while trustworthiness represents a broader attributional channel through which procedural legitimacy is generalized into durable institutional trust.

$$q1_i = 1 * \eta 2_i + e10_i$$
$$q2_i = \lambda 11 * \eta 2_i + e11_i$$
$$q3_i = \lambda 12 * \eta 2_i + e12_i$$
$$q4_i = \lambda 13 * \eta 2_i + e13_i$$
$$q5_i = \lambda 14 * \eta 2_i + e14_i$$

$$q6_i = \lambda 15 * \eta 2_i + e15_i$$

$$q7_i = \lambda 16 * \eta 2_i + e16_i$$

$$\eta 2\_i = \alpha 5 + \theta 1 * \eta 1\_i + \theta 2 * EI\_i + \theta 3 * V\_U\_i + \theta 4 * V\_A\_i + \theta 5 * AL\_O\_i + \theta 6 * AL\_G\_i + \theta 7 * GT\_i + \theta 8 * PEI\_i + u5\_i$$

The model is estimated using maximum likelihood with standard errors clustered at the country level to account for intra-country dependence in observations. Identification is ensured through fixed factor loadings for each latent construct and the recursive structure, which prevents feedback loops among endogenous variables. The specification remains intentionally parsimonious: demographic predictors are confined to the participation stage, civic knowledge is limited to procedural evaluation, and generalized interpersonal trust enters only in the final stage. This structure preserves the theoretical clarity of the evaluative mechanism while avoiding over-specification.

In order to further assess the generalizability of the proposed mechanism of evaluative trust attribution, the model is extended to the supranational level by replacing national electoral participation and political trust with their European Union counterparts. This additional specification allows us to examine whether the sequential logic identified at the national level also operates in the context of European elections and trust in EU institutions.

The supranational extension preserves the underlying causal architecture of the original model while adapting the relevant constructs. Electoral participation is operationalized as participation in European Parliament elections (EP vote), modelled analogously to national turnout. Institutional trust at the supranational level is specified as a latent construct (EU trust), measured by three indicators: trust in the European Commission, trust in the European Council, and trust in the European Parliament. These indicators jointly capture generalized confidence in the core executive and legislative bodies of the European Union.

The structural logic remains sequential. Participation in EP elections is expected to shape procedural evaluations of electoral integrity, which in turn influence attributional perceptions of institutional trustworthiness. These trustworthiness perceptions are then expected to predict political trust in EU institutions. In addition, alignment with governing versus opposition parties (defined at the national level) is retained in the model, as partisan alignment may influence supranational evaluations through motivated reasoning and elite cueing. Civic knowledge and generalized interpersonal trust remain included as theoretically established covariates.

The supranational specification follows the same sequential logic as the national model and consists of four components: electoral participation, perceived electoral integrity (EI), institutional trustworthiness (η1), and trust in European Union institutions (η2_EU). First, participation in European Parliament elections is modelled as a function of political interest (PI), age (AGE), and country-level electoral integrity (PEI).

$$V\_U\_EU\_i = \alpha 1 + \beta 11 * PI\_i + \beta 12 * AGE\_i + \beta 13 * PEI\_i + u1\_i$$

$$V\_A\_EU\_i = \alpha 2 + \beta 21 * PI\_i + \beta 22 * AGE\_i + \beta 23 * PEI\_i + u2\_i$$

Next, perceived electoral integrity (EI) is modelled as a function of European Parliament participation (V_U_EU, V_A_EU), political alignment (AL_O, AL_G), civic knowledge (CK), and contextual electoral integrity (PEI).

$$EI_i = \alpha 3 + \gamma 1 * V_{U_{EU_i}} + \gamma 2 * V_{A_{EU_i}} + \gamma 3 * AL_{O_i} + \gamma 4 * AL_{G_i} + \gamma 5 * CK_i + \gamma 6 * PEI_i + u3_i$$

Subsequently, institutional trustworthiness (η1) is specified as a latent construct determined by perceived electoral integrity (EI), political alignment (AL_O, AL_G), and contextual electoral integrity (PEI).

$$\eta 1_i = \alpha 4 + \delta 1 * EI_i + \delta 2 * AL_{O_i} + \delta 3 * AL_{G_i} + \delta 4 * PEI_i + u4_i$$

Finally, trust in European Union institutions (η2_EU) is specified as a latent outcome predicted by institutional trustworthiness (η1), perceived electoral integrity (EI), European Parliament participation (V_U_EU, V_A_EU), political alignment (AL_O, AL_G), generalized interpersonal trust (GT), and contextual electoral integrity (PEI).

$$\eta 2_{EU_i} = \alpha 5 + \theta 1 * \eta 1_i + \theta 2 * EI_i + \theta 3 * V_{U_{EU_i}} + \theta 4 * V_{A_{EU_i}} + \theta 5 * AL_{O_i} + \theta 6 * AL_{G_i} + \theta 7 * GT_i + \theta 8 * PEI_i + u5_i$$

4.2.1. Structural Equation Model of Political Trust (National Level)

The structural estimates support the proposed sequential mechanism that links electoral participation to political trust through evaluations of procedural fairness and attributional assessment of trustworthiness of political actors and institutions. In the very first stage, frequency of voting (i.e. exposure to a first-hand experience of electoral participation) is predicted by political interest and age. Political interest increases the likelihood of voting more frequent ("always") (B = 0.153***) and is negatively associated with occasional voting ("usually") (B = −0.069***). Age exhibits statistically significant associations with both frequency choices of voting (positive B = 0.007*** for "always"; and negative B = −0.004*** for "usually").

Perceived electoral integrity (operationalized through trust in elections) is in turn shaped by experience of participation and electoral outcome – alignment with the incumbent or an opposition party. Voting in elections is positively associated with the perceived electoral integrity, where reporting "always" voting shows a substantially larger coefficient (B = 0.431***) as compared to "usually" voting (B = 0.187***). Notably, this points that experience of electoral participation does strengthen the perceptions of electoral integrity, regardless of the electoral outcome. The lowest evaluations of electoral integrity are observed among the reference category – those who "never" vote. Alignment with the governing party, as expected, displays a particularly large association with perceived electoral integrity (B = 0.628***), while alignment with the opposition parties also shows positive association (B = 0.234***). Individuals without a defined electoral alignment (reference category) exhibit comparatively lower evaluations of electoral integrity. Substantively, this suggests that having a defined partisan position — regardless of whether it is government or opposition — is associated with more positive procedural evaluations compared to being politically unattached. Finally, civic knowledge shows positive, though weak association with evaluations of electoral integrity (B = 0.005***).

Institutional trustworthiness in turn is predicted by perceived electoral integrity (B = 0.375***). Alignment with the governing party is also positively associated with trustworthiness (B = 0.516***), and alignment with opposition parties exhibits a smaller but statistically significant positive effect (B = 0.163***). Substantively, this suggests that more favourable procedural evaluations are associated with higher expectations of institutional trustworthiness – competence, impartiality, and accountability. In addition, the country-level PEI index shows a small but statistically significant positive association with trustworthiness (B = 0.017***).

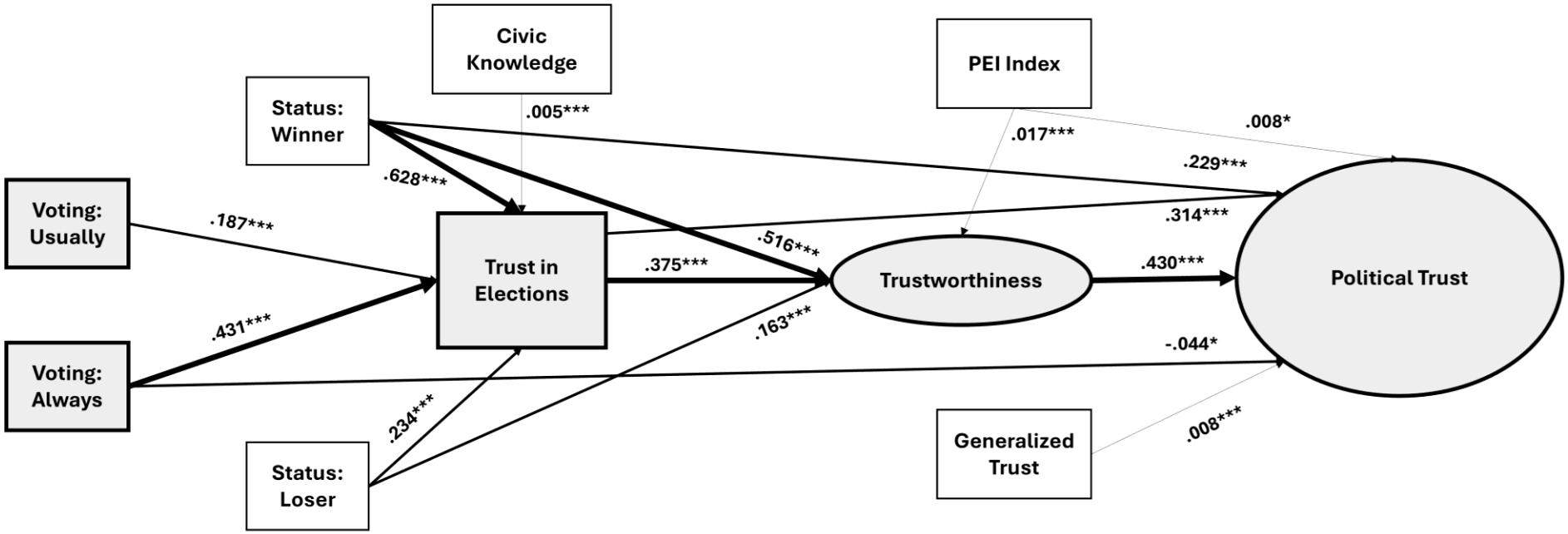
The final stage of the model explores predictors of political trust. According to our findings, it is primarily structured by perceptions of institutional trustworthiness (B = 0.430***) and perceived electoral integrity (B = 0.314***). Alignment with the governing party remains positively associated with political trust in the final equation (B = 0.229***) indicating the affective or partisan channel of trust-building. Voting "always" exhibits a modest negative association with political trust (B = −0.044*), while the remaining predictors have no statistically significant effect. Generalized trust is positively related to political trust (B = 0.008***). Moreover, the country-level PEI index exerts a small but statistically significant direct effect on political trust (B = 0.008*). Taken together, the model indicates that electoral participation contributes to political trust primarily through its influence on procedural evaluations of electoral integrity and subsequent attributional assessments of institutional trustworthiness. Direct participation effects are comparatively limited once evaluative mediators are included. At the same time, alignment with the governing party ("winner" effect) exerts consistent influence across multiple stages of the model.

Table 22. Structural Determinants of National Political Trust: Structural Equation Model

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Coefficient (SE)
Vote: usually	Interest in politics	−0.069*** (0.006)
	Age	−0.004*** (0.000)
	PEI index (country)	−0.001 (0.001)
Vote: always	Interest in politics	0.153*** (0.007)
	Age	0.007*** (0.001)
	PEI index (country)	−0.000 (0.001)
Electoral Integrity (individual)	Vote EP: usually	0.187*** (0.022)
	Vote EP: always	0.431*** (0.027)
	PEI index (country)	0.000 (0.001)
	Status: loser	0.234*** (0.036)
	Status: winner	0.628*** (0.036)
	Civic knowledge	0.005*** (0.000)
Trustworthiness (latent)	Electoral integrity (ind)	0.375*** (0.028)
	PEI index (country)	0.017*** (0.004)
	Status: loser	0.163*** (0.037)
	Status: winner	0.516*** (0.058)
National Political Trust (latent)	Vote: usually	0.022 (0.014)
	Vote: always	−0.044† (0.023)
	Electoral integrity (ind)	0.314*** (0.011)
	Trustworthiness	0.430*** (0.032)
	PEI index (country)	0.008* (0.003)
	Status: loser	−0.015 (0.019)
	Status: winner	0.229*** (0.032)
	Generalized trust	0.008** (0.003)

Notes: The model specifies a recursive structure. Continuous predictors are mean-centered (sample mean subtracted). Latent constructs are estimated using multiple reflective indicators with one loading per factor fixed to unity for identification. Robust standard errors account for clustering at the country level. Significance levels: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05, † p < .10.

Figure 14. Structural Equation Model of Evaluative Attribution Mechanism Linking Electoral Participation to National Political Trust



Unstandardized maximum likelihood coefficients are displayed. Robust standard errors are clustered at the country level (24 clusters). Only statistically significant paths are shown ($p < .10$; $p < .05$; $p < .01$; $^{**}p < .001$).

4.2.1. Structural Equation Model of Political Trust (Supranational Level)

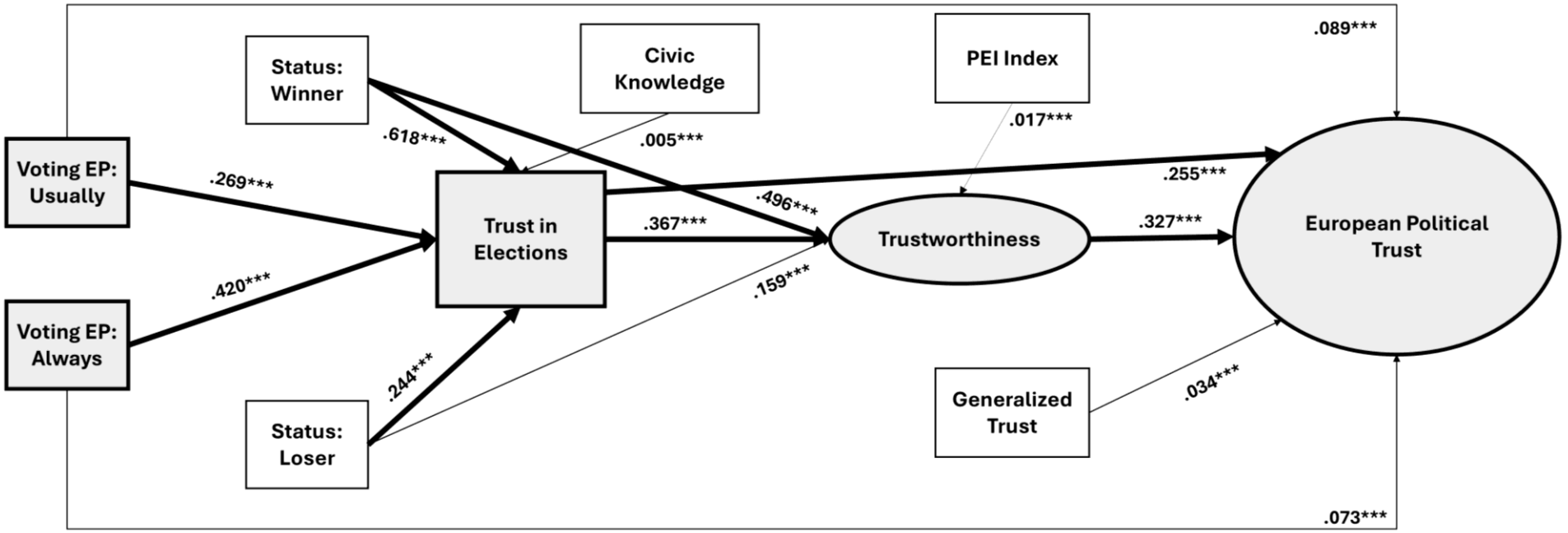
The supranational model reproduces the core structure of the evaluative trust attribution mechanism. Participation in European Parliament elections is systematically positively associated with perceived electoral integrity: both occasional (B = 0.269***) and regular EP voters (B = 0.420***) evaluate the integrity of elections more positively than non-voters. As in the national model, partisan alignment exerts substantial influence: alignment with the incumbents displays a strong association with perceived electoral integrity (B = 0.618***), while alignment with the opposition predictably exhibits smaller effect (B = 0.244***). Civic knowledge also contributes positively, albeit modestly. Institutional trustworthiness is, in turn, strongly predicted by perceived electoral integrity (B = 0.367***), confirming the attributional stage of the mechanism. Belonging to the camp of electoral "winners" demonstrates a substantial positive association (B = 0.496***) with the perceived trustworthiness of institutions, while supporters of the opposition parties exert a smaller but statistically significant positive effect (B = 0.159***). Finally, turning to EU institutional trust, both mediating components remain significant. Trustworthiness predicts EU trust (B = 0.327***), and perceived electoral integrity retains an independent positive effect (B = 0.255***). Importantly, participation in EP elections also displays direct positive associations with EU institutional trust ("usually" vote: B = 0.0895***; "always" vote: B = 0.073***). Generalized interpersonal trust also contributes positively (B = 0.034***). In contrast, partisan alignment shows no independent effect.

Table 23. Structural Determinants of European Political Trust: Structural Equation Model

Dependent Variable	Predictor	Coefficient (SE)
Vote EP: usually	Interest in politics	−0.041*** (0.006)
	Age	−0.004*** (0.000)
	PEI index (country)	−0.001 (0.001)
Vote EP: always	Interest in politics	0.143*** (0.005)
	Age	0.006*** (0.001)
	PEI index (country)	−0.002 (0.001)
Electoral Integrity (individual)	Vote EP: usually	0.269*** (0.017)
	Vote EP: always	0.420*** (0.023)
	PEI index (country)	0.000 (0.001)
	Status: loser	0.244*** (0.033)
	Status: winner	0.618*** (0.001)
	Civic knowledge	0.005*** (0.000)
Trustworthiness (latent)	Electoral integrity (ind)	0.367*** (0.028)
	PEI index (country)	0.017*** (0.004)
	Status: loser	0.159*** (0.037)
	Status: winner	0.496*** (0.058)
European Political Trust (latent	Vote: usually	0.089*** (0.023)
	Vote: always	0.073** (0.027)
	Electoral integrity (ind)	0.255*** (0.022)
	Trustworthiness	0.327*** (0.045)
	PEI index (country)	-0.003 (0.002)
	Status: loser	0.044 (0.046)
	Status: winner	0.057 (0.031)
	Generalized trust	0.034*** (0.007)

Notes: The model specifies a recursive structure. Continuous predictors are mean-centered (sample mean subtracted). Latent constructs are estimated using multiple reflective indicators with one loading per factor fixed to unity for identification. Robust standard errors account for clustering at the country level. Significance levels: *** p < .001, ** p < .01, * p < .05, † p < .10.

Figure 15. Structural Equation Model of Evaluative Attribution Mechanism Linking Electoral Participation to European Political Trust



Unstandardized maximum likelihood coefficients are displayed. Robust standard errors are clustered at the country level (24 clusters). Only statistically significant paths are shown ($p < .10$; $p < .05$; $p < .01$; $^{**}p < .001$).

5. Conclusions and Policy Recommendations

National turnout is not a stand-alone driver of political trust. Our analysis conducted in this report indicates that a higher electoral participation does not, by itself, translate into higher political trust. Instead, participation appears to matter as a predictor of political trust by being embedded in a broader evaluative sequence, consistent with a "conditional participation" logic. Citizens' trust judgments are closely linked to how they evaluate the fairness of electoral process, the competence, integrity and impartiality of political institutions, and not lastly the outcomes of elections. In other words, voting is best understood as a component of a trust-building mechanism rather than as a direct lever that reliably boosts trust across levels and national contexts. Participation is most likely to align with higher political trust, when citizens perceive the overall democratic competition as meaningful, that democratic rules and democratic procedures are observed as applied consistently, and political authorities are being observed as acting responsibly. Where these conditions are weak, mobilising turnout alone may be insufficient, and in some settings may even amplify frustration, which might be leading to mistrust, if the personal electoral experience is associated with an exposure to a potential violation of voting procedures, inconsistencies, violence, and polarised narratives. The central policy implication is that participation strategies should be designed as trust-sensitive, rather than turnout-maximising per se. Turnout-raising interventions that do not take into account the institutional and informational context, risk producing short-lived gains in participation, without strengthening (or potentially weakening) citizens' longer-term confidence in democratic governance. Instead, interventions should focus on strengthening mobilisation alongside with visible improvements in electoral credibility, procedural fairness, and responsiveness. One policy recommendation at the national, but also the European Level will be that turnout at national and European Elections is not the most important driver of political trust. A very important driver is to make the full electoral cycle more transparent, fair, inclusive, respectful, and following clear rules and that the full electoral cycle from its beginning to its end is an open, fully transparent and fully documented process. It is hence very important for all European democracies to improve the policies of elections and the complete electoral process above and beyond just increasing the turnout on election day.

Confidence in elections (perception of electoral integrity) is the strongest and most consistent correlate of political trust. The report's results point to a strong association: confidence that elections are conducted fairly and competently is closely linked to higher political trust. This relationship is not limited to trust in election procedures and management alone. Instead, perceptions of electoral integrity appear to have a "spill over" effect for the broader evaluations of democratic institutions and elected authorities. When electoral manipulation is suspected, distrust can extend beyond electoral management bodies to parliament, government, and party politics. This dynamic is highly relevant in contemporary information environments, where administrative errors or disinformation can erode confidence even when formal procedures are robust. The main policy implication is that integrity-enhancing reforms should be understood as and treated as "trust-building policy". Specific interventions can include actions aimed to ensure the independence and professional capacity of electoral management bodies, steps to strengthen transparency across all stages of the electoral cycle (registration, campaigning, counting, dispute resolution) and means to organize communication channels that make procedures understandable to citizens. Simultaneously, the electoral integrity policy needs to include measures targeted at greater information resilience (such as rapid correction of false claims, consistent publication of verifiable process data), to ensure that procedural quality appropriately translates into perceived credibility.

One policy action to increase confidence in elections could be the creation of an 'European Election Observatory EEO'. This new European Observatory should send election observers to all national and regional elections in all European countries to ensure the highest quality, cross-national comparability and standards in elections in Europe.

Political trust is strongly anchored in perceived institutional trustworthiness, which in turn is multidimensional. Our analysis points that political trust is best understood as an evaluative judgement grounded in perceived trustworthiness. Trustworthiness is a multidimensional phenomenon, and citizens can distinguish between its components, such as competence, integrity, and impartiality. These dimensions align with different evaluative logics, and they imply that trust can be withdrawn for different reasons that require different remedies. For instance, competence emerges more salient at national level, where public service performance is the dominant frame for evaluation. Whereas impartiality becomes central at supranational level, where citizens perceive unequal representation or systematic disregard for specific communities. The main policy implication is that trust-building should be designed as dimension-specific reform, rather than a generic "trust campaign". Political institutions should align interventions with the specific dimension driving distrust in a given setting and communicate evidence of change in a transparent way using verifiable indicators. One policy recommendation is that the creation of an 'European Observatory of Integrity', of a second 'European Observatory of Competence' and a third 'European Observatory of Impartiality'. These 3 new European Observatories should measure the trustworthiness of political institutions in all European countries on an annual basis. An example could be the annual Transparency Index of the NGO Transparency International. These 3 new European Observatories should be allocated to 3 different European cities as part of an international competition.

Winner–loser differences in trust are substantial, and they are channelled through perceptions of fairness and trustworthiness. The report confirms a pronounced association between electoral outcomes and political trust. Electoral "winners" tend to report higher trust than "losers," indicating that trust is partly structured by whether citizens feel represented by the governing result. This gap is not an emotional aftereffect of competition but reflects deeper legitimacy judgments about whether political authority is responsive and whether institutions recognise one's political voice. More specifically, the evidence supports the interpretation that procedural fairness moderates the "winner-loser dynamic". Where citizens, especially electoral losers, perceive the contest as fair and the rules as impartially enforced, they are more likely to accept defeat without withdrawing trust from institutions. Conversely, when electoral outcomes are experienced through a lens of bias, losing can translate into broader distrust. The implication is that democracies face a particular vulnerability when polarisation is high and distrust intensifies among those who feel systematically disadvantaged. The central policy implication is that post-election governance should be designed to protect losers' consent. This includes transparent adjudication of disputes, visible neutrality of electoral authorities, and institutionalised roles for opposition oversight. It also includes communication strategies that acknowledge pluralism and avoid "winner-takes-all" rhetoric. In the medium term, reforms that strengthen inclusiveness (such as consultative mechanisms, protections for minority rights, and accountability procedures that operate regardless of who is in power) can reduce the likelihood that losing becomes perceived as an equivalent to political exclusion.

Trust in EU-level governance relates to participation through perceived impartiality and fairness. At the EU level, the analysis shows three central patterns. First, participation in European Parliament elections is positively associated with trust in EU institutions. Second, winner–loser effects are weaker than at the national level. Third, the same evaluative factors that structure national

political trust, confidence in elections and perceptions of institutional trustworthiness, are also associated with EU political trust. However, the findings must be interpreted cautiously. The positive association between EP voting and EU trust may reflect self-selection rather than a causal participation effect. Citizens who are already more supportive of the EU are more likely to vote in EP elections. If this is the case, participation is an indicator of prior EU support, not its cause. The data show correlation, but they do not establish directionality. The broader pattern is more robust: EU political trust appears embedded in the same evaluative mechanism identified at the national level. Citizens who perceive elections as fair and institutions as competent and impartial are more likely to trust EU institutions as well. At the same time, EU trust is less tightly structured by partisan "winner-loser" alignment, suggesting that it is less immediately outcome-driven than national political trust. The policy implications follow from these limits. First, increasing EP turnout cannot be assumed to increase EU trust. Mobilisation alone is unlikely to produce legitimacy gains if underlying evaluations of fairness and institutional conduct remain unchanged. Second, because domestic procedural confidence is associated with EU trust, maintaining credible electoral administration at national level indirectly supports supranational legitimacy. Third, the weaker "winner-loser" effect implies that EU institutions should preserve rule-based, non-partisan presentation of decisions to avoid importing domestic-style polarisation into the supranational arena.

Our analysis also suggests that several clusters can be distinguished among the studied European countries can depending on the specific constellation of predictors of public trust. This implies somewhat different recommendations concerning the public policy. In the **electorally conditional trust systems** (Greece, Hungary, France, Slovakia, Portugal, Czechia), recommended measures should aim to reinforce confidence in electoral procedures and reducing the likelihood that electoral defeat translates into systemic distrust. Specific examples can include measures to ensure uniform implementation of electoral rules across districts, transparent and timely adjudication of electoral complaints, and clearly documented vote-counting procedures that are consistently applied nationwide. In **institutionally anchored trust systems** (Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Sweden, Netherlands, Estonia, Ireland), measures aiming at maintaining procedural reliability and institutional competence should be prioritised. This includes safeguarding the professional independence of electoral administration, avoiding frequent or late procedural changes, and ensuring prompt correction of administrative errors to preserve institutional credibility. Finally, in **performance- and representation-sensitive systems** (Italy, Spain, Poland, Slovenia, Romania, Latvia, Lithuania, Croatia, Bulgaria), measures strengthening perceptions of governmental competence and responsiveness should be prioritised. In these contexts, trust is more strongly linked to evaluations of performance and representation, which implies that improving service delivery, policy implementation capacity, and perceived fairness in representation may have greater impact than procedural reforms alone.

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Annex 1. Trust in National Political Institutions

q1. Trust: national government

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? — Your national government.

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	24.14%	30.97%	35.34%	9.56%
Belgium	19.72%	31.68%	37.79%	10.81%
Bulgaria	37.71%	29.85%	25.84%	6.61%
Croatia	30.30%	31.72%	30.63%	7.35%
Czechia	40.10%	25.17%	29.54%	5.20%
Denmark	12.02%	25.29%	45.55%	17.14%
Estonia	24.20%	28.81%	36.85%	10.13%
Finland	19.85%	28.51%	41.63%	10.01%
France	37.95%	30.85%	22.39%	8.81%
Germany	25.74%	30.12%	31.54%	12.60%
Greece	41.59%	34.06%	20.08%	4.27%
Hungary	43.71%	18.98%	23.73%	13.57%
Ireland	19.33%	23.26%	43.51%	13.89%
Italy	31.17%	24.77%	34.77%	9.28%
Latvia	26.83%	31.83%	30.35%	10.99%
Lithuania	22.47%	29.18%	37.93%	10.43%
Netherlands	14.78%	33.36%	37.67%	14.19%
Poland	24.22%	22.54%	40.54%	12.70%
Portugal	14.80%	33.78%	42.39%	9.03%
Romania	42.59%	41.07%	12.62%	3.73%
Slovakia	36.81%	27.88%	26.13%	9.18%
Slovenia	38.77%	40.66%	16.79%	3.79%
Spain	36.23%	27.62%	26.78%	9.37%
Sweden	13.97%	24.61%	44.56%	16.87%

q2. Trust: regional government

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? — Your regional government.

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	15.85%	29.07%	42.28%	12.80%
Belgium	16.38%	31.60%	40.61%	11.41%
Bulgaria	28.25%	31.60%	32.69%	7.46%
Croatia	20.97%	32.86%	39.27%	6.91%
Czechia	20.23%	31.31%	42.30%	6.16%
Denmark	10.81%	25.25%	50.00%	13.94%
Estonia	10.77%	23.12%	53.51%	12.60%
Finland	8.11%	23.50%	58.66%	9.72%
France	22.43%	31.49%	36.20%	9.88%
Germany	19.93%	27.34%	38.99%	13.74%
Greece	24.43%	50.38%	21.97%	3.22%
Hungary	18.17%	23.70%	43.38%	14.74%
Ireland	16.11%	24.24%	48.15%	11.49%
Italy	23.16%	29.08%	40.13%	7.63%
Latvia	13.85%	28.77%	40.64%	16.74%
Lithuania	11.86%	23.87%	49.78%	14.49%
Netherlands	11.03%	25.76%	47.47%	15.74%
Poland	15.85%	22.34%	49.66%	12.14%
Portugal	12.36%	29.16%	48.20%	10.28%
Romania	21.27%	51.68%	22.28%	4.77%
Slovakia	20.37%	28.03%	41.33%	10.27%
Slovenia	17.86%	48.40%	29.38%	4.36%
Spain	20.55%	34.53%	33.19%	11.73%
Sweden	10.81%	25.23%	49.20%	14.75%

q3. Trust: national parliament

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? — Your national parliament.

