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Important Personal Values and Other Variables Determining Trust in the UN among European Peoples



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Abstract

The United Nations is becoming increasingly important as we approach a new phase in global governance because of the recent health, security, and economic crises that have emerged since the 2020s. In this conjecture, understanding the factors predicting trust in the UN is imperative. Designed to fill the gap in the relevant literature, this study employs the Eurobarometer 98.2 dataset to conduct a binary logistic regression analysis to measure the impact of personal values on trust in the UN among European peoples. Findings suggest that except for religion, all the values tested in this research are important predictors of trust in the UN. However, based on their higher $\exp(B)$ values and Wald statistics, values such as; human rights, equality, solidarity, and respect for the planet are more robust predictors of trust in the UN than values like the rule of law, respect for human life, peace, self-fulfillment, individual freedom, democracy, tolerance, and respect for other cultures. In addition to the personal values mentioned, this research also confirms the robustness of sociotropic and demographic variables such as economic insecurity, satisfaction with the political system, and education. Further research is needed to test the temporal and territorial significance of the findings.

Keywords

Trust in the UN • international institutions • global governance • personal values • European public opinion.



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Important Personal Values and Other Variables Determining Trust in the UN among European Peoples

This research explores the determinants of trust in the UN among European peoples. In a time when global governance problems are increasingly visible in world politics, questions about the United Nations' role and what it should be are gaining increasing traction. Recently, the Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Gaza wars have brought the UN to the center of discussion once more. The high and complex level of globalization that we have reached thus far shows that the violent unilateral actions of states and non-state actors are becoming increasingly unacceptable for the global community with each passing day. The legitimacy of using violence to contest and maintain hegemonic world orders is becoming an outdated perception in each successive generation. Multilateralism is all that we have to construct a just world system. If it is ever possible to develop a "cosmopolitan democracy" (Fukuyama & Held, 1996) in the current world system whose dramatic evolution we are all witnessing in real-time, it must surely take place under the institutional umbrella of the UN. However, in its current form, the United Nations is still far from adequate for the task.

If a better reformed UN is to play any greater role in global governance, the problem of legitimacy must be addressed, which is strictly linked to garnering public trust. Although public opinion's influence on international matters was previously given varying degrees of importance among different segments of the academic community (Holsti, 1992), there have been serious developments in this regard, especially after the 1990s. Individuals who are exposed to UN news in the media daily inevitably form opinions on the powers of the UN. Zürn et al. (2012) state that if international institutions expand their initiatives in policy areas, they inevitably incite politicization, which in turn causes resistance unless a sufficient level of legitimacy is secured (Zürn et al., 2012). The increasing skepticism toward institutions in Europe and the United States in recent years is a manifestation of this phenomenon. Mingo and Faggiano (2020) express that the increasing popularity of anti-establishment movements and the decline of trust in institutions that can be observed in the Western world are concerns for the future of global governance (Mingo & Faggiano, 2020). With the help of social media, conspiracy theories have reached an alarming level of popularity in recent years, contributing to this upward trend of distrust (Massou et al., 2023). According to Massou et al. (2023), individuals' perception of a threat to their own needs fosters conspiracy theories and negatively affects institutional trust (Massou et al., 2023). Therefore, the importance of trust in the legitimacy of international organizations cannot be ignored (Tallberg, & Zürn, 2019).

Regarding the legitimacy of governance, trust is a necessary component that shapes public attitudes toward policies (Cacciatore et al. 2018). Although trust research in general and trust research in international institutions have a long history, they have gained considerable momentum since the 2000s. These studies examine the definition of trust and related concepts (social capital etc.) along with factors that foster trust. Kao and Sapp (2022) assert that there is still no universal definition of trust. Understandably, the definition of trust depends on the context. Therefore, it is perfectly normal for the definition of trust to change depending on the needs of the research topic (Stals et al., 2024). However, the foremost conceptual distinction is between particularized trust and generalized trust (Verhoeven, & Ritzen 2023). Particularized trust is the trust that arises from direct relationships with other individuals. Generalized trust, on the other hand, defines trust in people and institutions with which an individual has no personal interaction. It is related to positive expectations from strangers (Bjørnskov, 2007). Hence, it is reasonable to assume that

both types of trust can have determinants that are common to all types of trust. Because of the scope of this research, I will only mention the previous literature on generalized trust. However, generalized trust also has its own nuances. Generalized trust entails social, political, institutional, and international trust (Brewer et al., 2005). Although institutional trust is a type of generalized trust, Daskalopoulou (2018) offers a distinction. While generalized trust is a belief in the “benign intent” of others, institutional trust is a more knowledge-based belief about the institutional performance of the organization in question (Daskalopoulou, 2018). Kao and Sapp (2022) mention variables such as “information, expectations, risk and agencies” as defining characteristics of institutional trust. Stals et al. (2024) remind that although trust in civil society organizations and international organizations is related to each other, they still have different dimensions. Brewer et al. (2004) emphasize the importance of the concept of international trust. This concept is used to express trust in other nations, not in individuals or domestic institutions (Brewer et al., 2004). International trust is a form of approach that may vary from country to country and even from period to period within a country (Brewer et al., 2004). Additionally, a distinction was made between personal and system trust. Personal trust is toward people, and system trust is in expert systems like banks and other complex institutions (Gilbert & Behnam, 2012). For a qualitative argument on different definitions of trust and different approaches to trust, see Delhey and Welzel (2012).

