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**Chapter 7.**

**POLITICAL CULTURE AND THE VOTING FUNCTION AT TIMES OF DEMOCRACY  
 CHANGE**

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Many sources are telling us that democracy is once again in a state of *crisis*, that is, as the etymology of the word properly reminds us, in a state of change. According to a vast body of literature, spanning more than three decades by now, the heart of the crisis lays on representations that citizens have of the central institutions of a democracy. What they expect from them, what they feel about them, whether they trust them. Among them, the electoral connection seems to be the most in crisis, challenged by new value orientations of young generations, increasing populist stances in the political offer and dropping levels of confidence in political and non-political institutions.

This paper deals with three questions that regard the relation between the change of political culture and the voting function. Is the effect of partisanship on party choice weaker in countries where the “values’ silent revolution” made large inroads within the electorate? When populist stances grow in the market of political ideas, does the voting calculus change its contour? And do voters’ expectations that public institutions are trustworthy alter the way individual make up their mind when they choose who to vote for or whether to turnout at elections? All these questions can be summarized into a single question: how do cross-national differences in terms of collective patterns of *political culture* mould the working of individual calculus of voting?

Questions like this are not entirely novel in literature. In fact, a large body of studies have been trying to link cultural factors, and the way they have been changing, to politics. Their questions, however, tend to focus on whether or not a specific cultural attitude or value drives individuals’ choice of party A against party B, or on the extent to which clusters of deep-rooted cultural predispositions determine attitudes towards a political system. In this chapter, we look at the relationship between culture and politics in a different perspective. We are interested in understanding if the contour of the

individual voting calculus changes because cultural patterns or ideological appeals are differently salient across nations (and over time). Our concern, in other words, relates to whether political culture has enough power to alter the *generic* effect on voting of individual determinants.

This chapter intends to accomplish the following. Firstly, we explain where our notion of political culture originates by briefly reviewing what we know from existing studies on how political culture affects political attitudes and behaviours. Secondly, we discuss the reasons why, in addition to this, we should also expect that aspects of a country's political culture are able to *moderate* the voting individual calculus, making more (or less) salient the effects of some individual determinants. Then, measurement issues of our aggregate cultural orientations enter in the picture. Finally, results of our empirical analyses are presented and discussed.

### **In search of a viable approach to the contextual effects of political culture on the voting function**

*Political Culture* is one of the most popular and at the same time most problematic notions in political science. Part of the problem is represented by the question of who comes first in the relation between the noun (*culture*) and the adjective (*political*). Almond and Verba's (1963: 12) classical definition of political culture clearly refers to "*specifically* political orientations – attitudes towards the role of the political system and its various parts, and attitudes towards the self in the system". Nevertheless, others scholars think that also broader cultural outlooks (i.e. not specifically oriented to politics) may affect evaluations of political objects (Inglehart, 1988, 2000; Armigeon, 2000). Choosing among different *conceptual emphases* is not trivial since it has obvious consequences on the selection of the concept's empirical indicators (Almond and Verba 1963; Inglehart 1988; Coleman 1990; Putnam 1993; Putnam 1994; Inglehart and Welzel 2003; Deth, Montero, and Westholm 2007). Moreover, as we see below, emphasis on the noun (*culture*) against the adjective (*political*) may conceal deeply seated disagreements on what comes first in the causal chain: cultural orientations or political factors.

Other difficulties stem out from the *scope* of the notion itself. The list of components of a political culture proposed by the Almond and Verba's definition is for instance very long, and it taps different analytical dimensions (1963: 14-17). It includes beliefs, emotions and evaluations individuals may have of specific roles of political structure, of incumbents, of particular public policy decisions, and of their role in the system. In addition, these attitudes may regard both the input and the output side of any political system.

Finally, scholars tend also to disagree about the *mechanisms* through which cultural factors have an effect on human agency. As an example, students like Banfield (1958, *The moral basis of a backward society*, New York, Free Press) and Putnam (1993, *Making Democracy work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*, Princeton, Princeton University Press) tend to conceive societal cultural traits as highly coherent, highly resistant to change, and in which individuals are socialized. Because of it, they believe that cultural traits of a polity have to be conceived as internalized values, habits of hearth that severely limit the contingencies of individual agency<sup>1</sup>. But for others scholars the

mechanisms linking societal cultural traits to the individual agency are quite different. As an example, the economic historian Greif (1994: 915) thinks that “cultural beliefs (are) rational cultural beliefs that capture individuals' expectations with respect to actions that others will take in various contingencies”. Informal and formal institutions, such as social habit, reputation-based systems of coordination, contracts or bureaucratic rule, reinforce expectations people may have on others' behaviours through incentives, making action coordination possible<sup>2</sup>. This point of view does not see political culture as an internalized cluster of cultural factors that has become a driving force and that limit severely behavioural contingencies. Political culture is rather conceived as a useful cognitive device that frame the individual decisional calculus in face of a changing environment.

Given the multidimensionality of the notion of political culture, it may not be a surprise that there is no encompassing general theory of how cultural factors relate to politics. In fact, it is better to think of political culture as a theoretical framework from which one may extract different middle range propositions regarding the consequences of subjective orientations towards politics. We may then cluster these propositions in two broad families of propositions, internally divided as to the origin of cultural impact on political attitudes and behaviour.

The first family is interested in assessing the extent to which cultural orientations such as values, languages, religiosities, and feelings of belonging to status group or to social class are the antecedents of opinions on policy issues, on political participation modes and, finally, on party preference. Religiosity was for instance often credited to be a voting predictor for Christian Democratic parties, in the same way that minority languages were associated to vote for subnational parties, and voting for Socialist parties could be rooted in working class subcultures (e.g. Rokkan and Lipset, 1967). In the same vein, over the past decades several analyses were dedicated to the political consequences of the “cultural shift” occurred since the 1970s (Inglehart 1971; 1990; Dalton, 1987; Kaase and Newton, 1995; Dalton and Watterberg, 2000). Yet, whereas Rokkan and Lipset (1967) suggest cultural orientations have an effect on party choice to the extent to which they are activated in past conflicts, or historical critical junctures, Inglehart (1971; 1990) seems to suggest that impact of value change engendered by social change has a direct impact on the way people think and feel about politics.

The second set of propositions regards the cultural basis of support for a regime, and in particular of support for a democracy. According to Lipset (1981: 64), a stable democracy depends “not only on the economic development but also upon the *effectiveness* and *legitimacy* of its political system” (Italic ours). On the one hand, Lipset defines effectiveness as the “actual performance, the extent to which the system satisfies the basic functions of government”. However, he also adds: “as most of the population and such powerful groups within it...*see* them” (Italic ours). On the other hand, “legitimacy involves ...the *belief* that existing political institutions are the most *appropriate* for the society”. In other words, effectiveness as well legitimacy of a political system are always assessed also through the lenses of some cultural orientations.

A large debate exists on sources of these cultural orientations. No one disagrees that interpersonal trust, social capital and institutional confidence are the cultural pillars of the democratic legitimacy. Many disagree, however, on where they come from. Putnam (1993) suggests that institutional performance is closely linked to the level of social capital, which is an enduring cultural legacy that has become an internalized predisposition favourable to cooperation. Individual experience of the actual institutional performance has, then, a limited impact. Rothstein and Stolle (2009) have a different view of the causal mechanism connecting institutional experience to cooperative predispositions. For them, social capital and interpersonal trust depends on “good government institutions” perceived as trustworthy. Moreover, “good government institutions” are not to be equated with democracy. Instead, they are output institutions characterized by a fair or impartial exercise of authority. Thus, output and input institutions can promote political legitimacy equally (Rothstein, 2009). Montero, van Deth and Zmerly (200X) bring the discussion at the individual level showing new evidence according to which confidence towards institutions seems to foster social trust and not vice versa.