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	18.53%	30.77%	37.06%	13.65%
Belgium	18.77%	35.22%	35.13%	10.88%
Bulgaria	43.08%	29.76%	22.55%	4.61%
Croatia	31.01%	35.16%	27.93%	5.90%
Czechia	30.22%	31.37%	33.77%	4.64%
Denmark	9.48%	24.42%	48.59%	17.51%
Estonia	21.67%	32.64%	34.98%	10.71%
Finland	13.80%	29.77%	47.16%	9.28%
France	30.10%	37.41%	24.37%	8.12%
Germany	22.71%	30.32%	34.30%	12.67%
Greece	37.91%	41.84%	16.40%	3.85%
Hungary	36.53%	24.69%	26.52%	12.26%
Ireland	16.55%	26.30%	44.20%	12.94%
Italy	25.04%	30.88%	37.07%	7.00%
Latvia	28.28%	31.16%	30.83%	9.73%
Lithuania	27.49%	33.77%	30.99%	7.75%
Netherlands	14.36%	33.73%	38.83%	13.08%
Poland	20.12%	26.43%	44.36%	9.09%
Portugal	14.91%	34.63%	42.46%	8.00%
Romania	40.87%	44.49%	12.20%	2.44%
Slovakia	34.28%	30.85%	27.76%	7.11%
Slovenia	34.16%	45.71%	17.00%	3.14%
Spain	23.85%	34.86%	33.94%	7.34%
Sweden	10.13%	21.53%	54.04%	14.30%

q4. Trust: political parties

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? — Political parties.

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	23.31%	43.38%	25.90%	7.41%
Belgium	25.42%	40.12%	26.74%	7.72%
Bulgaria	42.28%	34.77%	18.57%	4.39%
Croatia	39.10%	36.44%	21.46%	3.00%
Czechia	26.05%	40.61%	30.77%	2.56%
Denmark	12.83%	33.16%	44.64%	9.37%
Estonia	20.30%	40.10%	32.80%	6.80%
Finland	16.50%	40.37%	38.11%	5.03%
France	37.76%	38.16%	17.48%	6.60%
Germany	23.18%	39.05%	28.58%	9.19%
Greece	45.44%	42.59%	8.45%	3.51%
Hungary	28.13%	40.32%	25.21%	6.34%
Ireland	20.00%	33.97%	39.25%	6.78%
Italy	35.72%	35.81%	23.63%	4.83%
Latvia	32.59%	38.97%	22.72%	5.72%
Lithuania	27.60%	36.09%	30.23%	6.08%
Netherlands	16.82%	37.02%	35.84%	10.31%
Poland	26.03%	34.64%	33.47%	5.86%
Portugal	20.84%	47.31%	27.14%	4.71%
Romania	46.61%	43.08%	8.13%	2.18%
Slovakia	29.32%	35.17%	29.91%	5.60%
Slovenia	39.93%	47.22%	10.44%	2.40%
Spain	32.22%	40.88%	23.06%	3.83%
Sweden	12.54%	33.78%	44.82%	8.86%

q5. Trust: courts and judicial system

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? — Courts and the judicial system.

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	11.66%	20.64%	41.78%	25.92%
Belgium	17.01%	27.55%	39.17%	16.27%
Bulgaria	34.87%	29.59%	28.16%	7.38%
Croatia	28.54%	33.03%	31.70%	6.74%
Czechia	14.90%	23.34%	48.76%	13.00%
Denmark	5.73%	13.15%	43.68%	37.44%
Estonia	9.90%	19.38%	48.49%	22.23%
Finland	8.44%	15.30%	48.75%	27.51%
France	27.17%	28.12%	31.32%	13.38%
Germany	13.73%	22.11%	37.25%	26.91%
Greece	25.10%	38.20%	28.19%	8.51%
Hungary	20.18%	25.96%	41.88%	11.98%
Ireland	12.41%	20.37%	46.77%	20.45%
Italy	22.31%	28.05%	38.35%	11.29%
Latvia	16.60%	26.97%	39.00%	17.43%
Lithuania	14.35%	26.21%	41.87%	17.57%
Netherlands	9.50%	17.14%	39.24%	34.12%
Poland	20.87%	26.40%	42.41%	10.31%
Portugal	13.05%	31.80%	42.59%	12.55%
Romania	29.25%	45.68%	18.86%	6.20%
Slovakia	23.81%	28.58%	36.97%	10.65%
Slovenia	18.69%	40.03%	32.09%	9.18%
Spain	18.42%	27.67%	38.42%	15.50%
Sweden	7.96%	15.41%	43.89%	32.75%

q6. Trust: Head of State

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? – Head of State

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	27.5%	17.5%	26.3%	28.7%
Belgium	12.5%	17.3%	40.9%	29.3%
Bulgaria	21.2%	17.1%	37.6%	24.1%
Croatia	16.6%	22.3%	42.2%	18.9%
Czechia	32.9%	19.4%	28.6%	19.1%
Denmark	6.1%	14.1%	33.9%	46.0%
Estonia	10.7%	14.4%	40.3%	34.6%
Finland	9.2%	13.0%	46.4%	31.5%
France	49.2%	22.0%	18.5%	10.4%
Germany	22.1%	22.9%	31.8%	23.2%
Greece	41.0%	34.6%	18.3%	6.1%
Hungary	39.8%	22.6%	25.1%	12.5%
Ireland	9.3%	13.2%	39.5%	38.1%
Italy	17.0%	16.3%	30.9%	35.8%
Latvia	19.8%	20.6%	32.3%	27.3%
Lithuania	21.3%	19.4%	39.0%	20.3%
Netherlands	13.6%	21.4%	38.1%	26.9%
Poland	41.2%	16.8%	24.1%	17.9%
Portugal	14.8%	24.6%	42.5%	18.2%
Romania	36.9%	28.1%	22.6%	12.5%
Slovakia	30.8%	20.7%	33.1%	15.4%
Slovenia	28.7%	35.8%	27.0%	8.6%
Spain	21.6%	21.0%	29.5%	27.9%
Sweden	10.5%	18.7%	37.5%	33.3%

q7. Trust: Head of Government

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following in your country? – Head of Government

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	26.1%	29.8%	32.5%	11.6%
Belgium	24.6%	24.1%	34.1%	17.1%
Bulgaria	35.1%	26.1%	30.0%	8.9%
Croatia	42.9%	25.2%	25.0%	6.9%
Czechia	56.5%	19.1%	18.4%	6.0%
Denmark	25.6%	22.1%	36.6%	15.7%
Estonia	31.6%	26.4%	32.5%	9.5%
Finland	38.2%	25.7%	27.2%	9.0%
France	44.3%	27.7%	20.2%	7.8%
Germany	40.1%	23.5%	23.7%	12.7%
Greece	53.7%	20.9%	17.1%	8.4%
Hungary	51.0%	12.9%	19.1%	16.9%
Ireland	22.9%	24.1%	39.2%	13.8%
Italy	36.1%	16.8%	30.9%	16.2%
Latvia	38.0%	24.1%	25.8%	12.1%
Lithuania	27.3%	32.8%	31.8%	8.2%
Netherlands	28.5%	22.5%	30.9%	18.1%
Poland	33.9%	17.1%	29.6%	19.5%
Portugal	24.1%	31.4%	33.9%	10.7%
Romania	60.2%	28.4%	8.2%	3.3%
Slovakia	51.1%	13.9%	20.4%	14.5%
Slovenia	47.8%	31.3%	15.2%	5.8%
Spain	44.4%	19.8%	24.3%	11.5%
Sweden	22.2%	25.3%	35.3%	17.2%

Annex 2. Trust in Supranational Political Institutions

q21. Trust: European Commission

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following? – The European Commission

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	27.3%	28.8%	34.1%	9.7%
Belgium	23.5%	29.8%	35.5%	11.2%
Bulgaria	29.9%	26.4%	33.0%	10.7%
Croatia	21.8%	30.4%	40.8%	7.0%
Czechia	30.9%	33.5%	30.1%	5.5%
Denmark	15.1%	26.8%	45.6%	12.5%
Estonia	17.4%	25.6%	43.7%	13.4%
Finland	14.1%	28.2%	48.3%	9.4%
France	31.5%	34.4%	26.5%	7.5%
Germany	23.7%	32.9%	33.0%	10.4%
Greece	25.6%	38.7%	30.3%	5.4%
Hungary	20.3%	21.6%	41.3%	16.7%
Ireland	12.6%	23.5%	50.9%	13.0%
Italy	27.6%	24.8%	39.1%	8.5%
Latvia	22.3%	29.4%	35.9%	12.3%
Lithuania	15.0%	22.3%	46.6%	16.1%
Netherlands	17.9%	27.4%	40.6%	14.1%
Poland	22.1%	22.0%	41.4%	14.5%
Portugal	11.7%	21.8%	52.8%	13.7%
Romania	25.5%	35.3%	28.7%	10.4%
Slovakia	25.7%	23.5%	34.4%	16.3%
Slovenia	27.7%	44.7%	23.3%	4.2%
Spain	18.1%	29.1%	40.8%	11.9%
Sweden	14.5%	22.1%	47.6%	15.9%

q22. Trust: European Parliament

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following? – The European Parliament

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	26.2%	28.9%	35.3%	9.6%
Belgium	23.2%	30.1%	36.0%	10.7%
Bulgaria	29.9%	27.3%	31.4%	11.3%
Croatia	21.8%	30.2%	40.9%	7.0%
Czechia	32.1%	33.3%	28.4%	6.2%
Denmark	14.8%	24.7%	46.6%	13.9%
Estonia	17.0%	26.1%	42.7%	14.2%
Finland	13.3%	27.6%	51.0%	8.0%
France	31.9%	32.5%	28.7%	6.8%
Germany	23.8%	33.8%	32.9%	9.5%
Greece	25.2%	39.1%	29.8%	5.9%
Hungary	20.1%	21.9%	39.8%	18.2%
Ireland	13.0%	22.5%	51.9%	12.6%
Italy	27.2%	25.7%	38.1%	9.0%
Latvia	22.5%	29.3%	35.3%	12.9%
Lithuania	15.6%	22.6%	45.9%	15.8%
Netherlands	19.2%	27.0%	39.5%	14.2%
Poland	21.7%	21.1%	42.7%	14.5%
Portugal	11.3%	23.1%	52.2%	13.4%
Romania	28.0%	33.5%	28.0%	10.5%
Slovakia	24.5%	23.2%	36.4%	15.9%
Slovenia	27.1%	44.8%	23.3%	4.8%
Spain	18.8%	28.1%	40.7%	12.4%
Sweden	14.9%	21.3%	47.0%	16.7%

q23. Trust: European Council

We would like to know how much you personally trust each of the following? – The European Council

Country	Not at all	Not very much	Somewhat	Completely
Austria	24.9%	29.2%	36.2%	9.7%
Belgium	22.2%	30.0%	37.8%	10.0%
Bulgaria	29.4%	26.1%	32.9%	11.7%
Croatia	21.5%	30.1%	40.5%	7.9%
Czechia	29.4%	33.3%	32.0%	5.4%
Denmark	13.4%	25.6%	46.8%	14.2%
Estonia	15.5%	24.9%	45.4%	14.3%
Finland	12.8%	29.0%	50.0%	8.3%
France	31.4%	32.9%	28.1%	7.6%
Germany	22.5%	33.4%	33.1%	11.0%
Greece	26.0%	39.0%	29.5%	5.5%
Hungary	18.6%	22.4%	41.2%	17.8%
Ireland	12.4%	22.7%	51.0%	13.8%
Italy	27.2%	26.4%	37.6%	8.8%
Latvia	23.6%	27.7%	36.0%	12.7%
Lithuania	15.6%	24.4%	45.1%	15.0%
Netherlands	17.3%	25.6%	43.2%	14.0%
Poland	21.3%	23.8%	40.1%	14.8%
Portugal	10.7%	22.6%	54.5%	12.2%
Romania	26.6%	34.7%	30.1%	8.6%
Slovakia	23.5%	23.7%	36.0%	16.8%
Slovenia	26.2%	46.3%	22.4%	5.1%
Spain	17.5%	27.8%	42.7%	12.0%
Sweden	14.3%	22.1%	48.1%	15.5%

Annex 3. Trustworthiness Evaluations

q26. If a member of parliament in your country were offered a bribe, how likely or unlikely is it that they would accept it?

How likely or unlikely do you think it is that a member of parliament in your country would accept a bribe if offered one?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	5.08%	2.50%	7.08%	8.42%	17.00%	12.00%	15.17%	12.67%	6.00%	14.08%
Belgium	4.64%	2.36%	4.05%	5.06%	17.05%	13.25%	16.03%	17.13%	5.74%	14.68%
Bulgaria	5.56%	0.59%	1.43%	1.77%	5.73%	5.99%	8.77%	13.15%	10.71%	46.29%
Croatia	1.60%	0.51%	1.18%	2.61%	5.81%	6.99%	11.46%	17.02%	13.48%	39.34%
Czechia	5.72%	1.60%	2.35%	3.20%	11.77%	7.74%	14.21%	14.97%	9.34%	29.10%
Denmark	5.01%	10.11%	14.17%	10.63%	15.21%	12.88%	13.31%	7.78%	2.51%	8.38%
Estonia	4.71%	3.36%	6.97%	8.32%	14.54%	11.93%	13.78%	11.93%	7.56%	16.89%
Finland	5.15%	7.77%	9.80%	10.81%	13.01%	13.60%	13.34%	10.47%	6.25%	9.80%
France	7.80%	2.42%	5.45%	6.56%	15.94%	9.39%	12.70%	12.42%	6.63%	20.70%
Germany	7.45%	5.50%	10.17%	8.36%	18.52%	12.12%	12.40%	9.54%	3.69%	12.26%
Greece	5.00%	1.27%	2.21%	2.63%	6.79%	6.96%	10.01%	14.84%	13.40%	36.90%
Hungary	8.48%	2.18%	2.94%	3.27%	11.92%	6.80%	8.56%	11.92%	8.90%	35.01%
Ireland	7.11%	4.68%	8.49%	7.37%	14.38%	13.95%	12.22%	11.27%	6.59%	13.95%
Italy	8.74%	1.09%	3.91%	3.73%	12.01%	11.56%	14.56%	16.11%	7.55%	20.75%
Latvia	5.03%	2.43%	4.36%	6.63%	13.09%	8.72%	11.91%	11.41%	7.72%	28.69%
Lithuania	3.49%	1.34%	3.42%	4.91%	11.00%	9.37%	12.94%	16.80%	8.85%	27.88%
Netherlands	5.16%	3.27%	7.83%	11.96%	15.92%	14.29%	16.09%	13.17%	5.25%	7.06%
Poland	6.37%	2.50%	4.04%	5.77%	16.35%	13.68%	13.94%	12.91%	6.02%	18.42%
Portugal	14.88%	2.03%	3.21%	3.47%	11.50%	9.21%	13.10%	15.30%	7.61%	19.70%
Romania	6.78%	0.76%	2.71%	2.54%	7.54%	7.03%	7.63%	11.36%	8.47%	45.17%
Slovakia	3.40%	1.36%	2.89%	3.49%	9.69%	7.99%	10.12%	14.12%	11.99%	34.95%
Slovenia	3.84%	2.09%	3.75%	3.59%	7.26%	9.26%	12.26%	15.10%	11.09%	31.78%
Spain	21.62%	4.22%	4.90%	4.90%	11.49%	8.28%	10.90%	11.32%	5.57%	16.81%
Sweden	5.13%	6.58%	9.83%	10.51%	14.70%	13.93%	14.62%	9.66%	3.50%	11.54%

q27. If many people complained about a public service that is working badly, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that it would be improved?

If many people complained about a public service that is working badly, how likely or unlikely do you think it is that it would be improved?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	14.2%	7.7%	14.5%	11.6%	16.4%	13.1%	10.3%	6.5%	2.2%	3.6%
Belgium	8.6%	5.4%	11.0%	10.8%	19.0%	16.2%	13.5%	8.3%	2.8%	4.3%
Bulgaria	18.6%	7.5%	12.2%	12.7%	14.8%	10.2%	9.7%	6.9%	2.8%	4.5%
Croatia	21.3%	12.1%	14.9%	12.3%	13.9%	10.3%	7.5%	4.1%	1.0%	2.5%
Czechia	11.2%	6.4%	9.9%	12.6%	22.8%	15.9%	11.2%	5.8%	2.1%	2.1%
Denmark	7.2%	5.3%	8.8%	11.9%	16.0%	16.8%	15.4%	11.1%	2.9%	4.6%
Estonia	9.2%	4.5%	8.1%	13.0%	18.7%	14.1%	13.4%	9.5%	3.4%	6.0%
Finland	9.1%	6.6%	10.0%	10.3%	14.6%	16.3%	15.3%	11.6%	2.7%	3.6%
France	14.2%	5.0%	9.2%	11.7%	20.9%	13.8%	11.2%	6.8%	2.6%	4.7%
Germany	14.1%	7.1%	12.2%	11.9%	17.0%	11.8%	9.7%	8.0%	3.6%	4.7%
Greece	18.2%	8.9%	11.2%	12.1%	14.0%	11.4%	9.5%	6.9%	3.4%	4.3%
Hungary	15.0%	7.8%	12.6%	11.5%	18.8%	14.7%	8.6%	5.5%	1.8%	3.6%
Ireland	12.2%	4.8%	10.1%	9.8%	16.5%	15.2%	11.7%	10.6%	4.3%	4.9%
Italy	14.0%	6.7%	10.2%	10.3%	19.2%	16.9%	9.6%	6.8%	2.4%	3.8%
Latvia	12.2%	5.5%	7.5%	11.4%	22.8%	14.8%	13.3%	7.6%	2.3%	2.5%
Lithuania	13.9%	4.4%	7.5%	7.6%	17.1%	15.1%	13.6%	11.8%	3.4%	5.6%
Netherlands	5.4%	4.0%	5.9%	9.4%	16.5%	19.5%	19.1%	11.6%	4.3%	4.3%
Poland	10.5%	5.5%	8.4%	10.4%	21.3%	15.8%	12.8%	8.0%	3.1%	4.3%
Portugal	9.1%	4.3%	9.5%	12.3%	17.7%	16.9%	12.9%	7.9%	2.6%	6.8%
Romania	24.9%	5.8%	8.5%	6.8%	11.5%	8.4%	10.0%	6.8%	4.3%	12.9%
Slovakia	11.9%	6.5%	13.4%	11.9%	17.7%	16.4%	10.2%	6.1%	2.3%	3.4%
Slovenia	20.2%	9.3%	13.6%	12.4%	14.8%	9.7%	9.2%	4.5%	2.7%	3.6%
Spain	7.3%	3.9%	8.9%	8.7%	17.7%	16.7%	13.0%	10.3%	5.5%	8.0%
Sweden	7.0%	4.6%	7.6%	9.7%	17.9%	15.1%	17.6%	10.5%	4.4%	5.6%

q28. If considering new tax policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that your government would act in the interests of all citizens?

If considering new tax policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that your government would act in the interests of all citizens?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	22.8%	8.4%	10.7%	12.7%	14.8%	11.4%	8.3%	4.0%	2.3%	4.5%
Belgium	15.2%	5.2%	8.7%	10.9%	16.8%	15.7%	13.2%	8.0%	2.4%	3.9%
Bulgaria	33.1%	9.9%	11.3%	10.9%	12.4%	7.9%	6.9%	3.5%	1.5%	2.6%
Croatia	25.4%	12.5%	12.7%	12.5%	13.6%	10.6%	6.7%	4.1%	0.6%	1.3%
Czechia	33.1%	8.4%	11.1%	9.4%	14.2%	8.0%	6.9%	4.7%	1.5%	2.6%
Denmark	13.2%	6.5%	12.0%	12.5%	16.6%	13.5%	12.0%	7.2%	2.7%	3.8%
Estonia	32.2%	8.1%	12.5%	10.6%	12.8%	7.4%	5.9%	4.8%	1.6%	4.1%
Finland	28.0%	10.4%	10.8%	9.8%	11.4%	9.7%	9.9%	6.1%	1.7%	2.3%
France	17.1%	7.5%	8.7%	10.9%	19.6%	12.2%	8.7%	8.0%	2.3%	5.0%
Germany	22.4%	6.8%	10.7%	12.4%	16.3%	9.5%	8.7%	5.5%	2.8%	4.9%
Greece	29.8%	11.8%	11.0%	11.7%	13.1%	7.5%	5.9%	4.4%	1.8%	3.1%
Hungary	35.7%	6.6%	10.6%	8.0%	13.6%	7.7%	6.2%	4.9%	2.3%	4.3%
Ireland	14.0%	4.4%	9.6%	10.6%	16.5%	14.1%	11.9%	10.2%	4.2%	4.5%
Italy	21.0%	7.7%	8.7%	10.3%	15.0%	16.3%	9.0%	6.7%	2.7%	2.7%
Latvia	33.9%	8.4%	7.8%	10.3%	15.2%	9.1%	8.1%	4.1%	1.2%	1.9%
Lithuania	36.9%	5.5%	8.9%	10.6%	12.3%	10.4%	6.6%	4.5%	2.1%	2.1%
Netherlands	8.1%	4.5%	7.2%	12.2%	18.6%	18.2%	15.6%	7.4%	4.6%	3.6%
Poland	18.8%	5.2%	8.6%	9.9%	17.7%	14.1%	11.0%	7.9%	2.8%	4.1%
Portugal	12.4%	4.7%	7.9%	12.1%	21.9%	17.3%	11.3%	7.0%	1.7%	3.8%
Romania	39.3%	7.5%	7.8%	8.2%	9.8%	6.3%	7.8%	4.8%	1.5%	7.0%
Slovakia	26.6%	10.0%	12.7%	10.5%	13.8%	9.9%	7.0%	4.5%	2.4%	2.5%
Slovenia	33.8%	8.9%	12.9%	10.8%	11.7%	7.4%	5.9%	4.1%	2.2%	2.1%
Spain	20.2%	7.0%	7.9%	8.4%	16.3%	12.1%	11.7%	9.2%	2.7%	4.4%
Sweden	15.8%	6.5%	9.8%	11.7%	17.0%	13.3%	11.8%	7.0%	2.4%	4.8%

q29. If a newspaper published a story about government policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that this would be accurate and reliable?

If a newspaper published a story about government policies, how likely or unlikely do you think that this would be accurate and reliable?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	9.5%	5.6%	7.9%	9.2%	20.9%	14.1%	12.9%	10.8%	4.6%	4.6%
Belgium	5.3%	2.7%	5.1%	7.4%	20.0%	17.1%	19.3%	13.9%	4.9%	4.4%
Bulgaria	20.1%	8.1%	12.1%	11.7%	19.2%	11.0%	8.6%	4.8%	1.6%	2.9%
Croatia	13.6%	8.1%	11.8%	12.3%	20.2%	13.6%	9.5%	6.8%	2.3%	1.8%
Czechia	12.8%	6.1%	11.4%	12.1%	25.4%	12.8%	7.6%	6.8%	2.6%	2.6%
Denmark	4.2%	2.8%	5.2%	8.7%	20.3%	17.7%	18.9%	14.2%	4.5%	3.6%
Estonia	10.4%	5.1%	9.8%	11.9%	21.7%	12.4%	13.0%	9.2%	3.8%	2.8%
Finland	7.7%	3.3%	6.3%	8.5%	15.6%	13.8%	17.4%	16.2%	7.0%	4.2%
France	8.3%	3.6%	8.2%	8.0%	25.5%	15.3%	13.4%	8.7%	3.5%	5.4%
Germany	9.9%	4.1%	5.8%	8.3%	20.0%	12.4%	13.2%	13.6%	6.3%	6.5%
Greece	16.0%	7.4%	13.3%	12.5%	21.3%	12.2%	6.8%	6.2%	1.5%	2.6%
Hungary	21.0%	8.1%	10.3%	9.9%	28.1%	9.3%	5.8%	3.8%	1.7%	2.2%
Ireland	6.3%	2.7%	6.4%	8.3%	20.5%	16.3%	15.5%	13.7%	6.1%	4.2%
Italy	10.4%	5.7%	8.0%	10.9%	23.0%	18.5%	11.6%	7.7%	1.8%	2.5%
Latvia	17.5%	6.0%	10.0%	11.6%	24.1%	12.2%	9.1%	5.8%	1.7%	2.0%
Lithuania	15.6%	5.0%	8.0%	10.0%	20.2%	13.3%	13.0%	8.4%	3.0%	3.6%
Netherlands	4.4%	1.4%	4.0%	6.3%	15.7%	19.5%	26.8%	13.3%	4.1%	4.4%
Poland	13.1%	4.5%	8.5%	8.2%	20.9%	16.0%	11.9%	9.7%	3.2%	4.0%
Portugal	5.1%	2.8%	7.2%	9.9%	20.7%	16.2%	16.4%	13.5%	3.5%	4.8%
Romania	19.2%	6.1%	8.6%	9.5%	19.1%	12.4%	8.6%	5.6%	3.4%	7.4%
Slovakia	12.8%	7.3%	9.8%	9.9%	23.4%	11.6%	8.9%	9.2%	2.8%	4.1%
Slovenia	14.1%	8.4%	10.9%	12.8%	21.5%	11.6%	8.6%	7.2%	2.9%	2.1%
Spain	10.2%	3.5%	7.5%	10.1%	22.9%	15.8%	13.9%	8.3%	3.6%	4.2%
Sweden	5.9%	3.6%	6.5%	10.9%	19.8%	15.0%	15.1%	12.5%	5.0%	5.5%

q30. If you shared your personal data with a government department, how likely or unlikely do you think that it would be protected?

If you shared your personal data with a government department, how likely or unlikely do you think that it would be protected?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	8.1%	3.4%	5.0%	7.2%	13.6%	12.3%	14.3%	17.4%	9.6%	9.2%
Belgium	6.1%	3.5%	4.5%	6.9%	14.0%	14.4%	18.5%	16.6%	7.6%	7.9%
Bulgaria	15.7%	6.7%	9.5%	11.2%	17.5%	11.2%	10.4%	8.8%	4.3%	4.6%
Croatia	13.4%	6.5%	9.4%	9.1%	18.3%	12.7%	13.2%	9.2%	4.4%	3.9%
Czechia	8.1%	2.9%	8.4%	7.3%	17.6%	11.4%	14.4%	14.1%	8.6%	7.1%
Denmark	2.7%	2.6%	5.3%	7.7%	14.8%	13.2%	16.7%	17.2%	11.6%	8.2%
Estonia	8.7%	5.3%	8.0%	9.6%	17.4%	11.1%	12.8%	12.7%	7.3%	7.0%
Finland	4.6%	2.6%	4.4%	5.7%	10.7%	10.4%	16.1%	19.6%	14.4%	11.4%
France	11.5%	4.4%	8.3%	8.3%	18.7%	10.3%	14.1%	12.2%	5.1%	7.0%
Germany	7.6%	4.3%	6.8%	8.0%	13.9%	9.8%	13.7%	15.6%	9.3%	11.1%
Greece	19.3%	9.6%	10.6%	10.0%	13.6%	9.4%	10.5%	8.5%	4.0%	4.5%
Hungary	15.6%	5.6%	9.3%	8.6%	18.5%	10.5%	9.2%	10.0%	5.4%	7.2%
Ireland	7.7%	3.5%	5.4%	7.6%	15.4%	13.2%	15.9%	16.0%	8.7%	6.7%
Italy	13.0%	6.7%	7.6%	7.9%	16.2%	16.1%	14.3%	11.2%	3.0%	4.1%
Latvia	12.3%	3.3%	8.1%	8.4%	18.5%	9.8%	14.7%	13.7%	6.4%	4.9%
Lithuania	14.3%	4.8%	8.3%	8.1%	14.3%	13.6%	11.9%	12.5%	6.3%	5.9%
Netherlands	3.5%	1.4%	3.5%	7.1%	12.2%	14.6%	21.3%	19.7%	10.3%	6.5%
Poland	11.4%	4.3%	7.2%	7.8%	16.4%	13.8%	14.0%	12.4%	5.9%	6.8%
Portugal	8.2%	4.5%	6.7%	9.9%	18.9%	11.9%	14.7%	11.9%	6.8%	6.5%
Romania	20.9%	4.2%	3.8%	6.6%	14.4%	7.7%	11.0%	11.6%	7.3%	12.4%
Slovakia	10.0%	5.4%	9.9%	11.0%	18.7%	12.8%	12.3%	9.0%	5.3%	5.8%
Slovenia	11.5%	4.9%	9.2%	8.7%	16.1%	11.9%	11.9%	12.6%	6.5%	6.6%
Spain	12.0%	3.8%	7.1%	9.0%	14.1%	13.9%	14.9%	13.7%	4.5%	6.9%
Sweden	4.7%	1.8%	5.4%	5.5%	12.9%	12.9%	18.7%	17.5%	10.0%	10.5%

q31. If an official inquiry found government ministers failed in their duties, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be held accountable?