Ronald Inglehart pioneered studies of trust measurements in the 1970s, on which the World Values Survey (WVS) was later based. Since then, mixed results of different factors have been observed among factors affecting institutional trust. To give a brief overview, the following are mostly reported as the determinants of trust in international institutions: income inequality, level of economic development, utilitarian cost-benefit analyses, heuristics, domestic political institutions, globalization, “urban-rural splits,” religion, and ethnicity. According to Bjørnskov (2007), any institution that reduces income inequality gains trust. Similarly, Algan et al. (2017) state that major collapses in the economy trigger political polarization. Disagreeing with Inglehart and Norris (2016), they maintain that institutional distrust depends not on external factors but on the economic crisis itself. According to them, economic insecurity has a negative impact on values and beliefs, and these values and beliefs that are negatively affected by the economy can produce results that will worsen the economy. Admitting the reciprocal nature of the relationship, they fundamentally put more emphasis on economics (Algan et al., 2017). Confirming the findings in prior literature, Lipps and Schraff (2020) find similar results for the negative effects of inequality on trust in national institutions and through them in the EU.

On the other hand, Schlipphak (2014) finds that unlike Europe, in Latin America and sub-Saharan Africa, the influence of utilitarian cost-benefit analyzes is not evident when determining attitudes toward regional organizations, such as UNASUR and AU. Instead, the use of heuristics is reported to be a more powerful predictor of trust in those regions. Supporting the “logic of extrapolation” effect, Schlipphak (2014) concludes that individuals express trust in regional organizations to the extent that they trust their own country’s domestic political institutions (Schlipphak, 2014). A decade earlier, similar results were reported for the US public opinion on the effects of domestic politics on trust in an international organization (Brewer et al., 2004).

In addition to the above factors, Ecker-Ehrhardt (2012), cited in Lamprianou and Charalambous (2018), reveals that the inadequacy of a nation-state in solving global problems positively affects support for international institutions (Lamprianou & Charalambous, 2018). Besides, diverging from previous studies, Verhoeven and Ritzen (2023) do not report a negative relationship between globalization and institutional

trust (Verhoeven, & Ritzen 2023). Building on existing research, McKay et al (2023) argue that 'urban-rural splits' are an important factor dividing global politics. However, they found that the assumption that people living in rural areas have negative political trust levels is empirically supported only for developing countries, and a lack of political trust is not clear for the rural areas of highly-developed countries (McKay et al., 2023).

In some other studies, religion appears to be influential in terms of trust in international institutions. Citing various sources, Delhey and Welzel (2012) argue that some cultural legacies (Islam, Confucianism, communism) create a barrier to outgroup-trust because they are generally collectivist, while there is an opposite effect for Protestantism, which is more individualistic. As the level of "human empowerment" increases, liberated individuals gain the confidence to trust individuals outside their group (Delhey & Welzel, 2012). Alongside religion, ethnic differences also have a negative impact on generalized trust (Bjørnskov, 2007). However, Bjørnskov (2007) doesn't find any evidence for the effects of democracy, the rule of law, education, age, and political ideology on generalized trust (Bjørnskov, 2007).

As for the focus of this research, the factors that determine trust in the UN are surprisingly underexplored, and most of the existing studies have produced mixed results, either due to methodological differences, survey universe, or differences in the variables (Medve-Bálint & Boda, 2014) used in the research models.

Torgler (2008) conducted the first serious research on trust in the UN using data from 38 countries in the World Values Survey. In his research, in addition to the socioeconomic and demographic variables used in previous trust studies, he also explored the effects of variables such as globalization, geographic identification, and corruption. Since then, the following factors have been explored in the studies: age, education, occupation, gender, marital status, political interest, left-right ideology, religiosity, globalization, cosmopolitanism, corruption, identity, domestic institutions, EU, economic crisis, sociotropics, economic performance and democracy. The term sociotropics refers to respondents' perceptions of broader macro-economic conditions rather than personal or individual economic concerns when they form their attitudes toward international institutions. Sociotropic variables concern collective well-being rather than individual self-interest.

On the one hand, compared with older ages, young age has been reported to have a positive correlation with trust in the UN (Torgler, 2008; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019; Kiratli, 2020). Moreover, education (Torgler, 2008; Diven & Constantelos, 2011; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), political interest (Torgler, 2008; Diven & Constantelos, 2011), cosmopolitanism (Torgler, 2008; Diven & Constantelos, 2011), pride in one's nationality, trust in domestic government institutions, 'extrapolation' and the 'capacity to deliver' (Diven & Constantelos, 2011; Dellmuth & Tallberg, 2015), religiosity and the country's globalization index (Torgler, 2008) have been found to positively affect UN trust. Furthermore, trust in the EU also correlates with and affects trust in the UN (Lamprianou & Charalambous, 2018). As for the importance of sociotropics, taking cues from the literature on the attitudes toward the EU, Kiratli (2020) finds in his research that a country's economic performance is an important determinant of attitudes toward the UN and NATO.