In front of this background, this chapter will focus on a third and different kind of proposition, although this largely benefits from the two broad families of political orientations studies and from previous theoretical framework. First of all, as to the conceptual premise, we share the idea that if cultural clusters have an impact on electoral behaviour this is not because voters internalize them through socialization process. Rather, it is because societal cultural clusters, often crystalized in political as well non-political institutions, foster elite and mass “incentives” and expectations about the appropriate voting calculus, diminishing or amplifying the salience of individual determinants of party choice and turnout. This approach allows us to consider as political culture also populist stances some parties tend to supply in the market of ideas. Secondly, as to the subject, we are interested neither in the individual antecedents of the voting choice nor in examining the cultural basis of democratic legitimacy. We are concerned in assessing the *cross level generic effects* of political culture on voting calculus over an extended number of nations and years. We are in particular interested in effects on the contour of the voting calculus of: a) the “cultural shift” occurred since the 1970s on, once dubbed by Inglehart (1970, 1990) as a “silent revolution”; b) the increase of populist party stances; c) and shared expectations that “good government” institutions are trustworthy.

### 1. *The “cultural shift”*

At the beginning of the 1970s Inglehart argued that a “silent revolution” was taking place. Younger generations appeared to have different values priorities than older ones, more oriented towards self – expression than to material acquisition. Inglehart disputed that in many countries an overall cultural shift was taking place through generational replacement. Twenty-five years later, Scarbrough argued: “indisputably, across much of Western Europe, value orientations are shifting” (1995: 61). In 2008, Inglehart once again claimed that “a massive body of evidence demonstrates that an intergenerational

shift from materialist to post-materialist has been occurring” (2008: 131). According to several studies, the “cultural shift” is the outcome of a more general process of social and political modernization, whose engine was the increase of the educational level among the mass public of all modern European societies. Because of that, citizens became more oriented to values that seem to encourage less deferential attitudes, more political sophistication and less inclination to accept party cues or cues coming from social groups they belong to. Norris has labelled them “critical citizens” (2000).

Numerous studies have shown that the cultural shift has also provoked new lines of political divisions. New issues not connected to those traditional of the left-right ideology have emerged in many countries. After a while, however, these issues have been absorbed by the traditional ideological alignments, whose meaning have become multidimensional or plural (Kitchelt and Helleman, *Comparative Political studies*, 23 1990; Knutsen, 1995 *European Journal of Political research*, vol 28, 1; for the former communist countries see Kitchelt, Mansfeldova, Markowski and Toka, 1999). According to Inglehart (1990) and Inglehart and Klingeman (1995) however, new politics issues are still crosscutting traditional party boundaries. In addition, value changes had also consequences on political participation modes. The psychological links between parties and mass public have been declining over the decades, while citizens have found new ways of access and influence of political decisions (Dalton and Watterberg, 2000 - *Parties without Partisans*, OUP).

Studies on the consequence of the cultural shift on mass politics are mainly concerned about the extent to which people with new value priorities, or cognitively sophisticated a) prefer new modes of political participation, or b) new constellations of issues, different from those typical of the old social structural cleavages, and/or c) they tend to vote for parties mobilizing these issues. The *cross level effects* on the individual voting and turnout function, stemming from a cultural environment where new political cultural attitudes are prevailing, tend to be ignored. Yet, based on the implicit expectations of previous studies findings on the correlates and consequences of the cultural change, we can posit two hypotheses related to party choice:

- 1.1 Since post-materialist values are more widespread among sophisticated voters, one could expect that in countries where *post-materialist values* are more pervasive:
  - 1.1a. the effects of *partisanship* on *vote choice* is weaker or not significant
  - 1.1b. while the effect of *ideological proximity* on *vote choice* is higher.
- 1.2 Following the argument that left-right has absorbed over time the new dimensions of conflict, we posit that post-materialist values should to be de-aligned in earlier periods of modernization with the left-right, and more positively aligned later on. If so, one could expect that at the onset of social change, a cultural frame dominated by *post-materialist values* trims the effect of *ideological proximity* on *party choice*, while later on it increases that.

## 2. Populism

Nowadays populism has become a quintessential evil “spirit”, which any responsible leader has to try and lock it back in the “bottle” from which it escaped. Yet, identifying the “spirit” and the “bottle” proves not to be an easy task. To begin with, even if everybody seems to agree that populism is not a coherent beliefs system, how populism can positively be defined is not clear. Is it a quasi-ideology? An arguing style? Or what else? Moreover, can voters be labelled as “populist” in the same way we can claim that they are “socialist” or “rightist” or “politically disaffected” or “cognitively sophisticated”? If populism is a leaders’ arguing style, which specific rhetorical content has to be taken into account?

To make things more complicated, according to many scholars contemporary populism is not explicitly in contrast with some democratic principles (Canovan 1981, 1999; Taggart, 2000; Taguieff, 2002). Regardless of its changeable nature that discourages any exhaustive definition of the phenomenon, it is safe to claim that the core of almost all definitions of contemporary populism combines a) an appeal to “the people” together with b) deprecating claims against the elite (Meny and Surel, 2002). Appeal and critical claims are not in themselves against any democratic principle. The problem is in the nuances: the appeal to “the people” can be framed in different ways according to the definition attributed to “the people” (Meny and Surel, *Par le people, Pour le people*, Paris, Libraire Arthème Fayard, 2000). Yet, all definitions of populism represent “the people” as a homogenous community whose internal divisions are an artefact that deliberately conceals the “real” divide, which pits “the people” against the elite.

Although populism may not be contrary to the democratic principle in itself, certainly it represent the annihilation of the liberal component of modern democratic credo as well as of the pluralist account of how modern democracy work. The idea that conflict is inherent to society, and authoritative decisions should be made through compromises between different opinions, values and interests is a liberal legacy more than a democratic principle in itself (Riker, 1982). Besides, Taguieff (2002) is right when he says that populism, contrasting elite to masses, is a negative reaction to representative democracy. As Meny (1997) has convincingly shown, selection by vote always implies an aristocratic element, whereas selection at random is intrinsically democratic.

If it is hard to define what populism is, it is even harder to agree why populism “escaped from the bottle”. In the authoritative book by Meny and Surel (2002), we may find a few relevant considerations at this regard. According to these authors, populism may be connected to the malaise of many contemporary democracies, which originates from the gap between the demand to enlarge access to political decisions beyond the electoral channel and the constitutional framework, which is still a relevant ruling body. In a nutshell, more democracy could be the therapy to tame populism. Mair (2002) claims that populism is a sweeping phenomenon, which takes on different shapes. However, both the *hard* and *mild* version of populism came from the same “bottle”, namely the erosion of political parties’ role in linking the electoral channel and the constitutional one. At its core, populism

is the outcome of the crisis of party democracy. Finally, also Kitschelt (2002) suggests that populism could be linked to the malaise that many democracies are experiencing. Yet, sources of this syndrome are not only the unreformed constitutional framework, but quite a specific *modus operandi* of the output institutions, together with their colonisation by parties and political elites. In short, the fact that power, although legally based, is exercised in unfair ways.