If an official inquiry found government ministers failed in their duties, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be held accountable?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	18.6%	10.7%	12.0%	10.9%	13.7%	10.4%	8.3%	7.2%	3.7%	4.5%
Belgium	12.3%	7.5%	7.7%	10.3%	14.0%	13.6%	13.2%	11.3%	4.3%	5.9%
Bulgaria	40.4%	11.1%	9.7%	10.2%	9.2%	7.0%	5.2%	2.6%	1.3%	3.3%
Croatia	29.5%	14.0%	12.1%	9.7%	10.6%	9.0%	5.7%	4.4%	2.3%	2.8%
Czechia	23.1%	9.8%	10.8%	11.9%	14.7%	9.2%	8.1%	5.7%	2.7%	3.9%
Denmark	8.7%	7.6%	10.9%	11.0%	13.7%	11.1%	10.3%	12.7%	6.8%	7.0%
Estonia	21.9%	7.9%	10.0%	11.8%	14.5%	9.5%	8.7%	6.3%	3.8%	5.6%
Finland	15.0%	6.8%	9.6%	11.1%	11.4%	9.7%	11.1%	11.9%	7.0%	6.4%
France	16.2%	7.2%	11.0%	9.2%	16.6%	9.8%	11.6%	8.4%	3.3%	6.7%
Germany	17.9%	9.4%	9.9%	9.6%	13.4%	9.2%	9.8%	9.5%	4.5%	6.9%
Greece	41.4%	14.6%	8.8%	8.1%	6.9%	7.0%	4.2%	3.4%	2.2%	3.4%
Hungary	35.6%	9.6%	11.7%	9.6%	10.6%	6.6%	4.1%	5.0%	2.0%	5.3%
Ireland	17.3%	8.8%	7.9%	10.7%	12.0%	11.9%	11.0%	10.3%	4.5%	5.7%
Italy	21.4%	9.4%	9.9%	10.6%	13.5%	13.2%	8.5%	5.9%	3.0%	4.6%
Latvia	33.6%	9.4%	10.3%	8.9%	13.7%	8.1%	6.6%	4.6%	2.6%	2.2%
Lithuania	27.8%	8.2%	10.4%	9.1%	11.3%	11.2%	9.7%	5.7%	3.1%	3.5%
Netherlands	6.8%	3.4%	6.4%	8.6%	11.9%	13.6%	18.3%	16.9%	6.0%	8.2%
Poland	18.4%	8.1%	10.7%	10.3%	14.2%	10.8%	8.6%	8.5%	4.2%	6.2%
Portugal	21.0%	9.0%	12.9%	11.9%	13.9%	10.5%	8.3%	5.5%	2.2%	4.7%
Romania	34.8%	7.7%	8.4%	7.5%	8.1%	6.4%	6.2%	6.0%	2.9%	12.0%
Slovakia	27.6%	12.6%	13.0%	9.4%	12.3%	8.3%	5.5%	5.1%	2.8%	3.4%
Slovenia	37.6%	11.3%	12.3%	8.3%	9.3%	7.5%	6.3%	3.9%	1.3%	2.2%
Spain	16.5%	7.4%	10.1%	9.3%	11.7%	11.3%	10.8%	9.8%	5.0%	7.9%
Sweden	11.5%	5.4%	8.1%	11.0%	10.9%	12.7%	13.3%	12.1%	5.8%	9.1%

q32. If a government minister was found by the courts to have mishandled public funds, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would resign voluntarily?

If a government minister was found by the courts to have mishandled public funds, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would resign voluntarily?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	14.1%	10.1%	13.1%	10.5%	11.9%	9.9%	9.6%	9.5%	5.3%	6.0%
Belgium	12.8%	7.6%	8.9%	9.9%	14.4%	12.5%	13.0%	9.9%	4.5%	6.4%
Bulgaria	34.1%	12.5%	10.0%	8.7%	10.0%	7.0%	6.1%	3.8%	2.8%	4.9%
Croatia	40.3%	12.2%	9.8%	7.9%	7.9%	7.3%	6.7%	3.5%	2.2%	2.2%
Czechia	29.9%	10.3%	10.5%	9.9%	12.2%	8.6%	7.9%	5.2%	2.2%	3.2%
Denmark	8.2%	6.4%	7.7%	9.9%	14.1%	12.4%	13.4%	12.4%	7.6%	7.9%
Estonia	20.2%	8.4%	10.2%	11.1%	13.0%	10.1%	10.4%	7.3%	3.8%	5.4%
Finland	15.7%	7.5%	8.8%	9.3%	11.5%	10.0%	11.8%	11.3%	7.6%	6.6%
France	25.8%	8.9%	10.2%	8.4%	14.7%	8.3%	8.6%	5.8%	3.3%	5.9%
Germany	15.2%	8.6%	8.4%	9.3%	13.9%	8.8%	11.4%	9.4%	6.0%	9.2%
Greece	37.3%	15.1%	10.7%	6.6%	7.9%	5.4%	5.7%	5.0%	3.1%	3.1%
Hungary	41.0%	9.9%	7.8%	7.4%	10.9%	7.0%	5.3%	4.0%	2.3%	4.3%
Ireland	14.1%	6.7%	7.7%	9.0%	13.3%	12.0%	10.4%	10.9%	6.6%	9.2%
Italy	35.4%	10.2%	9.3%	7.5%	11.2%	10.5%	5.2%	5.5%	2.0%	3.3%
Latvia	28.6%	9.9%	10.9%	7.9%	13.3%	10.8%	6.5%	6.4%	2.6%	2.9%
Lithuania	29.7%	9.0%	9.4%	9.0%	14.5%	8.5%	8.3%	5.0%	2.4%	4.3%
Netherlands	6.3%	2.7%	6.1%	8.2%	11.4%	13.4%	18.3%	15.4%	8.1%	10.2%
Poland	21.9%	8.8%	11.3%	9.1%	14.2%	11.6%	8.2%	6.8%	3.7%	4.4%
Portugal	15.2%	6.3%	8.4%	11.8%	15.8%	10.9%	11.7%	10.3%	3.3%	6.4%
Romania	40.3%	8.3%	8.0%	6.0%	8.8%	4.7%	6.1%	5.8%	2.7%	9.3%
Slovakia	32.7%	12.2%	11.1%	8.8%	13.1%	7.9%	5.0%	3.5%	2.8%	2.9%
Slovenia	37.3%	10.0%	12.2%	8.2%	9.8%	6.1%	6.8%	5.2%	1.5%	2.9%
Spain	34.4%	9.0%	9.0%	7.4%	10.5%	7.8%	9.3%	4.9%	3.3%	4.3%
Sweden	9.0%	6.4%	8.7%	8.6%	11.7%	12.4%	12.6%	11.6%	7.3%	11.6%

q33. If a politician in your country engaged in sexual misconduct, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be disciplined for their actions?

If a politician in your country engaged in sexual misconduct, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be disciplined for their actions?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	10.0%	5.6%	8.7%	9.7%	13.6%	10.7%	12.8%	11.5%	7.2%	10.1%
Belgium	7.6%	5.6%	7.3%	7.2%	13.1%	14.1%	14.3%	13.3%	7.8%	9.8%
Bulgaria	31.8%	12.8%	12.2%	7.3%	9.0%	7.7%	6.4%	5.2%	2.8%	4.7%
Croatia	18.3%	12.6%	13.6%	10.5%	10.7%	8.4%	8.6%	6.7%	3.8%	6.9%
Czechia	7.9%	5.2%	7.9%	7.6%	15.0%	11.0%	13.3%	13.8%	6.6%	11.7%
Denmark	3.9%	2.9%	3.9%	8.4%	10.9%	11.0%	10.5%	15.4%	11.7%	21.4%
Estonia	10.7%	7.0%	8.7%	9.6%	14.0%	8.8%	12.6%	10.4%	5.9%	12.4%
Finland	8.0%	7.1%	5.9%	8.5%	10.1%	9.6%	11.7%	14.4%	10.4%	14.3%
France	13.6%	6.3%	8.3%	8.6%	14.6%	10.3%	11.1%	11.3%	6.3%	9.4%
Germany	10.5%	4.8%	7.1%	7.9%	12.7%	10.0%	12.6%	12.9%	7.6%	13.8%
Greece	30.0%	14.6%	13.6%	7.5%	9.1%	7.1%	6.6%	4.2%	3.0%	4.4%
Hungary	25.0%	11.6%	11.7%	8.3%	11.6%	6.4%	7.0%	7.4%	3.1%	7.9%
Ireland	11.6%	5.9%	7.7%	8.5%	12.6%	10.4%	12.7%	11.8%	8.0%	10.9%
Italy	25.9%	9.9%	10.1%	11.0%	12.5%	10.0%	7.7%	6.1%	2.5%	4.1%
Latvia	20.5%	8.7%	10.6%	8.8%	12.1%	9.2%	11.6%	8.1%	4.4%	6.0%
Lithuania	16.8%	7.3%	9.4%	8.5%	12.1%	9.6%	10.5%	10.2%	6.2%	9.3%
Netherlands	4.6%	1.9%	4.4%	5.1%	10.7%	12.0%	19.1%	15.2%	12.2%	14.7%
Poland	12.6%	6.9%	8.6%	8.1%	13.5%	11.0%	11.5%	10.0%	7.1%	10.5%
Portugal	12.9%	6.4%	10.3%	10.0%	14.3%	8.3%	14.2%	9.5%	5.1%	9.0%
Romania	25.7%	9.1%	7.7%	7.7%	9.3%	6.2%	7.3%	6.0%	5.4%	15.7%
Slovakia	18.2%	11.6%	13.4%	7.9%	14.5%	8.7%	8.0%	6.3%	5.1%	6.2%
Slovenia	21.0%	9.7%	12.6%	8.4%	12.6%	7.1%	9.7%	8.3%	4.9%	5.5%
Spain	12.1%	5.5%	9.3%	7.1%	10.2%	10.6%	10.0%	10.5%	6.1%	18.6%
Sweden	4.9%	3.5%	5.3%	6.6%	9.7%	8.8%	13.8%	14.5%	12.1%	20.8%

q34. If the government promised to reduce inflation, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be able to do so?

If the government promised to reduce inflation, how likely or unlikely do you think that they would be able to do so?

Country	1 Extremely unlikely	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Extremely likely
Austria	21.5%	11.0%	12.1%	12.0%	15.7%	10.6%	6.8%	4.7%	2.3%	3.2%
Belgium	12.0%	6.9%	9.9%	14.1%	18.4%	13.7%	11.2%	8.3%	2.4%	3.1%
Bulgaria	34.6%	13.6%	11.0%	10.4%	10.9%	6.5%	5.4%	2.8%	2.2%	2.7%
Croatia	26.8%	12.8%	13.7%	11.9%	12.6%	9.2%	6.2%	4.2%	0.9%	1.7%
Czechia	26.3%	9.4%	11.5%	12.3%	16.7%	9.9%	5.6%	4.2%	2.0%	2.1%
Denmark	7.9%	7.1%	9.9%	12.8%	17.1%	16.2%	12.5%	9.2%	3.5%	3.8%
Estonia	27.2%	9.7%	14.7%	11.6%	14.4%	9.4%	5.5%	3.6%	1.7%	2.3%
Finland	18.2%	12.0%	11.6%	11.8%	16.2%	12.0%	8.6%	5.5%	2.6%	1.7%
France	18.6%	7.6%	12.5%	13.1%	17.6%	11.2%	7.3%	5.2%	2.4%	4.4%
Germany	18.1%	8.2%	11.7%	11.4%	15.8%	11.4%	9.7%	6.6%	3.2%	3.9%
Greece	22.4%	12.1%	14.4%	11.6%	13.2%	9.1%	6.5%	5.1%	2.4%	3.0%
Hungary	29.1%	9.7%	10.7%	8.5%	14.6%	7.3%	5.6%	6.2%	2.8%	5.6%
Ireland	14.0%	7.1%	10.9%	13.7%	15.2%	13.0%	10.7%	7.5%	4.3%	3.6%
Italy	19.8%	10.5%	10.8%	11.5%	14.2%	15.8%	7.6%	5.2%	1.7%	3.0%
Latvia	33.8%	10.8%	9.9%	9.9%	14.0%	9.3%	5.7%	4.0%	1.7%	1.0%
Lithuania	27.6%	7.8%	11.8%	10.5%	16.9%	10.7%	7.5%	3.8%	2.1%	1.5%
Netherlands	10.5%	6.7%	9.1%	13.4%	17.5%	16.3%	11.6%	8.3%	3.7%	2.9%
Poland	16.4%	6.0%	9.0%	11.6%	17.6%	13.3%	11.1%	8.1%	2.4%	4.4%
Portugal	12.9%	5.7%	12.1%	15.9%	18.8%	13.0%	9.9%	6.7%	1.3%	3.8%
Romania	26.0%	9.5%	9.8%	8.0%	13.0%	7.5%	6.8%	7.5%	3.6%	8.2%
Slovakia	23.0%	11.1%	14.7%	10.5%	16.9%	8.7%	6.2%	4.2%	1.8%	2.9%
Slovenia	25.1%	11.7%	12.3%	13.7%	13.6%	8.4%	6.4%	3.9%	2.1%	2.6%
Spain	18.7%	6.7%	10.5%	10.0%	16.5%	11.3%	11.1%	7.4%	3.6%	4.3%
Sweden	12.4%	6.7%	9.9%	11.1%	19.0%	15.1%	10.9%	7.8%	2.1%	5.1%

Annex 4. Government and opposition party status by country[2]

Country	Political Party	Status
Austria	102 at: osterreichische volkspartei (ovp)	Government
Austria	103 at: sozialdemokratische partei osterreichs (spo)	Government
Austria	105 at: neos - das neue osterreich und liberales forum	Government
Austria	101 at: freiheitliche partei osterreichs (fpo)	Opposition
Austria	104 at: die grunen - die grune alternative	Opposition
Austria	106 at: die kpo - kommunistische partei osterreichs	Opposition
Belgium	201 be: democrate-chretien et flamand (cd&v)	Government
Belgium	205 be: les engages (le)	Government
Belgium	206 be: mouvement reformateur (mr)	Government
Belgium	207 be: nouvelle alliance flamande (n-va)	Government
Belgium	212 be: vooruit	Government
Belgium	202 be: democrate federaliste independant (defi)	Opposition
Belgium	203 be: ecolo	Opposition
Belgium	204 be: groen	Opposition
Belgium	208 be: liberaux et democrates flamands ouverts (open vld)	Opposition
Belgium	209 be: parti socialiste (ps)	Opposition
Belgium	210 be: parti du travail de belgique (pvda-ptb)	Opposition
Belgium	211 be: interet flamand (vb)	Opposition
Bulgaria	301 bg: ГЕРБ-СДС (Граждани за европеиско развитие на България - Съюз на де	Government
Bulgaria	304 bg: ДПС - Ново начало (Движение за права и свободи - Ново начало)	Government
Bulgaria	305 bg: БСП-Обединена левица (Българска социалистическа партия-Обединен	Government
Bulgaria	307 bg: Има такъв народ (ИТН)	Government
Bulgaria	302 bg: Продължаваме промяната - Демократична България (ПП-ДБ)	Opposition
Bulgaria	303 bg: Възраждане	Opposition
Bulgaria	306 bg: Алианс за права и свободи	Opposition
Bulgaria	308 bg: Морал единство чест (МЕЧ)	Opposition
Bulgaria	309 bg: Величие	Opposition
Bulgaria	310 bg: Български възход	Opposition
Bulgaria	311 bg: Български национален съюз - Нова демокрация	Opposition
Bulgaria	312 bg: Български съюз за директна демокрация	Opposition
Bulgaria	313 bg: Синя България	Opposition
Bulgaria	314 bg: Атака	Opposition
Bulgaria	315 bg: Народна партия „Истината и само истината“	Opposition
Bulgaria	316 bg: Пряка демокрация	Opposition
Bulgaria	317 bg: Свободни избиратели	Opposition
Bulgaria	318 bg: България на труда и разума	Opposition
Bulgaria	319 bg: Компетентност отговорност и истина	Opposition
Bulgaria	320 bg: Русофили за България	Opposition
Bulgaria	321 bg: Демократи за отговорност солидарност и толерантност	Opposition
Bulgaria	322 bg: Глас народен	Opposition
Bulgaria	323 bg: Социалистическа партия „Български път“	Opposition
Bulgaria	324 bg: Българи	Opposition
Bulgaria	325 bg: Моята страна България	Opposition
Bulgaria	326 bg: Бригада	Opposition
Bulgaria	327 bg: Правото	Opposition

[2] Doring, H., & Manow, P. (2024). *ParlGov 2024 Release* (Version V1) [dataset]. Harvard Dataverse. https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/2VZ5ZC

Country	Political Party	Status
Croatia	401 hr: hrvatska demokratska zajednica (hdz)	Government
Croatia	404 hr: domovinski pokret	Government
Croatia	402 hr: socijaldemokratska partija hrvatske (sdp)	Opposition
Croatia	403 hr: mozemo!	Opposition
Croatia	405 hr: most	Opposition
Croatia	406 hr: istarski demokratski sabor (ids)	Opposition
Croatia	407 hr: nezavisna platforma sjever (nps)	Opposition
Croatia	408 hr: centar	Opposition
Czechia	502 cz: spolu (ods kdu-csl top 09)	Government
Czechia	503 cz: starostove a nezavisli (stan)	Government
Czechia	506 cz: ceska piratska strana	Government
Czechia	501 cz: ano 2011	Opposition
Czechia	504 cz: komunisticka strana cech a moravy (kscm)	Opposition
Czechia	505 cz: svoboda a prima demokracie (spd)	Opposition
Czechia	507 cz: prisaha	Opposition
Czechia	508 cz: motoriste	Opposition
Czechia	509 cz: socdem	Opposition
Denmark	601 dk: socialdemokratiet	Government
Denmark	603 dk: venstre danmarks liberale parti	Government
Denmark	610 dk: moderaterne	Government
Denmark	602 dk: socialistisk folkeparti	Opposition
Denmark	604 dk: danmarksdemokraterne	Opposition
Denmark	605 dk: det konservative folkeparti	Opposition
Denmark	606 dk: liberal alliance	Opposition
Denmark	607 dk: dansk folkeparti	Opposition
Denmark	608 dk: radikale venstre	Opposition
Denmark	609 dk: enhedslisten - de rød-grønne	Opposition
Denmark	611 dk: alternativet	Opposition
Denmark	612 dk: nye borgerlige	Opposition
Denmark	613 dk: kristendemokraterne	Opposition
Estonia	701 ee: reformierakond	Government
Estonia	703 ee: sotsiaaldemokraatlik erakond	Government
Estonia	705 ee: eesti 200	Government
Estonia	702 ee: keskerakond	Opposition
Estonia	704 ee: isamaa	Opposition
Estonia	706 ee: ekre (eesti konservatiivne rahvaerakond)	Opposition
Estonia	707 ee: eesti roheline erakond	Opposition
Finland	801 fi: perussuomalaiset	Government
Finland	802 fi: kansallinen kokoomus	Government
Finland	806 fi: suomen ruotsalainen kansanpuolue	Government
Finland	808 fi: suomen kristillisdemokraatit	Government
Finland	803 fi: suomen sosialidemokraattinen puolue	Opposition
Finland	804 fi: vihrea liitto	Opposition
Finland	805 fi: vasemmistoliitto	Opposition
Finland	807 fi: liike nyt	Opposition
Finland	809 fi: suomen keskusta	Opposition
France	907 fr: renaissance (anciennement la republique en marche	Government
France	908 fr: le mouvement democrate (modem)	Government
France	901 fr: lutte ouvriere (lo)	Opposition
France	902 fr: nouveau parti anticapitaliste (npa)	Opposition
France	903 fr: parti communiste (pcf)	Opposition
France	904 fr: la france insoumise (lfi)	Opposition
France	905 fr: parti socialiste (ps)	Opposition

Country	Political Party	Status
France	906 fr: europe ecologie les verts (eelv)	Opposition
France	909 fr: les republicains (lr)	Opposition
France	910 fr: debout la france (dlf)	Opposition
France	911 fr: rassemblement national (rn)	Opposition
France	912 fr: reconquete	Opposition
Germany	1003 de: sozialdemokratische partei deutschlands (spd)	Government
Germany	1004 de: bundnis 90/die grunen	Government
Germany	1005 de: freie demokratische partei (fdp)	Government
Germany	1001 de: christlich demokratische union (cdu)	Opposition
Germany	1002 de: alternative fur deutschland (afd)	Opposition
Germany	1006 de: die linke	Opposition
Germany	1007 de: bundnis sahra wagenknecht - fur vernunft und gerechtigkeit	Opposition
Germany	1008 de: freie wahler	Opposition
Germany	1009 de: volt deutschland	Opposition
Germany	1010 de: die partei	Opposition
Greece	1101 gr: Νεα Δημοκρατια	Government
Greece	1102 gr: ΣΥΡΙΖΑ	Opposition
Greece	1103 gr: ΠΑΣΟΚ - Κινημα Αλλαγης	Opposition
Greece	1104 gr: ΚΚΕ	Opposition
Greece	1105 gr: Ελληνικη Λυση	Opposition
Greece	1106 gr: ΜεΡΑ25	Opposition
Greece	1107 gr: Νικη	Opposition
Greece	1108 gr: Πλευση Ελευθεριας	Opposition
Greece	1109 gr: Φωνη Λογικης	Opposition
Greece	1110 gr: Νεα Αριστερα	Opposition
Hungary	1201 hu: fidesz - magyar polgari szovetseg	Government
Hungary	1202 hu: demokratikus koalicio (dk)	Opposition
Hungary	1203 hu: momentum mozgalom	Opposition
Hungary	1204 hu: tisza part	Opposition
Hungary	1205 hu: magyar szocialista part (mszp)	Opposition
Hungary	1206 hu: lmp - lehet mas a politika	Opposition
Hungary	1207 hu: parbeszed	Opposition
Hungary	1208 hu: a mi hazank mozgalom	Opposition
Ireland	1301 ie: fianna fail	Government
Ireland	1302 ie: fine gael	Government
Ireland	1304 ie: green party	Government
Ireland	1303 ie: sinn fein	Opposition
Ireland	1305 ie: labour party	Opposition
Ireland	1306 ie: social democrats	Opposition
Ireland	1307 ie: people before profit	Opposition
Ireland	1308 ie: aontu	Opposition
Ireland	1309 ie: independents 4 change	Opposition
Ireland	1310 ie: the national alliance	Opposition
Italy	1401 it: fratelli d'italia	Government
Italy	1404 it: forza italia - noi moderati	Government
Italy	1405 it: lega	Government
Italy	1402 it: partito democratico	Opposition
Italy	1403 it: movimento 5 stelle	Opposition
Italy	1406 it: alleanza verdi e sinistra	Opposition
Italy	1407 it: azione	Opposition
Italy	1408 it: italia viva	Opposition
Italy	1409 it: piu europa	Opposition
Latvia	1501 lv: jauna vienotiba	Government

Country	Political Party	Status
Latvia	1502 lv: nacionala apvieniba	Government
Latvia	1509 lv: apvienotais saraksts	Government
Latvia	1503 lv: latvijas attistibai	Opposition
Latvia	1504 lv: progresivie	Opposition
Latvia	1505 lv: latvija pirmaja vieta	Opposition
Latvia	1506 lv: socialdemokratiska partija "saskana"	Opposition
Latvia	1507 lv: zalo un zemnieku savieniba	Opposition
Latvia	1508 lv: stabilitatei!	Opposition
Latvia	1510 lv: suverena vara	Opposition
Lithuania	1602 lt: laisves partija	Government
Lithuania	1603 lt: liberalu sajudi	Government
Lithuania	1615 lt: tevynes sajunga-lietuvos krikscionius demokratus	Government
Lithuania	1601 lt: demokratu sajunga „vardan lietuvos“	Opposition
Lithuania	1604 lt: lietuvos lenku rinkimu akcija-krikscionisku seimu sajunga	Opposition
Lithuania	1605 lt: lietuvos liaudies partija	Opposition
Lithuania	1606 lt: lietuvos regionu partija	Opposition
Lithuania	1607 lt: lietuvos socialdemokratu partija	Opposition
Lithuania	1608 lt: lietuvos valstieciu ir zaliuju sajunga	Opposition
Lithuania	1609 lt: lietuvos zaliuju partija	Opposition
Lithuania	1610 lt: nacionalini susivienijima	Opposition
Lithuania	1611 lt: partija „laisve ir teisingumas“	Opposition
Lithuania	1612 lt: partija „nemuno ausra“	Opposition
Lithuania	1613 lt: taikos koalicija (darbo partija- lietuvos krikscioniskosios demokratijos partija-	Opposition
Lithuania	1614 lt: tautos ir teisingumo sajunga (centristai tautininkai)	Opposition
Netherlands	1701 nl: partij voor de vrijheid (pvv)	Government
Netherlands	1705 nl: christen democratisch appel (cda)	Government
Netherlands	1706 nl: democraten 66 (d66)	Government
Netherlands	1715 nl: christenunie (cu)	Government
Netherlands	1702 nl: groenlinks - pvda	Opposition
Netherlands	1703 nl: volkspartij voor vrijheid en democratie (vvd)	Opposition
Netherlands	1704 nl: forum voor democratie (fvd)	Opposition
Netherlands	1707 nl: boerburgerbeweging (bbb)	Opposition
Netherlands	1708 nl: volt nederland	Opposition
Netherlands	1709 nl: staatkundig gereformeerde partij (sgp)	Opposition
Netherlands	1710 nl: nieuw sociaal contract (nsc)	Opposition
Netherlands	1711 nl: partij voor de dieren (pvdd)	Opposition
Netherlands	1712 nl: 50plus	Opposition
Netherlands	1713 nl: socialistische partij (sp)	Opposition
Netherlands	1714 nl: denk	Opposition
Netherlands	1716 nl: ja21	Opposition
Poland	1802 pl: koalicja obywatelska (ko)	Government
Poland	1803 pl: trzecia droga (psl i polska 2050)	Government
Poland	1804 pl: lewica (the left)	Government
Poland	1901 pt: partido socialista (ps)	Government
Poland	1801 pl: prawo i sprawiedliwosc (pis)	Opposition
Poland	1805 pl: konfederacja wolnosc i niepodległosc (konfederacja)	Opposition
Poland	1902 pt: alianca democratica (ad) - coligacao partido social democrata (psd) com centro dem	Opposition
Poland	1903 pt: chega (ch)	Opposition
Poland	1904 pt: bloco de esquerda (be)	Opposition
Poland	1905 pt: coligacao democratica unitaria (cdu) - coligacao partido comunista portugues (pcp)	Opposition

Country	Political Party	Status
Poland	1906 pt: iniciativa liberal (il)	Opposition
Poland	1907 pt: pessoas-animais-natureza (pan)	Opposition
Romania	2001 ro: partidul social democrat (psd)	Government
Romania	2002 ro: partidul national liberal (pnl)	Government
Romania	2003 ro: alianta pentru unirea romanilor (aur)	Opposition
Romania	2004 ro: uniunea salvati romania (usr)	Opposition
Romania	2005 ro: partidul miscarea populara (pmp)	Opposition
Romania	2006 ro: udmr (uniunea democrata maghiara din romania)	Opposition
Romania	2007 ro: reinnoim proiectul european al romaniei (reper)	Opposition
Romania	2008 ro: forta dreptei (fd)	Opposition
Romania	2009 ro: sanatate educatie natura sustenabilitate (sens)	Opposition
Slovakia	2101 sk: smer - socialna demokracia (smer-sd)	Government
Slovakia	2103 sk: hlas - socialna demokracia	Government
Slovakia	2108 sk: sns	Government
Slovakia	2102 sk: progresivne slovensko (ps)	Opposition
Slovakia	2104 sk: krestanskodemokraticke hnutie (kdh)	Opposition
Slovakia	2105 sk: sloboda a solidarita (sas)	Opposition
Slovakia	2106 sk: republika	Opposition
Slovakia	2107 sk: slovensko (byvale olano)	Opposition
Slovakia	2109 sk: demokrati	Opposition
Slovakia	2110 sk: aliancia / szovetseg	Opposition
Slovenia	2202 si: socialne demokrate (sd)	Government
Slovenia	2203 si: gibanje svoboda	Government
Slovenia	2205 si: levico	Government
Slovenia	2201 si: slovensko demokratsko stranko (sds)	Opposition
Slovenia	2204 si: novo slovenijo - krscanske demokrate (nsi)	Opposition
Spain	2302 es: partido socialista obrero espanol (psoe)	Government
Spain	2304 es: sumar	Government
Spain	2301 es: partido popular (pp)	Opposition
Spain	2303 es: vox	Opposition
Spain	2305 es: se acabo la fiesta (salf)	Opposition
Spain	2306 es: partidos regionalistas (pnv- hb- erc- convergencia- compromis-.)	Opposition
Sweden	2402 se: moderata samlingspartiet	Government
Sweden	2406 se: kristdemokraterna	Government
Sweden	2408 se: liberalerna	Government
Sweden	2401 se: socialdemokraterna	Opposition
Sweden	2403 se: sverigedemokraterna	Opposition
Sweden	2404 se: centerpartiet	Opposition
Sweden	2405 se: vansterpartiet	Opposition
Sweden	2407 se: miljopartiet de grona	Opposition

Annex 5. Distribution of Sociodemographic Characteristics by Country

q168 Gender x q169 Year of birth

	Male 18 - 24 years	Male 25 - 39 years	Male 40 - 54 years	Male 55 years and above	Female 18 - 24 years	Female 25 - 39 years	Female 40 - 54 years	Female 55 years and above	Gender other than MF or prefer not to say
Austria	5.4%	11.8%	12.2%	21.8%	5.8%	12.3%	12.1%	18.1%	0.5%
Belgium	6.1%	11.8%	11.8%	21.0%	6.5%	11.7%	12.0%	18.6%	0.6%
Bulgaria	3.5%	9.9%	13.3%	24.3%	3.7%	10.5%	13.9%	19.2%	1.7%
Croatia	4.2%	10.7%	12.3%	24.7%	4.5%	11.1%	12.3%	19.8%	0.4%
Czechia	4.0%	11.3%	14.1%	21.6%	4.2%	11.8%	14.6%	17.9%	0.5%
Denmark	5.3%	11.8%	11.7%	21.7%	5.5%	12.2%	11.7%	19.9%	0.2%
Estonia	5.2%	10.9%	11.3%	23.2%	5.6%	11.6%	11.3%	20.5%	0.4%
Finland	4.6%	11.5%	11.0%	23.7%	4.8%	12.3%	11.5%	20.5%	0.1%
France	5.0%	11.3%	12.3%	23.3%	5.3%	11.0%	12.0%	19.5%	0.3%
Germany	5.2%	10.9%	11.3%	23.1%	5.6%	11.6%	11.3%	20.5%	0.5%
Greece	4.6%	9.7%	13.6%	23.3%	4.9%	10.1%	13.5%	20.0%	0.3%
Hungary	4.4%	11.0%	14.2%	22.5%	4.6%	11.8%	14.6%	16.5%	0.4%
Ireland	5.4%	13.1%	14.6%	18.0%	5.6%	12.5%	14.1%	16.7%	
Italy	3.8%	9.3%	13.2%	25.1%	4.3%	9.8%	12.9%	21.5%	0.2%
Latvia	3.9%	11.5%	12.8%	26.5%	4.1%	12.2%	12.3%	16.5%	0.2%
Lithuania	3.9%	11.9%	12.6%	25.6%	4.1%	12.5%	12.2%	16.9%	0.3%
Netherlands	5.5%	11.7%	11.8%	21.7%	5.6%	12.0%	11.7%	19.9%	0.1%
Poland	4.0%	12.4%	13.3%	22.3%	4.2%	13.0%	13.4%	17.1%	0.3%
Portugal	4.3%	9.8%	13.6%	25.1%	4.6%	9.9%	12.6%	20.1%	
Romania	4.4%	10.8%	14.3%	22.1%	4.7%	11.5%	14.9%	16.9%	0.3%
Slovakia	4.1%	12.5%	13.8%	21.0%	4.3%	13.1%	14.4%	16.5%	0.3%
Slovenia	3.9%	10.3%	12.7%	22.8%	4.2%	11.7%	14.0%	19.9%	0.5%
Spain	4.3%	10.5%	14.4%	22.1%	4.5%	10.6%	14.6%	18.8%	0.2%
Sweden	4.7%	12.5%	11.6%	20.9%	5.2%	13.2%	12.0%	19.7%	0.2%

EDU. Education level of respondent (ISCED 2011)

What is the highest educational level that you have attained?