On the other hand, negative correlations were reported for financial crises (Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), identification with local communities (Diven & Constantelos, 2011), being married (Torgler, 2008), and trust in the UN. Regarding occupations, gender (Torgler, 2008; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), left-right ideology (Diven & Constantelos, 2011; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), and corruption (Torgler, 2008; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), conflicting results were reported. Lastly, regarding the effects of "interest representation" (Dellmuth

& Tallberg 2015) and democracy (Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019) no evidence were reported to be found on trust in international organizations.

What is clearly missing in the literature on the determinants of trust in the UN so far is the effects of personal values. Unfortunately, I have not come across any academic research designed to explore the effects of important personal values on trust in the UN. There is actually a Glocalities survey (Karaca, nd) that mentions that certain values such as; having tolerant views toward other religions and cultures, being proud of one's nation, caring for the planet, having faith in technological progress, believing in the importance of networking, and socially responsible businesses have significant positive correlation with trust in the UN. In contrast, pessimistic and nostalgic feelings and feeling disconnected with the rest of the world are stated to have negative effects on trust in the UN. However, there is not enough information about the reliability of the research methods that they employed.

Taking all these factors into consideration, this article aims to test the effects of important personal values on trust in the UN by controlling for sociotropic and demographic variables. Therefore, this study posits the following hypothesis:

H1 = The personal values people state to have are important predictors of trust in the UN.

Method

For the measurement of trust in the UN, the Eurobarometer 98.2 (2023) survey dataset was used. This is because this dataset is the most recent survey at hand that includes variables for “trust in the UN” along with “personal values” covering 38 European countries. The survey universe comprises 27 EU countries and 11 non-EU countries (Türkiye, North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, United Kingdom, Albania, Norway, Switzerland, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, and the Republic of Moldova. Number of Units: 37.793 aged 15 years and over. The unit of analysis is individual. The following details regarding the data collection specifications of the survey are provided on the official website of the EU Commission: Data Collection Period: 12.01.2023 - 06.02.2023. Stratified sampling methods using a combination of probability and non-probability techniques are reported to have been employed. The data collection modes include face-to-face interviews, computer-assisted interviews (CAPI/CAMI), self-administered questionnaires, web-based surveys (CAWI), and web-based interviews.¹

Dependent variable

In EU barometer surveys, citizens are asked whether they trust certain national and international institutions. The surveyors ask the citizens of European countries whether they trust the United Nations without providing any academic definition of the term and without asking what they understand by the word ‘trust’. Therefore, in the survey, the word “trust” is used based on its everyday meaning. To measure trust in the UN, there is only one item in the survey that is suitable to use as a dependent variable, and the original coding for that variable has three options with the following structure; *Trust in the United Nations: 1= tend to trust, 2= tend not to trust, 3 = don't know*. For the purposes of this research, those who do not express either a negative or a positive opinion about the UN are excluded. Then the variable was recoded as follows; *Trust in the United Nations: 0 = tend not to trust, 1 = tend to trust*. After recoding, the number of cases included in the analysis decreased to $N = 33.273$. With the help of this new binary outcome variable, the results can be deciphered more straightforwardly. Due to the binary nature of the dependent variable, binary logistic

¹Retrieved January 01, 2025, from https://search.gesis.org/research_data/ZA7953

regression analysis was chosen to explore the predictors of a unit change from “0= distrust in the UN”, to “1= trust in the UN”. The percentage of those who tend not to trust the UN is 38,3% and those who tend to trust the UN is 49,8% and the system missing is 12%. This unequivocally demonstrates that among European peoples, trust in the UN is quite higher than distrust.

Independent variables:

To provide brief descriptive statistics of independent variables included in the analysis; there are 13 items designated for important personal values in the dataset. Each personal value is coded as 0 = *not mentioned* and 1 = *mentioned*. Based on the data, 21.1% of respondents mentioned the rule of law as an important personal value. The percentages for the other personal values are as follows; respect for human life 30.8%, human rights 36.6%, individual freedom 24.2 %, democracy 25.7%, peace 43.4%, equality 16.6%, solidarity 17.5 %, tolerance 12.1%, religion 7.4%, self-fulfillment 8 %, respect for other cultures 9.6%, respect for the planet 10.7%

To assess the impact of the extrapolation argument, there are items in the Eurobarometer surveys designed to measure the level of attachment one states to feel towards their own country and the EU. Both of these variables are coded in the same fashion; *Attachment to country/European Union*: 1= *very attached*, 2= *fairly attached*, 3= *not very attached*, 4= *not at all attached*, 5= *don't know*. When the positive answers are taken together, the percentage for those who feel attached to their countries is 92%, and for those who do not feel attached is 8%. For attachment to Europe, positive identification is 52,7%, while not feeling attached to EU 45.2% and don't know is 2,2%. For political interest, there are three summary variables classifying respondents' level of political interest based on their answers to questions regarding whether and how much they discuss local, national, and European political matters. To avoid redundancies in the model, I only included the variables coded as; *political interest index: low*, and *political interest index: strong*. The percentages for these two variables are 15,7% and 20%, respectively.

