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CONFIDENCE IN INSTITUTIONS IN FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLICS

Poverenje u institucije u bivšim jugoslovenskim republikama

ABSTRACT: *In this paper, we identify the main factors of confidence in institutions in the six former Yugoslav republics. Conceptually, we introduce two theoretical approaches: social capital theory and political approach. To test our hypotheses, we rely on European Value Study 2008 data, and we use OLS regression analysis. We conclude that the six countries are quite similar in terms of identified factors of confidence in institutions. Satisfaction with democracy proves to be the most reliable predictor of confidence in institutions in each country. Additionally, we conclude that social capital theory provides a better framework for explaining confidence in institutions, rather than the political approach.*

KEY WORDS: institutions, European Value Study, social trust, OLS regression, former Yugoslavia.

APSTRAKT: *Tema ovog članka jeste identifikacija ključnih faktora poverenja u institucije u šest država, bivših Jugoslovenskih republika. Članak se konceptualno oslanja na dva pristupa, i to su teorija o socijalnom kapitalu i politički pristup. Za testiranje hipoteza koristili smo podatke iz Evropskog istraživanja vrednosti (2008). Kao metodu koristili smo regresionu analizu – kriterijum: suma najmanjih kvadrata. Zaključci ovog članka upućuju na sličnosti između šest država, bivših SFRJ republika, kada je reč o faktorima poverenja u institucije. Rezultati istraživanja ukazuju da je 'zadovoljstvo demokratijom' najpouzdaniji faktor poverenja u institucije na uzorcima svake od šest država. Takođe, rezultati ukazuju da teorija o socijalnom kapitalu obezbeđuje heuristički plodniji okvir za objašnjavanje poverenja u institucije u odnosu na politički pristup.*

KLJUČNE REČI: institucije, Evropsko istraživanje vrednosti, socijalno poverenje, regresiona analiza, bivša Jugoslavija.

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Conceptual framework

Although there are many theoretical explanations of why confidence in institutions (sometimes referred to as political confidence[2]) varies among countries, none predominate and few are empirically testable. One of the most prominent approaches is social capital theory (Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1993), in which social trust undergirds confidence in institutions. However, social trust itself can be interpreted differently. Why do people trust one another more or less? Hardin (1999: 26) argues that social trust can be interpreted as encapsulated interest: "By behaving in a particular expected way, because you have an interest to do so, your interest encapsulates my interest". In this interpretation, the issue of social trust is about expectations. We "expect" that someone will behave in certain manner. However, some authors see a concept of uncertainty (Kramer, 1999) in this approach, and other authors argue that social trust is, in its essence, based on a moral worldview (Mansbridge, 1999). This approach presumes that we trust or distrust others because we share the same moral standards. By sharing the same moral views, we are interdependent because we expect that others will react in the same manner as we would (Newman, 1998; Misztal, 1996; Warren, 1999). In a given situation, we transpose our trust in ourselves with trust in others. Considering the issue on a broader metaphysical level, some authors maintain that social trust is based on religious views, because basic moral and social standards come from religion (Brehm & Rahn, 1997; Verba, Schlozman, & Brady, 1995). On the other hand, Rational choice theory interprets social trust as a calculated benefit (Hindmoor, 1998; Warren, 1999) or "risk analysis" (Williamson, 1993; 1996).

Returning to the question of political confidence, we assume (as do many other authors) that social trust is the basis of confidence in institutions (Newton, 1999; Brehm & Rahn, 1997) . In this perspective, the main argument comes from social capital theory, which claims that the more we trust people we know, the more we trust people we do not know. Consequently, the more we trust each other, the greater the level of confidence in institutions. In social capital theory terminology, particularized trust is the basis of generalized trust (Putnam, 1995; Newton, 1999). This approach is not without substantial criticism. Uslaner (2002) claims that particularized trust in people we know is different from generalized trust in people we do not know. Therefore, trust in people is not the same as trusting institutions (Seligman, 1997). Trusting people is something personal, while trusting institutions belongs to a public sphere, and it is to a great extent influenced by public opinion, particularly mass media (Newton, 1999). Levi and Stoker (2000) argue that political confidence stems from the credibility, competence and transparency of public institutions as they perform their duties. Critics also argue that individuals in institutions are obliged to act in accordance to law; hence their behavior is not a question of free will and moral judgment. From this standpoint, institutions are based on rules, which diminish the personal element of political confidence (Offe, 1999; Patterson, 1999).