	Early childhood education (ISCED 0) / no education	Primary education (ISCED 1)	Lower secondary education (ISCED 2)	Upper secondary education (ISCED 3)	Post-secondary non-tertiary education (ISCED 4)	Short-cycle tertiary education (ISCED 5)	Bachelor or equivalent (ISCED 6)	Master or equivalent (ISCED 7)	Doctoral or equivalent (ISCED 8)
Austria	1.3%	1.6%	16.0%	36.7%	11.9%	3.8%	11.5%	14.2%	3.0%
Belgium	1.9%	5.1%	17.3%	35.5%	2.1%	12.0%	8.5%	16.1%	1.6%
Bulgaria	0.3%	18.4%	0.9%	51.8%	3.0%		5.5%	19.2%	0.8%
Croatia	0.1%	0.2%	14.9%	49.2%		4.7%	4.8%	25.5%	0.6%
Czechia	0.6%	0.5%	12.2%	47.5%	23.8%	2.3%	3.9%	8.1%	1.1%
Denmark	0.8%	3.4%	29.0%	31.6%		6.0%	18.7%	9.3%	1.3%
Estonia	0.3%	1.6%	18.7%	30.7%	12.6%	4.2%	17.1%	13.2%	1.7%
Finland	0.6%	2.6%	16.9%	35.8%	9.7%	6.3%	15.9%	10.6%	1.7%
France	1.3%	7.5%	14.2%	39.5%	1.6%	14.5%	9.2%	10.6%	1.5%
Germany	1.5%	1.9%	19.0%	45.3%	3.5%	3.2%	11.5%	12.6%	1.5%
Greece	0.3%	0.8%	25.0%	34.8%	11.3%	1.0%	13.3%	12.1%	1.6%
Hungary	0.3%	0.6%	18.0%	45.9%	10.3%	4.0%	12.3%	7.7%	0.8%
Ireland	0.8%	3.0%	12.3%	18.9%	18.9%	7.7%	21.3%	14.8%	2.3%
Italy	0.3%	1.6%	34.2%	41.1%	2.9%	6.1%	9.9%	3.9%	
Latvia	0.2%	0.2%	16.5%	37.8%	11.9%	5.2%	11.6%	15.4%	1.2%
Lithuania	0.1%	1.5%	13.4%	38.2%	5.9%	2.1%	22.7%	15.6%	0.5%
Netherlands	2.4%	2.1%	26.1%	27.2%	1.3%	21.1%	6.5%	11.7%	1.6%
Poland	0.4%	7.8%	8.3%	44.4%	8.0%	0.4%	8.0%	22.1%	0.7%
Portugal	0.7%	14.1%	31.6%	24.4%	3.7%	2.1%	9.0%	13.1%	1.2%
Romania	0.2%	5.1%	6.5%	54.0%	16.9%	2.8%	3.1%	7.7%	3.8%
Slovakia	0.7%	1.2%	12.8%	57.5%	3.7%	1.4%	3.7%	17.7%	1.2%
Slovenia	0.7%	0.2%	17.2%	53.3%		7.6%	15.7%	4.8%	0.4%
Spain	2.5%	10.6%	27.5%	17.9%	6.0%	5.5%	10.9%	16.3%	2.8%
Sweden	0.6%	2.6%	16.7%	29.0%	10.5%	10.2%	16.8%	11.8%	1.7%

q178. Income group [country-specific labels]

Here is a list of incomes… In what group does your household fall, after taxes and other deductions?

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Austria	11.1%	10.8%	9.1%	11.7%	9.2%	9.2%	8.7%	9.7%	10.5%	10.0%
Belgium	5.5%	11.4%	14.7%	15.8%	11.1%	11.9%	10.8%	7.9%	4.4%	6.5%
Bulgaria	4.8%	6.3%	9.1%	8.3%	8.6%	19.0%	18.7%	11.3%	4.1%	9.8%
Croatia	6.1%	4.6%	7.9%	13.6%	11.4%	13.8%	13.6%	13.8%	9.8%	5.3%
Czechia	9.5%	8.1%	5.5%	5.7%	6.9%	6.1%	5.5%	9.3%	17.1%	26.4%
Denmark	6.3%	11.5%	9.9%	12.5%	10.5%	12.4%	11.1%	9.6%	8.6%	7.7%
Estonia	7.5%	7.8%	8.2%	12.4%	10.0%	10.2%	9.7%	12.9%	10.5%	10.7%
Finland	16.8%	9.6%	8.6%	12.6%	8.5%	12.3%	10.0%	7.6%	8.1%	6.0%
France	15.9%	12.8%	11.0%	12.6%	10.5%	8.8%	9.6%	8.3%	7.2%	3.4%
Germany	15.3%	14.2%	12.9%	11.7%	12.0%	8.5%	8.1%	6.7%	4.0%	6.6%
Greece	12.0%	9.1%	15.1%	15.8%	11.7%	12.9%	7.7%	6.1%	4.8%	4.8%
Hungary	15.0%	11.1%	9.7%	8.7%	8.0%	8.7%	7.7%	5.0%	9.7%	16.4%
Ireland	11.7%	14.7%	12.1%	14.6%	11.4%	7.8%	9.1%	6.0%	4.3%	8.2%
Italy	12.4%	15.0%	12.5%	13.9%	9.8%	11.8%	8.3%	6.0%	6.9%	3.3%
Latvia	14.6%	12.5%	12.3%	10.9%	13.3%	10.5%	9.8%	5.1%	4.0%	6.8%
Lithuania	6.9%	7.8%	9.5%	7.3%	11.8%	11.6%	9.5%	10.8%	11.1%	13.5%
Netherlands	9.1%	11.0%	11.8%	12.4%	14.5%	12.4%	9.3%	9.0%	6.6%	3.8%
Poland	4.7%	4.1%	3.5%	5.0%	7.1%	7.1%	5.3%	12.0%	12.1%	39.0%
Portugal	10.8%	6.9%	7.4%	13.6%	8.7%	8.1%	8.4%	12.2%	12.5%	11.3%
Romania	26.6%	14.7%	12.9%	8.3%	10.0%	10.2%	6.5%	5.2%	2.4%	3.1%
Slovakia	9.3%	7.9%	11.2%	12.5%	8.4%	8.6%	8.5%	9.5%	13.0%	11.3%
Slovenia	4.4%	6.0%	11.9%	14.6%	9.7%	10.3%	13.4%	13.1%	10.6%	5.9%
Spain	8.8%	9.6%	16.0%	11.1%	10.8%	10.1%	14.2%	8.0%	5.6%	5.8%
Sweden	10.7%	12.2%	13.1%	11.6%	10.8%	9.8%	10.0%	8.0%	6.2%	7.5%

q182. Settlement type

Where do you live, is it…

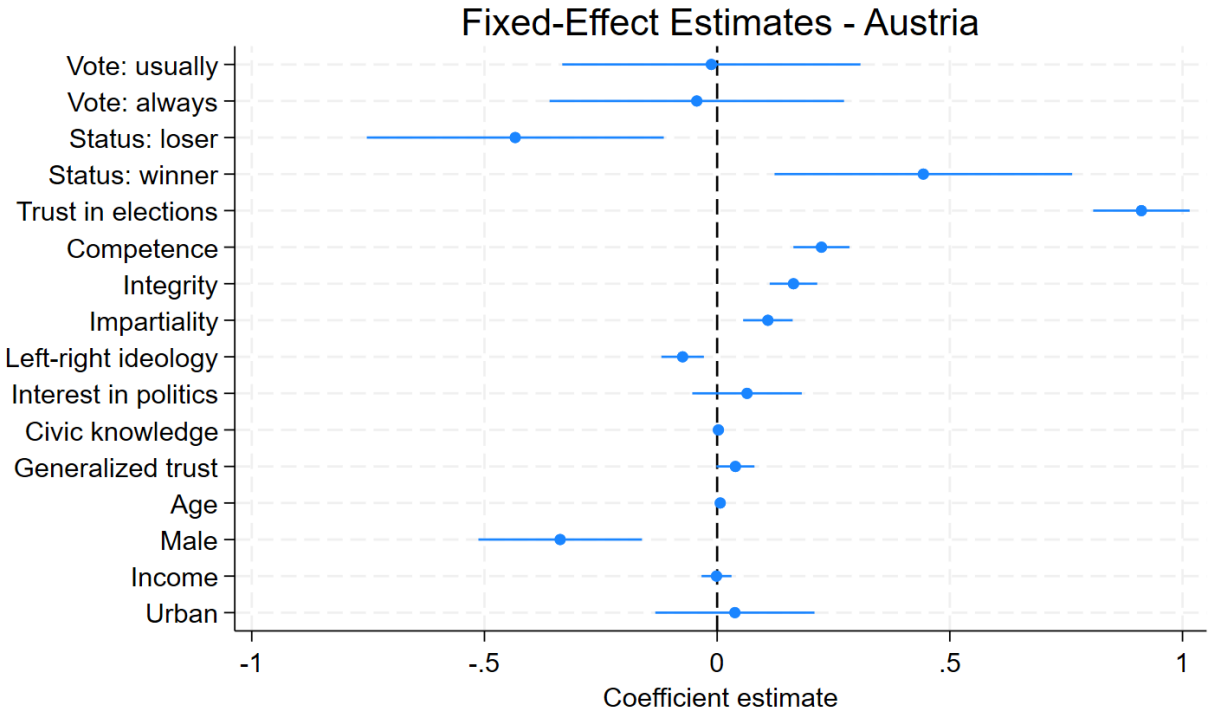
	A metropolitan or large city (population over 500,000)	A medium-sized city (population 100,000-500,000)	A small city or town (population 20,000 to 100,000)	A local village or rural area (population under 20,000)
Austria	36.0%	14.0%	14.5%	35.5%
Belgium	19.0%	15.2%	29.7%	36.1%
Bulgaria	31.5%	28.9%	30.8%	8.8%
Croatia	26.6%	17.0%	32.8%	23.5%
Czechia	16.7%	15.4%	29.2%	38.7%
Denmark	19.8%	20.7%	31.4%	28.0%
Estonia	17.9%	24.9%	26.5%	30.7%
Finland	16.9%	31.4%	29.2%	22.5%
France	16.7%	18.4%	24.3%	40.6%
Germany	27.0%	17.7%	28.6%	26.8%
Greece	44.4%	18.2%	27.1%	10.3%
Hungary	22.8%	20.0%	27.9%	29.3%
Ireland	26.5%	14.2%	23.6%	35.7%
Italy	19.4%	16.2%	37.9%	26.5%
Latvia	38.4%	12.6%	27.1%	21.9%
Lithuania	34.6%	22.6%	24.5%	18.3%
Netherlands	21.6%	24.7%	28.7%	24.9%
Poland	21.8%	23.3%	33.4%	21.4%
Portugal	25.3%	26.3%	30.8%	17.6%
Romania	23.4%	26.4%	27.0%	23.2%
Slovakia	11.4%	15.1%	34.1%	39.4%
Slovenia	9.6%	14.6%	27.0%	48.8%
Spain	28.8%	29.7%	23.8%	17.7%
Sweden	25.0%	25.4%	27.8%	21.8%

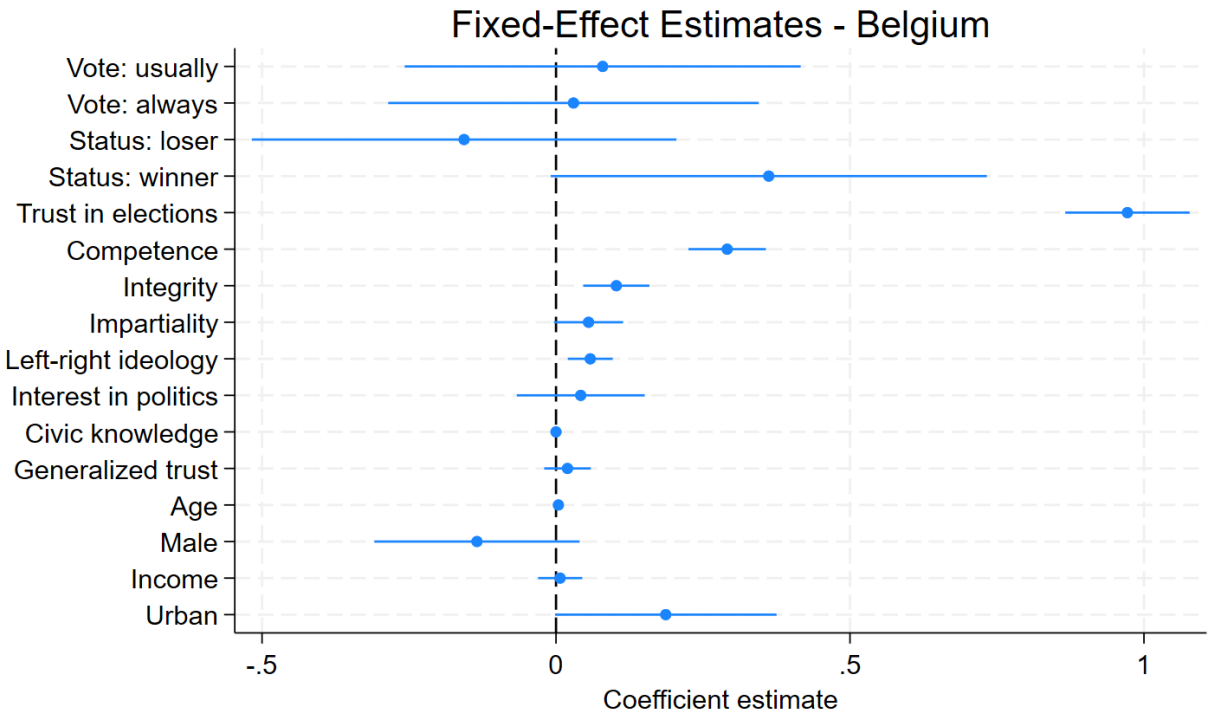
q143. Left-right scale self-placement

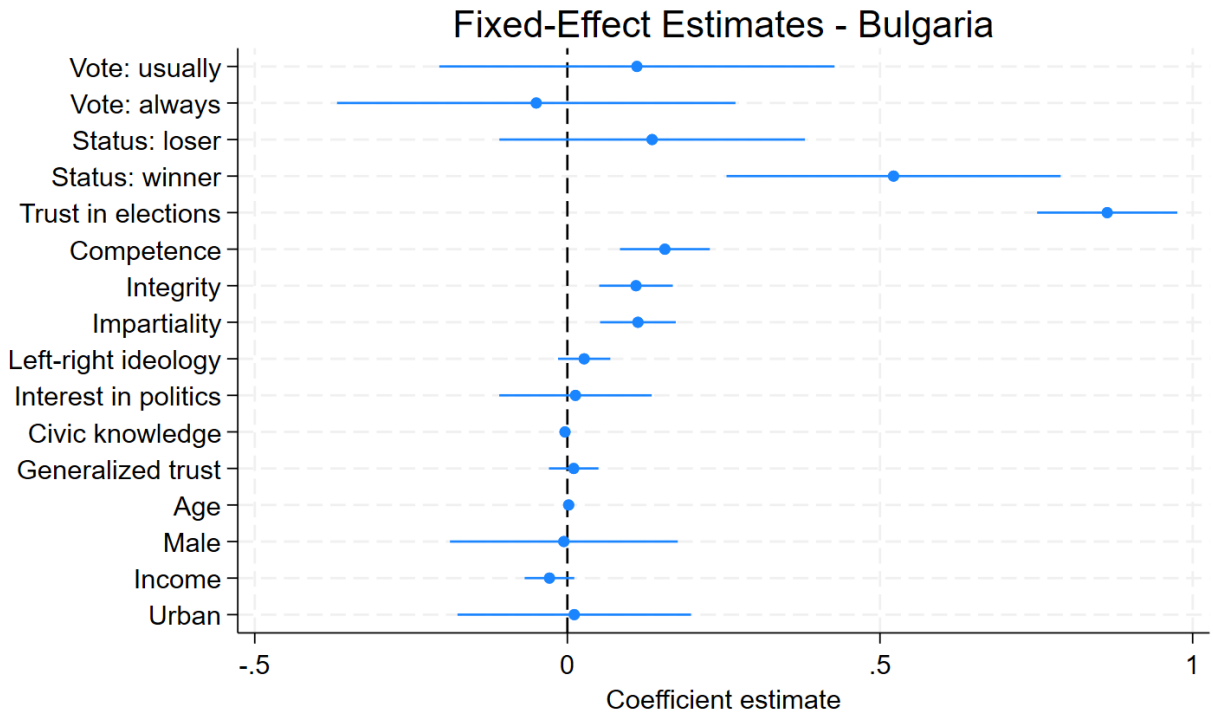
In economic and political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?

	1. Left	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10. Right
Austria	3.4%	4.1%	7.4%	12.7%	30.3%	18.5%	9.4%	6.7%	3.5%	4.1%
Belgium	5.3%	3.9%	7.4%	9.0%	23.4%	15.4%	13.1%	10.5%	4.7%	7.5%
Bulgaria	6.0%	1.6%	5.7%	6.2%	33.8%	15.5%	10.1%	9.0%	3.7%	8.2%
Croatia	8.7%	4.3%	13.5%	10.5%	29.4%	11.4%	9.2%	6.9%	2.0%	4.1%
Czechia	3.9%	3.0%	5.9%	6.8%	36.3%	16.3%	9.4%	9.2%	2.8%	6.3%
Denmark	3.9%	4.4%	10.8%	11.2%	21.5%	15.4%	11.4%	10.7%	4.2%	6.3%
Estonia	3.1%	2.6%	4.7%	8.1%	32.8%	12.4%	11.1%	12.7%	3.6%	8.9%
Finland	6.9%	6.3%	12.7%	10.5%	20.8%	11.5%	10.5%	11.9%	4.3%	4.6%
France	4.9%	5.3%	8.8%	9.1%	21.6%	9.4%	7.5%	12.2%	7.5%	13.7%
Germany	3.9%	4.6%	9.4%	9.3%	32.0%	16.8%	8.0%	6.9%	3.0%	6.1%
Greece	4.9%	4.3%	9.1%	11.0%	32.5%	12.6%	8.5%	7.0%	2.6%	7.3%
Hungary	7.1%	4.1%	6.6%	9.6%	35.6%	10.3%	6.3%	7.4%	2.8%	10.2%
Ireland	4.5%	3.9%	10.7%	9.3%	30.8%	16.1%	9.5%	6.9%	3.0%	5.4%
Italy	10.7%	6.2%	8.8%	7.3%	18.4%	13.1%	10.8%	9.0%	6.6%	9.0%
Latvia	3.9%	1.7%	5.8%	7.5%	36.1%	17.2%	10.2%	7.3%	3.4%	6.8%
Lithuania	4.2%	2.4%	5.4%	7.5%	36.4%	14.0%	10.7%	9.2%	3.0%	7.2%
Netherlands	3.8%	5.1%	7.5%	10.1%	19.4%	16.3%	13.0%	12.6%	5.1%	7.1%
Poland	5.2%	4.4%	10.0%	9.0%	23.0%	13.3%	9.4%	9.0%	5.2%	11.6%
Portugal	6.4%	2.8%	10.1%	9.7%	23.8%	10.4%	13.6%	8.6%	3.5%	11.1%
Romania	7.9%	2.7%	3.5%	4.5%	32.2%	12.5%	7.1%	8.6%	4.0%	17.0%
Slovakia	6.9%	3.2%	7.5%	8.8%	33.4%	12.7%	10.1%	8.0%	3.7%	5.7%
Slovenia	5.2%	3.3%	7.6%	11.2%	31.6%	12.9%	8.4%	8.0%	3.2%	8.7%
Spain	7.5%	10.3%	10.6%	11.2%	19.0%	13.3%	7.9%	7.3%	4.1%	8.8%
Sweden	6.2%	6.3%	8.7%	9.1%	18.2%	12.5%	12.7%	11.6%	5.2%	9.5%

Annex 6. Country-Specific OLS Regression Coefficients for National Political Trust Models