Continuing with the effects of personal finances and sociotropic factors, four standard Eurobarometer questions are chosen, which are coded as; *financial situation*: 1= *very good*, 2= *rather good*, 3= *rather bad*, 4= *very bad*, 5= *don't know*. The items asking about the national economy's situation are also coded in the same way as financial questions. However, the variables for *expectations about the country economy* and *expectations about the country in general* are coded as; 1=*better*, 2=*worse*, 3=*the same*, and 4= *don't know*. 13% of the respondents express they have a very good financial situation, while 54,3% say rather good, 24,4% rather bad, 6,2 % , very bad, and 2.1% don't know. The numbers for the situation of the national economy are; very good, 6.1%; rather good, 32.6%; rather bad, 41.5%; very bad, 17.8%; and don't know 2%. The percentage of participants expecting the economy of their country will be better is 20,3% and the percentages for the other groups are; worse 40,3%, the same 35,7% and don't know 3,7%. Finally, for expectations about the country in general, the percentages are as follows: better, 21.3%; worse, 36%; the same 39,1% and don't know, 3.5%.

For the analysis of the impact of media on trust in the UN, I chose only three index variables because of data limitations. These variables are; *media use index= very high*, *media use index= very poor*, and *total internet use*; 1= *everyday*, 2= *often*, 3= *never*, and 4= *no internet access*. The percentages for high media use index is 29.2% and 24.6% for low media usage. For the Internet use index, the relevant figures are as follows: everyday, 81.8%; often, 6.9%; never 10%; no Internet access, 1.3%.

Finally, descriptive statistics of demographic variables are as follows; the age variable is scale data based on the actual age the respondents state for the relevant question. The overall age distribution of the total

37,793 participants can be roughly divided into 3 categories; 23% of the participants are between the ages of 15-34. 33% of participants are between the ages of 35-54 and 43% are aged 55 and over. So middle aged and elderly participants constituted the majority of the survey. Educational age is grouped into five categories. The first group comprises those who left school before the age of 16 and their percentage is 11.7%, the second group is 16-19 agers with 41,8%, the third group is 20+ with a percentage of 36,2, the fourth group is those who still study and they are 7,4% and the fifth group is those who have no formal education 0,7%. Regarding the gender variable, 48.6% of participants are male, 51.4% are female and 0.1 non-binary. The occupations of respondents are grouped into 18 classes. These are the corresponding percentages for each category; 4.9 percent of the participants are responsible for ordinary shopping, 7.4% are students, 5.8% are unemployed, 27.4% are retired, 1.1% are farmers, 0.1% are fishermen, 2% are professionals like lawyers etc., 2.9% are shop owners, 1.8% are business proprietors, 3.4% are employed professionals such as doctors, 1.6% are in general management, 7.5% are in middle management, 10% are employed position: at desk, 3.7% are employed position: traveling, 6% are employed position: service job, 1.6% are supervisors, 9.8% are skilled manual workers, 2.9% are unskilled manual workers. The type of community variable is a three-category variable, and those who say they live in rural areas are 34.8%, those living in small towns are 34%, and those living in big cities are 31.1%. Social class variable is a five category variable. 23.5% of respondents define themselves as working class, 15.8% as lower middle class, 50.1% as middle class, 7.8% as upper middle class, 1% as higher class, and the rest are "don't know". The last variable is the left-right ideological scale. This variable is coded as; from 1=left, 10 =right, refusal, and don't know. Most of the participants prefer to stay equidistant to both poles, which is why the percentage of those who choose numbers 5, 6, is 37,4 %, those who are on the left are 26,5% and those who are on the right are 24.9%, and the refusals are 4,7% and don't know are 6.5.

In order to conduct a binary logistic regression analysis, the dependent variable and the above listed independent variables are all included in the same model. Because all independent variables are categorical except for the exact age variable, while running the test, first categories were chosen as indicators. Therefore, for each variable, the first category is the reference group to compare the likelihood of other groups' belonging to the group that tend to trust the UN. The next section presents the results of the analysis.

Results

A binary logistic regression analysis was performed to explore the determinants of trust in the UN. In what follows, Table 1 exhibits the outputs of the analysis. In a binary logistic regression analysis, it is customary to interpret the results as follows; the change in the odds of the outcome variable is associated with a one-unit increase in the predictor variable. Therefore, the odds ratio (OR) of each independent variable signals its impact on the dependent variable by holding all other variables constant in the model. That is, the odds of a change from "0= tend not to trust the UN" to "1= tend to trust the UN" can be interpreted by looking at how far the odds ratio ($\exp(B)$) is from the number 1. The values below 1 indicate a tendency toward belonging to the group that does not trust the UN, and the values above 1 indicate a sign of belonging to the group that trusts the UN.