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2   In this paper confidence in institutions and political confidence are going to be used as synonyms

In this paper, we explain political confidence in the six former republics of Yugoslavia, today independent states, through the social capital theory thesis: social trust is the basis of confidence in institutions. Accepting this main presumption of social capital theory, we examine three additional aspects of social trust important for political confidence. First, we contend that association membership, civic activism and voluntarism are parts of social trust and they influence confidence in institutions (Brehm & Rahn, 1997). It is presumed that when individuals join associations, it increases their mutual trust and identification with society in general, which leads to higher political confidence. However, there is a disagreement among theorists with this approach (Hooghe, 2003, Stolle, 2001). Second, we test a "political approach" to explaining confidence in institutions. Since political confidence is "political," it is reasonable to assume that political factors would be important in explaining confidence; party affiliation and ideology are main factors of confidence in institutions (Newton & Norris, 2000). Therefore, individuals would believe that if the institutions are in the hands of the cabinet of the party they prefer, they will have more confidence in these institutions and *vice versa*. This concept is well-developed and explained in the so-called *home team hypothesis* (Holmberg, 1999). Further, this explanation could be particularly strong in transitional societies. Former Yugoslav societies are often interpreted as "political societies," or "pre-democratic" societies, with everything in the hands of the ruling party (Lazić, M. 2011; Dimitrijević, 2004; Vujadinović, 2008). Laws, regulations and institutional independence are jeopardized, and the institutions act primarily for the benefit of the ruling party. This tendency in these societies is reinforced by two historical factors: the lack of a tradition of rule of law, and a strong tradition of authoritarian governance. The main reason to comparing six Yugoslav republics is because these countries have common history under the same country. The question is what the differences among these countries are after 30 years of transitions.

Third, we investigate individuals' satisfaction with life and their attitudes toward democracy as possible explanatory factors of political confidence. It is one of the most prominent and easily-testable among the many different approaches in explaining political confidence. We expect that the more people are satisfied with their life and the way democracy develops the more confidence they will have in institutions. In many research surveys, satisfaction with democracy correlates with tradition of a democratic society (Schmitt, 1983; Kuechler, 1991; Klingemann, 1999). Therefore, the level of satisfaction with democracy is much lower in new democracies than in mature ones (Rimac & Štulhofer, 2004). However, researchers have different opinions on this argument as well. Easton (1965) claims that when estimating satisfaction with democracy, in the research environment, individuals actually assess the current performance of the government. Therefore satisfaction with democracy, as a variable, should not be a reliable predictor of political confidence.

Data and measurement

We rely on European Value Study (EVS) 2008–2010 data. We accept measurements[3] provided by this comparative research, with some additional statistical adjustments, of course. It is important to note that in this 2008 particular wave, Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Macedonia were included for the first time; it is the second wave of EVS research for Slovenia and Croatia. Therefore, this is the first time it is possible to test certain hypothesis in the six countries using the same measurements.

First, in EVS social trust is measured by using three items:

Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?

Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or do they mostly look after themselves?

Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got a chance or would they try to be fair?

In case of these three questions, the first question is bivalent, while other two are 10 point scale. First, we run principal component analysis of these three variables (Table 1). As a result, only one factor appears, and reliability of measurement is justified.

Table 1 Principal component analysis of social trust

Social trust	BIH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
Most people can be trusted	0.73	0.58	0.69	0.63	0.70	0.75
Most of the time people try to be helpful or mostly looking after themselves	0.83	0.77	0.86	0.78	0.73	0.92
Do you think most people try to take advantage of you	0.87	0.81	0.86	0.83	0.79	0.91
KMO[2]	0.64	0.57	0.63	0.59	0.62	0.65
% of variance explained	66	53	65	57	55	74
Eigenvalue	1.98	1.59	1.96	1.71	1.64	2.23

Then, we produced a new variable (scale) measuring social trust by collapsing three variables and producing the score ranging from 0 (lowest level of trust) to 1 (highest level of trust). In this way, it is possible to analyze dispersion of social trust in the six republics by using the same interval criteria (Table 2). It could be seen that, according to this measurement, we found the highest level of social trust in Slovenia (0.39) and the lowest in Serbia (0.29).

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3   There are many different measurements of the concepts we used. The primary differences pertain to which specific question is used and what kind of scale is used. Different questions and particular scaling may produce different results. For example, the same question that is used in EVS about confidence in institutions CID uses an 11-point scale. Still, we use measurements introduced by EVS as they are.