It is utterly hard in this context to extract a set of expectations on how populist claims, understood as characteristics of a specific party in an election or of the entire national party competition in an election, may alter the skyline of the voting function, making more salient the effects of one determinant against another. Yet, if we accept the idea that populist claims are targeting the pluralistic component of the liberal democracy, then we should also think that populist claims erode the notion of “being part of”, which can be thought of as the core of democratic partisanship. If so, two interconnected hypotheses may be the following:

- 2.1 *Leadership* effects are greater on *party choice* in countries with salient *populist claims*
- 2.2 whereas *partisanship* effects on *party choice* are smaller.

### 3. *The perception of trustworthiness of “good government” institutions*

There is a growing evidence that political institutions, primarily electoral systems but also governmental institutions, mould the way individuals make their party choice. We posit that also *non-political* institutions may matter. At the onset, this proposition may look as much counter-intuitive as inappropriate. Why non-political institutions should be able to condition the voting function? And why this question should stay in a chapter devoted to political culture?

In the case of *political* institutions, the causal mechanism is straightforward. They provide incentives that make salient in the decision-making process some considerations instead of others. Electoral system based on between candidates competition tend to make candidates image prominent. Presidential institutions increase the effect of leadership on the vote choice, and so on so forth. Seen from this perspective, it may seem quite strange to theorize that *non-political* institutions might have a similar role. Yet, we argue that also *non-political* institutions might influence the voting calculus, albeit in a different way than the political ones. While political institutions provide incentives that directly impact the voting choice, non-political institutions may interact with the process of electoral connection, and then indirectly influence the way individuals make up their mind in that context. The point we want to underline is that the influence of non-political or output institutions on the voting function via the characteristic of the electoral connection is often understated.

Let us consider for instance the current debate on electoral integrity. According to Pippa Norris (2013) the integrity of the electoral process might be undermined, also in consolidated democracies, by administrative mal-practices, lack of administrative capacity, human errors or limitation of minority rights. This threat may have indeed consequences on the way people actually make up their turnout and voting decisions (Birch, 2008). The point that should be underlined is that

this lack of election integrity limits or violates the political equality principle (Dahl, *On Political Equality*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2006). As a general consequence, it severely undermines consensus that voters might express towards the legitimacy of the body politic.

This approach clearly focus on election integrity from the *input* side of the political system. Yet, the fairness of the electoral process might be perceived at risk also by looking from the opposite direction, from the *output* side of the political system. By definition, elections have always a *winner* who presumably wants to foster his own values and interests, and a *loser* who worries about his values and interests. Winners, however, might succeed in penetrating, colonizing, or corrupting state institutions. In that case, the principle of impartiality of “good government” institutions is at risk (Rothstein and Teorell, 2008; Rothstein 2013). This means it is a source of political legitimacy, different from the one based on the political equality principle, that is at risk. It is not consensus for democratic values that is at risk. It may rather be at risk the consensus on the way institutional power should be exercised. And the two types of consensus, albeit linked, they are not closely correlated.

The problem of a potential collision between electoral processes and the way *output* institutions work is far to be novel. Almond and Verba (1963), in almost neglected pages, claimed that “civic competence, which is a product of democratic participation, might have spill over effects on what they call subject or *legal competence*. One spill over effect is such when citizens, because they are competent, exert pressure upon the bureaucrats to follow the administrative rules” (172, italic ours). But a second one is such when political competent citizens exert pressure on the bureaucrats “not to compel them to follow the bureaucratic rules, but to compel them to make a particular decision in favour of a particular individual or group” (*ibidem*). Rothstein (2013) reinstates the point when he claims that “good government” has not be equated to democracy, since democracy may sometimes be a threat for good government institutions.

Expectations on the *modus operandi* of output institutions may be linked with experiences individuals have in their bureaucratic encounters. Yet, it is likely that these may have become consolidated habits of thinking. Maybe not a habit of the hearth, but a cultural prejudice according to which it is likely to expect impartiality violations provoked by the electoral outcome. At the end, those expectations are central components of cultural frames that voters use to make sense and evaluate their political as well as non-political institutions, and perceive their trustworthiness.

Those expectations have a number of important consequences. Perceptions that bureaucratic institutions are *fair* have important effects on compliance towards the law (Tyler, 1990) and on institutional confidence (Miller and Listhaugh, 2000). Institutional confidence may foster social trust and social capital, which are considered by many as a sort of cultural prerequisite of vibrant electoral democracy (Inglehart, 1988, Putnam, *Bowling alone*, 2000, Touchstone book, New York; Dahl, *On Democracy*, Yale, Yale University Press, 1998). A growing literature shows the outcome of elections has impact on satisfaction for democracy, and this effect tends to be larger when alternation in power is limited (Anderson et al, 2006), whereas inclusive political institutions tend to decrease the gap of

satisfaction (*ibidem*). Yet, Dahlber and Holmberg (2013) add an important detail to the picture. Output institution whose *modus operandi* is fair tend to increase satisfaction towards democracy.

All in all, we think that the expectations voters have on the trustworthiness of public institutions may affect also the way voters are making their voting calculus. On the one hand, literature on corruption mostly focus on the effects of corruption exposure on punishment of the incumbent or on consequences on electoral support. A few studies (Burracu, 2012) show that corruption exposure alters indeed the voting calculus, depressing the effect of partisanship and increasing the effects of leadership on vote choice. On the other hand, studies on the consequence of clientelism or nepotism on voting behaviour are mainly at the aggregate level. They suggest, however, the importance of personal vote in the voting function. In a nutshell, our argument is that the way the electoral process interact with output institutions may affect the *modus operandi* of the latter, and this *modus operandi* backfires on the voting function. Intervening variables in this process are the cultural expectations voters have developed based on their bureaucratic encounters with output intuitions.

We have here three hypotheses on this regard:

3.1 A country whose institutions are perceived to be *trustworthy* is a country where partisan competition is “contained in the electoral connection”, and then it is also likely that its generic effects are high. In other words, *partisanship* matters more on *vote choice*.

3.2 We could also theorize that a country with high level of institutional confidence is also a country in which forecasting of being a loser is less of a problem, and there is a smaller gap between winners and losers as to the *partisanship* effect on *vote choice*.

3.3 Since a country whose institutions are perceived as trustworthy may also be a country in which *social capital* is large, this may increase the effect of *partisanship* on *turnout*.

[for the purpose of this presentation Hypothesis 3.2 and 3.3 will be not tested]

### **Measurement of Cultural shift, Populism and Institutional confidence (and Social Capital)**

In our research strategy, dimensions of political culture are considered as context variables that explain variations in the relations between lower (micro) level variables. Two different types of context variables could be collected: *direct* measures or *derived* measures variables. While direct measures would be ideal, it is difficult to find measures of political culture directly at the macro level. Thus, the dimensions of political culture we took into account are all individual level indicators that have been aggregated at the election level (country/year).

Indicators of “cultural shift” are based on the “classical” Inglehart questions on values priorities and come from the Eurobarometer series from early 1970 to 2010, the ISSP for the late 1990s and EVS for countries that are not member of the EU in early periods. Responses to the four questions were clustered in three types of attitudes (post materialism, materialism and mixed).