As shown in the descriptive statistics of the model in Table 1, the model was statistically significant ($p < .001$) with an omnibus test of model coefficients of $\chi^2 = 4343,876$. The independent variables in the model explained approximately 23.2 % (Nagelkerke's R^2) of the variance in the dependent variable. After the system excluded the missing cases, the number of cases in the analysis decreased to $N = 22,959$. Overall, the model correctly predicted 68.8% of the cases, and its R-squared value signifies its moderate explanatory power. The

goodness of fit statistics, Hosmer-Lemeshow test is statistically non-significant ($p > .050$), which indicates the model's overall fit. To appreciate the magnitude of the effect of each predictor variable in the model, the $\exp(b)$ values and the Wald statistics will be taken into consideration while interpreting the results.

Table 1
Results of Binary Logistic Regression Model

Model ^a					
Predictors	b	SE	Exp(b) ^b (Wald)	95% C.I.	
				Lower	Upper
Important personal values					
Rule of law	,198	,044	1,219 (20,695)***	1,119	1,327
Respect human life	,201	,038	1,223 (28,386)***	1,136	1,317
Human rights	,266	,036	1,305 (53,138)***	1,215	1,401
Individual freedom	,180	,040	1,197 (20,144)***	1,107	1,295
Democracy	,351	,040	1,421 (77,370)***	1,314	1,536
Peace	,246	,037	1,278 (44,796)***	1,190	1,374
Equality	,314	,045	1,368 (47,763)***	1,252	1,495
Solidarity	,362	,044	1,437 (68,304)***	1,318	1,566
Tolerance	,238	,049	1,269 (24,037)***	1,154	1,396
Religion	-,006	,064	,994 (,009)	,877	1,127
Self-fulfillment	,216	,056	1,241 (14,842)***	1,112	1,386
Respect for cultures	,108	,052	1,114 (4,294)*	1,006	1,235
Respect for the planet	,372	,051	1,451 (53,137)***	1,313	1,603
Politics					
Political interest strong	-,048	,039	,953 (1,475)	,883	1,030
Political interest low	,124	,043	1,132 (8,444)**	1,041	1,232
Attachment to country (ref: very)			(16,830)**		
Fairly	-,053	,034	,949 (2,437)	,888	1,014
Not very	-,261	,067	,771 (15,283)***	,676	,878
Not at all	-,181	,153	,835 (1,402)	,619	1,126
Don't know	-,331	,430	,718 (,594)	,309	1,667
Attachment to the EU (ref: very)			(977,315)***		
Fairly	-,337	,045	,714 (55,360)***	,654	,780
Not very	-,975	,049	,377 (394,238)***	,342	,415
Not at all	-1,776	,067	,169 (695,479)***	,148	,193
Don't know	-,609	,146	,544 (17,468)***	,408	,723
Economics					
Financial situation (ref: very good)			(183,880)***		
Rather good	-,226	,051	,798 (19,773)***	,722	,881
Rather bad	-,622	,059	,537 (109,509)***	,478	,603
Very bad	-,886	,090	,412 (96,621)***	,345	,492
Don't know	-,359	,126	,698 (8,184)**	,546	,893

Predictors	Model ^a				
	b	SE	Exp(b) ^b (Wald)	95% C.I.	
				Lower	Upper
Situation national economy (ref: very good)			(225,230)***		
Rather good	-,032	,076	,968 (,177)	,834	1,125
Rather bad	-,419	,077	,658 (29,624)***	,565	,765
Very bad	-,738	,086	,478 (74,341)***	,404	,565
Don't know	-,393	,144	,675 (7,479)*	,510	,895
Expectations country in general (ref: better)			(27,398)***		
Worse	-,277	,063	,758 (19,129)***	,669	,858
The same	-,068	,060	,934 (1,310)	,831	1,050
Don't know	-,094	,139	,911 (,452)	,693	1,196
Expectation country economy (ref: better)			(41,976)***		
Worse	-,334	,063	716 (28,029)***	,632	,810
The same	-,121	,062	,886 (3,823)*	,785	1,000
Don't know	,157	,141	1,170 (1,232)	,887	1,543
Media use					
High Media use index	,061	,036	1,063 (2,864)	,990	1,140
Low Media use index	-,096	,041	,908 (5,529)*	,838	,984
Internet use total (ref: everyday)			(25,743)***		
Often	,105	,062	1,111 (2,843)	,983	1,256
Never	,206	,062	1,228 (11,133)**	1,089	1,386
No	,650	,148	1,915 (19,344)*	1,434	2,558
Demographics					
Age Education 5 categories (ref: Up to 15)			(43,240)***		
16-19	,069	,054	1,072 (1,630)	,964	1,192
20+	,200	,059	1,221 (11,319)**	1,087	1,372
Still studying	,466	,114	1,593 (16,573)***	1,273	1,994
No fulltime educ.	,868	,208	2,383 (17,368)***	1,584	3,586
Refusal	,262	,222	1,299 (1,388)	,841	2,008
Don't Know	,068	,152	1,070 (,200)	,795	1,441
Age exact	-,001	,001	,999 (,165)	,997	1,002
Gender (ref: male)			(15,731)***		
Female	,120	,031	1,128 (15,088)***	1,061	1,198
Non-binary	,655	,740	1,926 (,784)	,451	8,217
Occupation (ref: responsible for ordinary shopping)			(52,045)***		
Student	-,184	,104	,832 (3,133)	,678	1,020
Unemployed	-,121	,087	,886 (1,944)	,748	1,050
Retired	-,068	,181	,934 (,140)	,655	1,333

