Low expectations or different evaluations – What explains immigrants' high levels of trust in host country institutions?

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Abstract

Several recent studies show that immigrants exhibit higher levels of trust in public institutions than natives. This study uses pooled data from the European Social Survey to examine possible reasons for this 'over-confidence' of immigrants, arguing that it is largely the relatively lower expectations of immigrants from countries with poorer institutional performance that account for this difference. The eminent role of expectations is also underscored by the finding that low social standing matters less for the level of trust of immigrants than it does for natives. The 'frame of reference effect' weakens over time and with increased acculturation in the country of residence, suggesting that expectations are less strongly based on experiences in the country of origin the better integrated an immigrant is in the country of residence. A small part of immigrants' higher trust levels overall and some of the dual frames of reference effect are also explained by the more conservative value orientations of immigrants from countries with lower political stability, who appear to regard stability and conformity more highly, which in turn is associated with higher levels of institutional trust.

Key words: Migration; Confidence; Trust; Institutions; Expectations

Introduction

An increasing number of studies indicate that immigrants exhibit higher trust in political and public institutions than natives. Weaver (2003) and Wenzel (2006) find that Mexican Americans exhibit higher levels of trust in political and societal institutions than the general population while Maxwell (2008) shows members of British ethnic minority groups trust political institutions more than whites. Bilodeau and Nevitte's (2003) analysis of political trust of migrants in Canada revealed that migrants are more trusting than native residents. Röder and Mühlau (2010) show that trust levels of first generation immigrants in European countries in public institutions are higher than the trust levels of the native populations and the same holds for satisfaction with government (Maxwell, 2010). This may seem counterintuitive considering the relatively less favourable position of immigrants in many societies. Therefore we ask in this paper: what can explain the high level of trust of immigrants in European countries?

Previous studies indicate that 'over-confidence' in political institutions erodes over time and across generations: Canadian migrants from non-democratic states loose trust the longer they stay in Canada (Bilodeau and Nevitte, 2003). Michelson (2001, 2003) and Wenzel (2006) show that Mexican-Americans are more sceptical of American institutions the more acculturated they are to mainstream society. Foreign born Mexican-Americans are more trusting than Mexican-Americans born in the US (Wenzel, 2006; see also Michelson, 2001) and second generation immigrants in Europe show lower levels of trust than natives and first-generation migrants (Röder and Mühlau, 2010). We aim to replicate this finding for European countries to determine whether low assimilation into the host society is linked to higher trust levels (acculturation hypothesis).

Yet this does not explain the initially high levels of trust amongst immigrants, and more recent research has suggested that different evaluative frameworks may be of importance. Firstly, immigrants may compare the host country's institutions with those in their country of origin, and should therefore have lower expectations than natives (Maxwell, 2010). We test whether the origin country context has the predicted influence (reference point hypothesis), and develop this argument further to determine in how far this influence fades over time, and whether the generally observable negative impact of low social status is mitigated by these different evaluations (status indifference

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hypothesis). We furthermore test the possibility that expectations of immigrants may not only be lower, but also be different from those of natives, as immigrants may have different value orientations that could explain their higher trust (value-mediation hypothesis). Immigrants often come from countries with different values than those prevalent in European countries (Inglehart, 1997), and values in turn are linked to trust (Devos et al., 1992), making this a viable alternative explanation.

These hypotheses are tested using a double comparative design that permits to separate 'community effects' from residence country and origin country effects. (Van Tubergen et al., 2004). 'Community effects' are effects at the level of migrant groups from a specific source country in a specific host country. These are crucial for this study as a core argument is that the comparison between the institutions in the residence and the origin country guides the evaluation of residence country institutions. Using data from the European Social Survey allows us to analyse the attitudes of migrants living in a variety of European states who originate from countries with very varied institutional settings. No other dataset that is currently available has included this range of countries or the necessary country of origin information for this type of study.

