



VALTIOTIETEELLINEN YHDISTYS  
STATSVETENSKAPLIGA FÖRENINGEN  
FINNISH POLITICAL SCIENCE ASSOCIATION

### 3. Political and Social Trust: Causes, consequences and trends

#### **Puheenjohtajat:**

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**Työryhmän kuvaus:** Studies on different aspects of trust have become increasingly relevant in many social science research disciplines. In this working group we attempt to gather together people working on trust and distrust in political science broadly taken, including international relations.

In political science, the causes and consequences of different forms of political trust has been in focus. Political trust is broadly defined as a basic evaluative orientation of how governmental institutions, political parties and actors operate against the backdrop of the citizens' normative expectations. High trust makes institutions work effectively, facilitates social and economic exchange, moderates transaction costs in markets and reduces the need for control and supervision. In the long run, the lack of political trust may affect both the legitimacy and stability of democratic regimes, increase the willingness of citizens to engage in illegal behavior.

In the last two decades, research has also found social trust to be a cure for many ills of society. The statement is that high levels of generalized social trust (the feeling that 'most people can be trusted') promote civic virtues, social cohesion and a cooperative social climate, whereas lack of the same will create democratic problems, such as political dissatisfaction and declining political participation. With the new challenges that come with the arising number of refugees and asylum seekers in many European countries, questions of social cohesion and integration have become central.

Trust is also crucial for international relations. The main question has been how trust can be created and maintained, how it is broken and whether it can be restored between states but trust is an issue for all kind of collective action in world politics. One key issue has been, to what extent trust can be developed on the interpersonal level between the leaders and how much this level of interaction matters compared to the structural constraints and collective identities.

The panel welcomes theoretical studies on the concepts of political and social trust, as well as interpersonal trust in politics. Also welcome are empirical papers that take on diverse methodological techniques and analytical tools. Approaches that concentrate on the various expressions and trends of political and/or social trust, either at the micro- or macro levels, are also encouraged. Papers should preferably be written in English, but manuscripts in Finnish and Swedish will also be considered. The working language of the panel will be decided upon when the group of participants is known.

## **Abstraktit:**

### **Health and Political Trust**

We explore two theoretical possibilities for why health may affect political trust: the psychological-democratic contract theory and the role of personal experience in opinion formation. We argue that citizens with health impairments are more likely to experience the direct effects of political decisions, as they are more dependent on public health services. Bad experiences could lower trust levels, especially if those people's expectations of public services are high. Using European Social Survey data, we analyse the association between health and trust in 32 European states. The results indicate that people in poor health exhibit lower levels of trust towards the political system than people in good health. The differences in trust between those in good and poor health are accentuated among citizens with left-leaning ideological values. Our results suggest that welfare issues may constitute a rare context in which personal, rather than collective, experiences affect opinion formation.

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### **Party Competition, Institutional Quality and Government Finances: Do Trustworthy Institutions Mitigate Budgetary Common-Pool Problems?**

This paper analyses how the context of party competition affects the relative importance of programmatic and non-programmatic ways of policy-making. In the former, economic policy outcomes should be a function of the programmes of the parties with access to public funds whereas in the latter they should rather depend on the number of parties. The quality of state institutions is important in this respect, and the mechanism by which institutional quality affects the relative weights of different modes of politics has to do with people's trust in political actors. Low institutional quality, characterised by corruption, weak rule of law and bureaucratic incompetence, is likely to breed distrust in the actors of the public sphere, including politicians and parties. Thus, the information value of parties' programmatic statements is low and the extraction of benefits becomes a more relevant political goal. The weak institutionalisation of the political system makes this process more pronounced. An analysis of European data where the new EU member states of Central and Eastern Europe are contrasted with the old Western European member states supports this reasoning. This is so especially when one looks at the predictors of public spending, but also the revenue side exhibits similar effects.

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## **The trust-peace nexus and the levels of trust: The case of the United States-Egypt relationship in the post-Arab Spring frame**

The United States has, for the better part of thirty years, maintained a close relationship with the Egyptian ruling entourage and the military establishment. Although the relationship has been tenuous from the start, the 2011 Tahrir Revolution served to underline its problematic contours even further. On the one hand, the fostering of trust between the US and Egypt's military leaders has enabled the United States to maintain its role as the self-anointed guarantor of regional peace and stability, particularly through arresting the spectre of conflict between Egypt and Israel. On the other hand, the maintenance of this relationship has forced the US to undercut its democracy and human rights initiatives, garnering mistrust within the ranks of the Egyptian populace. This apparent foreign policy dilemma not only undermines America's soft power vis-à-vis Egypt and the wider region, but also, as has arguably been the case since the Arab Spring, has negative implications in terms of preserving peace. The post-Arab Spring US-Egypt relationship, therefore, underlines the multiple levels upon which trust functions in international affairs. Ultimately, the choice of case also allows for exploring the complexities of the trust-peace nexus in an increasingly fragmented and uncertain 21st century global environment.