Fixed-Effect Estimates - Bulgaria
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
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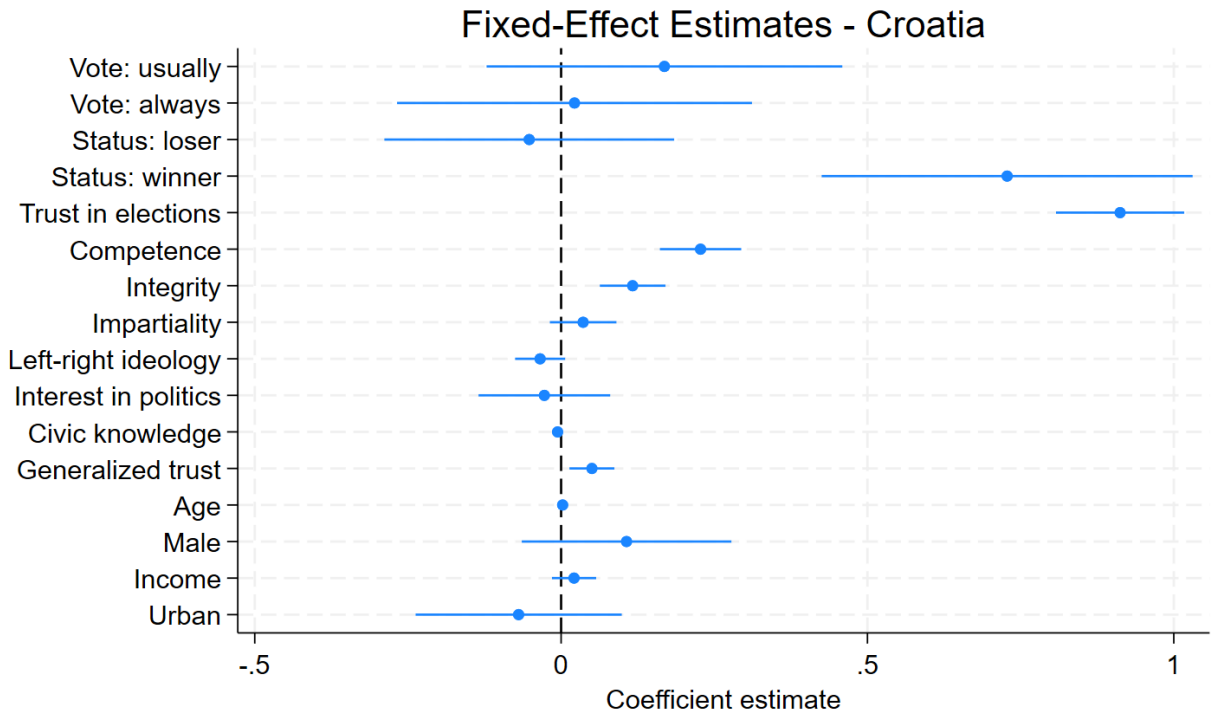
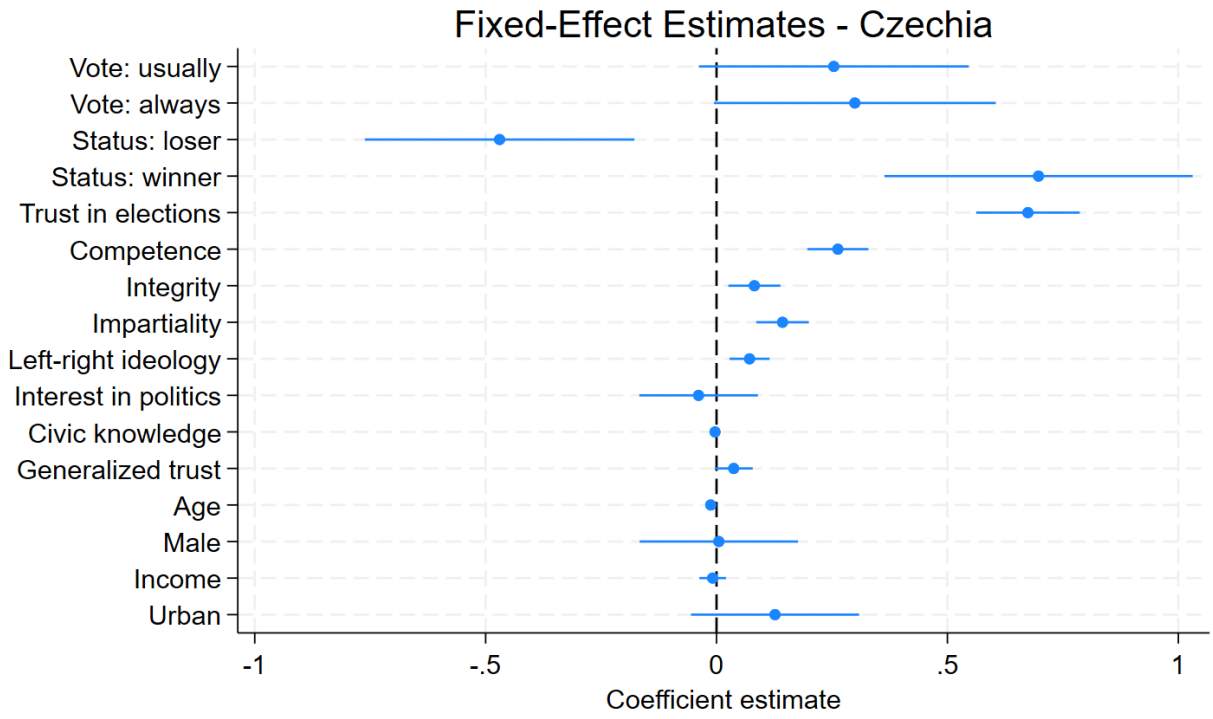
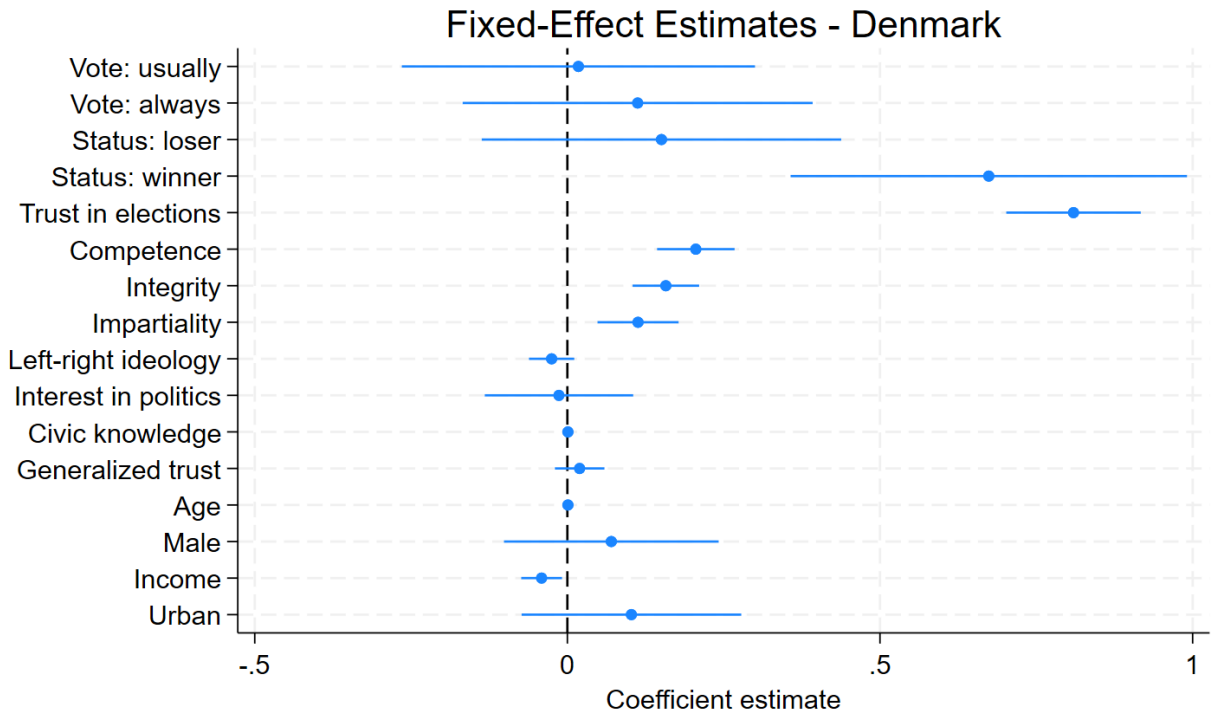
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Croatia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
0
.5
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Czechia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-1
-.5
0
.5
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Denmark
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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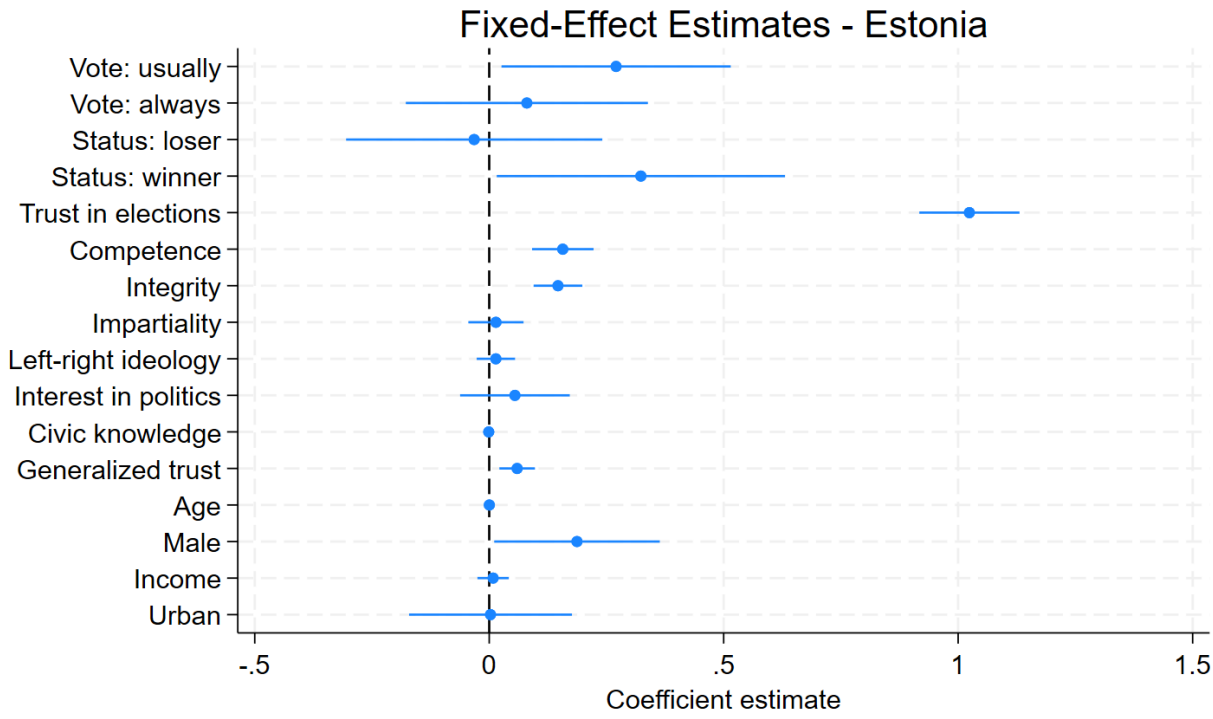
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Estonia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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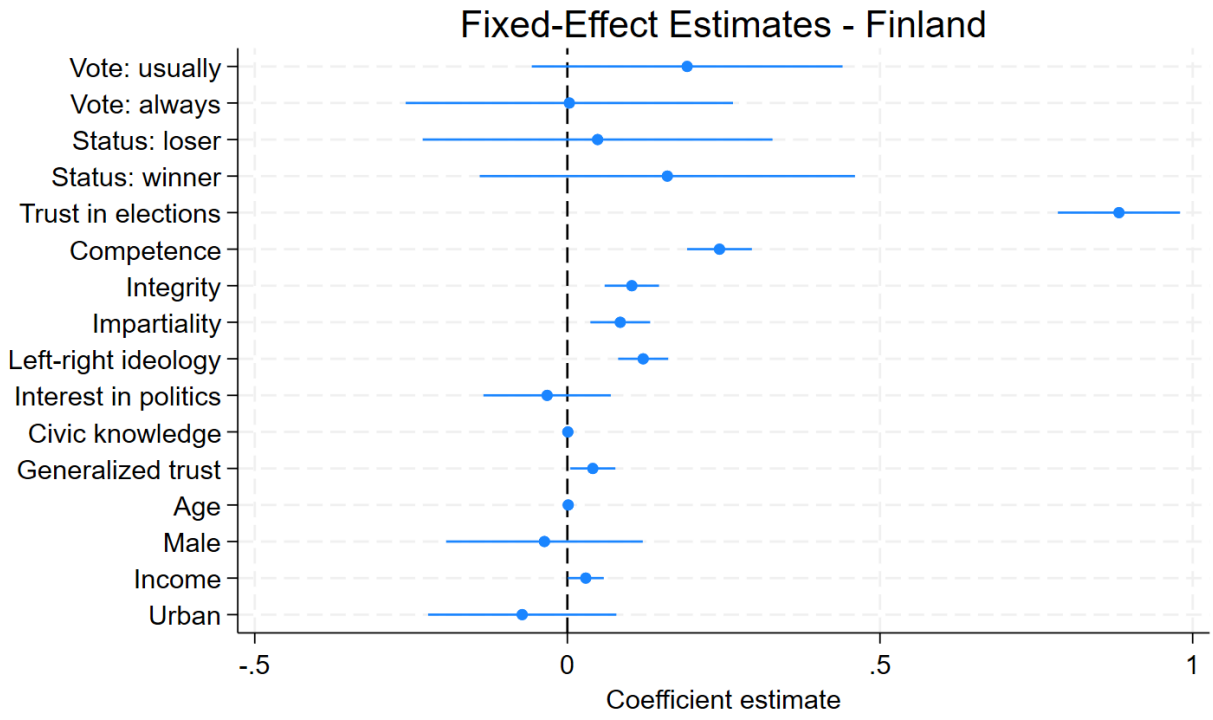
1.5
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Finland
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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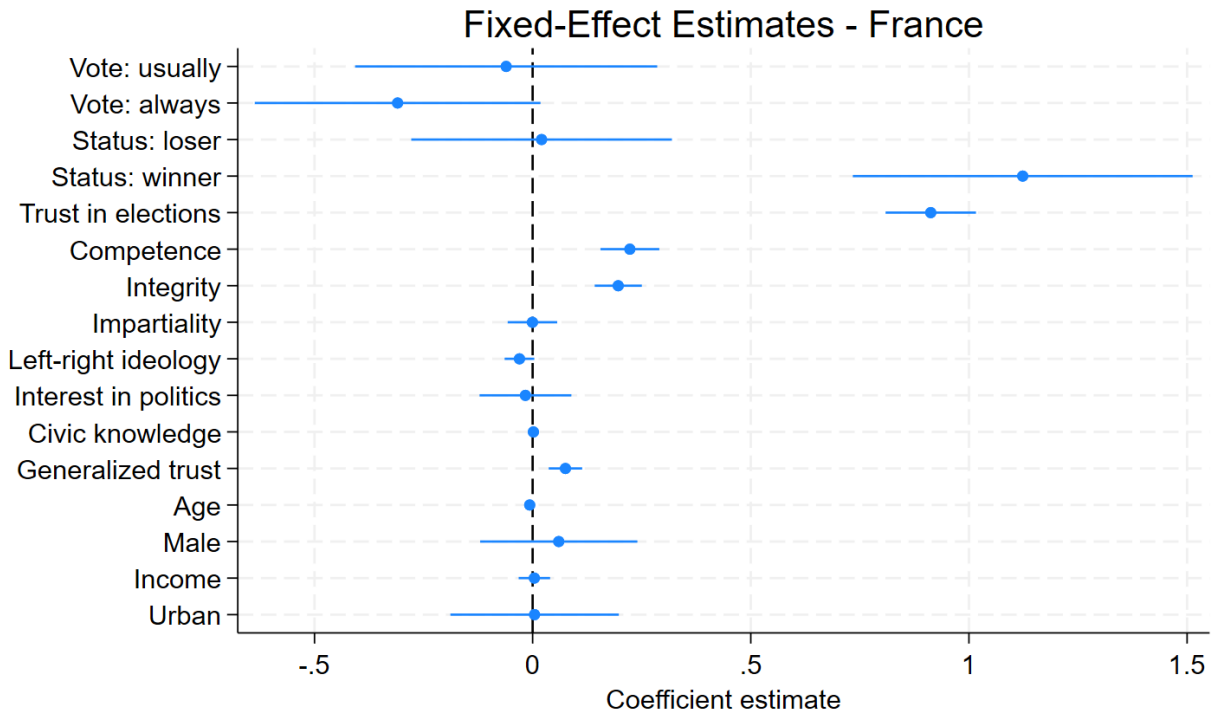
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - France
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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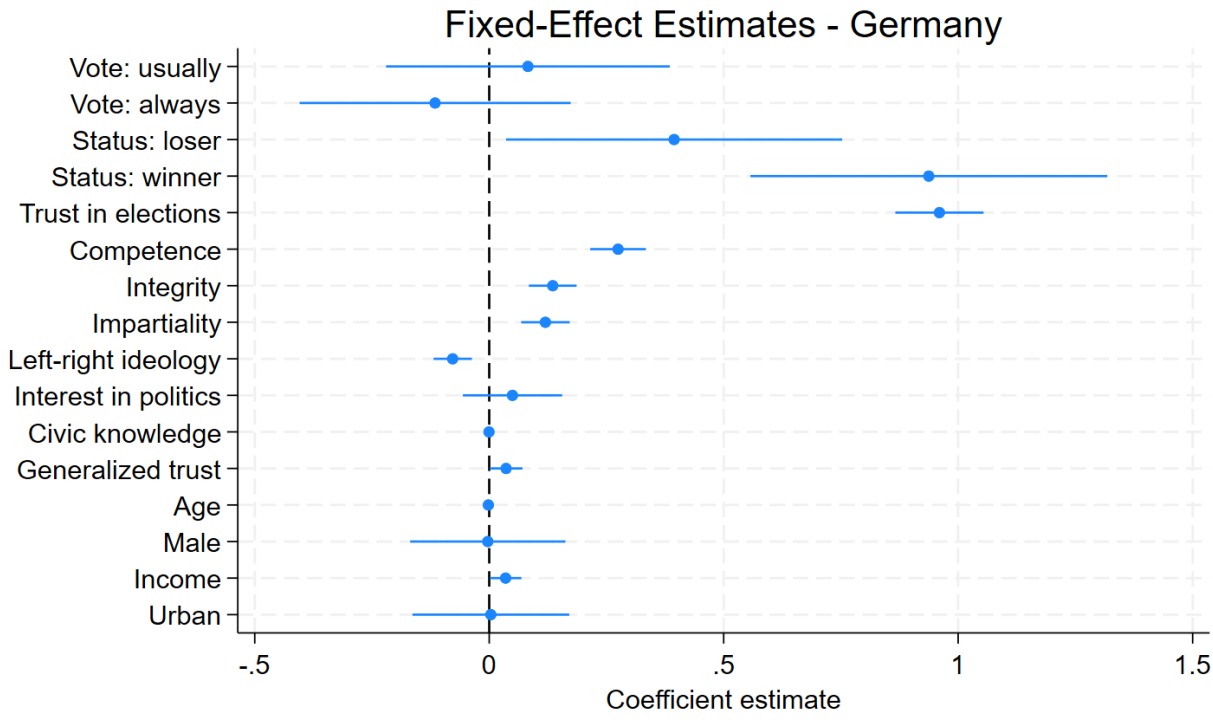
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Germany
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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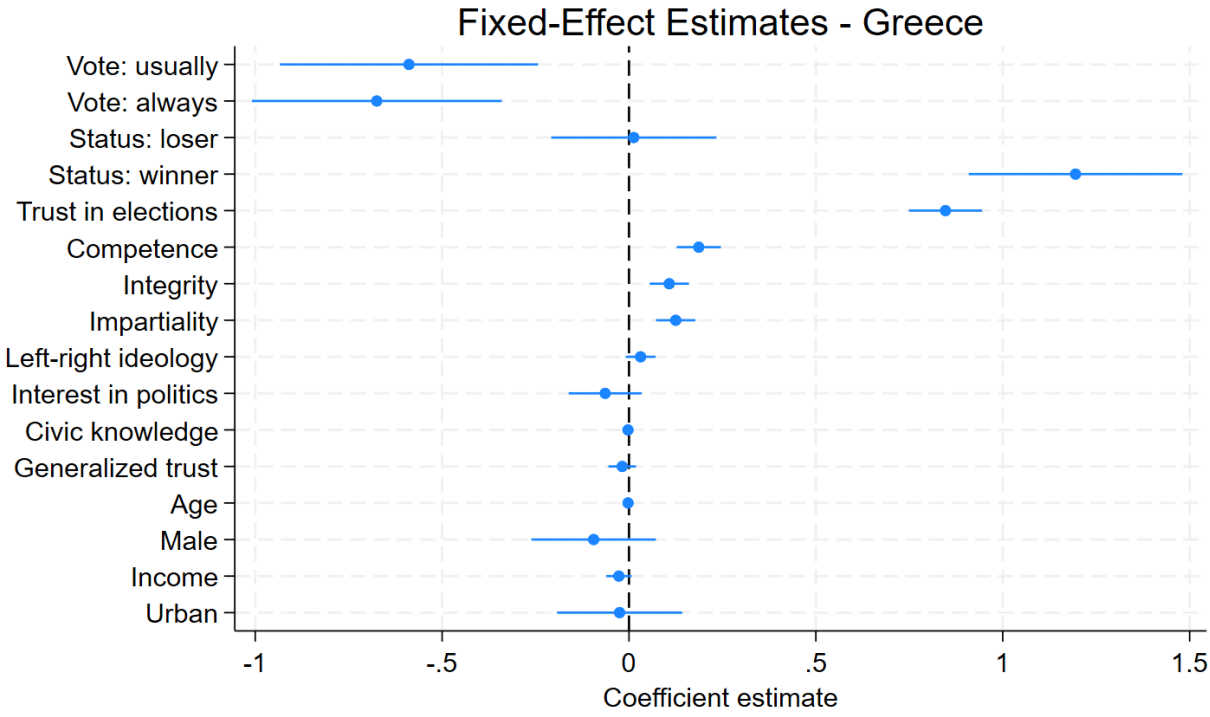
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Greece
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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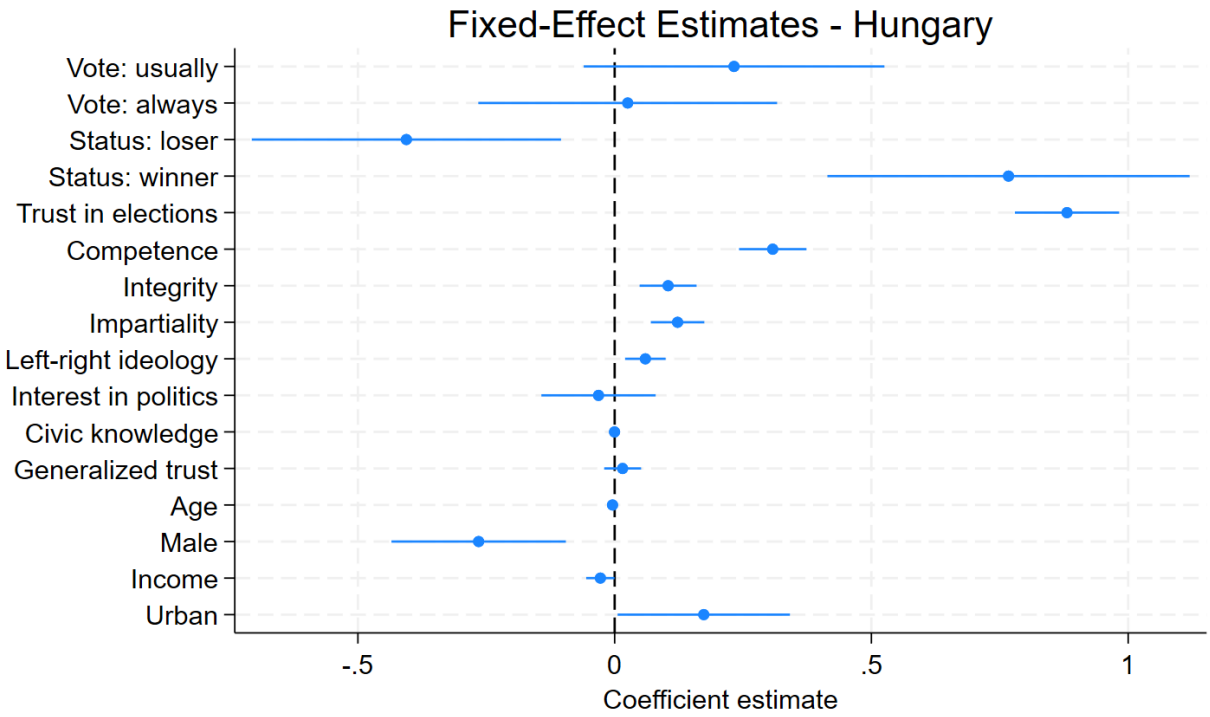
1.5
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Hungary
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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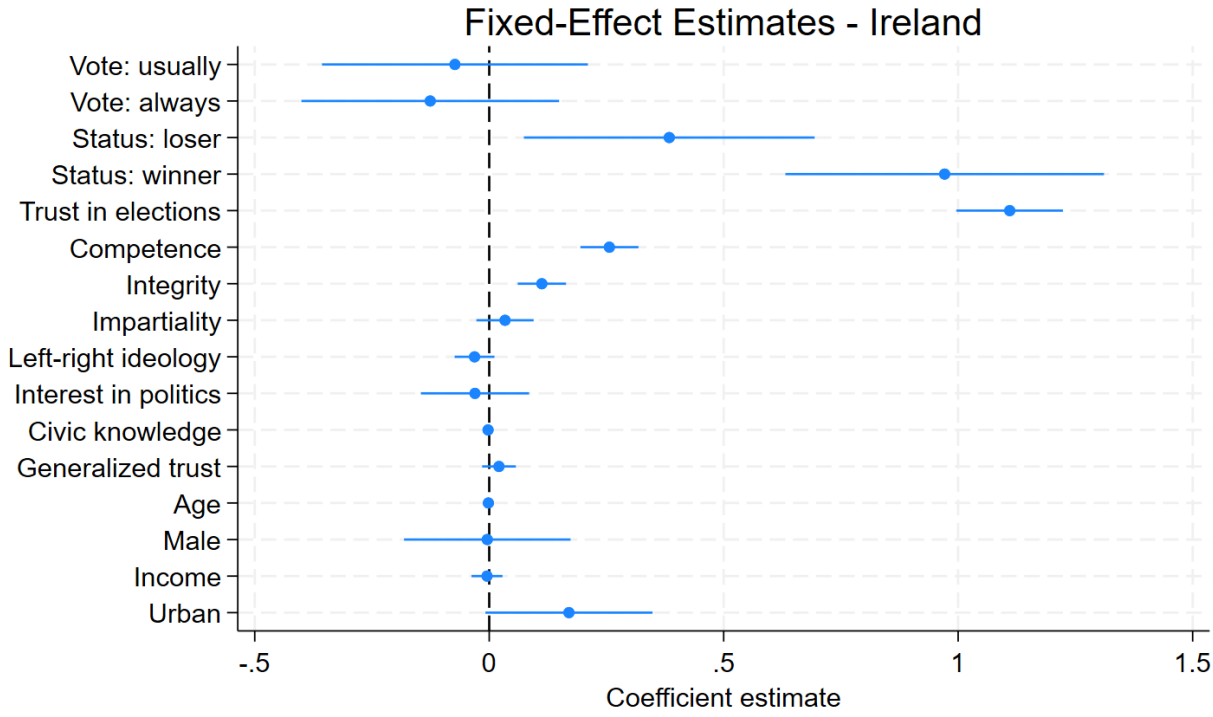
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Ireland
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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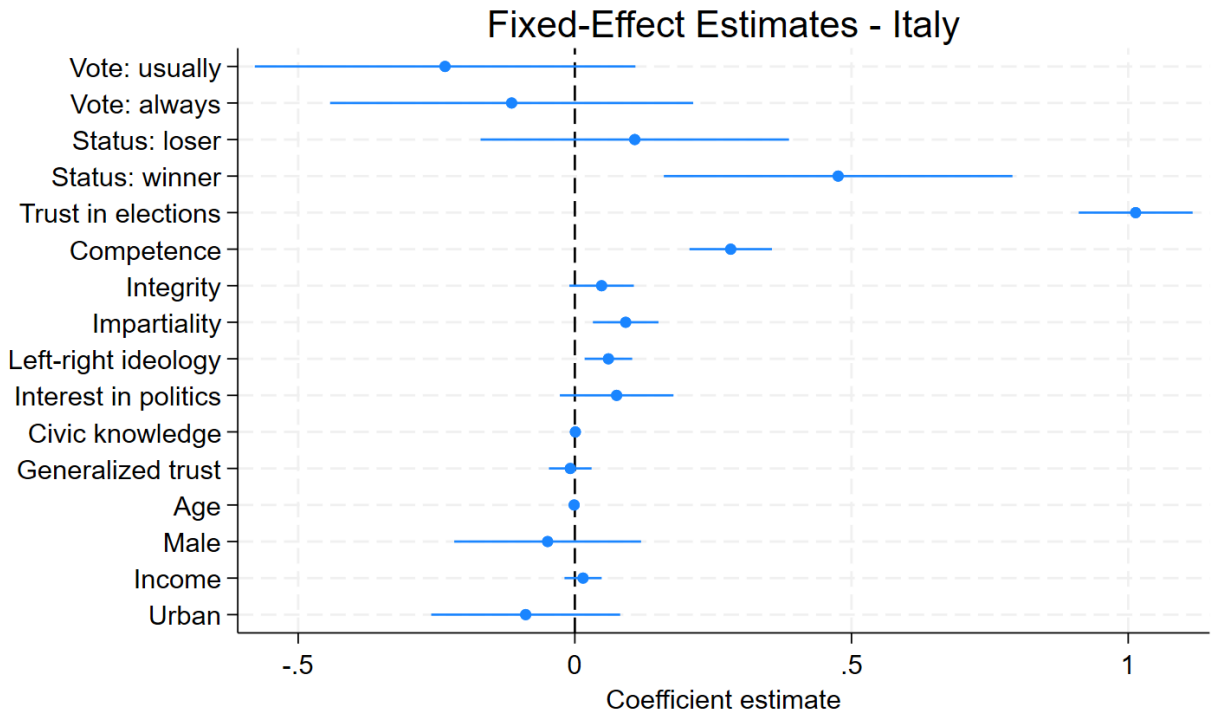
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Italy
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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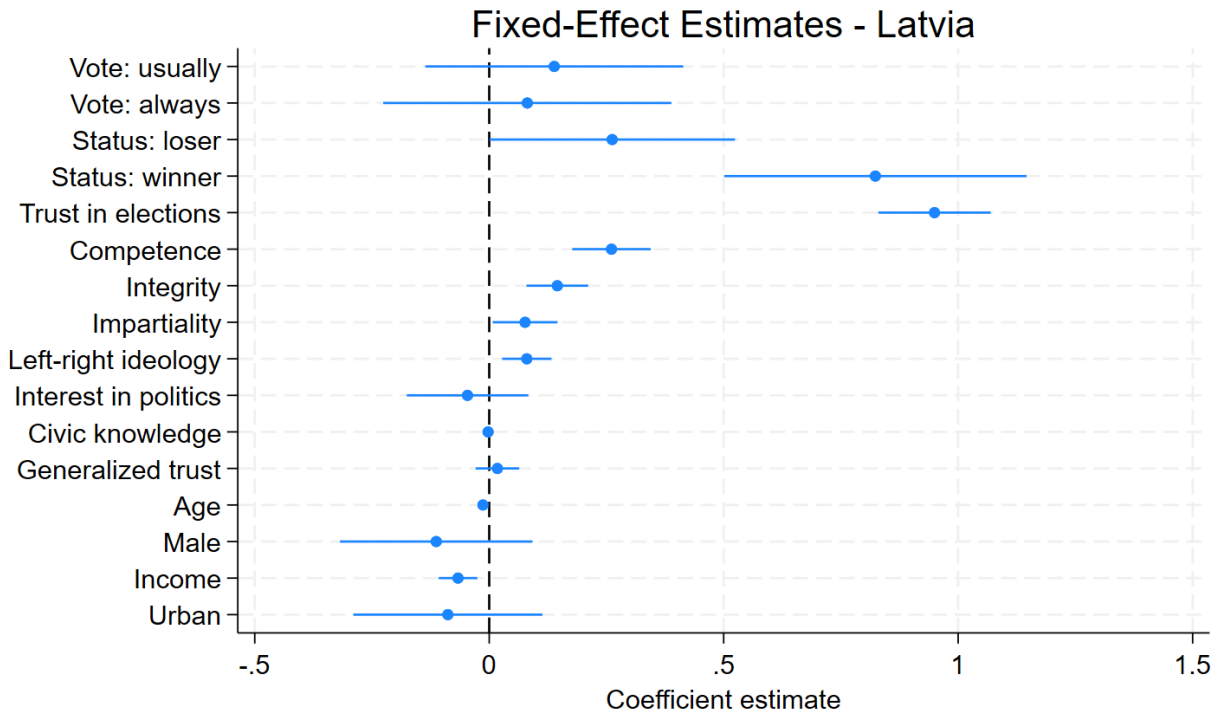