Theory and hypotheses

Acculturation. In line with 'classical' assimilation theory (Gans, 1973; Alba and Nee, 1997) it may be assumed that expectations and values become more similar to the expectations and values of natives over time. The home frame of reference will become less salient over time as the memories of the past fade, contacts with the home country become more sparse and social contacts with members of the host countries more prevalent. Similarly, immigrants are more likely to adopt the values prevalent in the host country, the longer they stay. These processes are likely to work more quickly for immigrants who are eager to integrate into the host society. Children of immigrants born in the country of residence have little or no contact with the home country of their parents and are likely to take their lead from peers rather than their parents. This leads us to formulate the following *acculturation hypothesis*: Better acculturated immigrants (in terms of length of stay, generation, language usage and citizenship) will have less trust than less well acculturated immigrants.

Expectations: Dual frames of reference. Research indicates that trust in institutions may depend more on the expectations of the citizens than on 'objective' indicators of economic and political performance. For example, rising expectations rather than declining performance are invoked as cause for the decline in political trust that most democratic countries experience (Miller and Listhaug, 1990; Orren, 1997). Expectations of immigrants, however, are likely to be shaped not only by the realities in their host country but also by past experiences in their home country. Frequently, immigrants appear to evaluate their situation, for example educational opportunities (Suarez-Orozcco, 1987) or working conditions (Waldinger and Lichter, 2003; Binford, 2009; Heath and Li, 2008), more positively than natives would in the same context. A 'dual frame of reference' (Suarez-Orozco, 1987) that anchors the evaluation of the present situation in the immigrants' past experiences in their home country has been suggested as the underlying mechanism. Most immigrants leave their countries of origin because they expect better opportunities in the destination countries. As long as the circumstances in the host countries compare favourably to the situation in their home country, the 'dual frame of reference' will induce a more positive evaluation relative to people who lack this anchoring. There are indicators that 'dual frames of reference' govern not only the evaluation of individuals' success and the opportunities of immigrants. For example, immigrants judge moral behaviour (Reese, 2001) or treatment by authorities (Menjivar and Bejarano, 2004) relative to the standards of their home countries. It is likely that past experiences also shape the appraisal of societal and political institutions inducing a more favourable view of host country institutions for migrants who migrated from countries with poor state institutions.

Röder and Mühlau (2010) showed that the quality of host country institutions, measured by Worldbank quality of governance indicators (Kaufman et al., 2009), is an evenly strong predictor of the trust in public institutions of natives and of immigrants in European countries. According to the dual frame of reference theory, immigrants compare the institutional reality of the host country with their experiences with institutions in the home country as a reference point. This leads to the *reference point hypothesis* that immigrants' trust in institutions of the host country is expected to be larger the poorer the quality of home country institutions is relative to the host country institutions. This reference point hypothesis provides the most direct test for the 'dual frame of reference' theory.

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Support for the reference point hypothesis is further strengthened if the difference between the quality of home and host country institutions bears a stronger relationship for recent immigrants than for established ones and for first generation than for second generation immigrants reflecting a decreasing salience of the home country frame of reference.

In general, it is observed that citizens with a low standing in society exhibit lower trust in institutions than high status citizens, be it that low status citizens attribute their social position to the political system, that the institutions have a class-bias or that – as Putnam (2000: 138) observed -- that '…haves are treated by others with more honesty and respect (…) than 'non-haves''. However, immigrants' comparison of their status with people in their home countries is expected to mitigate the corrosive effect of low status positions in the country of residence. The *status indifference* hypothesis posits that the relationship between social position variables (education, income) and trust in institutions is less negative for first-generation migrants than for native born.