2   KMO is Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin measure; it indicates to what extent the variables included in the model fit the underlying criteria. The highest possible level of KMO is 1.0 which corresponds to excellent fit.

Table 2. Level of dispersion of social trust

Country	Mean	Standard deviation	N
Slovenia	0.39	0.24	1365
Montenegro	0.34	0.28	1504
BiH	0.34	0.28	1511
Croatia	0.33	0.23	1523
Macedonia	0.31	0.29	1483
Serbia	0.29	0.23	1508

Confidence in institutions, our main dependent variable, is based on a question asking the level of confidence in particular institutions: "Please look at this card, and tell me for each item, how much confidence you have in them (list of institutions)." Confidence is measured on a four-point scale ranging from high level of confidence to no confidence at all. After careful examination of the entire list of institutions, and by examining the KMO measure for each country, we introduced one-factor principal component analysis which includes the following institutions: police, parliament, civil service, social security system, government, political parties, health care system and justice system (Table 3)

Table 3. Principal component analysis of confidence in institutions

Institutions	BIH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
Police	.716	.657	.787	.685	.593	.672
Parliament	.785	.684	.826	.738	.772	.806
The Civil Services	.812	.722	.762	.767	.766	.841
Social Security System	.794	.727	.741	.730	.681	.791
Government	.714	.761	.769	.761	.714	.688
Political Parties	.640	.609	.595	.616	.670	.697
Health Care System	.690	.701	.610	.680	.573	.724
Justice System	.791	.733	.801	.767	.674	.794
KMO	.88	.87	.87	.87	.85	.87
% of variance explained	55	49	55	52	47	57
Eigenvalue	4.44	3.93	4.39	4.14	3.74	4.55

Then, as in the case of social trust, we calculated the score of political confidence based on scale from 0 (no confidence) to 1 (the highest confidence). Dispersion of the score could be seen in Table 4. Although there are some differences in the order of the countries, we still identify the highest level of political confidence in Slovenia, while in Serbia it is at the lowest level.

Table 4. Level of dispersion of confidence in institutions

Country	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Slovenia	0.58	0.13	1362
Macedonia	0.57	0.18	1496
Montenegro	0.55	0.17	1487
BiH	0.53	0.17	1506
Croatia	0.47	0.13	1519
Serbia	0.46	0.14	1501

Since we presume membership in associations as one of the explanatory factors of political confidence, we ran principal component analysis for each country, based on their level of membership in associations. As with the case of confidence in institutions, a single factor analysis is introduced with attention to the KMO test in order to produce valid comparative measurement. Membership in organizations is presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Principal component analysis
of membership in associations

Member/Belong to:	BiH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
Local political actions	0.70	0.57	0.79	0.80	0.72	0.66
Human rights	0.78	0.67	0.88	0.78	0.78	0.17
Conservation, the environment, ecology, animal rights	0.65	0.63	0.83	0.67	0.59	0.79
Youth work	0.72	0.40	0.70	0.70	0.47	0.69
Peace movement	0.47	0.64	0.76	0.81	0.71	0.54
KMO	0.74	0.67	0.83	0.81	0.74	0.67
% of variance explained	45	35	63	57	44	37
Eigenvalue	2.26	1.74	3.16	2.84	2.20	1.85

By collapsing the above memberships in a new variable, the score would be extremely skewed, since a relatively small number of respondents belong to any of these associations. Therefore, we formed a new dummy variable which practically indicates whether respondents belong to any of these associations.[4] In Table 6, we present the distribution of this variable in each country.

Table 6. Membership in associations

Country	Not a member	Member	N
BiH	97,6%	2,4%	1512
Croatia	91,8%	8,2%	1374
Montenegro	95,6%	4,4%	1516
Serbia	95,4%	4,6%	1512
Slovenia	89,0%	11,0%	1362
Macedonia	89,6%	10,4%	1499

The highest level of association involvement is measured in Slovenia, but in Macedonia it is almost at the same level. While Croatia is in the middle of this scale, people in Montenegro and Serbia rarely are members of associations; and we measure the lowest level of associational involvement in BiH, where only 2,4% of respondents report that they are members of any of the above mentioned organizations.

Since we presumed that satisfaction with democracy should be a possible predictor of political confidence, we introduced this variable in the analysis as well. Satisfaction with democracy in EVS is based on a four-point scale question,

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4   Number of those which belong to two or more associations is ridiculously small.

ranging from "very satisfied" to "not at all satisfied." We transformed this four-point scale to provide the scale from 0 (the lowest level) to 1 (the highest level) of satisfaction. We present distribution of satisfaction with democracy in each country in Table 7.