Populism was measured through automated text analysis of party manifestos of the main political parties of a specific election. Taking inspiration on a study by Rooduijn & Pauwels (2011) published on Western European Politics, we replicated their populism measurement on a much wider scale. Using a dictionary-approach, they constructed a dictionary of populism including 15 to 20 words, and then looked for the proportion of populist words used in several manifestos. Their research was an over-time study and included four countries: the Netherlands, Germany, Italy and the UK. With the help of country experts, we first extended the translation of the dictionary to 26 languages, accounting for 24 different countries, and we slightly refined the list of words by looking at “keywords in context”. Then, using an *ad hoc* programme written in *Python*, we run the populist dictionary on all available machine-readable party manifesto (either .txt or .pdf). As Rooduijn & Pauwels, in order to construct a proportion of populism per party per election (country/year), we counted the number of populist words and divided them by the number of total words of the document. We then moved a step forward from the original study and constructed an election-measure of populism by taking the mean of the populism scores of all parties of a specific election. Since the available machine-readable party manifesto that could be used for this analysis were not always complete (i.e. not all manifestos of the relevant parties of a specific election were available), we constructed a weight. We divided the number of parties available for our analysis by the number of relevant parties in a specific election as defined by the Comparative Manifesto Project. Then, we multiply this weight by the election-measure of populism. This would result in a multiplication by 1 if the number of party manifestos used coincides with the number of party manifesto used by the CMP. If instead the number of party manifestos available was lower than the one used by CMP, the election-measure is multiplied by a number lower than 1, to reduce its value and to avoid overestimate incomplete data.

Institutional confidence measurement was based on EB survey from 1997 to 2010. Two sets of confidence indicators of democracy view were considered. The first set consists in opinions about such output institutions as armed forces, police, justice system, civil service. The second set relates to opinions about input institutions such as parliament, government and parties. In addition, we used data from the European Values Study (EVS) to study social capital. We considered the following variables horizontal trust and indicators of social participation. Generalized trust is measured as agreement with statement that most people can be trusted. Indicators of social participation are variables related to membership to various organizations, such as welfare, religious, local community actions, human rights, youth work and voluntary health organizations<sup>3</sup>.

Before aggregating the measurements of institutional confidence and social capital at the individual level, we tested cross-countries and time equivalence of the original EVS variables using Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis. In the validation procedure, confirmatory factor analysis models were compared across 78 groups defined by elections (countries by time). Because of the complexity of calculations, the measurement equivalence for the two dimensions was tested separately. In particular, we tested for scalar, metric and configural invariance. *Configural* invariance

implies that the measurement model holds across country/time but that measures comparison is still not meaningful; *metric* invariance implies that *configural* invariance holds and that comparison of relationships between unstandardized measures becomes meaningful; *scalar invariance* implies that metric invariance holds and it becomes meaningful to compare means measures (Meredith, 1993; Davidov, Schmidt and Billiet, 2011). Results of equivalence tests are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Cross-country equivalence test over time (EVS waves 1-4)**

	Metric	Scalar
	RMSEA 0.03	RMSEA 0.05
Social Capital	CFI 0.96	CFI 0.84
	TLI 0.92	TLI 0.82
Confidence in Institutions	RMSEA 0.15	RMSEA 0.19
	CFI 0.80	CFI 0.55
	TLI 0.79	TLI 0.67

According to convention rules of measurement model acceptance used in the literature (RMSEA <0.05, CFI>0.9 and TFI>0.9), results are promising, although not entirely satisfactory. We found that social capital items are invariant at scalar level across the three EVS waves across countries. For institutional confidence, instead, we did not find measurement invariance neither at metric nor scalar level. We succeeded, however, to demonstrate that there is indeed a scalar invariance of the institutional confidence across the TEV Countries for the fourth EVS wave (See Poletti and Kotnarowski, 2013). Moreover, Segatti (2007), using Mokken scale analysis on EES, EVS and EB data, has been able to demonstrate that in the 2000s confidence items were tapping a single latent factors that might be considered a scale. On those ground we are optimistic that we will find at least *partial scalar* invariance for institutional confidence items over time and across countries [these results should be considered as work in progress].

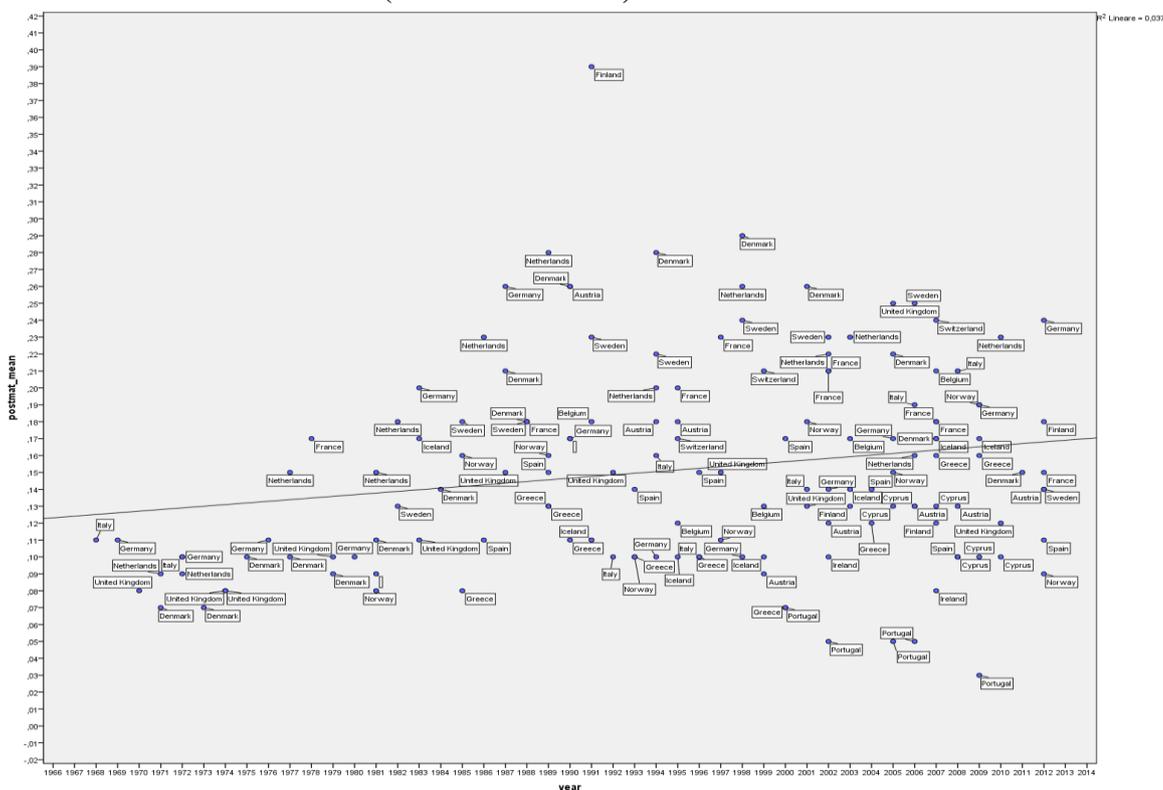
Given that, only for the purpose of this presentation, we *assume* that all our three conceptual dimensions of political culture are error free for the three EVS waves. In the case of indices of values priorities, institutional confidence and social capital, we aggregate them from the individual to the macro level. In order to that, original items are firstly rescaled, in a way that all variables had a range between 0 and 1, where higher values mean higher levels of a given dimension of political culture. Then, for each rescaled indicator we calculate its mean value at the election level (country/year). As a last step, for each election we add the mean values of the indicators of a given dimension of political culture and divide the obtained sum by the number of indicators used for a given dimension. In other

words, we calculate the mean of the mean values of the indicators of a given dimension of political culture.