Value congruence. An alternative explanation for the phenomenon that immigrants trust more in public institutions than natives is that immigrants, predominately socialised in 'more traditional' societies and frequently facing strong material constraints in their destination countries, have value orientations that lead them to appreciate more the institutional reality of their destination countries than the native population. According to this view, immigrants do not have lower expectations, they have *different* expectations. Inglehart (1999) argued that the declining trust in societal institutions can be explained by a 'shift from materialist values, emphasizing economic and physical security, to postmaterialist values, emphasizing individual self-expression and quality of life concerns' (Inglehart, 1997: 28). Although the erosive effect of postmaterialist values is assumed to pertain primarily to hierarchical institutions, postmaterialism is shown to be associated with lower political trust (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006): 'Although postmaterialism is fundamentally pro-democratic, it also reflects elite-challenging views and behaviour, as well as increased dissatisfaction with the established authority in today's democracies' (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006: 42). Similarly, Devos et al. (1992) claim that trust in institutions is affected by human values: 'Individuals who give high priority to conservation values are more likely to trust institutions, whereas individuals who cherish openness to

change values adopt a more sceptical orientation toward institutions' (Devos et al., 1992: 484). The underlying rationale is that institutions produce stability and hence are more congruent with conservation values and incongruent with 'openness to change' orientations. A positive correlation between religiosity and trust in institutions has been interpreted in a similar way: Religiosity is understood as a proxy for conservative attitudes (Catterberg and Moreno, 2006) or a proxy for an affinity to conservation values and a distance to openness to change values (Devos et al., 1992).

Based on this, we formulate a *value mediation hypothesis* that holds that the higher trust levels of immigrants, but also possible acculturation and reference point effects are mediated by different value orientations of immigrants. Assuming that most immigrants in Europe have moved from countries with a higher prevalence of conservation values, less emphasis on change and stronger religious orientations, differences between immigrants and natives regarding their trust in institutions may be explained by differences in their value orientations. Similarly, it is expected that value differences underpin the relationship between indicators of acculturation and trust in institutions. Moreover, as countries with poor political institutions may be characterised by high prevalence of conservation values and low emphasis of 'openness to change' values, the reference-point effects on trust may prove spurious: It may not be the comparison of host with home country institutions, but the societal context nurturing conservation values and discouraging openness to change values that accounts for the relationship described as reference-point hypothesis. A strong affiliation with religion may be one vehicle to stabilise these value orientations.

Data

The data are extracted from the first three rounds of the European Social Survey (ESS), and was collected between 2002 and 2006. In the dataset for this analysis we include natives, defined as individuals whose parents and who themselves were born in a country, first generation migrants, defined as respondents whose parents and who themselves were born abroad, and second generation migrants, who were born in their country of residence, but whose parents were both born abroad and both in the same country. As the first round of the ESS does not include detailed information for

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parents' country of origin, we exclude second generation migrants from this round. We also exclude any cases that do not belong into any of the three categories, such as return migrants or individuals with only one foreign born parent. These criteria were used to construct the three categories as clearly as possible and exclude any ambiguous cases such as return migrants.

Individuals are seen as nested within their country of residence and their 'community'. For first generation migrants and natives, the 'community' is defined by their country of origin and their country of residence. For second generation migrants, parents' origin country and country of residence are used to define the community the respondent belongs to. First and second generation migrants are in separate communities even if the origin is identical. If country of origin information was missing, the respondent was excluded.

We use data from 26 out of 29 countries covered by the first three rounds of the ESS. These include the EU 15 countries and the EFTA states Iceland, Norway and Switzerland. Further, eight new member states (Bulgaria, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and Slovakia) are included. We excluded Turkey, Ukraine and Israel from the analysis. As there may be a different relationship between quality of governance and trust in these countries, both a dummy for new member states and an interaction with quality of governance is included. Also all analyses were performed on a subset of EU15/EFTA and EU15 to test robustness. Findings do not change in substance when these subsets are used alternatively.

Trust in public institutions is measured in the ESS with a range of variables that assess, on a zero to ten scale, how much people trust different public institutions of the survey country. Four of these variables are present in all three rounds of the ESS: how much people trust their country's parliament, the legal system, the police and politicians. The reliability of this four item scale was confirmed with Cronbach's Alpha for individual survey countries between 0.655 and 0.785, and a sum score was calculated from the four items, with higher scores indicating more trust. Cases with missing values were excluded.