Table 7. Satisfaction with democracy

Country	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Slovenia	0.48	0.21	1330
Macedonia	0.43	0.29	1473
Montenegro	0.42	0.27	1418
Croatia	0.36	0.23	1456
BiH	0.34	0.26	1465
Serbia	0.32	0.23	1423

Again, in Slovenia we measure the highest level of satisfaction with democracy and in Serbia the lowest level.

Life satisfaction in EVS is measured with a ten-point scale, ranging from 1 (dissatisfied) to 10 (satisfied). We present dispersion of this variable on the original scale for each country in our sample in Table 8.

Table 8. Satisfaction with life

Country	Mean	Standard Deviation	N
Slovenia	7.52	2.11	1364
Montenegro	7.45	2.37	1497
Croatia	7.09	2.39	1514
BiH	7.06	2.34	1496
Serbia	6.94	2.41	1495
Macedonia	6.87	2.47	1445

Data showed that, as with the other variables, we measure the highest level of satisfaction with life in Slovenia, while this time Macedonia is at the bottom.

The variables that are presented are the once which operationalize social capital theory approach in our methodological design. Additionally, as we said, we test this so-called "political approach" as well, presuming that specific political variables, particularly party preference, would be the main factor of confidence in institutions. The main variable for this measure is party affiliation. In EVS, party preference is represented through the question: "Which party would respondents vote for if the elections took place tomorrow?" We list every party with support N=25+ in each country and present them with respective EVS codes[5] in Table 9.

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5   It should be noted that these codes were used as they are in regression analysis tables. Thus, when reading the codes in regression tables, each code will refer to the political parties presented in Table 9

Table 9. List of parties and respective EVS codes

BiH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
BA: (SDS) – 70004	HR: (HDZ)– 191004	ME: DPS– 499001	RS: DS– 688001	SI: (DeSUS)– 705002	MK: (DPA)– 807002
BA: (SDA)– 70009	HR: (SDP)- 191007	ME:SDP 499002	RS: DSS- 688002	SI: (LDS)– 705003	MK: IMRO – DPMNU– 807023
BA: (SB&H)– 70010	HR: (HSS)– 191009	ME: RCC- 499003	RS: SRS- 688003	SI: (SLS)- 705004	MK: SDAM– 807019
BA: BSDP– 70015	HR: (HSP)- 191011	ME: SNS- 499004	RS: G17+– 688004	SI: (SNS)- 705005	MK: DUI– 807020
BA: (HDZ)– 70030	HR: HSU- 191013	ME: SNP- 499005	RS: LDP- 688005	SI: (SDS)– 705006	
BA: (BPS) – 70038	HR: (IDS)– 191016		RS: SPS- 688015	SI: (NSI)– 705020	
BA: SNSD– 70047				SI: SD– 705021	
				SI – SNP 705022	

For the purpose of our research, we produced a dummy variable for each party in each country, ranging from 1 (would vote) to 0 (wouldn't vote).

Our second variable for political approach testing is general interest in politics. In EVS, interest in politics is measured by a single question with four possible responses: very interested, somewhat interested, not very interested and not interested at all. For the purpose of our analysis, we produced a dummy variable by collapsing very interested and somewhat interested into one category, and we combined the other two into a second category. Thus, the dummy variable which measures interest in politics has a value of 1 for those who are more interested in politics and 0 for those who are less interested in politics. Distribution of this variable for each country can be seen in Table 10.

Table 10. Interest in politics

Country	Not interested in politics	Interested in politics	N
BiH	59,6%	40,4%	1512
Croatia	67,3%	32,7%	1525
Montenegro	73,9%	26,1%	1516
Serbia	63,5%	36,5%	1512
Slovenia	55,9%	44,1%	1366
Macedonia	53,7%	46,3%	1500

The most interested in politics, according to the data, are Macedonians and Slovenians, and the most uninterested are Montenegrins.

Finally, besides controlling variables which will be explained later, we introduced Inglehart's (1990) measurement of materialism/post-materialism. We used an Index based on four well-known items, dividing the sample into three categories: materialist, mixed and post-materialist. For the purpose of our research, we used post-materialist orientation as a dummy variable. Distribution of materialists vs. post-materialists in each country can be seen in Table 11.

