

Trust and Distrust in Governance: Exploring the Impact of Social and Political Dynamics

International Conference organised by the EU-funded *EnTrust* project

September 28-29, 2023 – University of Siena, Italy

– CONFERENCE PROGRAMME –

September 28, Thursday

08:30 - 09:00 | Registration

09:00 – 09:30 | Welcome / Opening Remarks

09:30 – 11:00 | Paper Presentations: Parallel Session (1 & 2)

Session One: The Realm of Bureaucracy, Local Institutions and the Creation of Dis/Trust

- 1) Kollmann, Laura: “Exploring the role of dis/trust for the work of employees in the Public Employment Service in Sweden and Germany”
- 2) Theiss, Maria; Zschache, Ulrike: “How (dis)trusting the clients can matter. Insights from social assistance”
- 3) Cristea, Mioara: “Predictors of trust in local authorities during a crisis: a representative study on Romanian citizens”

Session Two: The European Union as a Source and Target of Trust and Distrust

- 1) Donat, Elisabeth; Lenhart, Simon: “Closeness to citizens as a way to increase political trust? An analysis in EUs multilevel system”
- 2) Henriques, João; Nunes, Nuno; Botelho, Maria do Carmo: “Social Cohesion in the European Union: the role of trust in institutions and its factors”
- 3) Ciornei, Irina; Maman, Libby: “Can Policy Framing Repair Trust in the EU? Evidence from a Survey Experiment in Spain”

15:30 – 16:00 | Coffee Break

16:00 – 17:30 | Paper Presentations: Parallel Session (7 & 8)

Session Seven: Trust in Transition: Lifespan Dynamics

- 1) Đorđević Ana et al.: “Constructing Interpersonal and Political Trust Across Life Span: Emotional and Rational Dimension”
- 2) Masling, Anna; Möbert, Anne: “Development of a questionnaire to measure trust and distrust in institutions”
- 3) Šerek, Jan et al.: “How the Actions of Authorities Affect Their Perceived Legitimacy: A Developmental Perspective”

Session Eight: Navigating Trust and Distrust in the Era of the COVID-19 Pandemic

- 1) Loukakis, Angelos: “Contestation about covid management in Greece: Looking for unusual suspects”
- 2) Shariati, Shamsoddin: “Building and Breaking Trust in Government during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Comparative Analysis of Trust and Distrust Dynamics in Europe”
- 3) Demertzis, Nicolas; Yfanti, Aggeliki: “The Janus face of trust and the pandemic”

17:30 – 18:30 | **Keynote** (Virtual Presentation)

by Pippa Norris (Harvard University):
“Trust in Government Worldwide: The role of information environments and cognitive skills”

19:30 | **Joint Dinner** | Natural History Museum - Fisiocritici Accademy

September 29, Friday

09:00 – 10:00 | **Keynote**

by Tereza Capelos (University of Birmingham):
“Hot Emotionality and the Fracture of Trust in the Era of Grievance Politics”

10:00 – 10:30 | **Coffee Break**

- 3) Brus, Anne; Sand Madsen, Frederik; Hjulmand Wiberg, Marie: “Trust in Governance. An age variable Perspective on Children and Young People’s Lived Citizenship in Denmark during the Pandemic”

Trust in governance plays an important role in a stable and cooperative democracy as well as distrust to politicians and institutions is a fundamental part of democracy progress (Lahusen ?). But what happens with children and young people’s trust in government when politicians and institution representatives are forced to take immediately action on a crisis that have a radical intervention for all children and young people, for example online teaching, wearing masks, testing, and vaccination. In this paper, we will put a spotlight on how the age-group of 11/12-, 14/15-, and 18/19-years old construct their meanings of trust to the actors that were responsible for these radical changes. Are there any age differences in the construction of trust and to the sources of trust during the time of crisis?

15:30 – 16:00 | Coffee Break

16:00 – 17:30 | Paper Presentations: Parallel Session (7 & 8)

Session Seven: Trust in Transition: Lifespan Dynamics

- 1) Đorđević Ana et al.: “Constructing Interpersonal and Political Trust Across Life Span: Emotional and Rational Dimension”

Trust is a precondition of functional relationships and cohesive societies. Various studies point out the significance of the interaction between cognitive and affective dimensions in attempts to understand interpersonal and political trust. Further, the literature suggests that there is a leap between interpersonal and political trust, since the former is more direct, but also that the two are interlinked. However, the developmental dynamic between the emotional and the rational dimension in constructing interpersonal and political trust remains understudied. Additionally, most psychological research on determinants, correlates, and dimensions of trust is quantitative and neglects the substantive importance of social context in its development. The current research aims to bridge these gaps by providing in-depth insight into the processes of construction of interpersonal and political trust among different age groups and across three European countries. The sample, recruited via purposive and snowball sampling, consisted of a total of 119 participants (F=60) from four age groups (11-12; 14-15; 18-19; 30+) from Italy, the Czech Republic, and Serbia. A total of 24 focus groups (two per age group, eight per country) were conducted online, providing qualitative data on how participants construct their trust in interpersonal relationships and in the government. The results of the thematic analyses conducted separately for all countries expose two independent dimensions of trust building: emotional and rational. Furthermore, it shows that interpersonal trust is built primarily on the emotional basis (closeness, care, reciprocity, familiarity, sharing), while political trust is mostly built on the rational one (the assessment of knowledge, competence, and expertise of the authorities). However, the two are interlinked and can have a spillover effect so that when, e.g., a public official represents a familiar figure, the sense of familiarity, despite its centrality for interpersonal trust, can incite political trust. The findings will be discussed considering the differences between age groups and social contexts of the three countries.

- 2) Masling, Anna; Möbert, Anne: “Development of a questionnaire to measure trust and distrust in institutions”

In times of increasing change and uncertainty at the national and global level, the issue of trust and distrust in authority is becoming increasingly important. However, up to now, there are few scientific instruments