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Latvia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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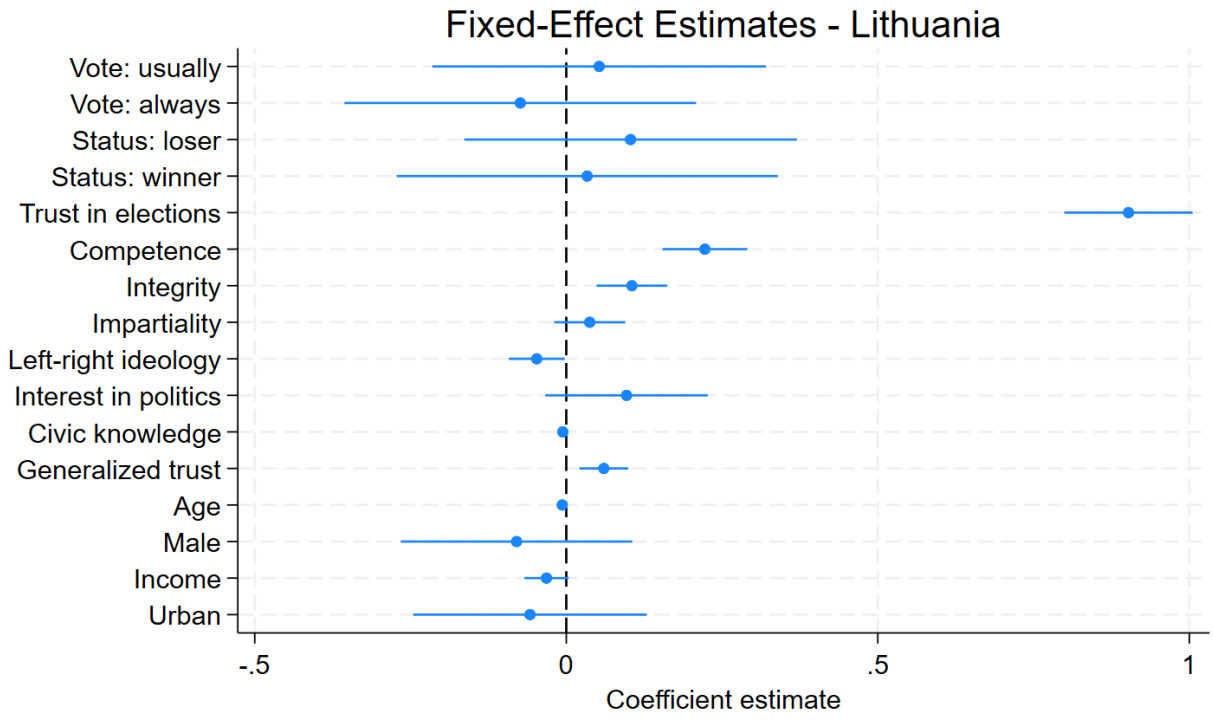
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Lithuania
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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Income
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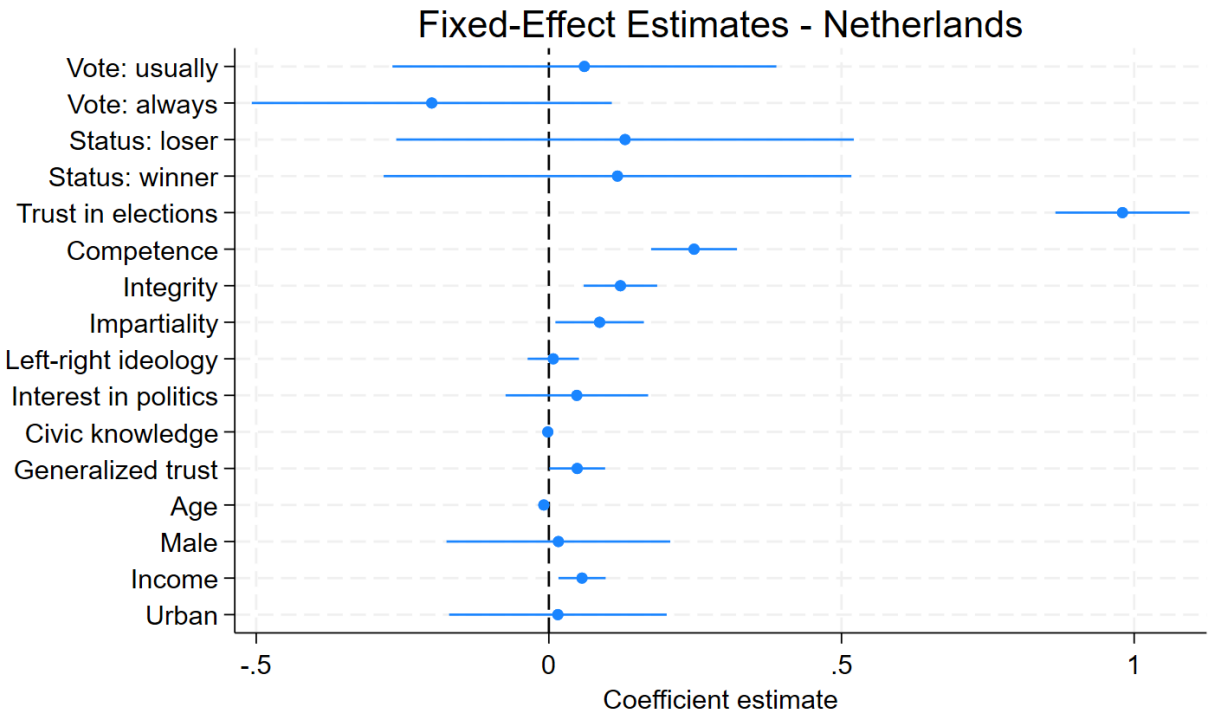
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Netherlands
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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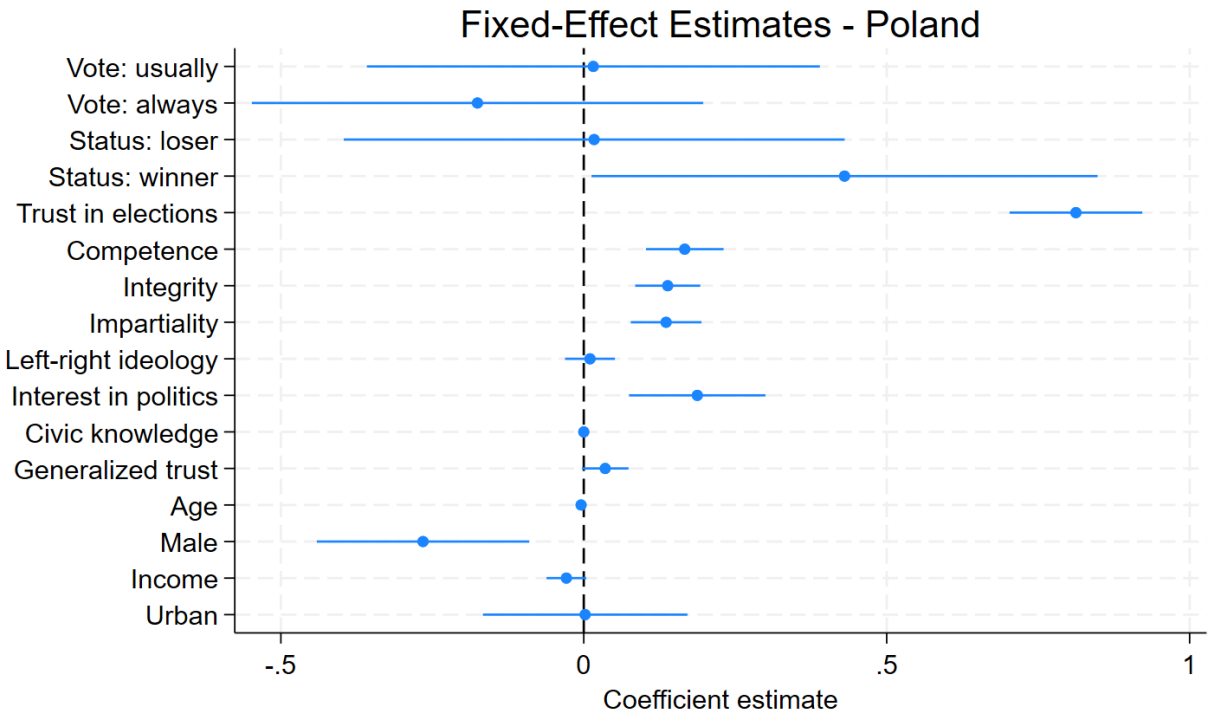
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Poland
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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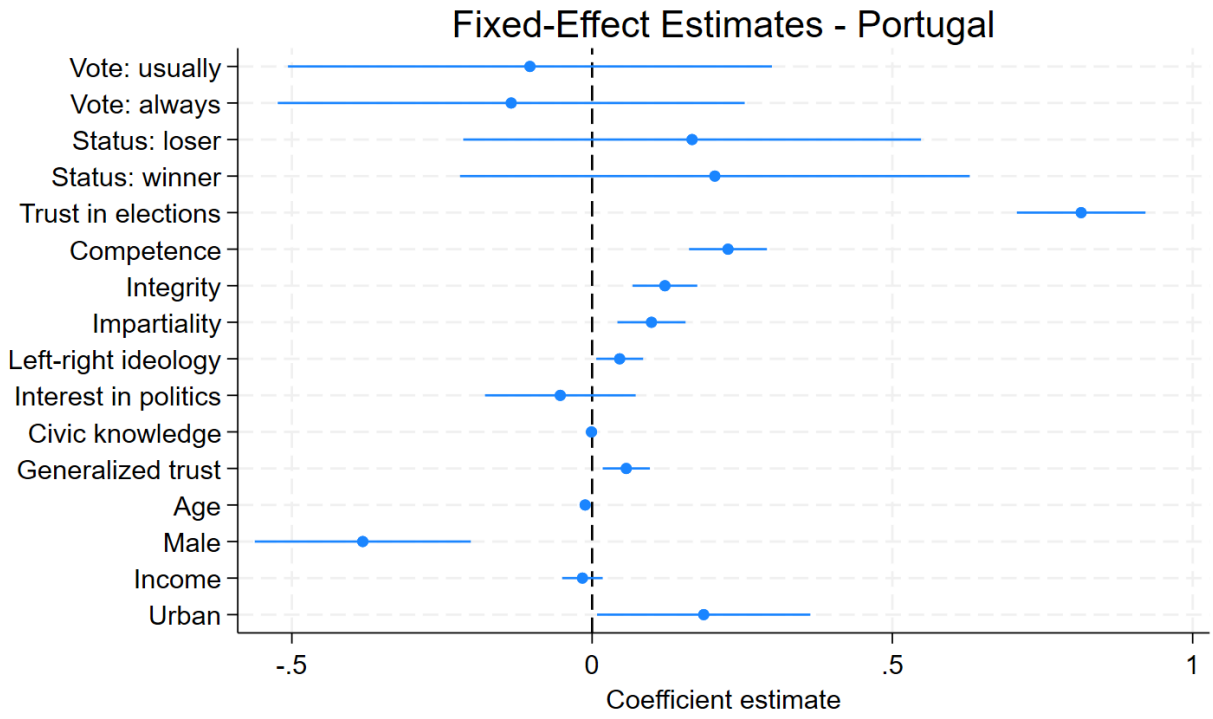
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Portugal
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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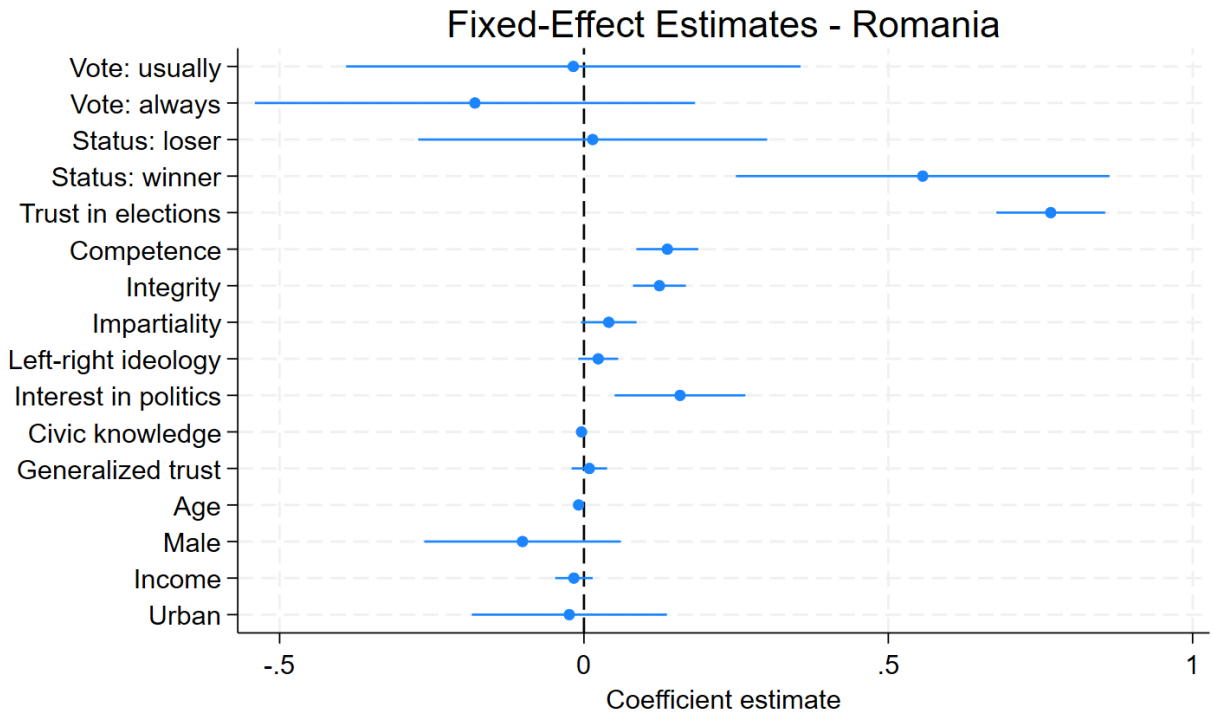
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Romania
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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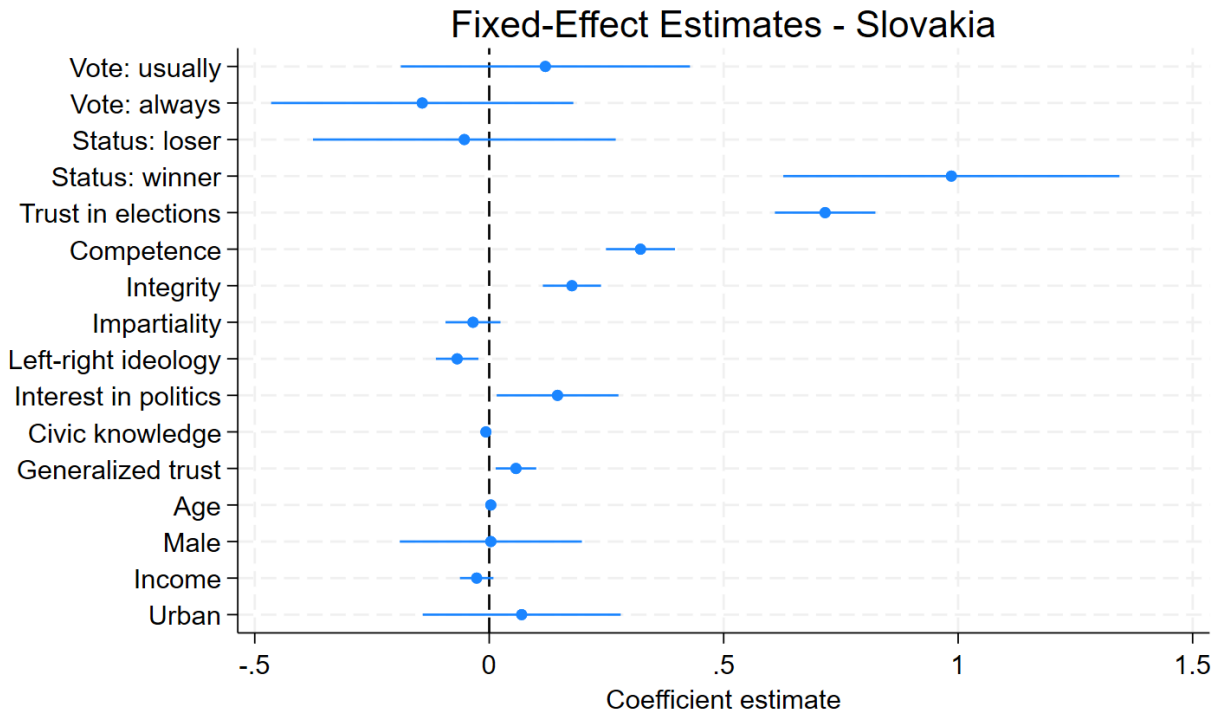
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Slovakia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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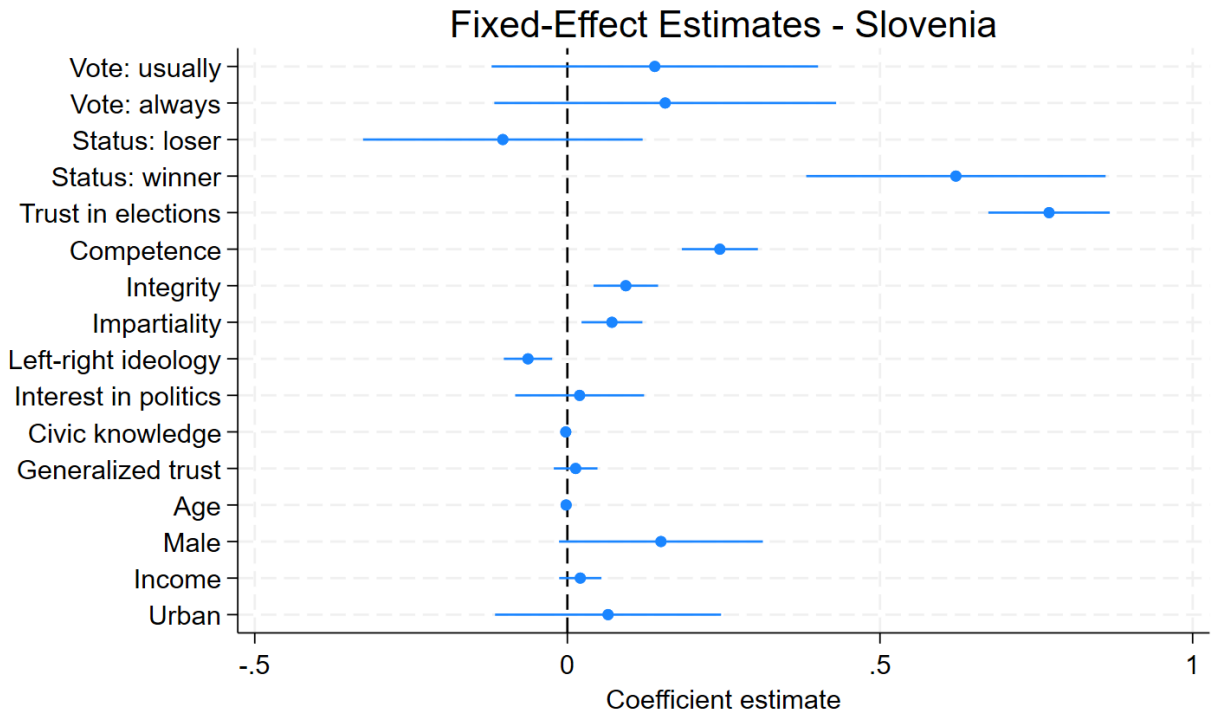
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Slovenia
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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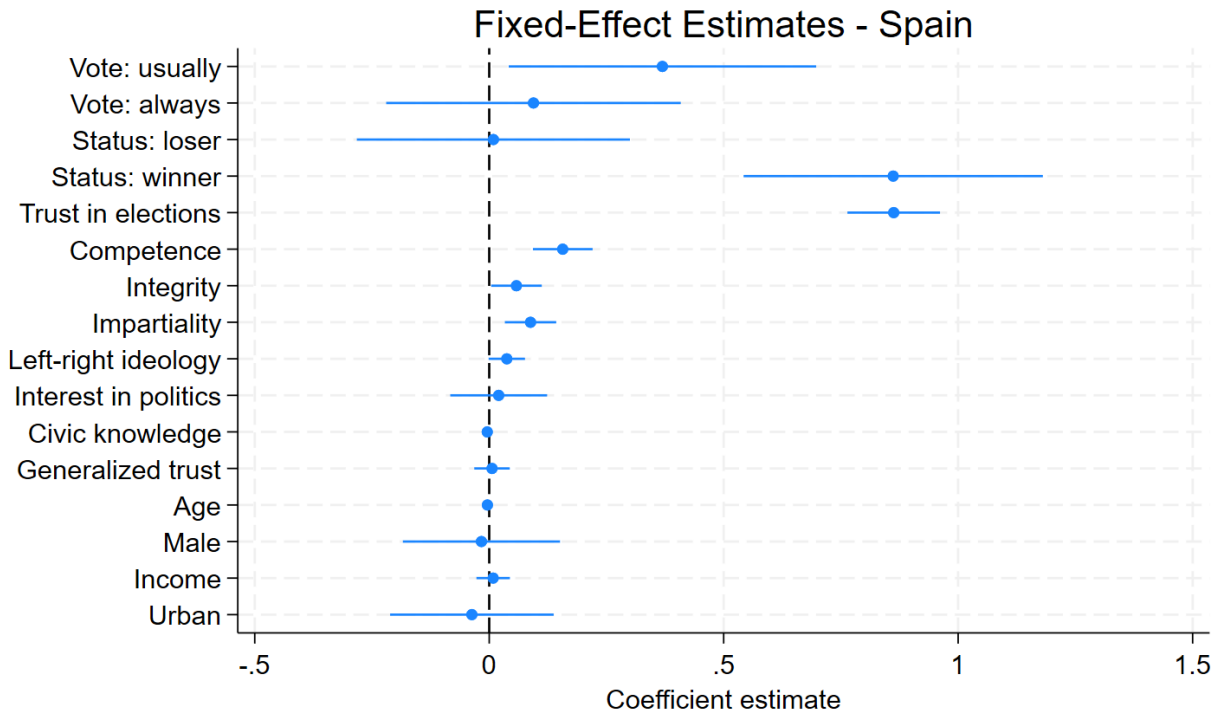
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Spain
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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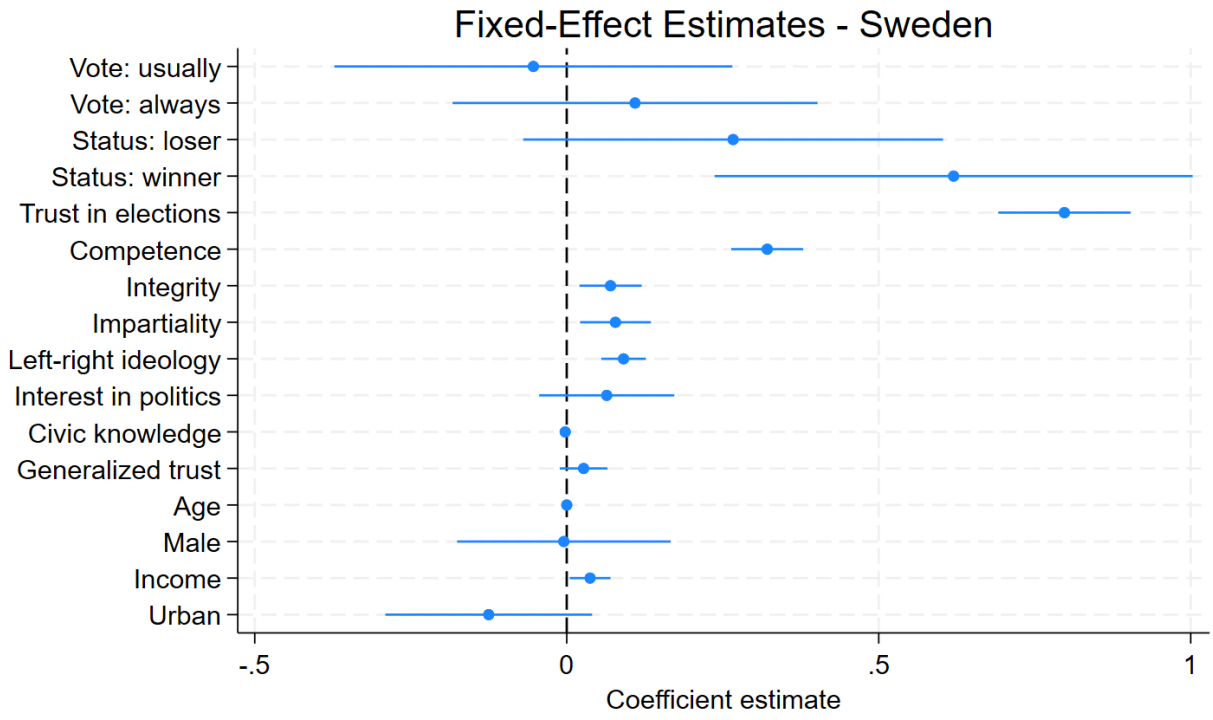
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Sweden
Vote: usually
Vote: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
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.5
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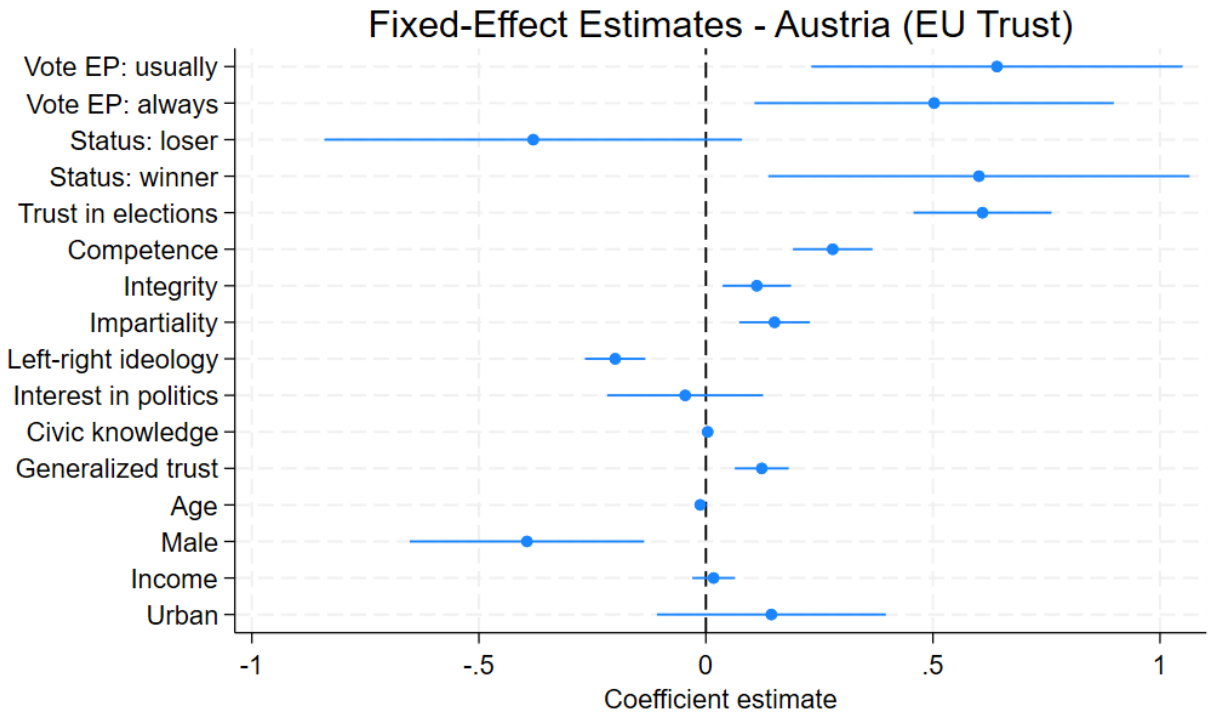
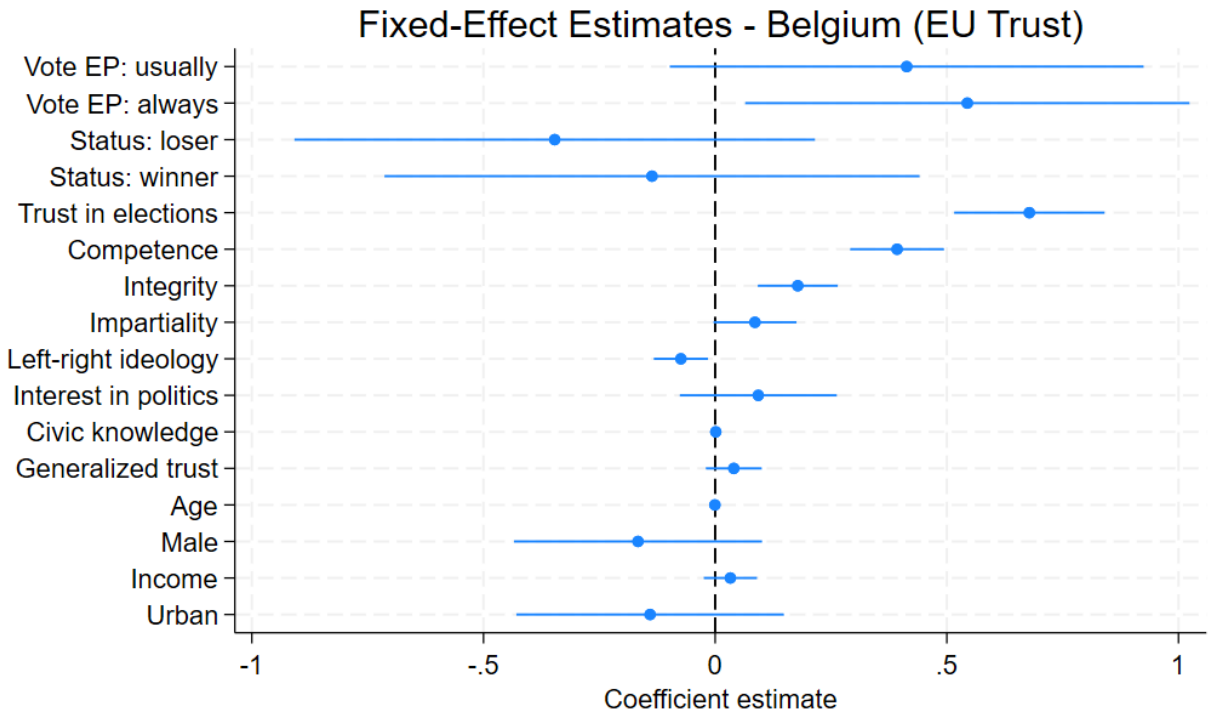
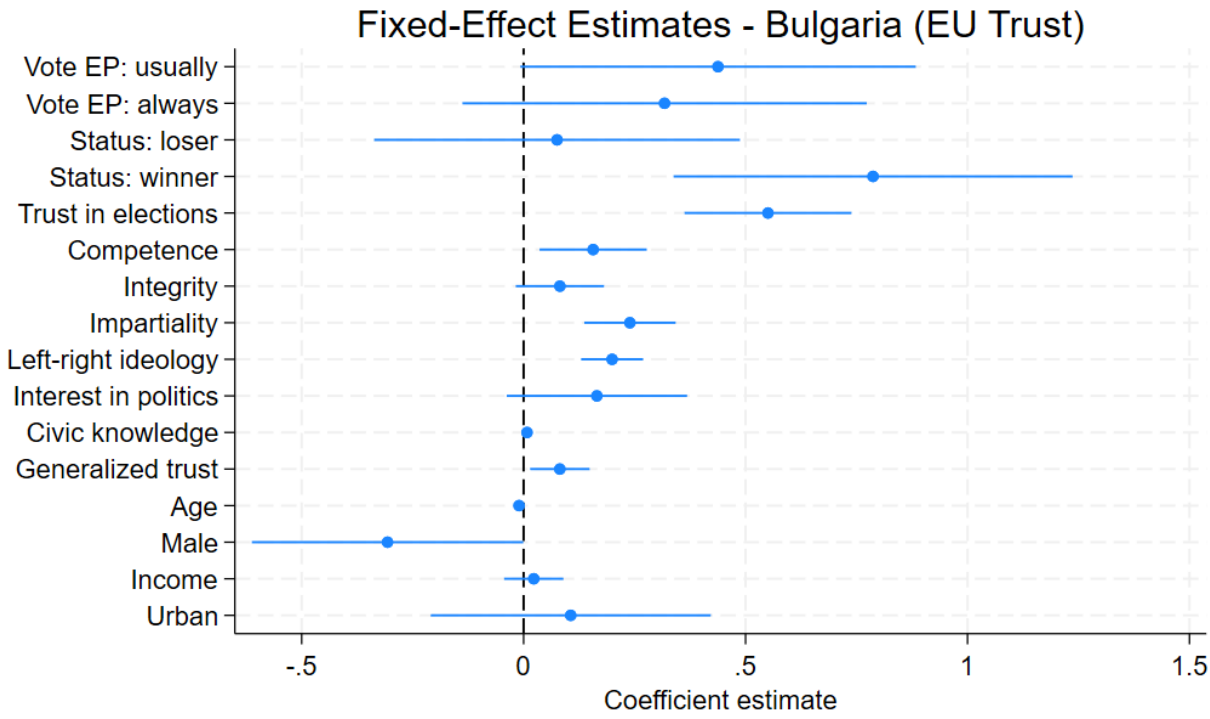
Coefficient estimate