Table 11. Materialism/Post-Materialism

Country	Materialist	Post materialist	N
BiH	92,6%	7,4%	686
Croatia	76,8%	23,2%	517
Montenegro	86,0%	14,0%	606
Serbia	88,1%	11,9%	705
Slovenia	60,7%	39,3%	460
Macedonia	75,9%	24,1%	593

According to this parameter, Slovenia has comparatively the largest post-material-oriented population, while in BiH we measure the smallest number of respondents belonging to this category.

Factors of political confidence

Our first hypothesis of this research is that social trust, membership in associations, satisfaction with democracy and life satisfaction explain political confidence. Since we presented theoretical arguments for this approach, as well as distribution of variables in question in each country, we test this approach by using OLS regression analysis.

Table 12. Correlations between social trust, confidence
in institutions and satisfaction with democracy

Country	Social trust and confidence in institutions		Social trust and satisfaction with democracy		Confidence in institutions and satisfaction with democracy	
	Pearson's r	N	Pearson's r	N	Pearson's r	N
BiH	0.104	1505	0.138	1464	0.268	1463
Croatia	0.075	1517	0.059*	1454	0.340	1453
Montenegro	0.093	1476	0.114	1409	0.505	1401
Serbia	0.123	1497	0.064*	1422	0.303	1415
Slovenia	0.137	1361	0.149	1329	0.338	1328
Macedonia	0.116	1479	0.149	1457	0.492	1471
Entire sample	0.119	8835	0.127	8535	0.412	8531

Each correlation is significant at 0.01 level except those marked with: * which are significant at 0.05 level

First, we ran the correlation analysis presented in Table 12. In order to provide a multivariate test of the hypothesis, we used OLS regression analysis (Table 13). The model is controlled for demographic variables. For gender/sex, we used an original dummy variable marking 1 for female. Age of the respondent is used in its authentic interval number of years. Also, we used education as ISCED one-digit coding scheme. Finally, the size of a town is introduced. This variable ranges from 1 (towns smaller than 2000 residents) to 8 (towns with more then 500 000 residents). Although it was not an intended matter of

interest, demographic variables proved to have some explanatory power. This is particularly the case with education, showing the higher the level of education, the lower the level of political confidence (the only exception is Serbia). Also, in each sample apart from Slovenia, older people tend to have higher political confidence than younger ones. Finally, the size of a town seems to be a significant negative predictor in each country except in Serbia and Slovenia.

Table 13. Social capital theory testing
– OLS Beta coefficients of confidence in institutions

PREDICTORS	BiH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
Social trust	0.10***	0.07**	0.04[+]	0.09**	0.11***	0.06*
Satisfaction with democracy	0.23***	0.32***	0.49***	0.28***	0.33***	0.47***
Membership in associations	0.05*	– 0.03	0.02	-0.03	– 0.01	-0.01
Life satisfaction	0.07[+]	0.03	0.08***	0.07**	0.05	0.05[+]
Size of a town	– 0.17***	– 0.18***	– 0.12***	– 0.02	– 0.03	– 0.13***
Female	0.08**	0.00	0.04[+]	0.01	-0.03	0.00
Age	0.09**	0.08**	0.05*	0.06[*]	0.08**	– 0.01
Education	– 0.07*	– 0.06*	– 0.07**	– 0.04	– 0.06*	– 0.09**
Adjusted R^2	0.129	0.169	0.289	0.101	0.137	0.267

*** p ≤ 0.001 ** p ≤ 0.01 * p ≤ 0.05 [+] p ≤ 0.1

Further, we examine social capital theory variables as the most important predictors of political confidence. Satisfaction with democracy is the most reliable predictor across all samples. In each sample, the value of Beta coefficients is much higher than other coefficients, and in each case it is significant with a 99.9% confidence interval. However, social trust also is a significant predictor of political confidence in each country. We observe the most reliable significant level in BiH and Slovenia (p<0.001), but it also is highly significant in Croatia and Serbia (p<0.01) and in Macedonia (p<0.05). Montenegro is the only country in which the significance level of social trust, as a predictor of political confidence, can be questioned (p<0.1).

Thus, in general, we may predict that increasing social trust in society will produce a higher level of confidence in political institutions. On the other hand, membership in associations proved to be a poor predictor of political confidence. Apart from BiH, where this variable is significant at a 95% level, in all other samples it is insignificant. Finally, the degree of life satisfaction and its significance vary from country to country. While satisfaction with life is a highly-significant predictor in Montenegro and, at lower level, in Serbia, in Macedonia and BiH its predictability is questionable. Moreover, we can conclude nothing about the level of political confidence based on life satisfaction in Croatia and Slovenia.