Predictors	Model ^a				
	b	SE	Exp(b) ^b (Wald)	95% C.I.	
				Lower	Upper
Farmer	,305	,756	1,356 (,162)	,308	5,968
Fisherman	-,278	,135	,757 (4,265)*	,582	,986
Professional (lawyer.etc)	-,352	,119	,703 (8,771)**	,557	,888
Owner of a shop	-,396	,131	,673 (9,177)**	,521	,869
Business proprietors	,067	,118	1,069 (,318)	,848	1,347
Employed Professional	-,009	,147	,991(,004)	,744	1,321
General management	,049	,097	1,051 (,262)	,869	1,270
Middle management	,073	,091	1,075 (,640)	,900	1,284
Employed at desk	,010	,108	1,010 (,009)	,818	1,248
Employed traveling	-,076	,096	,927 (,619)	,767	1,120
Service job	-,130	,136	,878 (,915)	,673	1,146
Supervisor	-,171	,091	,843 (3,550)	,706	1,007
Skilled manual worker	-,223	,119	,800 (3,531)	,634	1,010
Unskilled manual worker	-	-	-		
Type of community (ref: Rural area			(,537)		
Small, Middle town	-,020	,036	,981 (,296)	,914	1,052
Large town	-,027	,038	,974 (,492)	,904	1,049
Social class (ref: working class)			(10,536)		
Lower middle	,079	,050	1,082 (2,549)	,982	1,193
Middle	,025	,041	1,025 (,356)	,945	1,111
Upper middle	,173	,070	1,189 (6,153)*	1,037	1,363
Higher	,246	,169	1,279 (2,125)	,919	1,780
Other	,201	,618	1,222 (,106)	,364	4,101
Non	,080	,250	1,083 (,102)	,663	1,768
Refusal	,264	,311	1,302 (,718)	,707	2,396
Don't know	-,045	,187	,956 (,058)	,663	1,378
Left – right scale (ref: 1 Left)			(100,424)***		
2	-,077	,110	,926 (,488)	,746	1,149
3	,004	,091	1,004 (,002)	,840	1,200
4	-,013	,089	,987 (,020)	,829	1,176
5	-,126	,082	,881 (2,380)	,751	1,035
6	-,123	,088	,884 (1,955)	,744	1,051
7	-,039	,089	,962 (,194)	,808	1,144
8	-,120	,095	,887 (1,616)	,737	1,067
9	-,073	,124	,930 (,345)	,729	1,186
10 Right	-,185	,109	,831 (2,895)	,671	1,029
Refusal	-,693	,105	500 (43,237)***	,407	,615
Don't know	-,415	,100	,660 (17,342)***	,543	,803

Predictors	Model ^a			
	b	SE	Exp(b) ^b (Wald)	95% C.I.
				Lower Upper
Constant	1,203	,177	3,330 (46,064)***	
Models summary				
Omnibus Tests of Model Coefficients	p < .001 (Chi-Square χ^2 4343,876)			
Hosmer and Lemeshow	p > .05 (Chi-Square χ^2 13,116)			
Nagelkerke R^2	,232			
-2 Loglikelihood	26978,992			
N	22.959			

*p < .05, **p < .005, ***p < .001

a. Dependent variable: Trust in the UN: 1 = Tend not to trust. 2 = Tend to trust.

b. Wald statistics are indicated in brackets.

First, contrary to many previous studies in the literature, religion as a personal value, respondents' age, strong political interest, type of community, high media use, and left – right scale (except for refusal and don't knows) are not statistically significant ($p > .05$).

For the main hypothesis of this research, when we look at the positive odds ratios of the personal values variable, it is clear that $H1$ holds true, suggesting that personal values are an important predictor of trust in the UN. Looking more closely, important personal values are all statistically significant ($p < .005$, $p < .001$) except religion ($p > .05$). Their positive coefficients (B) indicate an affirmative association with trust in the UN. For the personal value rule of law, the odds ratio, exp(b), is 1,219, implying that those who state rule of law as an important personal value are 1,219 times more likely to trust the UN compared to those who do not. The Wald statistic (20,695) in the parenthesis shows that this variable has a stronger effect on the outcome variable than the ones with a lower Wald statistic. Those who mention that they value democracy are approximately 142% more likely to trust the UN compared to those who do not. Respect for human life, 122%; tolerance, 126%; solidarity, 143%; human rights, 130%; respect for the planet, 145%; equality, 137%; peace, 128%; individual freedom, 120%; self-fulfillment, 124%; respect for cultures, 111% more like to express trust in the UN than those who do not hold those values. The Wald statistics are considerably high for personal values such as democracy (77,370), solidarity (68,304), human rights (53,138), respect for the planet (53,137), equality (47,763), and peace (44,796). These metrics demonstrate that the stated values have more predictive power on the outcome variable than the demographic variables in the model. However, the rest of the personal values such as; respect human life (28,386,) tolerance (24,037), individual freedom (20,144), self-fulfillment (14,842), and respect for cultures (4,294) also have high Wald statistics compared to many other variables in the model.