### Descriptive Analysis

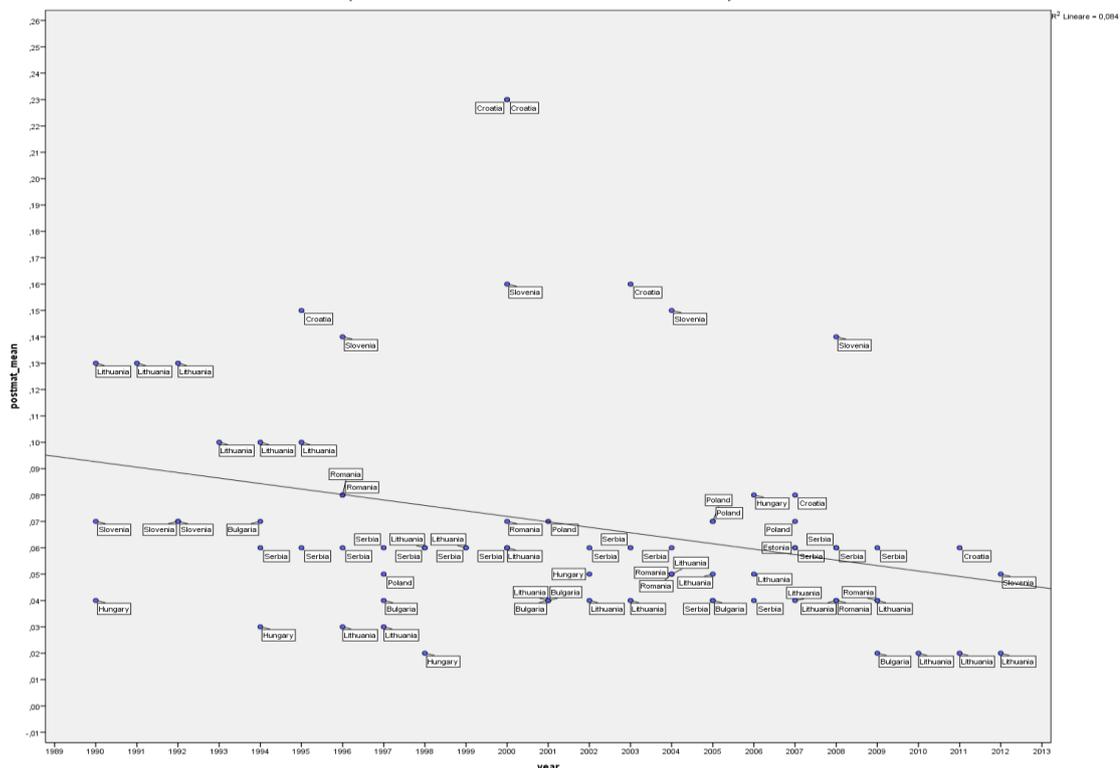
We present here some descriptive data on our macro indicators of political culture. Figures 1.1 and 1.2 show the trend of different values priorities in European countries, distinguishing between Western and Eastern or Former Communist countries. Figure 1.1 shows that post-materialism increase over time in Western countries, while Figure 1.2 shows it decreases over time in Eastern countries.

**Figure 1.1. Post-materialism over time (Western countries)**



Source: EB, EVS, WVS, ISSP data

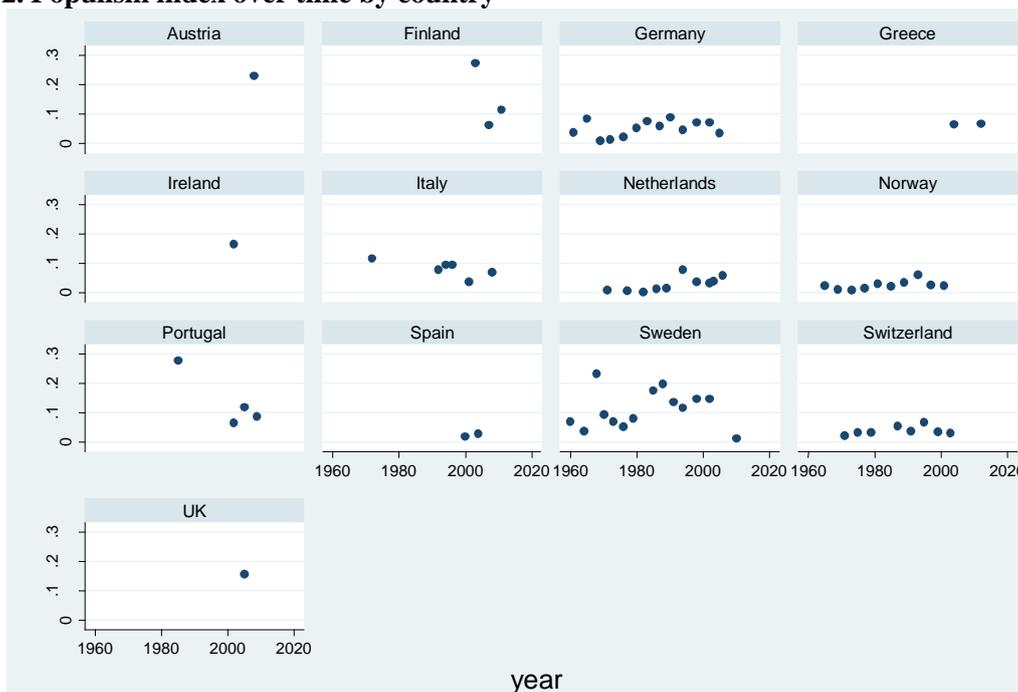
**Fig. 1.2 Post-materialism over time (Former Communist countries)**



Source: EB, EVS, WVS, ISSP data

Figure 2 shows the trend over time of our election-level index of populism in political party manifestos. We can see that for countries in which we have more than one point in time, populism seems to fluctuate up and down over the years. [The amount of populist data that we can use for this presentation is limited by the availability of elections data at the individual level]

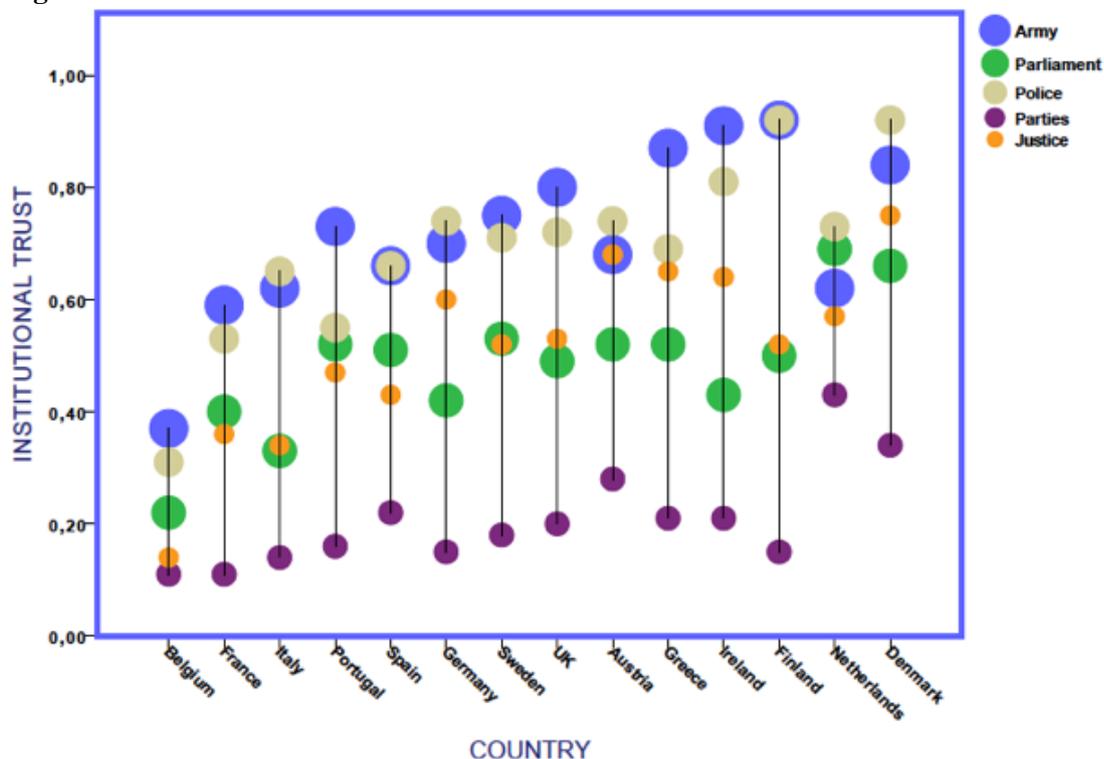
**Figure 2. Populism index over time by country**