By observing Adjusted R^2 with this model, we can explain 29% of the variation in political confidence in Montenegro and 27% in Macedonia. With

these predictors, in Croatia we can explain 17% of the variation; in Slovenia 14%; and in BiH 13%. We can explain the smallest amount of variation with this model in Serbia, covering only 10% of variation. However, adjusted R^2 includes demographic variables. In a model without demographic variables, we found a wide percentage of explained variation in each country: BiH 8%; Croatia 12%; Montenegro 26%, Serbia 10%, Slovenia 12% and Macedonia 24%. Thus, this is the extent in each country to which we can diminish the explanatory power of social capital theory variables.

Our second hypothesis is that political confidence can be explained by political factors, particularly by party affiliation. In order to test this hypothesis we run OLS regression model with "political" variables (Table 14). First, we can conclude from Adjusted R^2 that predictability of the model containing political variables[6] is much less useful compared to the social capital theory model. The explained variation of political confidence is relatively high only in the case of Montenegro (12%). In Slovenia it is 6%, and in all other countries it varies between a humble 2% in Macedonia and 4% in BiH. However, in each country, at least one party is a highly-significant predictor of political confidence.

Table 14. "Home team" hypothesis testing – OLS: Beta coefficients of confidence in institutions

Political parties in respective countries	BiH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
BA(70004); HR(191004); ME(499001); RS(688001); SL(705002); MK(807002)	0.13***	0.17***	0.30***	0.16***	0.09**	0.04
BA(70009); HR(191007); ME(499002); RS(688002); SL(705003); MK(807023)	0.13***	− 0.03	0.07**	0.09**	0.08**	0.01
BA(70010); HR(191009); ME(499003); RS(688003); SL(705004); MK(807019)	0.10***	0.08**	− 0.06*	0.06*	0.14***	− 0.04
BA(70015); HR(191011); ME(499004); RS(688004); SL(705005); MK(807020)	0.00	0.04	− 0.07**	0.04	0.03	0.10***
BA(70030); HR(191013); ME(499005); RS(688005); SL(705006)	0.00	− 0.01	− 0.04	0.01	0.18***	-
BA(70038); HR(191016); RS(688015); SL(705020)	0.05[+]	− 0.02	-	0.05*	0.08**	-
BA(70047); SL(705021)	0.09**	-	-	-	0.07**	-
SL(705021)	-	-	-	-	0.01	-
Interest in politics	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.08**	0.10***	0.10**
Adjusted R^2	0.038	0.029	0.115	0.035	0.063	0.022

*** $p \leq 0.001$. ** $p \leq 0.01$. * $p \leq 0.05$. [+] $p \leq 0.1$

It is interesting that in Macedonia, the Party of Ethnic Albanians (DUI) is the only significant political party. Additionally, Montenegro, has had a stable ruling structure led by the Democratic Party of Socialists (DPS) since the beginning of the country's transition, and it is logical that preferring this party would be highly-significant for political confidence. This model fits the best in Montenegro compared to other countries probably because of the country's

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6   We will use term "home-team" hypothesis (Holmberg, 1999) as a synonym of political approach

transitional exceptionalism, in which there has been no change of the ruling party since the fall of socialism. In Montenegro, the model is "clean": when preferring two parties which are in power (DPS and SDP), the Beta coefficient is positive and the political confidence predictor of preferring the two main opposition parties (SNS[7] and PZP) is negative. The only insignificant party in this regard is SNP, but this party emerged from the ruling DPS after the DPS dissolved in 1997. In Slovenia, as well as in Serbia, it is interesting that both the ruling and opposition parties are significant positive predictors of political confidence. However, it must be said, this finding further undermines the "home-team" hypothesis, since support for the ruling parties, and not opposition parties, should connote a higher level of political confidence. This hypothesis is supported, apart from the case of Montenegro, in BiH and Croatia. Finally, interest in politics is a significant predictor in Serbia, Slovenia and Macedonia, but this predictor is not significant at all in the other three countries.

Our final model is presented in Table 15. It is a comprehensive model which includes the entire set of variables from both of the above proposed models[8]. We introduce this model primarily to estimate the strength of predictors in a multivariate environment where each independent variable is controlled by other independent variables. First, if we analyze the differences between adjusted R^2 in the social capital theory model and the final model, we see that we did not gain many explained variations by adding the full range of political variables. In the final model, compared to the social capital theory model, the percentage of explained variation increases only by 1% to 2%, depending on the country.