Acculturation. Length of stay was coded in five categories, immigrants who arrived within the last year, 1 to 5 years, 6-10 years, 11-20 years and more than twenty years ago. Product terms for interaction effects with this variables have been formed with a binary coding (1=10 or less years, 0=more than 10 years). The variable 'different language' indicates that a migrant mainly speaks a language at home which is not an official language of the country of residence. Self-reported citizenship in the country of residence is also used as proxy for acculturation. All these variables are only included for first generation migrants.

Social status. The social status of the respondent is measured by their education, their household income and their main source of the household income. Education was measured in years of education for the highest completed credential. Income is measured by the relative income position of the household in the country of residence. Income source was coded into three categories depending on the main source of income declared: the first includes income from employment, self-employment and pensions (reference category), the second income from welfare and unemployment benefit ('benefits') and the third covers income from savings and others sources ('other income').

The difference between the quality of host and home country institutions are measured by the Worldwide Governance Indicators ('Quality of Governance') published by the World Bank (Kaufmann et al. 2009). This is a composite indicator incorporating six dimensions: voice and accountability, political stability and absence of violence, government effectiveness, regulatory quality, rule of law and control of corruption, all based on a large number of sources. One of the advantages of this index is that as it covers all host countries and almost all origin countries in our dataset. Figures from 2002 to 2005 inclusively are used to compute averages for the six dimensions. A factor score of these indicators is computed based on the values of host and origin countries included in the dataset. This factor explains 89.69% of the variance of the six dimensions. These factor scores are also used to derive a measure for the difference between the quality of the origin and the host country institutions. This measure is computed by subtracting the host country score from the origin country score. For second generation migrants, the country of origin refers to the parents' country of

origin. Scores for respondents indicating that they were born in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia were computed as averages of the countries that these countries were divided into.

Values: Values are measured by selected human values (Schwartz, 1992). In the Schwartz value theory, 'openness to change' vs 'conservation' is one of two fundamental dimensions of human values. Openness to change values are measured as average score on 6 items associated with 'self-direction', 'stimulation' and 'hedonism', conservation values as average score of 6 items associated with 'security', 'conformity' and 'tradition' represent the 'conservation' dimension (see Davidov et al., 2008). As further measures of value orientation are included: self-reported religiousness (0-10 scale), being member of a non-Christian religion and the product term between both.

Table 1: Independent variables: Means and Percentages by Migrant Status

	Total	*Native*	*Generation 1*	***Generation 2***
Gender (% female)	52.1	52.1	52.3	49.5*
Age	47.02	47.19	45.88**	40.67**
Education in years	11.92	11.90	12.20**	12.07
Income	6.13	6.12	6.39**	5.69**
Income source (% from welfare/unemp.)	4.5	4.3	7.1**	6.2**
Income source (% from other sources)	1.8	1.8	2.4**	1.9
Citizenship (% holding citizenship)	n/a	n/a	47.4	n..a.
Official language spoken (%)	n.a.	n..a.	59.1	n.a.
Length of stay (% <1 year)	n/a	n/a	1.2	n/a
Length of stay (% 1-5 years)	n/a	n/a	13.5	n/a
Length of stay (% 6-10 years)	n/a	n/a	13.5	n/a
Length of stay (% 10-20 years)	n/a	n/a	23.2	n/a
Conservation Values	-2.67	-2.68	-2.58**	-2.63*
Openness to Change Values	-2.98	-2.98	-2.94**	-2.84**
Religiosity	4.85	4.81	5.38**	5.08#
Religious denomination (% non-Christian)	1.5	0.5	14.5**	12.1**
Difference Quality of Governance	n/a	n/a	-2.12	-1.89
Country of residence (% New member state)	22.5	22.8	14.4**	31.2**
Quality of Governance	0.18	0.17	0.39**	0.10**
Number of cases	105,878	98,268	6,137	1,473

Significance levels #= <.10, *=$p < .05$, **=$p < .01$
Percentages (%) reported for categorical variables

Missing values for independent variables were substituted, in hierarchical order, by the means of the community group (migrant status X country of origin X country of residence), the country of origin means (migrant status X country of origin) and the country of residence mean (migrant status X

country of residence). All quantitative variables are centred around the sample mean with the exception of the quality of governance indicator. Household income is centred around the country mean. Dummies for cases with missing values on a variable are included in the regression, but not reported in the tables.