For the attachment to country variable, the negative coefficient ((B) -,261) indicates an inverse relationship between trust in the UN and not feeling attached to the own country. As can be seen through the exp(b) value (,771) for “not very attached” option, which was the only option statistically significant ($p < .001$) in the attachment to country variable, those who are not very attached to their own countries are less likely to trust the UN compared to those who are very attached. This variable has a lower Wald statistic (15,283) than

most of the personal value variables in the model. Attachment to the EU variable is much stronger than attachment to the country because all the items in this variable are statistically significant ($p < .001$) and the negative coefficients show that the less a person feels attached to the EU, the less likely they are to trust the UN compared to those who feel very attached to the EU. Wald statistics for the items of “Not very attached to the EU” (394,238) and “Not at all attached to the EU” (695,479) in this variable are the highest in the model, indicating the explanatory power of the variable over other variables in the model.

Moving on, the financial situation of a person is also statistically significant ($p < .001$) and compared to the reference group who say their financial situation is very good, those in the group of rather good exp(b) (,798), rather bad exp(b) (,537), very bad (,412), and don’t know exp(b) (,698) are increasingly more likely to distrust the UN, respectively. The high Wald statistics values for the items of this variable indicate the importance of personal finances in forming trust in the international institutions like the UN. Regarding sociotropic variables, compared to those who think that the state of the country's economy is very good, those who think that the country's economy is quite bad (expB; 658) and very bad (expB; 478) tend to trust the UN less. The Wald statistic for those who say the country's economy is very bad is noteworthy. For the variable of expectations about the future of the country's economy, the pessimistic anticipations appear to be conducive of distrust in the UN in comparison to the reference group. Analogously, expecting that things will be worse in the country in general (expB; ,758) is also likely to undermine trust in the UN.

Those with low political interest are 113% more likely to trust the UN than those who are interested in politics. However, the comparatively low Wald statistic (8,444) for this variable casts doubt on its robustness in the model. Similarly, the positive correlation between no internet use (expB; 1,228 / 1,915) and UN trust is also inviting careful evaluation. Low media use has a negative correlation with trust in the UN. Nevertheless, the odds ratio (expB; ,908) of this variable is not far from 1, meaning that the effect is dubious.

For demographic variables, higher education levels are positively correlated with greater trust in the UN. Those who are still studying (expB; 1,593) and those who continue their education until their 20s (expB, 1,221) are more likely to trust the UN. The result for the group with no full-time education can be ignored because the percentage of this group is so miniscule (0,7%) in this large dataset. Among genders, females are more trusting to the UN (expB; 1,128). For occupations, only three were statistically significant ($p < .05$, $p < .005$) and compared to the reference group who are responsible for ordinary shopping, fishermen (expB; ,757), professionals (expB; ,703) and owner of a shop (expB; ,673) are more likely to be in the group distrusting the UN. Those who define themselves as belonging to the upper middle class of the society are 1,189 times more likely to trust the UN than the reference group of the working class. Lastly, the ideological scale is not significant, but those who do not know (expB; ,660) and refuse (expB; ,500) to define themselves in terms of having leftwing values or rightwing values are more likely to distrust the UN.

Discussion

To explore the determinants of trust in the UN among European peoples, I operationalized a binary logistic regression analysis, and the results are quite robust. Except for religion, all the values tested in this research are important predictors of trust in the UN. However, based on their higher exp(B) values and Wald statistics, values such as; human rights, equality, solidarity, and respect for the planet are more robust predictors of trust in the UN than values like the rule of law, respect for human life, peace, self-fulfillment, individual freedom, democracy, tolerance, and respect for other cultures. These results confirm the *H1* of the study. Some of the above values, such as human rights, can be considered pillars of cosmopolitanism, so they are indirectly in line with the findings of Torgler (2008) and Diven and Constantelos (2011). However, the

present findings do not affirm what Torgler (2008) and Delhey and Welzel (2012) found in their research on the influence of religion on trust in international institutions. Unlike my research, democracy is not statistically significant in Arpino and Obydenkova (2019). However, consistent with the findings of the Glocalities survey (Karaca, nd), tolerance toward others and compassion for the planet are positively correlated with trust in the UN.

Contrary to the findings of Torgler (2008) and Diven and Constantelos (2011), in this research, I find a somewhat reverse relationship between political interest and UN trust. Although strong political interest is not statistically significant, low political interest is conducive to UN approval. This discrepancy with the previous literature may be the result of the changing effects of social media and the culture of polarized political awareness that we are witnessing today.