In the final model, satisfaction with democracy is the strongest and the most reliable predictor. According to our analysis, only one in one thousand samples may show different results, which is a very impressive certainty of the finding. Additionally, the value of Beta coefficients of this predictor is much higher than any other predictor[9]. Thus, our main and most reliable finding is that *the more people are satisfied with democracy, the more likely they are to have confidence in institutions*. However, this finding also raises possible problems with the question used in the survey. As mentioned above, it is not clear whether satisfaction with democracy measures real perception of democratic development in a society, or whether it represents an assessment of the current performance of the government. Future research should include variables or scales measuring democratic value orientation. This would ensure that the satisfaction with democracy measure is not merely demonstrating a preference for the current democratic political system in general.

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7   Today called NOVA (New Serbian Democracy), at the time of research (2008) SNS (Serbian People's party)

8   We disregard the argument that many predictors would produce the situation that some of the coefficients are significant by chance because in the table we presented six models at one place (one in each country). The maximum number of predictors, therefore, is in Slovenia (18 of them)

9   We stress that standardized Beta coefficients are presented in the table.

Table 15. Final model – OLS:
Beta coefficients of confidence in institutions

PREDICTORS	BiH	CRO	MNE	SER	SLO	MCD
Social trust	0.10***	0.08**	0.04[+]	0.09**	0.10***	0.06*
Satisfaction with democracy	0.20***	0.31***	0.42***	0.27***	0.30***	0.46***
Membership in associations	0.05*	-0.03	-0.02	-0.01	– 0.02	0.01
Life satisfaction	0.08**	0.02	0.07**	0.07**	0.04	0.05[+]
Size of town	– 0.15***	– 0.18***	– 0.10***	– 0.03	– 0.03	– 0.13***
Sex	0.08**	0.00	0.04[+]	0.02	-0.02	0.02
Age	0.09**	0.08**	0.03	0.05	0.05[+]	– 0.01
Education	– 0.05[+]	– 0.05	– 0.08**	– 0.05[+]	-0.05[+]	– 0.08**
BA(70004); HR(191004); ME(499001); RS(688001); SL(705002); MK(807002)	0.07*	0.10***	0.13***	0.19**	0.08**	0.04
BA(70009); HR(191007); ME(499002); RS(688002); SL(705003); MK(807023)	0.10***	– 0.02	0.02	0.07*	0.06*	0.00
BA(70010); HR(191009); ME(499003); RS(688003); SL(705004); MK(807019)	0.07**	0.05[+]	– 0.05*	0.10**	0.10***	0.01
BA(70015); HR(191011); ME(499004); RS(688004); SL(705005); MK(807020)	– 0.01	0.05[+]	– 0.03	0.05[+]	0.03	0.07**
BA(70030); HR(191013); ME(499005); RS(688005); SL(705006)	-0.04	– 0.02	– 0.03	-0.01	0.12***	-
BA(70038); HR(191016); RS(688015); SL(705020)	0.02	– 0.02	-	0.06*	0.05[+]	-
BA(70047); SL(705021)	0.05[+]	-	-	-	0.06*	-
SL(705021)	-	-	-	-	0.00	
Interest in politics	0.04	– 0.01	0.03	0.05[+]	0.05[+]	0.03
Post –materialist	– 0.06**	– 0.02	– 0.06*	0.02	– 0.00	– 0.06**
Adjusted R²	0.149	0.178	0.310	0.119	0.159	0.274

*** $p \leq 0.001$. ** $p \leq 0.01$. * $p \leq 0.05$. [+] $p \leq 0.1$

Although social trust, our main social capital theory variable, varies among countries, it is still a significant predictor of confidence in institutions in each sample. As in the basic model, however, social trust is the most unreliable predictor of institutional confidence in Montenegro, where one out of ten possible samples could provide different results compared to the one we found in this sample. However, in all other countries, we can rely on social trust as a stable predictor of political confidence. Therefore, we say with reasonable probability that *interpersonal social trust increases political confidence in the six former Yugoslav republics*. However, association membership is not a useful predictor in either the basic model or the final model. Only in BiH is this variable significant (p<0.05).