Modelling

The data have been modelled as hierarchical linear models (multi-level models) using MLwiN 2.15. Three levels have been specified: Individuals at the lowest (n=105,878 of which 6,137 are first generation migrants and 1,473 second generation migrants) and countries of residence as the highest level (n=26). Units at the second level are 'communities'. Communities are defined as (Country of residence X country of birth X immigrant status)-cells. In total, there are 1,282 level 2 units. 26 units comprise natives, 995 units comprise first generation immigrant communities from 172 countries of origin and 261 units comprise second generation immigrant communities from 96 countries of origin. Random intercepts have been specified for the higher levels and random slopes for variables that are interacted with higher level predictor variables. Only the variances of intercepts and slopes are estimated but not co-variances. Complex variance modelling at the individual level has been applied to take into account for group-specific variation than immigrants. In the tables, we report only the main variance component at the respective level. All models have been estimated using full maximum likelihood estimation as implemented as IGLS in MLwiN.

Results

Models 1 to 5 (Table 2) present the findings that allow us to test the above hypotheses. All models include natives, first and second generation immigrants, although some variables, such as length of stay, are only estimated for the subgroup of first generation immigrants. Model 1 reports the differences between natives and immigrants taking into account the nested structure of the data, i.e. the grouping of individuals in 'communities' and countries of residence. All models also control for age, gender, quality of institutions, education, household income and source of income and whether

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the host country is a new member state. Differences in the models between natives and immigrants are therefore not the result of differences in group composition, but reflect actual difference if these factors are held constant.

Model 1 shows that first generation immigrants exhibit significantly more trust in institutions than natives (b=.80). In line with the acculturation hypothesis, second generation immigrants have significantly less trust (b=-.88) than natives (and first-generation migrants). Further findings to assess the support for the acculturation hypothesis are contained in Models 3 and 4. Support for the acculturation hypothesis is provided by the finding that immigrants speaking a different language at home than the official language of the host country put significantly more trust in public institutions than migrants who speak the official language at home, and that immigrants who acquired citizenship of the country of residence are less confident than immigrants who are not citizens of the host country (Model 3). Model 4 also includes length of stay for first generation immigrants in order to examine whether migrants exhibit less trust in public institutions the longer they have lived in the country of residence. The reference category are immigrants staying longer than 20 years. In evaluating the results, it should be taken into account that the model also contains an interaction effect between staying less than 10 years and the difference between the quality of home and host country institutions. Without these interaction effects, the coefficients for the three more recently arriving groups would be about .55 larger. The coefficients indicate that trust decreases continually with length of stay. Once length of stay is included, the effect of citizenship disappears underscoring that the negative relationship between citizenships and trust levels reflects that citizenship for immigrants is a proxy for acculturation.