Source: Automated Analysis of Party Manifesto

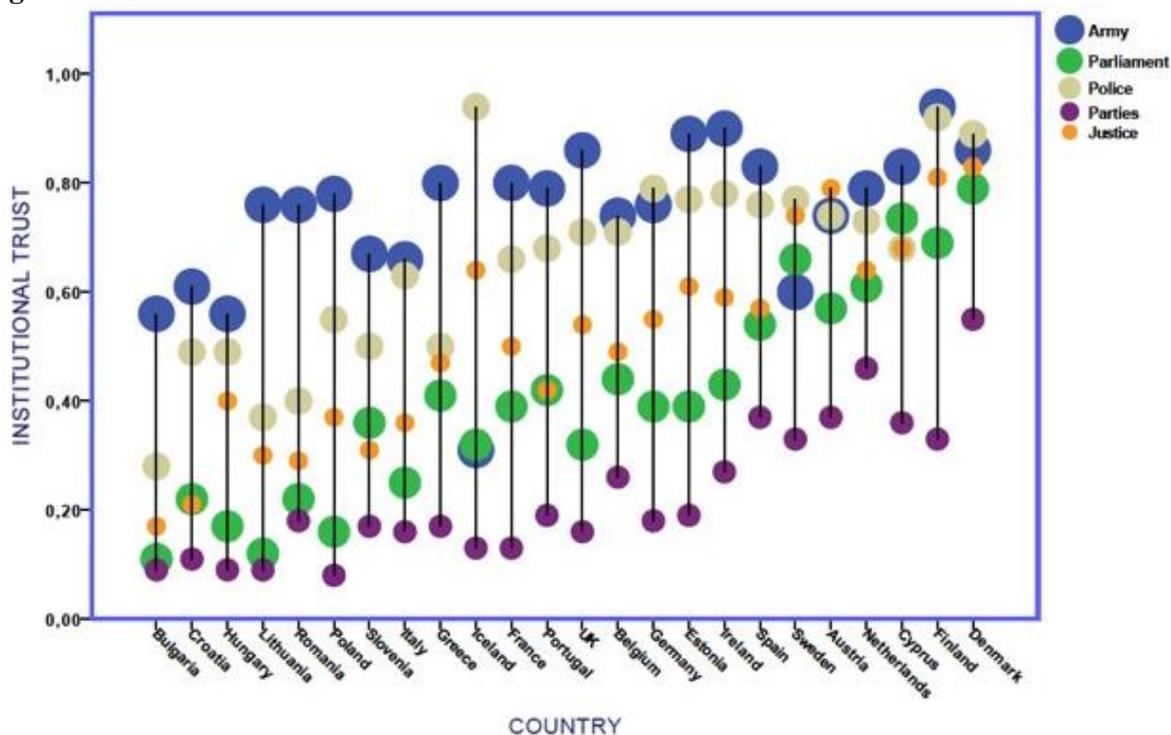
Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.2 present instead two snapshots of institutional confidence toward several institutions in two years, 1997 and 2008, in the TEV countries.

**Figure 3.1 Confidence mean towards several institutions in 1997**



Source: EB data

**Figure 3.2 Confidence mean towards several institutions in 2008**



Source: EB data

They show that trust in different institutions both in 1997 and 2008 are at different levels in different countries. However, the order of confidence seems to be quite similar across countries, with army and police having the strongest confidence and parties and parliament having the lowest. While in 1997 confidence in justice is sometimes higher and sometime lower than parliament trust, in 2008 justice confidence is higher than parliament confidence in all countries.

Finally, Figure 3.3 shows institutional confidence over time (1997-2008), as measured by the EB. In order to have the wider time span for as possible, this measure includes confidence for one input institution (Parliament) and for one output institution (Justice).

**Figure 3.3. Institutional confidence (Parliament and Justice) from 1997 to 2008**



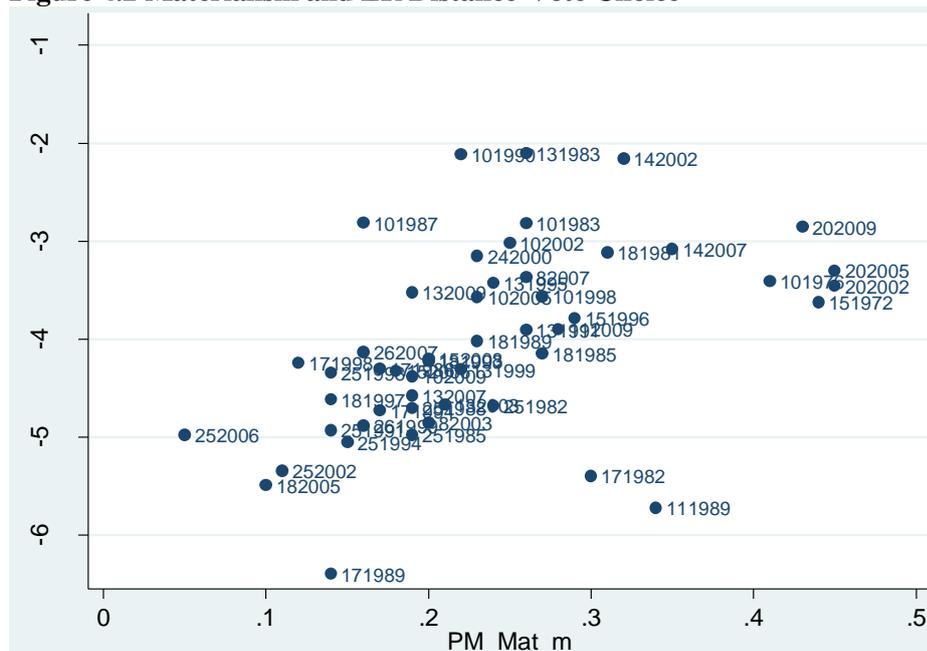
Source: EB data

### Hypotheses testing – Vote Choice

For the purpose of this presentation, we test some of the main hypothesis related to the moderating effects of political culture on the individual level relationship between vote choice determinants and vote choice. We do this in three steps: we first plot them in a graph, we then run a robust regression using an MM-estimator<sup>1</sup>, and we then run a Monte Carlo simulation with bootstrapping (using the *Cytel* software).