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## **'Norms imperative to trust imperative to norms' - The changing relation between trust and norms in the contemporary EU**

This research paper considers some legal philosophical and empirical considerations about the relation of societal trust, societal goals - especially of the European cooperation, and the EU - and legal norms: How norms create trust, how trust creates certain kinds of norms, how norms are or may be used to enhance trust and, thus to enhance cooperation. Cooperation is necessary from the perspective of commonly accepted societal goals of welfare and stability. Methodology is that of legal sociology, which considers behavioural studies on trust, (conditional) cooperation and solidarity, but also the proper level and efficiency of normative control of human interaction. It might be considered that the current state of the EU is an abnormal state, state which significantly changes pre-established trust-relations. This research paper aims to recognise what would seem to be in the light of empirical research of the opinions and attitudes of the Europeans, provided by the Eurobarometer's the key areas of development of legislation and execution that could contribute to the pan-European trust and cooperation.

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## **Ballot structure, corruption, and political trust**

This study examines the impact of ballot structure on political trust. We argue that trust in parliament, political parties, and politicians is higher in open ballot systems with preferential voting. Theory suggests that open ballot systems with preferential voting provide citizens with greater freedom of choice, promote closer links between voters and politicians, and reduce polarization as personal vote chasing candidates moderate their policy positions so as to broaden their appeal. Our strategy is to pool the data from 156 individual-level surveys in 29 countries across seven waves of the European Social Survey (EES) collected between 2002 and 2015. Hierarchical multilevel models show that political trust is highest in systems with preferential voting (open list and ordered list PR systems) and lowest in closed list PR systems. The study also accounts for the potential impact of macro-level political corruption, which has been linked to ballot structure in past research. When controlling for individual-level variables such as satisfaction with the economy and social trust, political corruption becomes a weak or even insignificant predictor. The positive effects of open and ordered list PR systems remain significant with the inclusion of individual-level and contextual controls.

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## **Can trust be restored between Russia and the west? Lessons from the end of the cold war**

This article looks at the interaction between the Soviet and Western leaders at the end of the Cold War, Mikhail Gorbachev, Ronald Reagan and Helmut Kohl particularly, and ask why were they able to build trust at the time and whether the lessons of that period can be transferred to the present confrontation between Russia and the West. One of the key events where trust was formed, was the Geneva conference in 1985. I argue that key elements why trust materialized in that meeting were both the acknowledged need for that on both sides as well as the personalities of the key leaders and the chemistry that emerged. The article discusses three theoretical approaches to trust: constructive, rational and psychological and argues that the elements that made the creation of trust possible at the end of the Cold War are only partially present at the moment.

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## **Mistrust within trust: Finnish-Swedish security political cooperation and the ghosts of 1990 EEC application analogy**

Over the previous years, Finland and Sweden have taken considerable, yet pragmatic and incremental steps to deepen their bilateral cooperation in security policy. Although the Finnish-Swedish security political cooperation seems to build upon a strong and historically institutionalized sense of reciprocal trust, reinforced by their shared Nordic values and a sense of security political interdependence, there seems to be a curious element of suspicion rooted into this relationship. This latent mistrust is often traced back to October 1990 when Sweden announced its plans to apply for EEC membership without consulting Finland properly, causing notable resentment in Helsinki. Now, over 25 years later, amidst increasing uncertainties in the Baltic Sea security environment, the October 1990 analogy has once again appeared into the Finnish-Swedish security political discussions, echoing Helsinki's fears that Sweden will repeat her 1990 antics by giving up "alliansfrihet" and applying NATO-membership without giving Finland a proper heads up. We argue that although Finland in general expects benevolent intentions and predictability from Sweden, a certain level of latent, historically stratified mistrust nonetheless prevails underneath the pragmatic surface of the everyday trust between the states. We will examine this trust-mistrust paradox against the backdrop of the trust-literature in International Relations.