Table 2: Multi-level regressions of Trust in Public Institutions

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
FIXED PART	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE
Intercept	20.18**	0.62	20.14**	0.60	20.09**	0.59	19.68**	1.24	19.88**	1.22
Migrant status										
Immigrant (1st generation)	0.80**	0.29	-0.09	0.32	0.97	0.64	0.89	1.25	0.75	1.24
Second generation	-0.88*	0.36	-0.84#	0.44	-0.82#	0.45	-0.86#	0.46	-0.89#	0.46
Background										
Gender (1=female)	-0.11*	0.05	-0.11*	0.05	-0.10#	0.05	-0.11*	0.05	-0.47**	0.05
Age/10	0.15**	0.01	0.16**	0.01	0.16**	0.01	0.17**	0.01	-0.01	0.02
Social status										
Education	0.08**	0.02	0.08**	0.02	0.13**	0.02	0.13**	0.02	0.15**	0.02
Education X 1st Generation					-0.08*	0.04	-0.10*	0.04	-0.10**	0.03
Income	0.21**	0.02	0.21**	0.02	0.22**	0.03	0.22**	0.03	0.24**	0.02
Income X 1st Generation					-0.01	0.06	0.00	0.06	0.01	0.06
Benefits	-1.15**	0.28	-1.23**	0.21	-1.51**	0.24	-1.50**	0.24	-1.41**	0.23
Other income	-0.77**	0.13	-0.77**	0.13	-0.77**	0.13	-0.76**	0.13	-0.74**	0.13
Benefits X 1st Generation					0.97*	0.48	0.84#	0.48	0.75	0.47
Acculturation										
Diff. Language X 1st Generation					0.73**	0.23	0.58*	0.23	0.50*	0.23
Citizenship X 1st Generation					-0.47*	0.22	0.07	0.23	0.14	0.23
Length of stay: < 1 year							3.00**	0.96	2.80**	0.96
Length of stay: 1-5 years							1.39**	0.46	1.21**	0.46
Length of stay: 6-10 years							0.96*	0.45	0.85#	0.45
Length of stay:11-20 years							0.88**	0.27	0.70**	0.27
Values										
Open to change Values									-0.24**	0.03
Conservation Values									0.30**	0.03
Non Christian									0.99*	0.51
Religiosity									0.34**	0.01
NonChristian X Religiosity									-0.28**	0.07
Country-level										
New Member State	0.69	1.63	0.85	1.62	1.01	1.58	1.18	1.55	1.30	1.43
Quality of Governance	2.40**	0.78	2.37**	0.77	2.41**	0.76	2.47**	0.74	2.72**	0.68
NewMember State X Qual Governance	3.48#	1.92	3.50#	1.89	3.52#	1.85	3.54#	1.81	3.40*	1.68
Frame of reference										
Difference Qual Gov X 1st Generation			-0.43**	0.07	-0.38**	0.07	-0.22*	0.09	-0.15#	0.09
Difference Qual Gov X 2nd Generation			-0.02	0.17	-0.03	0.17	-0.03	0.17	0.03	0.17

	Σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE
Difference Qual Gov XLength < 10 yrs							-0.21	0.14	-0.19	0.14
RANDOM PART	Σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE	σ	SE
Country level										
Intercept	3.39	1.07	3.39	1.06	3.24	1.03	3.16	0.99	2.60	0.83
Immigrant (1st generation)	0.21	0.36	0.45	0.41	0.74	0.50	0.55	0.43	0.46	0.40
Second generation	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.49	0.30	0.61	0.43	0.63	0.51	0.65
Community level										
Intercept	1.29	0.31	0.93	0.27	0.77	0.26	0.68	0.25	0.74	0.25
Education	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.00
Income	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.00
Benefits	1.11	0.46	1.01	0.43	0.89	0.40	0.89	0.40	0.75	0.35
Length < 10 yrs							0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Individual level										
Intercept	51.33	0.24	51.33	0.24	51.33	0.24	51.32	0.24	50.34	0.23
Intercept/Immigrant (1st generation)	2.59	0.54	2.55	0.54	2.53	0.54	2.37	0.53	2.86	0.53
Intercept/Second generation	4.04	1.13	4.10	1.13	4.17	1.13	4.18	1.13	4.47	1.12
Δ-2*loglikelihood, df	2057.0	22	2091.0	24	2118.3	29	2175.5	36	3985.0	44

All regressions further controlled for missing values (variable-specific dummies); NoCases: n_1=105,878, n_2=1,282, n_3=26

Significance levels #=p< .10, *=p < .05, **=p < .01, two-tailed

The reference point hypothesis led us to expect that the trust level of immigrants is higher the poorer the quality of governance in the country of origin relative to the country of residence. The estimate for the difference between quality of host and home country is significantly negative for first generation immigrants (Models 2 and 3). Moreover, when comparing Models 1 and 2, it is clear that the contrast between host and home country institutions (average value: -2.1) fully accounts for the change in the coefficients for first generation immigrants (Model 1: b= .80; Model 2: b= -.09), i.e. the home country frame of reference explains the higher average trust of first generation migrants. Model 2 also shows that the contrast between host and home country institutions is unrelated to the trust levels of second generation immigrants and that this relationship is significantly stronger for first when compared with second generation migrants. Finally, the relationship is stronger for first generation immigrants who migrated to the host country in the last 10 years (b=.-43) than for first generation immigrants who have lived more than 10 years in their country of residence (b=-.22). However, this difference is not statistically significant (see Model 4).