<sup>1</sup> An MM-estimator of regression is a robust fitting approach, which minimizes a (rho) function of the regression residuals, which is even, non-decreasing for positive values and less increasing than the square function. The function used here is a Tukey Biweight. The default Gaussian efficiency is set to 70%. The Breakdown point is 50%. In other words, this estimator controls for the median of the distribution, rather than the mean as in traditional OLS.



**Figure 4.2 Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice**

In Figure 4.1 we see that the relationship between post-materialism and the Bs of the individual level regression between LR distance and vote choice is negative. The more widespread post-materialism values are in a country, the less relevant LR distance is in determining vote choice. On the other hand, the relationship between materialism and the Bs of the individual level regression between LR distance and Vote choice is positive (Figure 4.2). The more widespread materialism values are in a country, the more LR distance becomes relevant in determining vote choice.

In order to see whether this graphical visualization of data is confirmed and generalizable to the population by statistical analysis, we run a robust regression using an MM-estimator. Results are reported in Table 2.1 (Post-materialism) and Table 2.2 (Materialism). As we can see, estimators of post-materialism are negative and significant at the 0.1% level, and the same is true for positive materialism estimators.

**Table 2.1 Robust regression: Post-materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice**

LRDIST	Coef.	Std. Err.	P>t	[95% Conf. Interval]
Post-Materialism	-8.06	1.63	0.000	-11.33 -4.78
_cons	-2.89	0.23	0.000	-3.35 -2.43

**Table 2.2 Robust regression: Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice**

LRDIST	Coef.	Std. Err.	P>t	[95% Conf. Interval]
Materialism	5.29	0.83	0.000	3.63 6.96
_cons	-5.36	0.20	0.000	-5.76 -4.96

Finally, in order to further check whether our hypotheses hold, we run a correlation using Monte Carlo simulation (bootstrapping). Table 2.3 (Post-materialism) and 2.4 (Materialism) show that our

hypotheses are once more confirmed. The correlation between Post-materialism and LR distance-vote choice with Monte Carlo simulation is negative and significantly different than 0, while the correlation between materialism and LR distance-vote choice with Monte Carlo simulation is positive and significantly different than 0.

**Table 2.3 Correlation - Monte Carlo simulation: Post-Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice**

Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	[95% Conf. Interval]	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	-0.42	0.12	-0.65	-0.18

**Table 2.4 Correlation - Monte Carlo simulation: Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice**

Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	[95% Conf. Interval]	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	0.40	0.13	0.15	0.66

We then test our second hypothesis, that left-right has absorbed over time the new dimensions of conflict, we posit that post-materialist values should be de-aligned in earlier periods of modernization with the left-right, and more positively aligned later on. So we expect that post-materialist values should reduce the effect of ideological proximity (LRDIST) on party choice at the onset of social change, while it should increase it later on. And the opposite for materialist values. We then check if the covariance between LR distance and the two values priorities has changed over time, before and after 1990 (Table 2.5 and Table 2.6). The choice of 1990 is a-theoretical. It would have been more appropriate to test the covariance strength in an early period. Yet, the number of observations would have been much less.

**Tab. 2.5 Correlation with Monte Carlo simulation: Post-Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice before 1990**

Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	[95% Conf. Interval]	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	-0.22	0.29	-0.79	0.34

**Tab. 2.6 Correlation with Monte Carlo simulation: Post-Materialism and LR Distance-Vote Choice after 1990**

Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	[95% Conf. Interval]	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	-0.59	0.088	-0.77	-0.42

Tables point out that over time the covariance between *post-materialism* and LR distance has changed indeed. We find a negative and significant coefficient after 1990. Given the way LR distance is operationalized, this means that LR distance has become significantly stronger than before in predicting party choice. The limited number of observation before 1990 (N=15) against those after 1990 (N=30) makes values prior to 1990 not significant. The same analysis for *materialism* [not shown here] shows that, before 1990, the correlation was positive (.22)

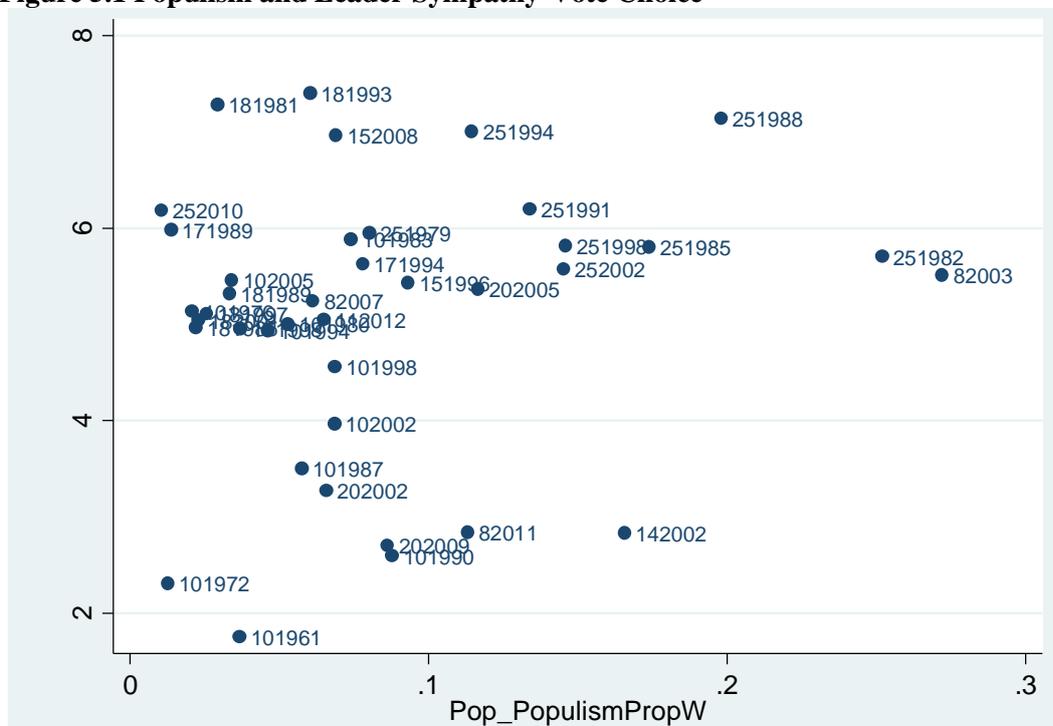
but not significant, and after 1990 it was almost 4 times larger than before 1990 and significant (0.78), meaning that LR distance has become significantly less strong than before in predicting party choice. Thus, our results suggest that the increase over time of post-materialism frame in societies is moving along with an increase of the ideological voting (or perhaps issue voting). These trends are extremely interesting and need to be further investigated.

## 2. Leader Sympathy and Populism

Moving to the hypotheses of populism as aggregate level variable, we look at whether in countries in which *populist claims* are more salient, *leadership* effects on vote choice are greater, and partisanship should be down. Using leader sympathy as proxy for *leadership*, Figure 5.1 shows that the first hypothesis seems confirmed. The higher the populism in a country, the higher the effect of leader sympathy on party choice.

This hypothesis seems to be confirmed when we run a robust regression using an MM-estimator. Table 5.1 shows that coefficients are positive and significant at the 5%. However, when running a correlation using Monte Carlo simulation (Table 5.2), we find a positive but not very strong correlation of 0.10, that is, however, not significant.