Annex 7. Country-Specific OLS Regression Coefficients for European Political Trust Models






Fixed-Effect Estimates - Bulgaria (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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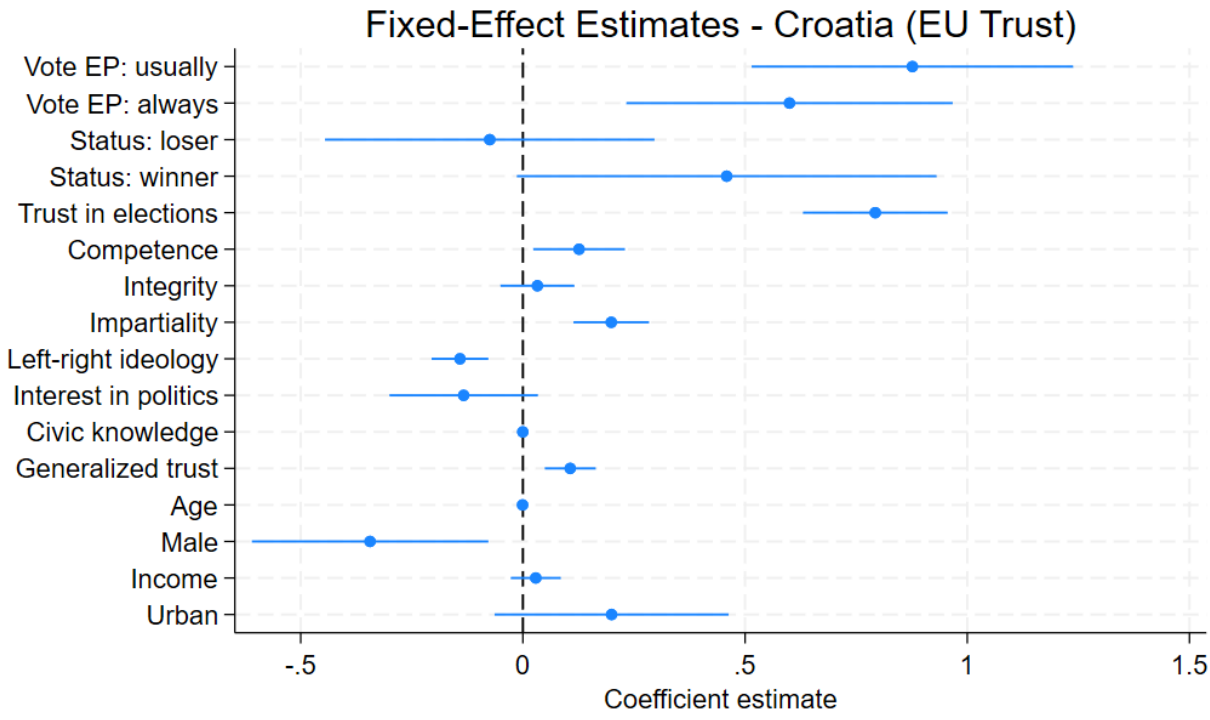
1.5
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Croatia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
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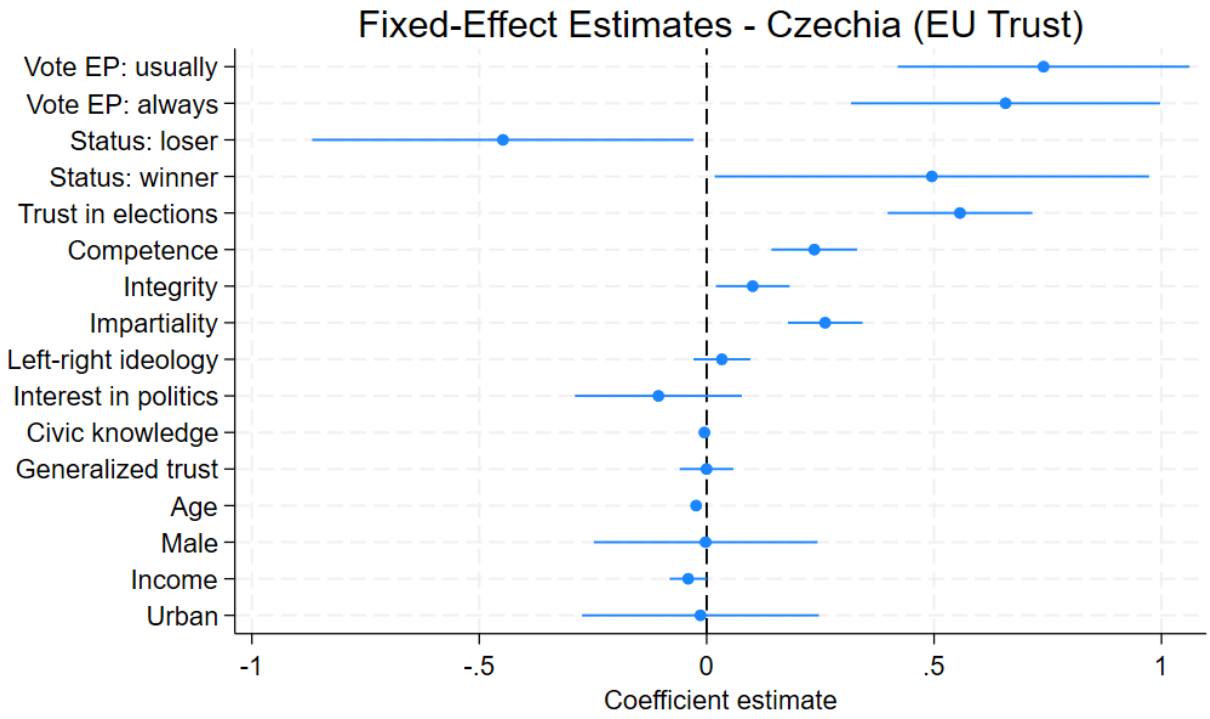
1.5
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Czechia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-1
-.5
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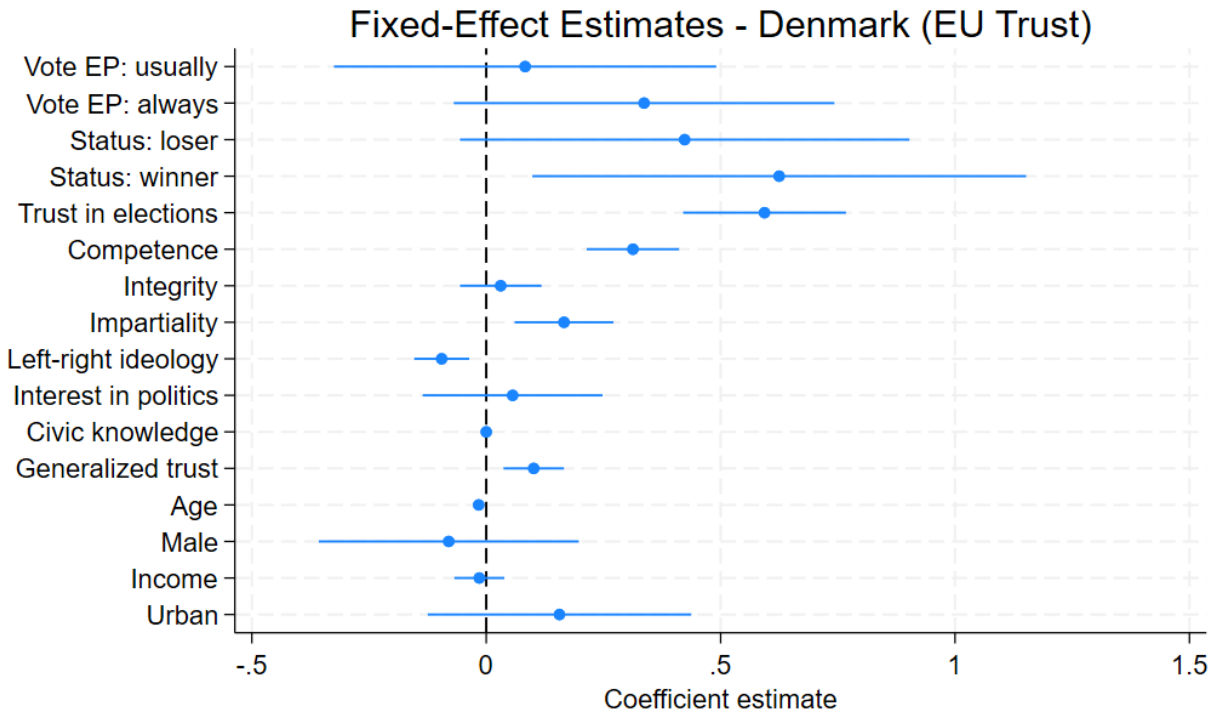
.5
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Denmark (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
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.5
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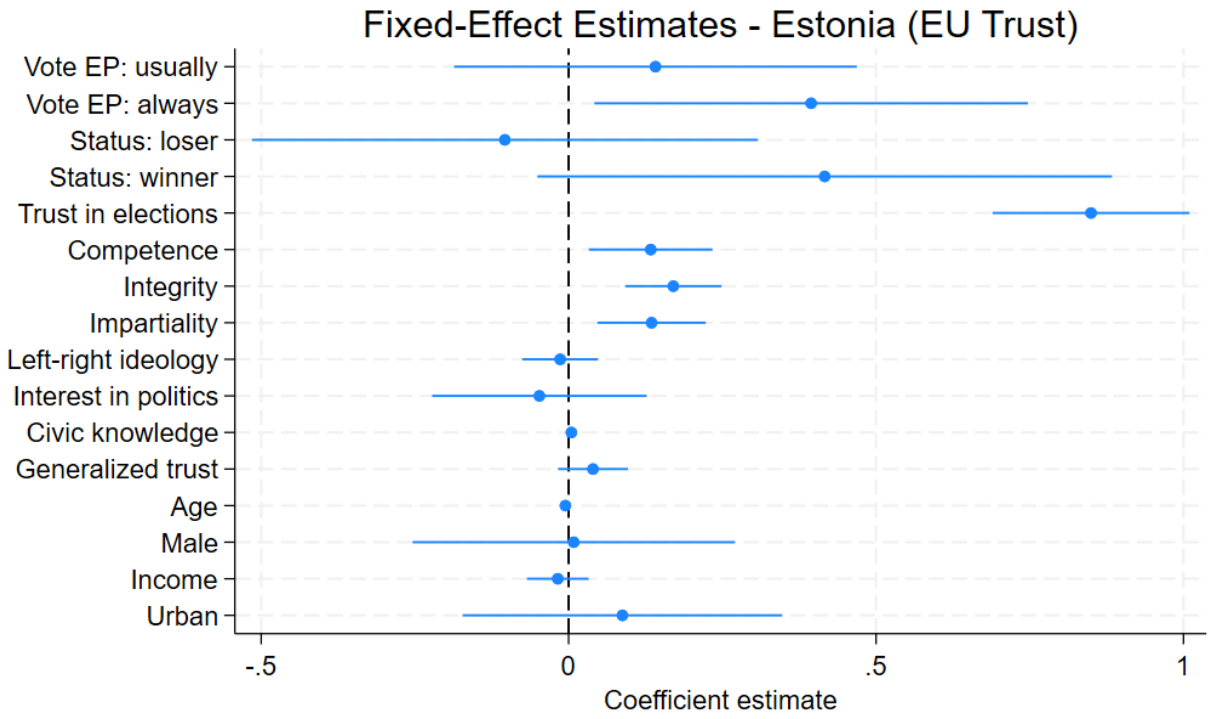
1.5
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Estonia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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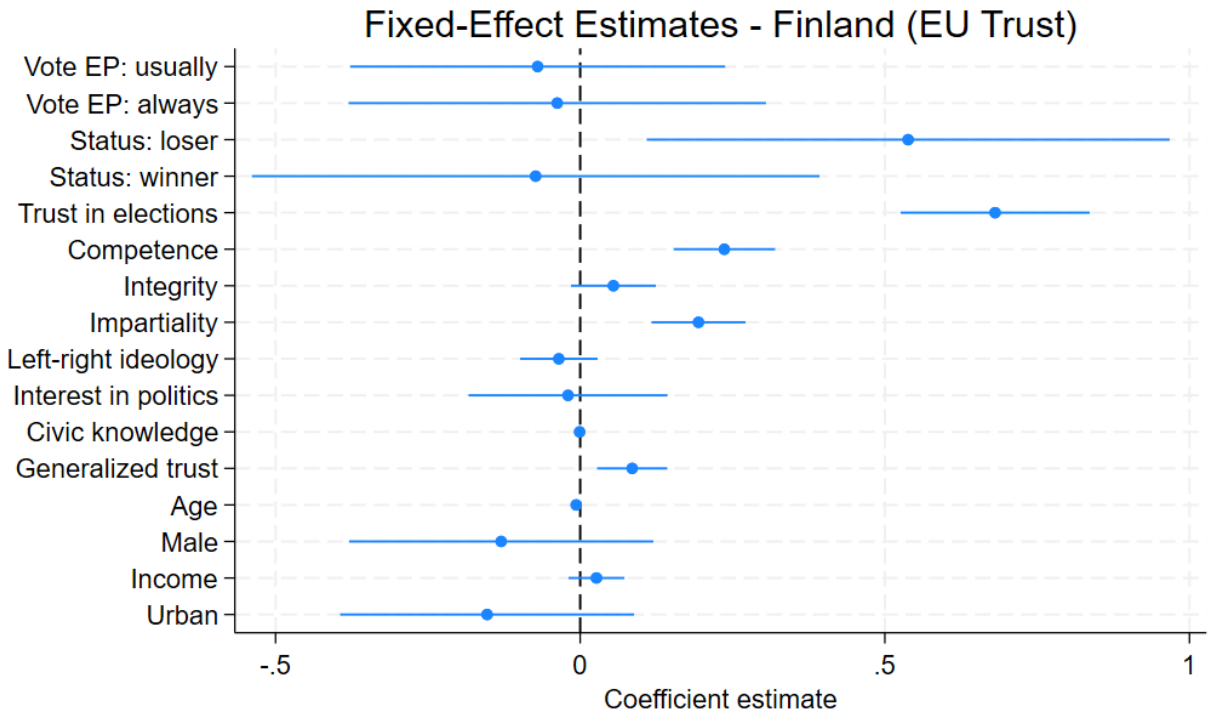
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Finland (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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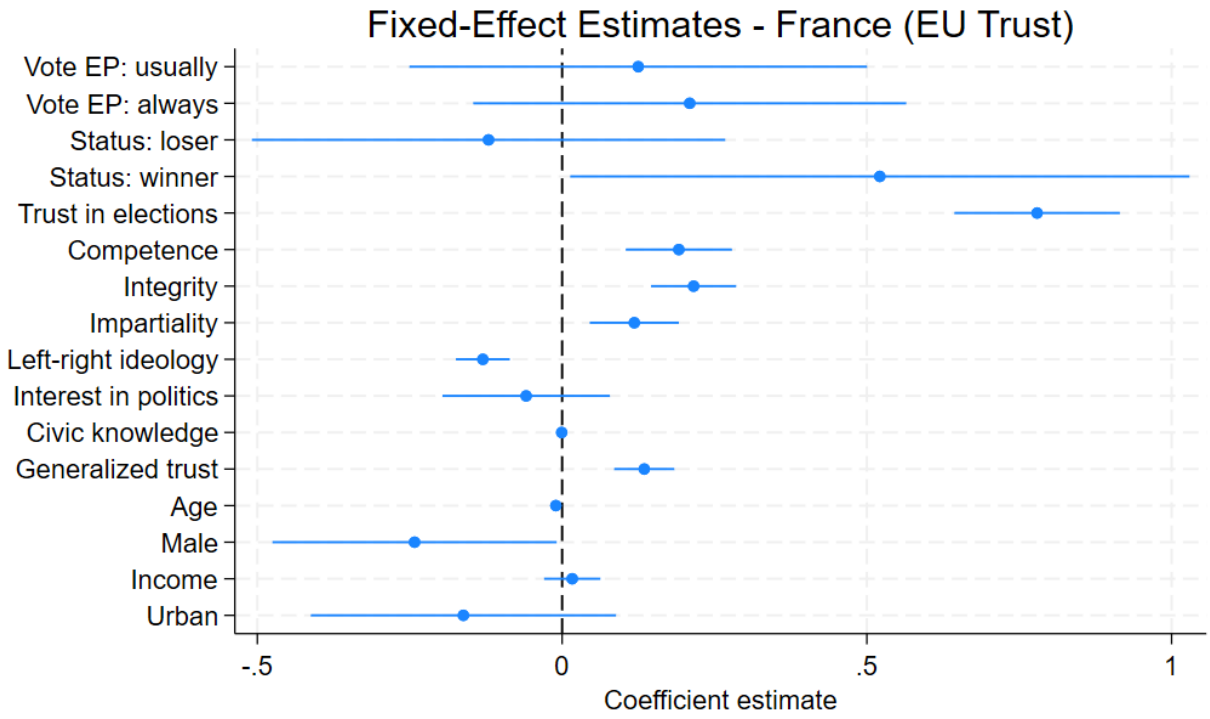
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - France (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
-.5
0
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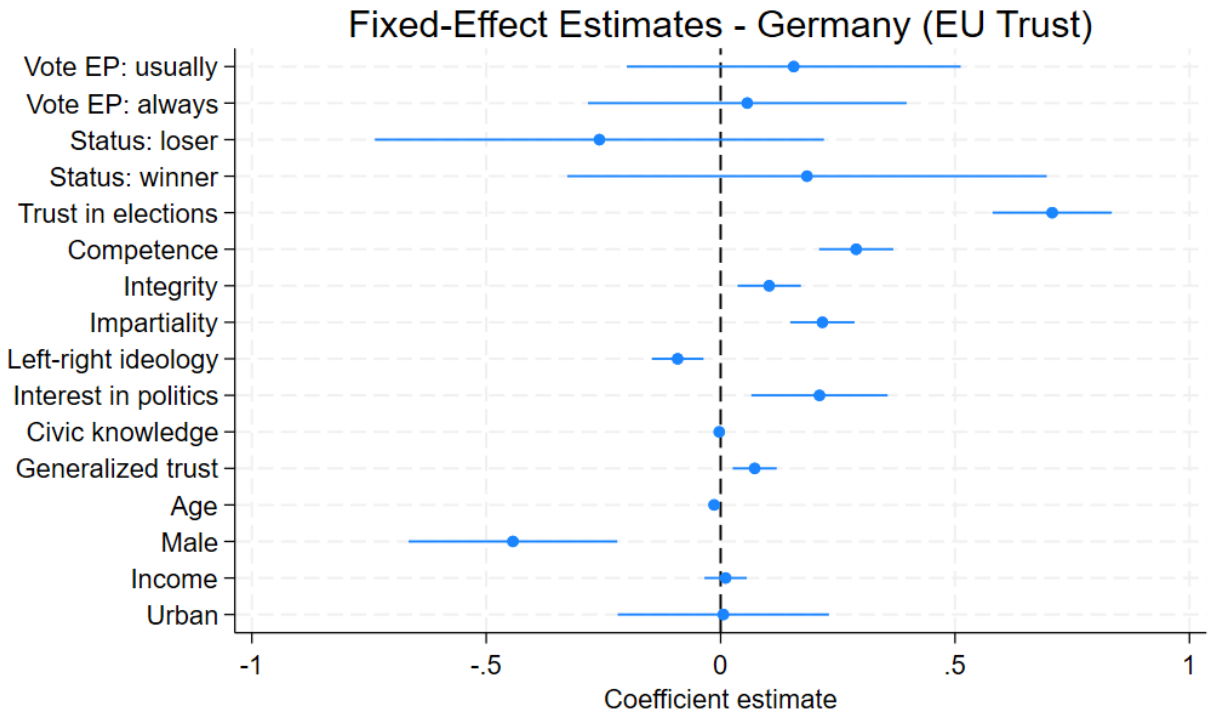
1
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Germany (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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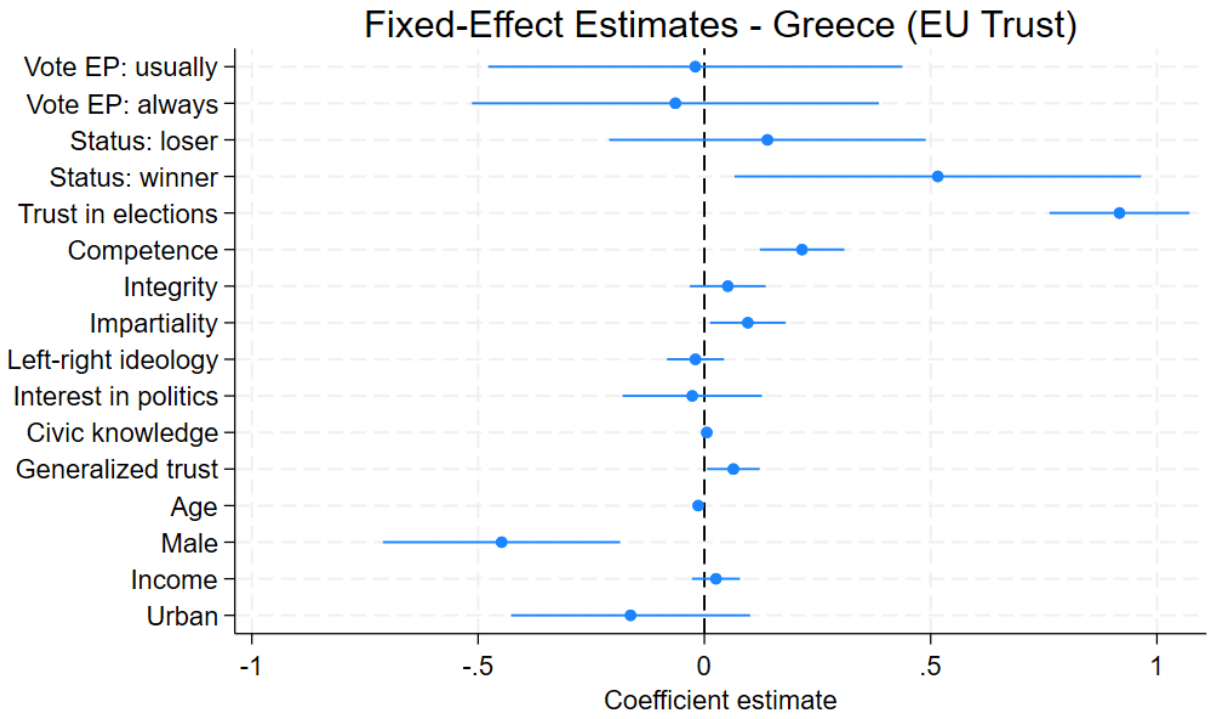
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Greece (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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Income
Urban
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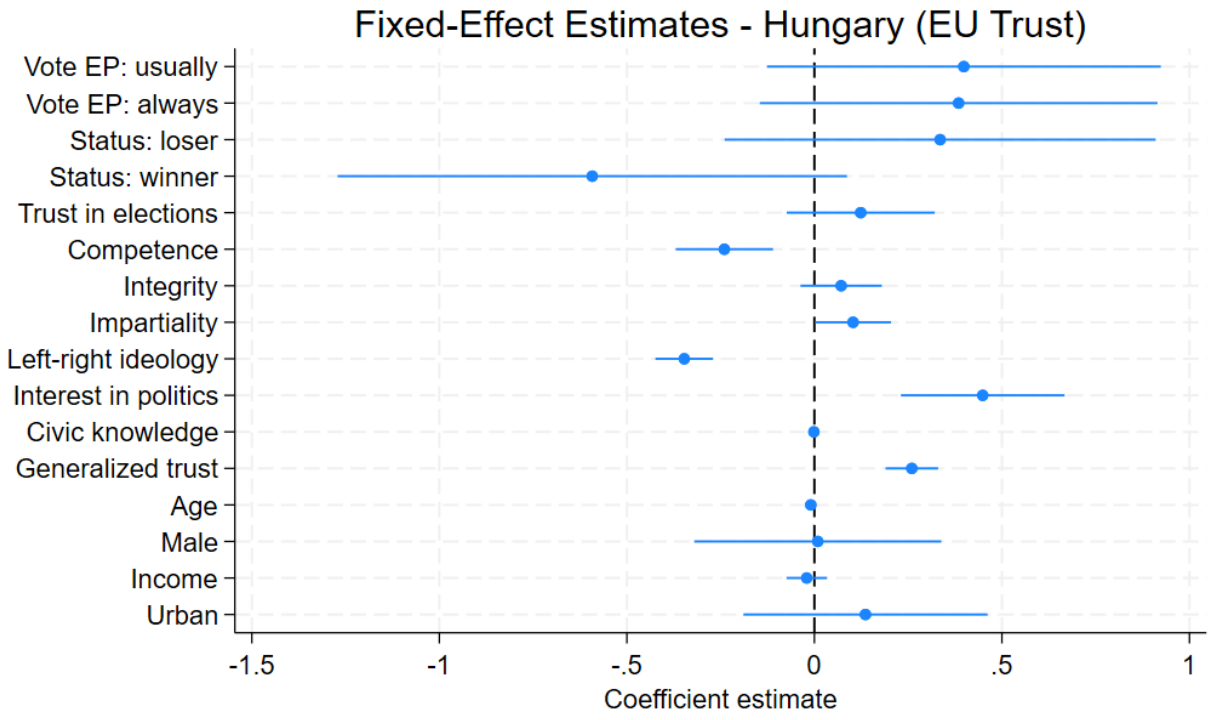
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Hungary (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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Income
Urban
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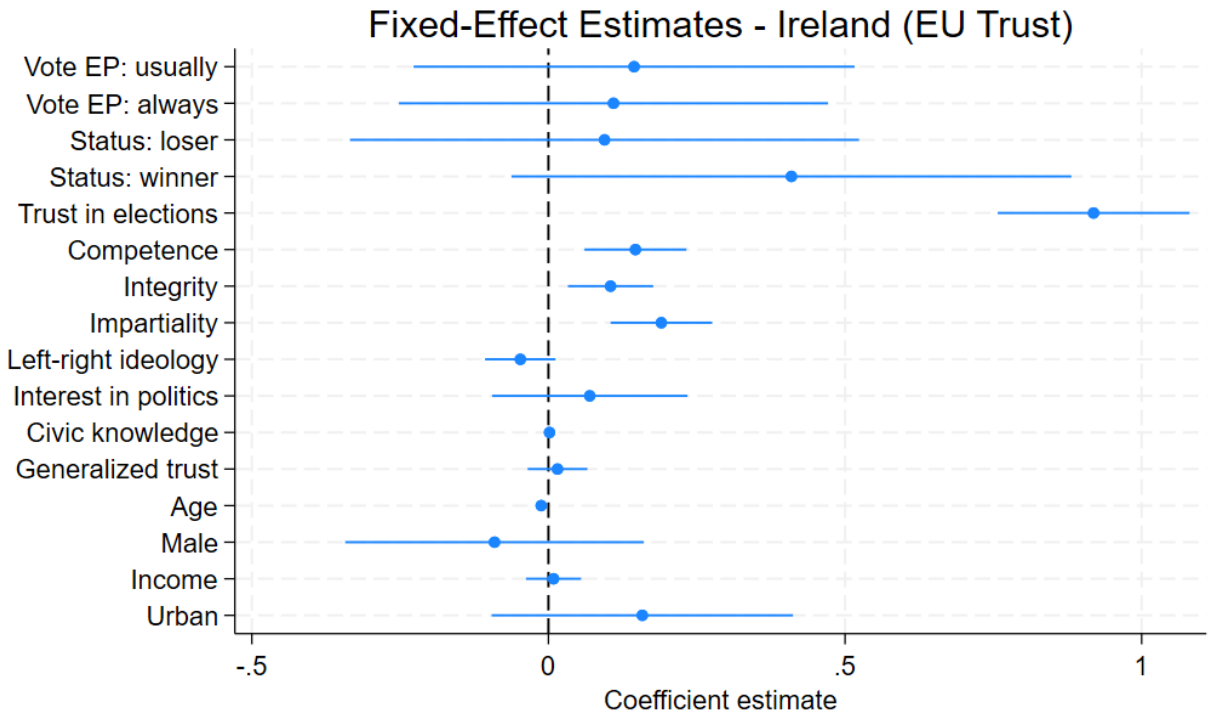
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Ireland (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
Urban
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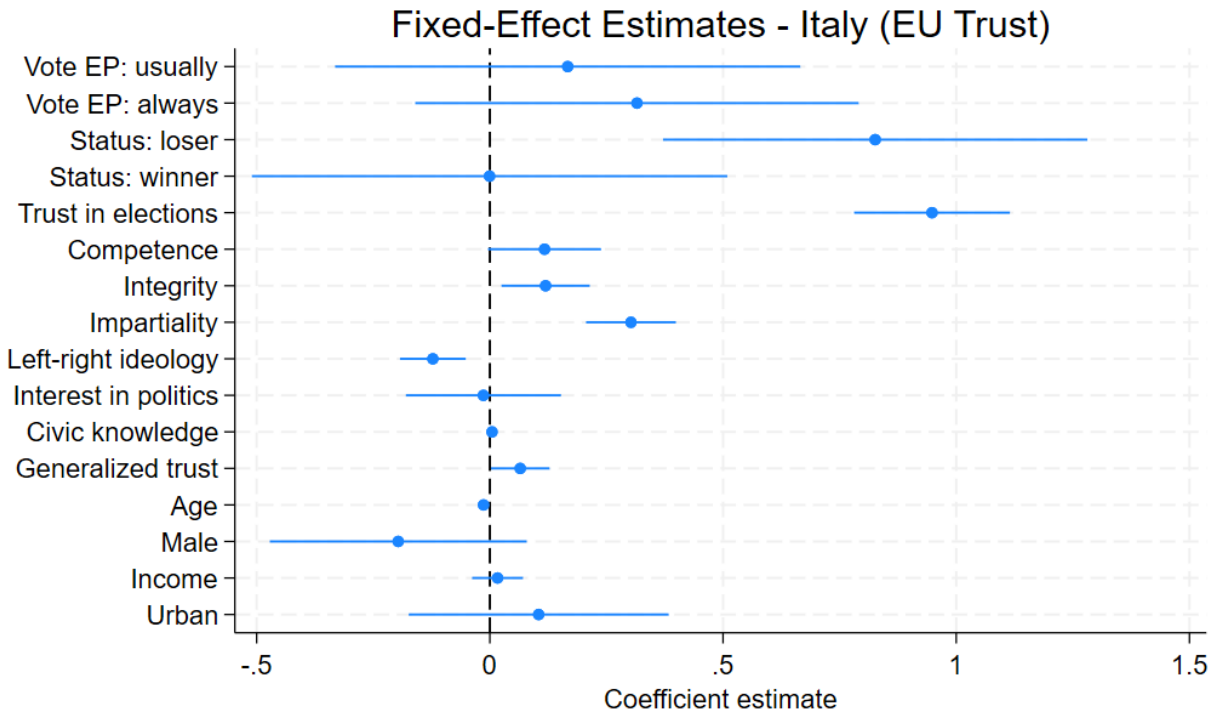
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Italy (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
Male
Income
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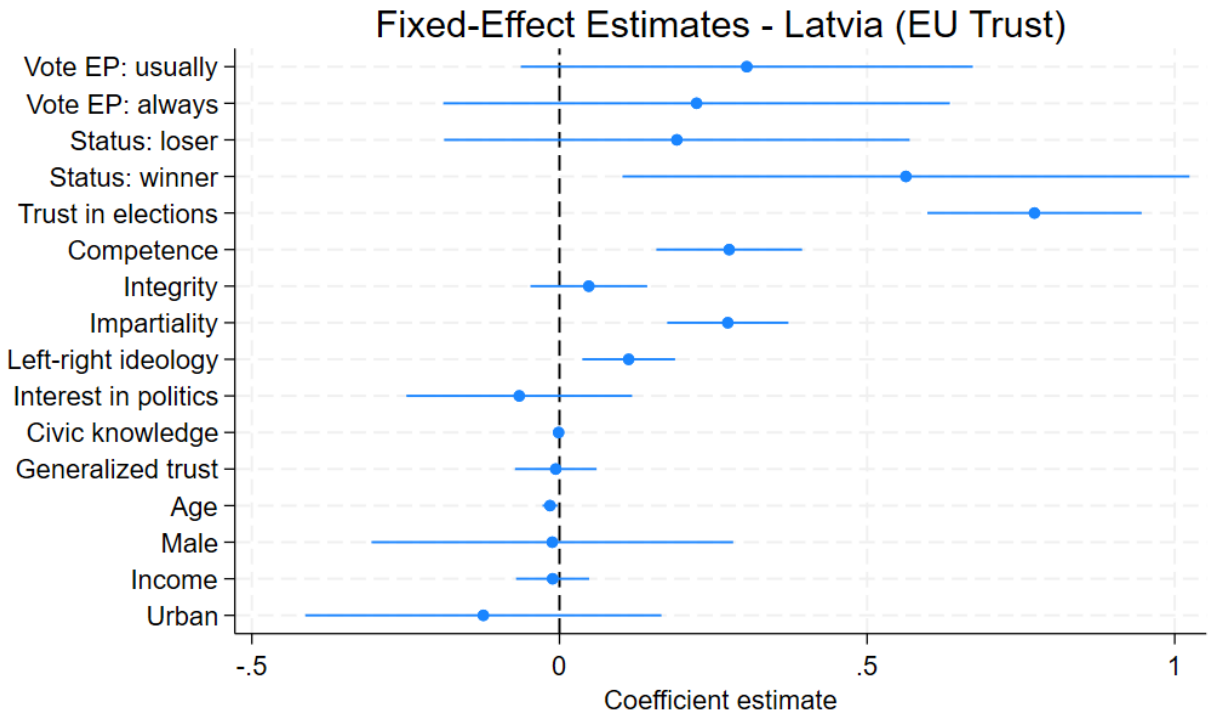
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Latvia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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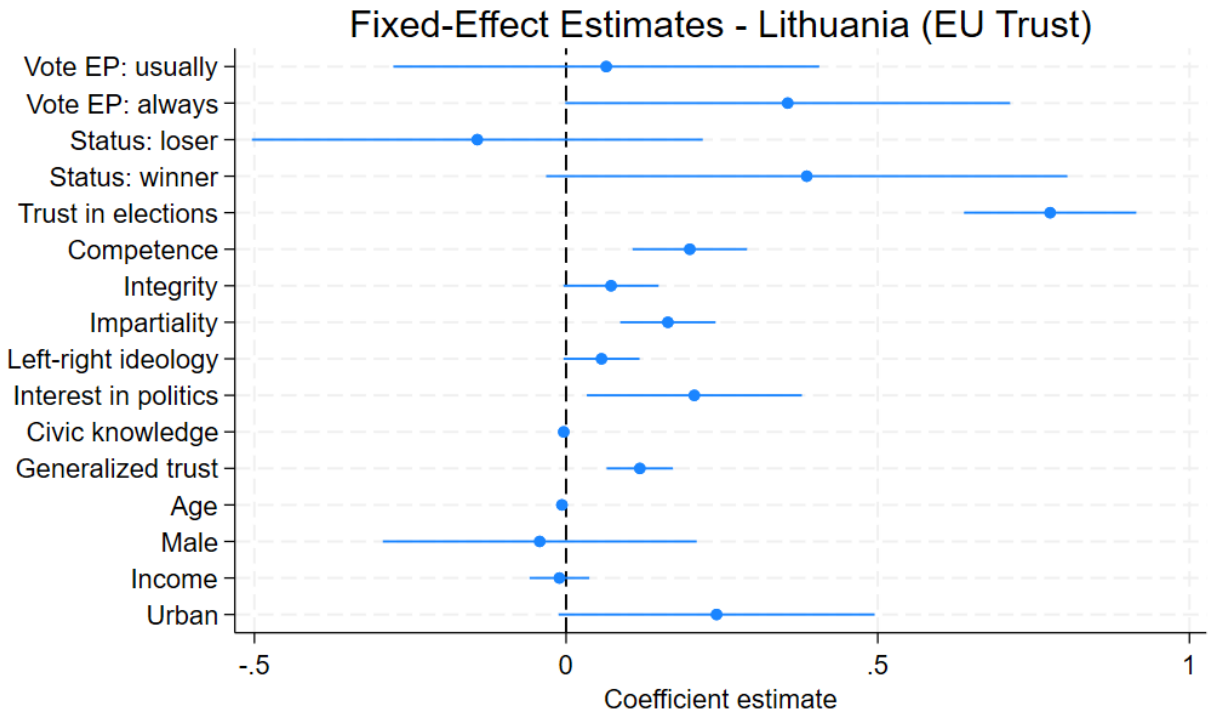
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Lithuania (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
Age
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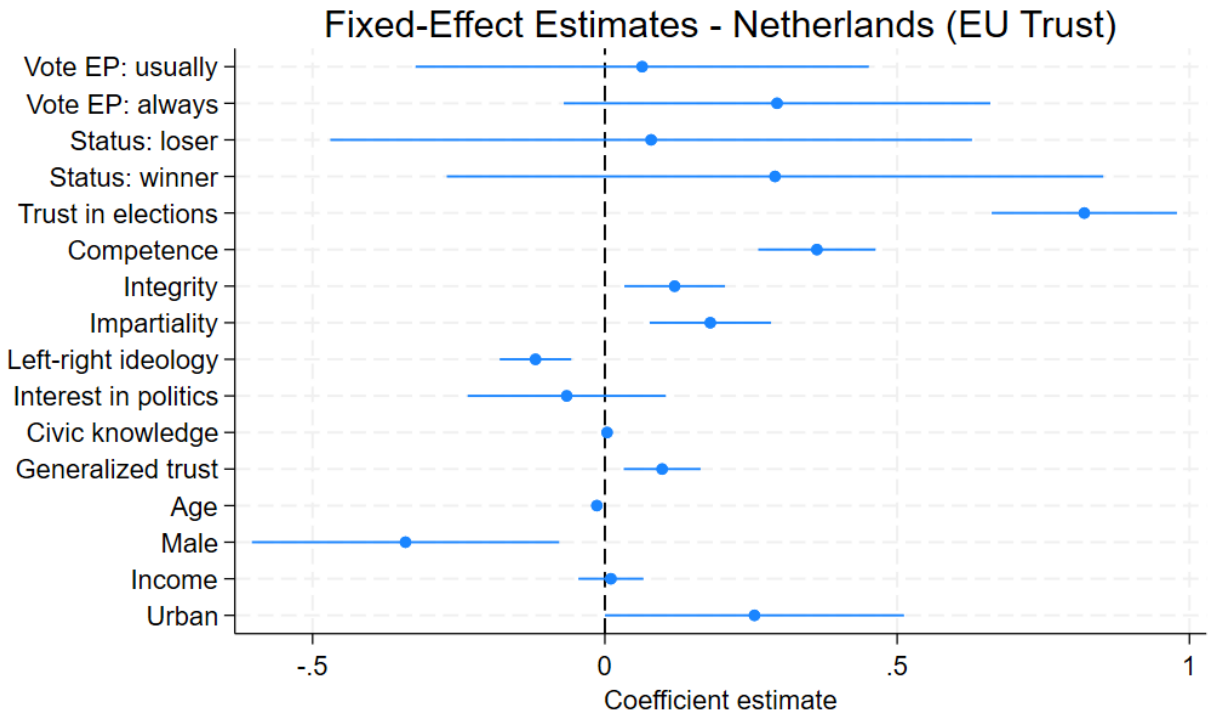
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Netherlands (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
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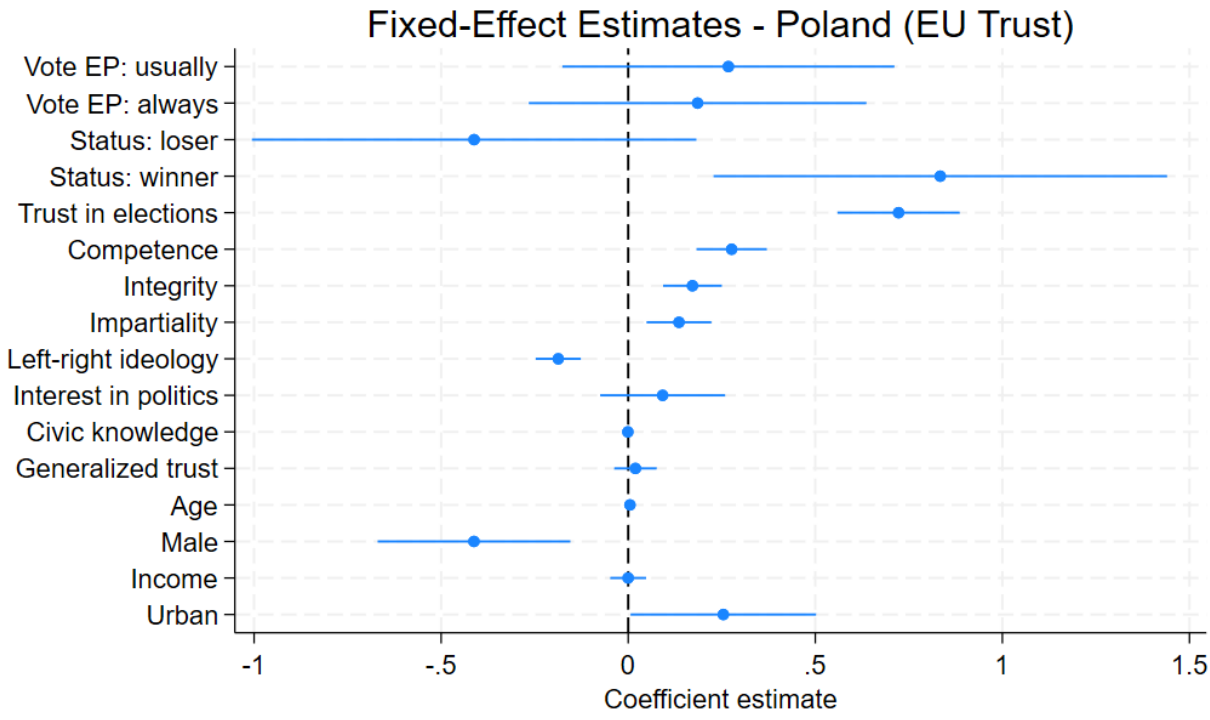
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Poland (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
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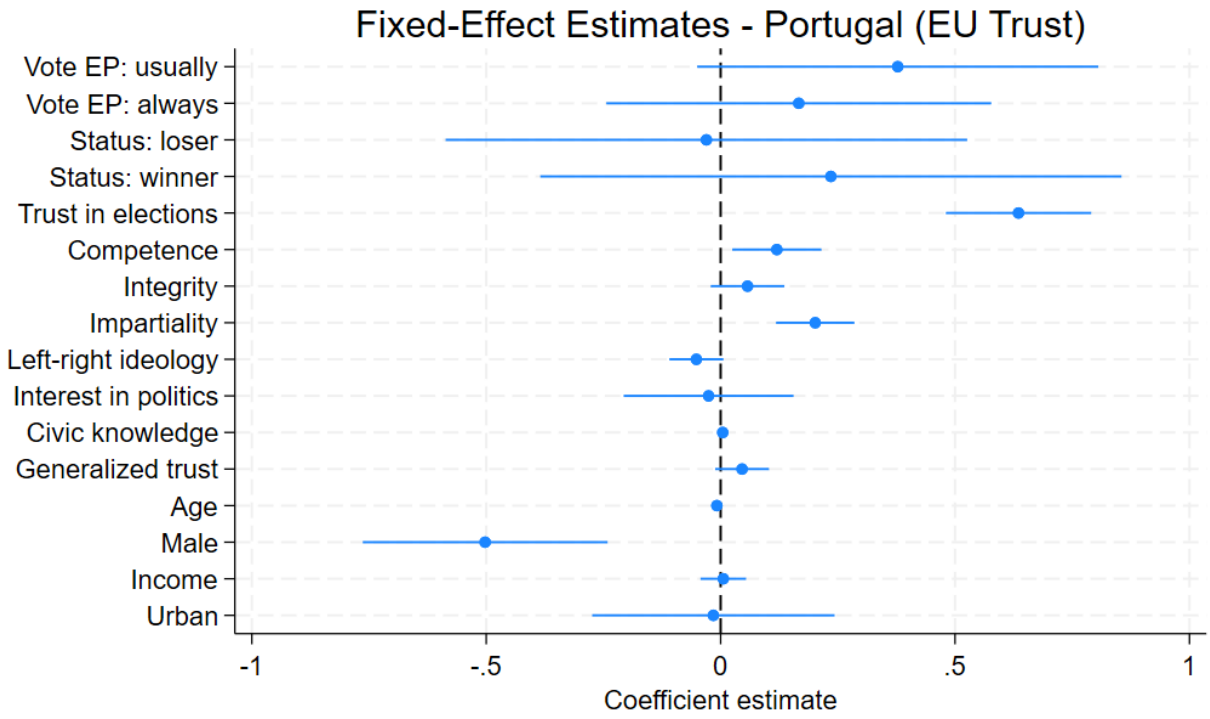
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Portugal (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
Interest in politics
Civic knowledge
Generalized trust
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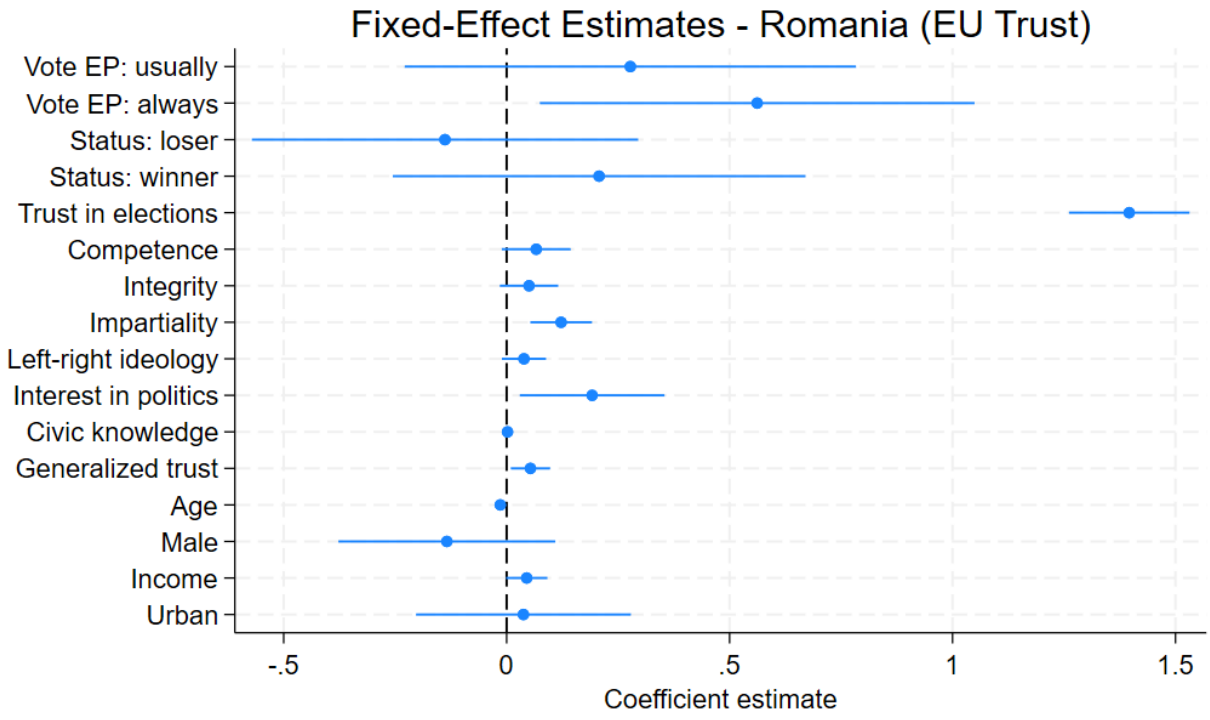
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Romania (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
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Left-right ideology
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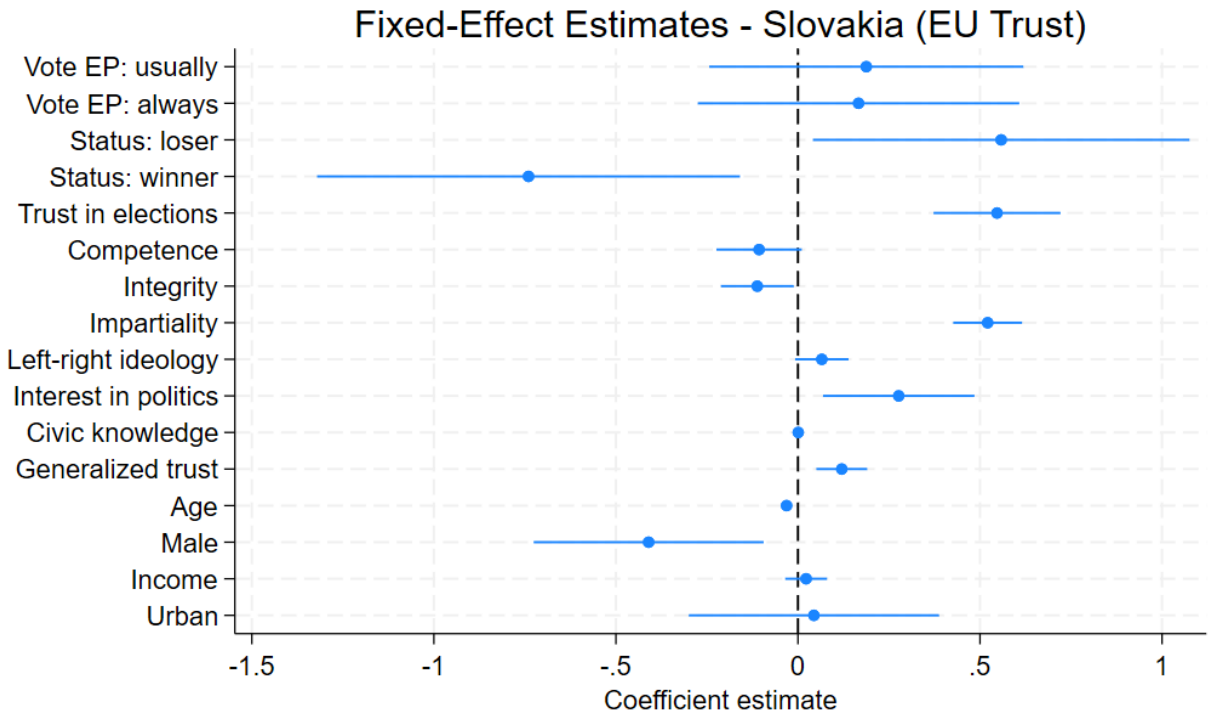
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Slovakia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
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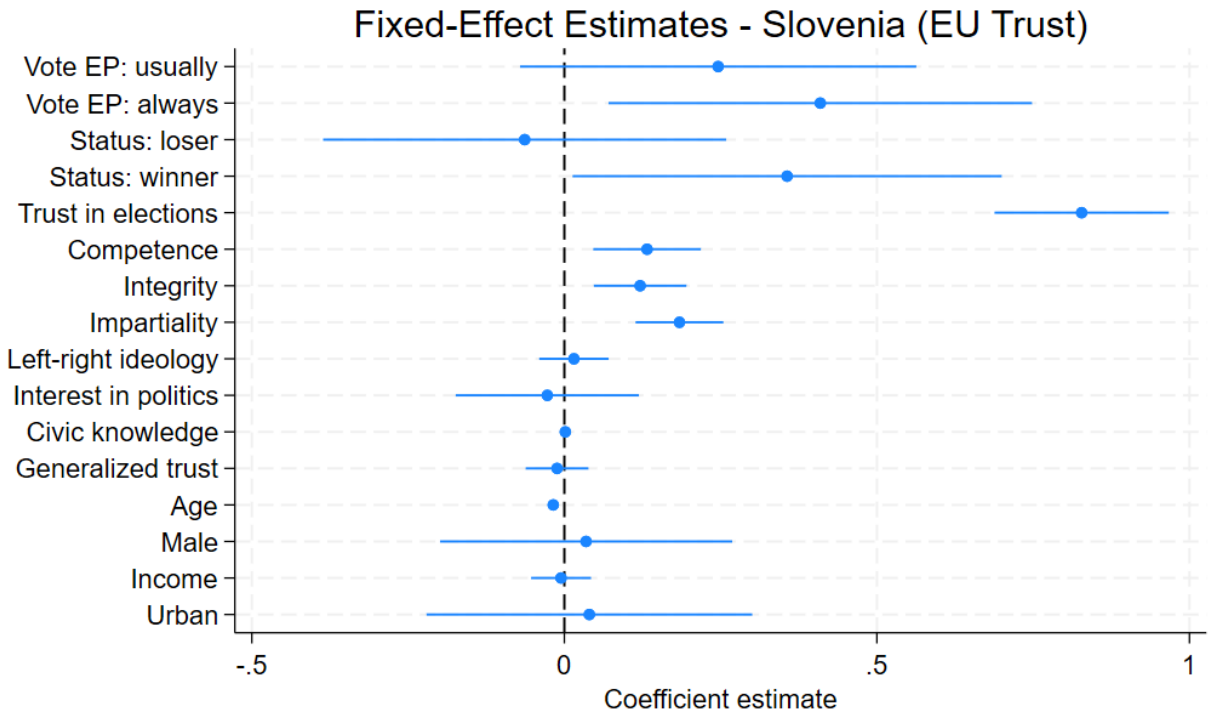
Coefficient estimate