To evaluate whether social status is less important for immigrants' trust than for natives', Model 3 should be consulted. It contains the estimates of social status variables interacted with being a first generation immigrant. For first generation migrants, education is not significantly related to trust in institutions (b=.13-.08=.05, t=1.31) and this relationship is significantly weaker for immigrants than for natives. Similarly, immigrants who depend on benefits as income source are not significantly less confident than other immigrants (b=-1.51+.97=-.54; t=1.14) and the link between being a benefit recipient and trust is weaker for immigrants than for the native born population. Both findings are in line with the status indifference hypothesis. However, in contrast to this hypothesis, income has the same effect for first generation migrants and the native born population.

The idea of value congruence suggests that immigrants are more oriented toward conservation values and assign less priority to openness to change values. To test whether this holds, we firstly examine whether immigrants differ in these values from natives, which is reported in Table 3. As expected, on average first generation immigrants exhibit stronger preferences for conservation values and are more religious (and more likely to be affiliated with a non-Christian religion) than the native born population. Second generation migrants are more similar to natives than first generation migrants although the differences between first and second generation migrants are not significant. However, the average immigrant does not differ from the typical native with respect to their endorsement of openness to change values (Panel 1). As Panel 2 of Table 3 indicates, intra-generational value acculturation appears to play a role: While the average immigrant who resides more than 20 years in the host country is in general undistinguishable from natives, more recent migrants have a consistently stronger conservation orientation, are less in favour of openness to change values and are more religious. Large value differences are associated with the migrants' country of origin. The coefficients for the difference between home and host institutions are substantial, highly significant and indicate that migrants from countries with comparatively poor institutions are more conservation oriented, more religious and, albeit to a lesser degree, less open to change.

Table 3: Multi-level regressions of Schwartz-Values and Religiosity

Dependent variable	Conservation Values		Openess-to-change Values		Religiosity		Non-Christian Religion	
PANEL 1	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE
Immigrant (1st gen)	0.15**	0.05	-0.01	0.03	0.71**	0.24	3.31**	0.30
Second generation	0.09#	0.06	0.05	0.04	0.41#	0.26	3.08**	0.32
PANEL 2	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE	Coeff	SE
Immigrant (1st gen)	0.08	0.10	0.09	0.11	-0.08	0.41	1.82**	0.58
Length of stay: < 1 year	0.10	0.08	-0.05	0.08	0.74**	0.28	0.05	0.34
Length of stay: 1-5 yrs	0.14**	0.03	-0.13**	0.03	0.69**	0.11	0.08	0.14
Length of stay: 6-10 yrs	0.09**	0.03	-0.14**	0.03	0.49**	0.11	0.16	0.13
Length/ stay:11-20 yrs	0.08**	0.02	-0.09**	0.03	0.50**	0.09	0.04	0.12
Second generation	-0.01	0.05	0.04	0.05	-0.19	0.25	1.41	0.42
DiffQuaGov X 1st gen	-0.10**	0.01	0.02**	0.01	-0.36**	0.03	-0.66**	0.05
DiffQuaGov X 2nd gen	-0.07**	0.02	-0.01	0.02	-0.36**	0.07	-0.73**	0.10
Controlled for gender, age, education, income, income source								