**Figure 5.1 Populism and Leader Sympathy-Vote Choice**



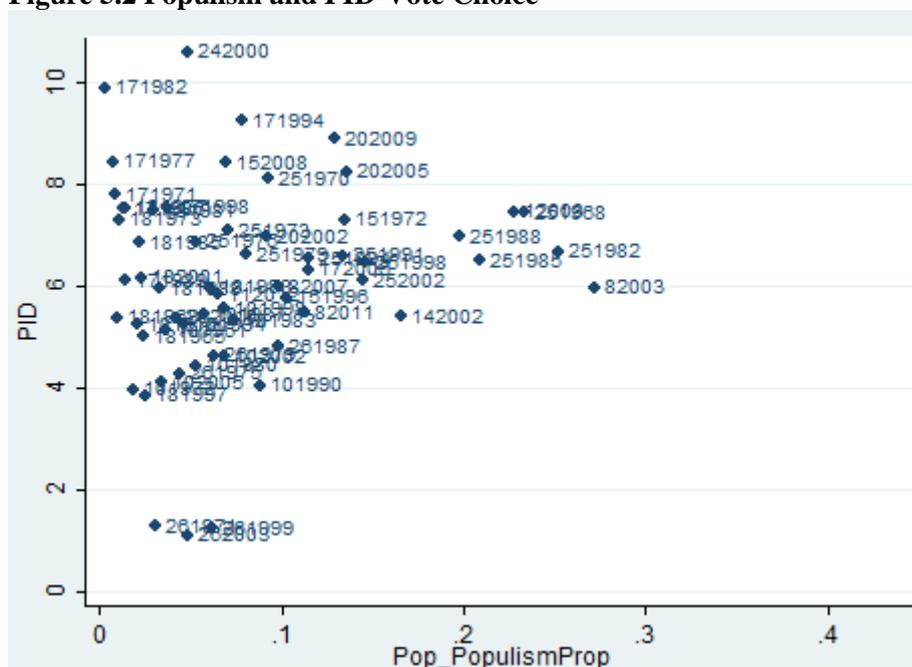
**Table 5.1 Robust regression: Populism and LSYMP-Vote Choice**

	b	Se	p	95.00% CI Limits	
				Lower	Upper
Populism	2.80	1.29	0.04	.17	5.42
_cons	5.20	0.17	4.04e-27	4.85	5.55

**Table 5.2. Correlation with Monte Carlo simulation: Populism and LSYMP-Vote Choice**

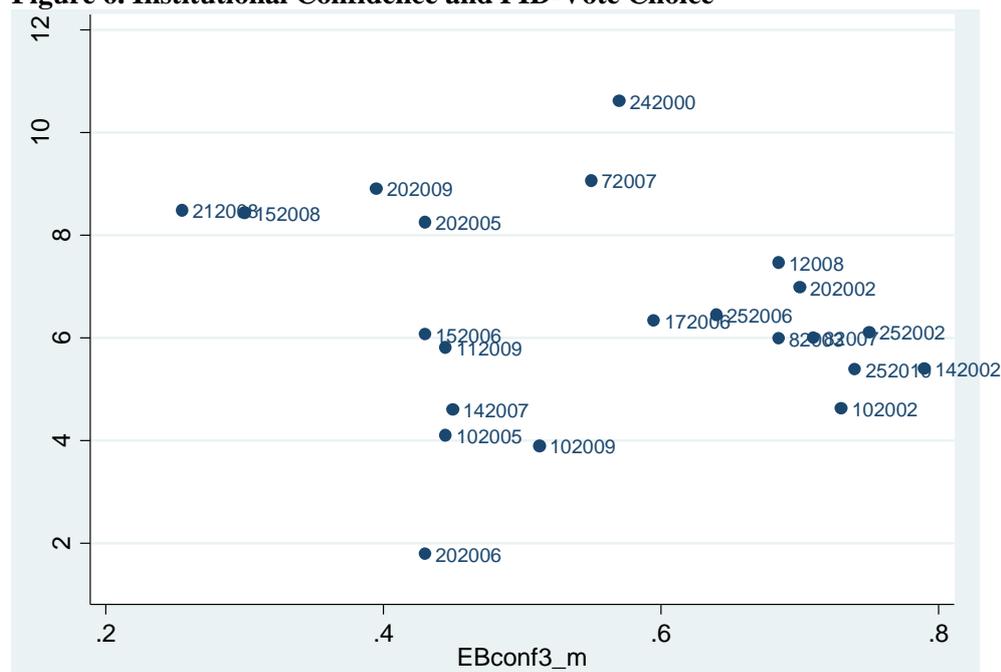
Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	95.00% CI Limits	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	0.11	0.13	-0.15	0.37

Inspection of the relationship between populism and PID effects on party choice shows that this is not significant. Yet, figure 5.2 seems to suggest that two clusters of country-election with different relations between populism and PID effects on party choice might exist. This point requires a further analysis.

**Figure 5.2 Populism and PID-Vote Choice**

### 3. Partisanship and Institutional Confidence

Finally, we move to institutional confidence hypotheses for party choice. A country whose institutions are perceived to be *trustworthy* is a country where partisan competition is contained in the electoral connection, and then it is also likely that its generic effects are high. In other words, we expected that the higher a country is in the confidence in institutions, the greater the effects of party choice (PID) on vote choice. The relationship found in our data is graphically shown in Figure 6, in which EB data since 1997 are plotted. The results do not confirm our hypothesis, since the relation is clearly negative.

**Figure 6. Institutional Confidence and PID-Vote Choice**

The robust regression between Trust and the Bs between partisanship and vote choice points out that the relationship between them is negative and also significant at the 0.1% level (Table 6.1). The correlation between the same variables using Monte Carlo simulation, however, is not significant (although still negative) (Table 6.2).

**Table 6.1. Robust regression: Institutional Confidence and PID-Vote Choice**

PID	Coef.	Std. Err.	P>t	[95% Conf. Interval]
InstitutConf	-5.43	1.38	0.001	-8.31 -2.55
_cons	9.87	1.06	0.000	7.66 12.08

**Table 6.2. Correlation with Monte Carlo simulation: Institutional Confidence and PID-Vote Choice**

Coefficient	Estimate	ASE1	95.00% CI Limits	
			Lower	Upper
Pearson's R	-0.17	0.17	-0.51	0.17

<sup>1</sup> This idea of “culture” circulating in some studies on the culture effects on political system seems not very far from the notion of culture that Gellner so well criticized in his book (Wittgenstein, and the Habsburg dilemma);.

<sup>2</sup> Some scholars tend to overstate the differences and the inner coherence of the two approaches, as Jackman and Miller (2007, *Before Norms Institutions and Civic Culture*, Ann Arbor: Michigan University Press). Other scholar, as the economist Tabellini (Institutions and Culture, presidential address, in *Journal of the European Economic Association* April–May 2008 6(2–3): 255–294) seems to downplaying the differences.

<sup>3</sup> The scope of time of our data in measuring three aspects of political culture is limited to data availability. The EVS, used to measure social capital, provide data for 1981, 1990, 1999 and 2008. Moreover, not every country from TEV dataset were included in each wave of EVS (e.g. Central Eastern Europe Countries were included from second wave of the study onwards). Moreover while we

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have almost in each election year from 1997 on an index of institutional confidence, earlier period are covered with data regarding a five-year span.