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## **Miten puoluekanta periytyy vanhemmilta lapsille?**

Poliittisen sosialisoinnin tutkimus on noussut kansainvälisesti uuteen suosioon 2000-luvun alusta lähtien. Suomessa sen sijaan poliittiseen sosialisointiin keskittynyt tutkimus on ollut verrattain vähäistä. Muutamat tarkastelut ovat keskittyneet esimerkiksi vaaliosallistumisen periytymiseen ja nuorten politiikkatietämykseen ja poliittinen kiinnostuneisuuden syntymiseen sosialisoinnin kautta. Perheen merkitys nuorten poliittisessä sosialisoinnissa on Suomessa vähentynyt ja politiikan merkitys lapsuudessa pienentynyt. Toisaalta nuorten ja vanhempien poliittisten kantojen on havaittu olevan hyvinkin lähellä toisiaan. Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastelemme poliittisen sosialisoinnin vertikaalista ulottuvuutta erityisesti vuoden 2015 kansallisen vaalitutkimusaineiston valossa. Vanhempien puoluekannan odotetaan jossain määrin periytyvän lapsille ja lapsuuden kasvuympäristön voi siten katsoa vaikuttavan paitsi arvoihin ja asenteisiin, myös joko välillisesti tai suoraan puoluekantaan. Analysoimme lapsuudenkodin ja luokkaidentifioitumisen yhteyttä, jonka jälkeen analysoidaan vastaajan ja hänen vanhempiensa puoluekannan välisiä yhteneväisyyksiä. Lopuksi tutkimme vielä sosiodemografisten tekijöiden ja yhteiskuntaluokan selitysvoimaa puoluekannan periytymisessä regressioanalyysin keinoin.

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## **Political parties and trade unions in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden - Similar reference groups?**

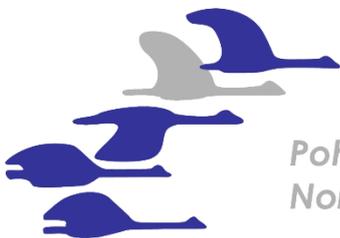
The aim of this article is to study the impact of trade union membership on the party-choice of the Nordic citizens. The study examines voters and voting behavior through the linkage between political parties and trade unions. This article seeks first, to study the impact of trade union membership on party-choice of the Nordic citizens. Second, its aim is to find out whether the political parties and trade unions share similar reference groups in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden. Third, it examines do these reference groups vary between countries. Traditionally, institutional relationship between parties and trade unions has been strong, especially in the Nordic countries. Typically, this institutional tie has been the strongest between Social Democratic Parties and trade unions. These two actors have even been called as the “Siamese twins” of the labor movement (Ebbinghaus 1995; Padgett & Patterson 1991, 177). Now, in the 21st century, the structures, on which the traditional institutional relations between parties and trade unions have based on, have faced many challenges. Several structural changes in societies, e.g. globalization and the ageing of population, have brought on some pressures of chance especially for political parties. Will the trade unions encounter similar challenges? How have these changes, reshaped the reference groups of political parties and trade unions? Some scholars have predicted the decline of these traditional relations since the late 1960s (e.g. Martin 1974). However, the explanations for the decline seem to vary significantly. Evidently the largest and the most effective changes have occurred in the economic sphere and the electorate. For example the manual working class living in cities, the number of inherent voters of Social Democrats and members of trade unions, has declined in globalized world where branches of industry have transformed. At the same time social classes have mixed with each other and entirely new occupations have been born. (Allern, Aylott & Christiansen 2007, 609.) This article sheds light on this question by advancing the present situation of party-union ties at the individual level. Recent studies have focused either parties or trade unions, but these two organizational actors have been rarely analyzed in the same context. There is national parliamentary election survey data available in Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden via national election studies. These studies contain extensive individual level survey data on voting behavior, trade union memberships and sociodemographic factors. These parliamentary elections surveys are been collected every election year in each country. The data collected for each country in the 21st century have been merged per country to ensure the highest N as possible. Trade union members are been compared between each other by their sociodemographic background, party-choice and class identification. The article combines various quantitative methods, for instance logistic and linear regression.

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## **Social trust and perceptions of immigration in Western Europe 2002-2014**

Issues on immigration have become increasingly topical in Europe, especially with the current refugee crisis. While the most acute issues are concerned with the very arrival of the refugees, their crossing of the Mediterranean and their getting to and staying within the borders of the European countries, issues of integration will eventually become equally pressing. Integration is a two-way process, and the general perceptions on immigrants and immigration can be a factor that either supports or discourages the integration processes. It is therefore highly relevant to study the determinants of these attitudes. The article examines a variety of such factors, but focus is on the explanatory power of generalized social trust on attitudes on immigration, both at the aggregated and the individual level. The study employs data from the 2002 and 2014 European Social Survey and uses OLS regression analysis to determine the relationship between the variables. While assessing the importance of the different predictors at the individual level, the study is also concerned with comparing their explanatory power in different European countries.

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