Significance levels #=p< .10, *=p < .05, **=p < .01, two-tailed

Turning to the relationship between values and trust in institutions (Model 2, Table 2): As expected, openness to change values are negatively related to trust, whereas conservation values and religiosity are positively related to trust in institution. More religious people exhibit more trust in institutions, but this relationship is much weaker for people affiliated with non-Christian religions. The 'reference point effects' and 'acculturation effects' appear to be partially mediated by values, in particular by a higher orientation toward conservation values, but also by a higher degree of religiosity. However, value mediation explains only a fraction of these 'effects': about 30 percent of the effects of the contrast of home and host country institutions and, for example, less than 10 percent of the difference between recent (less than 1 year) and established immigrants (more than 20 years in host country). Moreover, value assimilation appears to be a slow process which extends over generations and shows substantial effects only for immigrants who are in the host countries for more then 20 years. In contrast, the 'normalisation' of trust happens quicker, is largely completed after 20 years of stay and does not extend to the second generation – as is plausible for a change of expectations as opposed to values. Taken together, the data are consistent with the value mediation hypothesis. The value orientations of migrants from less well governed countries contribute to their strong trust in the institutions of the country of residence. Value orientations can, however, not account for the overall

pattern of relationships that has been found to be supportive for the acculturation and the reference point hypotheses.

Conclusion

In line with previous studies (Bilodeau and Nevitte 2003; Maxwell, 2008; 2010; Röder and Mühlau, 2010; Weaver, 2003; Wenzel, 2006), first generation immigrants are found to have higher levels of trust in institutions compared to natives, whereas this is not the case for the second generation, who are in fact significantly less confident than both the first generation and native born citizens. This over-confidence decreases the more acculturated immigrants are to mainstream society, whether this is measured with longer residence in the host country, generational status (see also Michelson, 2001; 2003; Röder and Mühlau, 2010; Wenzel, 2006), or language and citizenship. This finding confirms for the European context what has been noted previously for the United States.

The main aim of this paper was to account for the higher trust levels of immigrants, with two main explanations being tested. Firstly we asked, does this 'excess-confidence' of migrants stem from their lower expectations of institutional performance due to their experiences in their origin countries? Indeed the frame of reference explanation finds very strong support in the data. The overall higher trust level of the first generation could be fully explained by the difference in quality of governance between host and origin country. The better the institutional performance in the host country compared to the origin country, the higher the trust in these institutions. This is further supported by the decrease in this effect the longer migrants stay, the general decrease in trust levels over time, and the negative effect of acculturation. Furthermore, social position matters less for the first generation, so that the frame of reference effect seems to soften the impact of socio-economic disadvantage. Migrants give credit to public institutions in their host countries, but this credit fades away the more migrants are exposed to the working of these institutions and as the memories of the country of origin become more distant.

Secondly we asked, do the high levels of trust of migrants indicate that they hold values that may be conducive to develop trust in public institutions? As expected, migrants, particularly recent arrivals, from countries with less political stability and lower quality of governance have more

traditional and security oriented values and are less open to change, as well as reporting higher levels of religiosity. This is in line with McAllister and Makkai's (1992) findings that immigrants from non-democratic countries are more supportive of strong government, and may have more authoritarian values. Whilst most of these values are associated with trust in the expected direction, they do not explain the differences in trust in institutions between natives and immigrants, and only account for a relatively small part of the effect of difference between quality of governance in host and origin country. They also mediate only a small proportion of the acculturation effect in terms of length of stay and the timing of value change is different from the change of trust. Fears about the problematic nature of migrants' values as expressed by some commentators (e.g., Huntington 2004) therefore seem unfounded – this study finds that value differences are of relatively minor importance for migrants' higher trust levels. Additionally, values adjust over time – albeit slower than expectations, and the values of second generation in particular are largely similar to those of natives.

In this study we evaluated trust in the four public institutions that were included in all of the first three rounds of the European Social Survey (parliament, the legal system, the police and politicians). This is a limitation because other institutions such as social, housing, educational and health services may be more important for the daily experiences of migrants and their well-being. Equally, when evaluating trust in individual institutions, somewhat different patterns may occur that are specific to how the performance of particular institutions is perceived. This was not the interest here, as we focused on general trust in public institutions, but may be an interesting subject for further research.

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