The low media use index has a negative relationship with trust in the UN; on the other hand, compared with those who use the internet every day, those who never use the internet and those who do not have access at all tend to express more trust in the UN. As Schlipphak (2014) points out, heuristics may be at work here. Based on the findings in this research, we can assume that when people are not informed via media about international institutions, they tend to form opinions by following clues from their trusted sources. In addition, as Aslan (2023) found, regions and cities where people live also serve as proxies for knowledge. Notably, on the left-right ideological scale, neither the reference group the leftists nor the rightists were statistically significant. In contrast, those who refuse to identify themselves on a binary classification and the “don’t know” group tend to distrust the UN. When we take into consideration the varied outcomes for this variable in Bjørnskov (2007), Diven and Constantelos (2011), and Arpino and Obydenkova (2019), it is safe to say that both sides of the ideological scale host people who trust the UN for possible different reasons.

Consistent with the findings of Brewer et al. (2004), Diven and Constantelos (2011), Schlipphak, (2014), Dellmuth and Tallberg (2015), the respondents in the survey who express that they are not very attached to their countries tend not to trust the UN, as opposed to the reference group who say that they are very attached to their countries. Likewise, those who mention they are very attached to the EU are more likely to be in the group showing more trust in the UN than those who state lower levels of attachment. Confirming the predictions of Lamprianou and Charalambous (2018) that a positive extrapolation relationship must exist between the approval of a lower-level institution and a higher-level institution.

As evident from the results, the probability of trust in the UN considerably decreases as a person defines his/her current financial situation with anything other than ‘very good’. Hence, those who feel they are not part of the well-to-do group of society express greater distrust in the UN. Exactly the same correlation applies to the other socioeconomic and sociotropic variables, such as; ‘situation of the national economy’, ‘expectations about the economy of the country’, ‘expectations about the country in general’, and ‘expressing to be among the upper middle class of the society’. These findings, with their high level of Wald statistics, show the prominence of economic variables over other variables in the model. Therefore, conclusions of Bjørnskov (2007), Torgler (2008), Algan et al. (2017), Arpino and Obydenkova (2019), Lipps and Schraff (2020) and Kıratlı (2020) are once more validated with the results of this study regarding the impact of material well-being on trust in international institutions, in this case the UN.

For gender, females trust the UN more than males. This may have resulted from UN campaigns designed to salvage women from their disadvantaged positions worldwide. However, the conflicting results for this variable in Torgler (2008) and Arpino and Obydenkova (2019) indicate the need for caution when interpreting its correlation with UN trust. The education variable affirms the findings of previous literature (Torgler,

2008; Diven & Constantelos, 2011; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019). Consequently, the more a person climbs the educational ladder, the more likely they are to trust the UN. Many occupations in the variable are not statistically significant, and those that are significant (fisherman, professionals, owner of a shop) show a negative correlation with trust in the UN compared to the reference group sales representatives. The conflicting results from earlier research (Torgler, 2008; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019) is a good sign of the lack of robustness of this variable. For the age variable, as no significant correlation has been detected, the results for the age variable in this research do not reaffirm the findings of some prior studies (Torgler, 2008) Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019; Kiratli, 2020). Nevertheless, just as my model, Bjørnskov (2007) doesn't find any evidence for the effects of age in his research. Likewise, because the type of community variable is not statistically significant, we cannot infer from this study whether living in rural communities affects trust in the UN. Thus, my results do not support those of Diven and Constantelos (2011) and McKay et Al. (2023).

In conclusion, based on the outcomes discussed above, we can safely posit that economic insecurity is the most robust determinant of distrust in the UN. Education, universal values, and satisfaction with the political system are the most important factors helping to garner trust in the UN. This research reveals that individuals who embrace values such as human rights, equality, solidarity, and respect for the planet have a higher level of trust in the United Nations. Therefore, the UN should demonstrate its sincere commitment to promoting these values worldwide and communicate this effectively to the global public. Moreover, the UN must work closely with both national governments and regional organizations to ensure that all world citizens properly understand and embrace these values. It should also intensify educational efforts aimed at promoting global economic equality and uniting people around common humanitarian principles. Transparent and consistent policies on this issue will, hopefully, increase trust in the UN.

As for the limitations of the study, the fact that participants might have differing views on the concept of trust, and that there is no separate question in the survey addressing this matter, can be considered a limitation of the study. Thus, future studies may address this issue by including an item on the definition of trust in the UN. Moreover, in this study, I did not include any variables to measure ethnicity (Bjørnskov, 2007), marital status (Torgler, 2008), corruption (Torgler, 2008; Arpino & Obydenkova, 2019), or some other variables like UN knowledge, media sources, the experience of being abroad, etc. Thus, in addition to the limitations of geographical representation, the number of variables can be stated as a limitation of this study. In future studies, the findings of this research can be tested for other geographies such as; Russia, Africa, South America, North America, and Asia.



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