Fixed-Effect Estimates - Slovenia (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
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Left-right ideology
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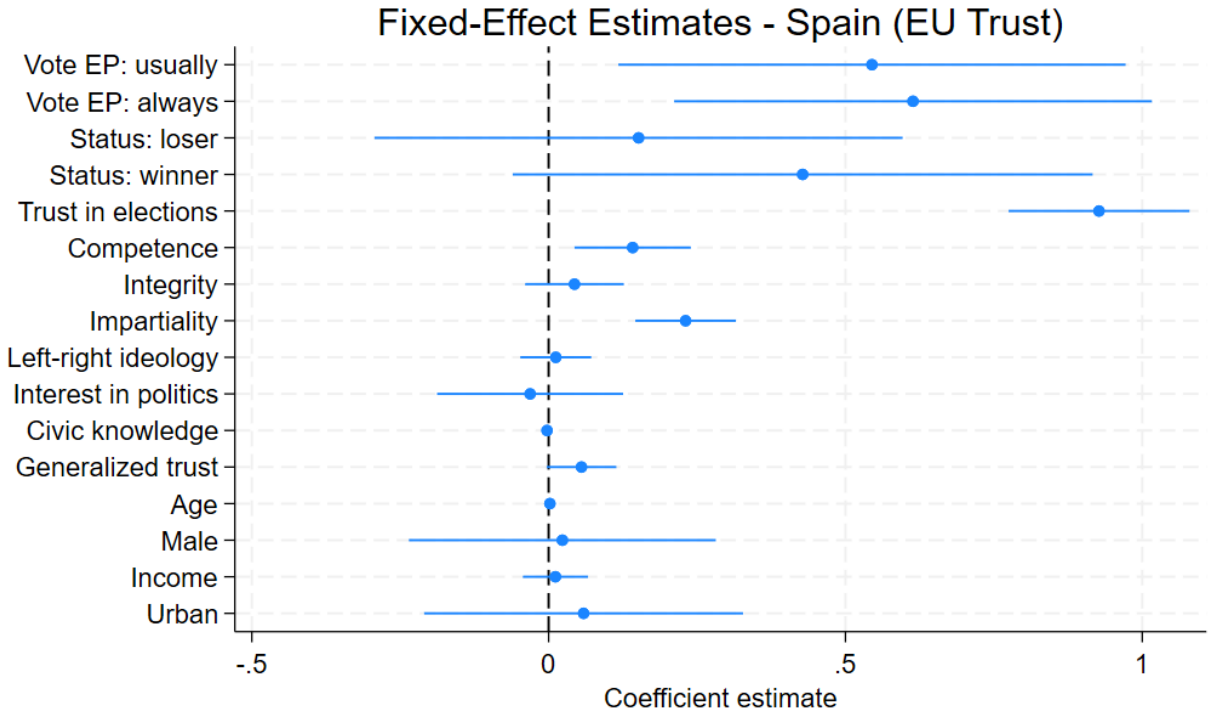
Fixed-Effect Estimates - Spain (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
Competence
Integrity
Impartiality
Left-right ideology
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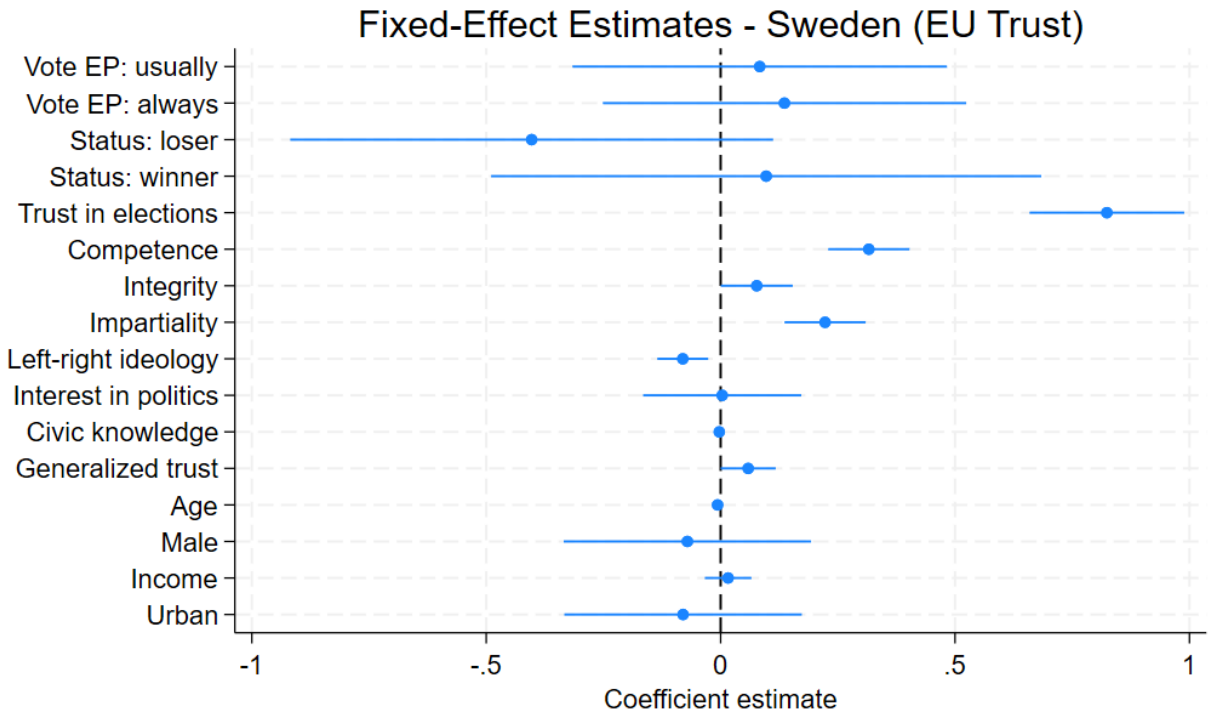
Fixed-Effect Estimates - Sweden (EU Trust)
Vote EP: usually
Vote EP: always
Status: loser
Status: winner
Trust in elections
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