Although the whole set of political variables does not explain much variation of political confidence, many of them remain significant and useful predictors in the final model. First, party affiliation – as the main variable which supports

the "home-team" hypothesis – plays different roles in different countries. In Slovenia, preference of six out of eight political parties is a significant predictor of political confidence, albeit with varying significance levels. Most interesting, each predictor of this kind in Slovenia is positive, and it includes both the ruling and opposition parties. We found a similar pattern in Serbia, where five out of six parties are significant predictors (with different levels of significance). However, as in Slovenia, each predictor is positive, and the parties in question are both opposition and ruling parties. Hence, in these two states, though party affiliation somewhat explains political confidence, the finding does not align with a "home-team" hypothesis, which claims supporters of the ruling party will have higher confidence in institutions. It seems that in these two countries, supporting either the ruling or opposition parties increases political confidence.

In BiH, four out of seven parties are significant positive predictors, but in this case the "home-team" hypothesis is somewhat supported: all four are ruling parties in respective Bosnian entities. In Montenegro and Croatia as well, the "home-team" hypothesis showed some potential. In Croatia, indeed, those who support the ruling HDZ[10] party tend to have more confidence in institutions compared to those who do not support this party. In Montenegro, we see even clearer picture: positive predictability of the ruling party is followed by negative predictability of the main opposition party. Therefore, in these three countries, the "home-team" hypothesis has some empirical support, but with limited explanatory power.

In Macedonia, only preference for the Ethnic Albanian Party is a useful predictor in the final model. This finding is odd and it demands additional analysis. We know that ethnic Albanians earnestly challenge the legitimacy of the Macedonian state, and it does not follow logically that preferring the Albanian party in Macedonia increases the likelihood of institutional confidence.

Interest in politics in the final model appears not to be a useful predictor of political confidence. This variable showed some potential only in Serbia and Slovenia, but at a p<0.1 confidence interval. Thus, *we may conclude that a higher level of interest in politics does not increase the level of political confidence.*

Finally, we included post-materialism as a dummy variable in our comprehensive model, primarily to control other variables with value orientations. This variable has some explanatory potential for political confidence as a negative predictor in BiH, Montenegro and Macedonia, but it is not significant in the other three countries.

Final conclusions and recap

We tested two theories with respective hypotheses, trying to illuminate to what extent social capital and political factors could explain confidence in institutions in the six former Yugoslav republics. We found that, in general, *social capital theory is a more useful predictor in each country.* Political factors have much less explanatory power, though we cannot disregard them.

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10   It was the ruling party at the time i.e. 2008

Among all the concepts we used to test our hypothesis, *satisfaction with democracy is the most reliable predictor*. In each of the six former Yugoslav republics, the more people are satisfied with democracy, the more they tend to have confidence in institutions. This finding raises some theoretical and empirical questions. Empirically, it spurs doubts about the measurement used in this particular research, which we have addressed above. Theoretically, the main question remains: what does satisfaction with democracy really measure? Bearing in mind the predictive power of satisfaction with democracy as a factor of political confidence, future research should examine three things. First, it should provide additional measurements for satisfaction with democracy. Second, it should control this measurement with other variables, such as the preference for the political system in general and preference for democracy in general, as well as including some wider value orientations. Third, future research should test the hypothesis at an aggregate level in addition to an individual one.

From the social capital theory point of view, the most important conclusion we can draw is that confidence in political institutions most probably increases if people trust each other more. We confirm this finding in each country sample. This justification of social trust as a predictor of political confidence can contribute to many research surveys with a similar topical focus but reach different – and even opposite – conclusions based on alternate empirical material and statistical analyses.

However, in each state we examined, *association membership does not contribute to higher political confidence*. It simply is not the case that the more people join different associations, the more they have confidence in the institutions of the state. This finding confirms many previous research surveys which reach the same conclusion. It might be that joining an organization is not connected with social trust, but the origins of motive for joining could be quite individual and vary from country to country. Still, it should be noted that Bosnia and Herzegovina is an exceptional case in this regard, compared to the other five countries. This finding may be explained by BiH's complex state structure, lack of political legitimacy, generally unstable social structure and its status as an international protectorate. Perhaps Bosnian people join associations searching for something to ameliorate the loss of social order in daily life.

Beside the fact that the political factors approach has limited explanatory power in general, from a comparative perspective, we identify differences among countries. First, in BiH, Croatia and, particularly, Montenegro, confidence in institutions correlates positively with preferring the ruling parties. However, in Serbia and Slovenia, we could expect higher political confidence by individuals supporting both the opposition and ruling parties. Perhaps political participation in general is a leading factor in these two countries. This could be examined in future surveys by introducing two mechanisms of control: conventional political participation as a variable, and a variable measuring to what extent citizens are politically informed. We assume that party affiliation only represents political participation and being politically informed. However, this should not be due to interest in politics because we controlled our model with this variable.

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