Ethnic Diversity and Generalized Trust in Europe : A Cross-National Multilevel Study

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While most current research documents a negative relation between ethnic diversity and generalized trust, it has to be acknowledged that these results often originate from one-country analyses in North America. In this article, attitudinal measurements from the European Social Survey are combined with Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development data on migration patterns, thus examining the relationship between diversity and trust in a comparative manner across 20 European countries. More fine-grained measurements of diversity (including type and rise of diversity over time and legal status of immigrants) are included in a multilevel model. At the individual level, most of the familiar relations were confirmed. At the country level, hardly any indicators for migration or diversity proved to be strongly and consistently related to generalized trust. Results suggest that the pessimistic conclusions about the negative effects of ethnic diversity on generalized trust cannot be confirmed at the aggregate level across European countries.

Keywords: *ethnic diversity; generalized trust; multilevel modeling; immigration; European Social Survey*

Introduction

In recent years, the impact of migration and increasing ethnic diversity on social cohesion and particularly generalized trust has become a hotly debated topic among scholars, policy makers, and in society in general

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(Campbell, 2007; Cheong, Edwards, Gouldbourne, & Solomos, 2007; Glazer, 1997; Putnam, 2007; Schildkraut, 2007). Clearly, during the past decades Western democracies have become increasingly diverse, and considering the overall demographic trends and changes in the labor market in Western societies, it is assumed that European societies will become even more ethnically and culturally diverse in the near future (Castles & Miller, 2003; Cornelius & Rosenblum, 2005; Hooghe, Trappers, Meuleman, & Reeskens, 2008). The idea that increasing cultural and ethnic diversity might threaten social cohesion by eroding the social fabric of society therefore strikes a sensitive nerve.

Several empirical studies have indeed documented a negative relation between ethnic diversity and generalized trust, an attitude that is considered an important measure of social cohesion. Levels of generalized trust are not just lower among ethnic minorities themselves, but they are also suppressed among majority populations when they face diverse surroundings (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Banting, Johnston, & Soroka, 2006; Bjørnskov, 2006; Hero, 2003). Recently this debate was reinvigorated by the publication of the Putnam (2007) article "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-First Century," demonstrating a negative impact of ethnic diversity in American society. Based on the results of the Social Capital Community Benchmark Survey, Putnam argues that at least in the short run diversity is likely to weaken community cohesion.

However, before concluding that ethnic and racial diversity has detrimental effects on trust and other civic attitudes, we need to extend current research. First, a major concern is that studies on the relation between diversity and generalized trust have been conducted mostly in a one-country setting so far, predominantly in the United States. By using the European Social Survey 2002-03 (ESS), we can complement current research with a comparative cross-national test. Second, many of these studies have focused solely on the racial cleavage between Blacks and Whites in America, neglecting both other forms of ethnic diversity, which for example result from immigration, and the dynamic nature of immigration to Western democracies. In this study, we will use various diversity indicators, based on the Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) Migration to Europe statistics. Third, ethnic diversity is a community characteristic that should be measured at the aggregate level. This automatically implies that survey analyses on the impact of diversity should be based on multilevel modeling techniques, including both individual and community characteristics.

Before presenting a cross-national investigation into the relation between ethnic diversity and generalized trust, the current literature with its

strengths and shortcomings is discussed and the hypotheses of the study are introduced. The next section describes the included variables and methodology. In the third part we will present our results. Finally, we offer a discussion of our results and some concluding remarks.

Research on Diversity and Generalized Trust

A growing body of research has recently focused attention on the way ethnic, racial, and religious diversity affects social cohesion more generally and generalized trust specifically (Alesina & La Ferrara, 2002; Putnam, 2007). Whereas the social capital literature was originally quite hopeful about the benefits of bridging ties across ethnic cleavages (Putnam, 2000), many recent studies reveal that increasing levels of diversity pose a challenge to civic and redistributive values, civic engagement, even informal social interactions, public participation, and most visibly generalized trust (Hero, 2003). Social cohesion and social capital are notoriously difficult concepts to include in empirical research because their multidimensional character cannot easily be captured and measured (Chan, To, & Chan, 2006). Therefore, most of the research in this area is concentrated on the specific attitude that is at the heart of social cohesion and social capital: generalized trust (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005). This form of trust in one's fellow citizens is a crucial prerequisite for collective action and patterns of cooperation (Levi, 1998).

Much of the current research on the effects of diversity on trust is undertaken in the North American context (Alesina & La Ferrara, 1999, 2002; Costa & Kahn, 2003; Hero, 2003; Putnam, 2007). The routine conclusion is that in racially diverse cities, communities, neighborhoods, or census tracts, generalized trust levels tend to be lower for visible minorities and White majorities alike. For example, in a larger study encompassing all U.S. states, Alesina and La Ferrara (1999) demonstrate that people who live in racially fragmented communities are significantly less trusting, even when controlling for a host of other socioeconomic factors. They argue that the negative effect of diversity is not just a result of the lower trust of Blacks and visible minorities themselves but that it is a contextual effect resulting from the composition of the neighborhood, affecting also the majority groups.

Putnam (2007) largely confirms these findings. His analysis shows that the ethnic and racial composition of one's surroundings has a significant influence on a host of variables that taps and measures social cohesion or social capital, diminishing not only generalized trust but also political confidence, even happiness, and the average number of friends and confidants.

It has to be noted that the Putnam study includes three distinct measurements of ethnic diversity: overall ethnic heterogeneity, the percentage of immigrants within the population, and the percentage of Afro-American citizens in the community of the respondent. Of these three measures, the percentage of immigrants in the community reveals the strongest effect (Putnam, 2007). This might suggest that recent increases in ethnic diversity have a stronger influence on trust than familiar and well-established forms of diversity within the community.

Although these findings are hardly comforting for the future of ethnically and culturally diverse societies, they do reflect current insights in various disciplines. Social psychological research suggests that trust should prosper in homogenous settings and suffer when faced with heterogeneity. Trust seems easier to develop when we are familiar with the people around us, and particularly when they seem similar to ourselves (Abrams, Hogg, & Marques, 2005; Uslaner, 2002). In essence, ethnic or racial differences make it more difficult to rely on the future behavior of one's neighbors, friends, and colleagues (Messick & Kramer, 2001), reducing levels of interpersonal trust and eroding the capacity for cooperation and support for collective action.

The theoretical and empirical work on the relation between diversity and generalized trust relies strongly on research on racial attitudes and intergroup relations. This line of research shows that a confrontation with ethnic or cultural diversity can cause feelings of threat and even increased negative orientations toward those who are different (Blalock, 1967; Brewer, 1999; Brown, 2000; Giles & Hertz, 1994; Taylor, 1998). For instance, studies on racial attitudes in the United States find that Whites who live in closer proximity to African Americans and other minority groups exhibit increasing racial hostility and prejudice (Fossett & Kiecolt, 1989). The perceived threat arising from the increasing percentage of minority (usually Black) populations in White majority neighborhoods is often understood as a result of economic or political competitions as well as status struggles between minority and majority groups (Paxton & Mughan, 2006; Tajfel & Turner, 1986). Threats arising from immigration are also often based on cultural identity and the perceived cultural distance between immigration groups and majority cultures (Sides & Citrin, 2007; Van Oudenhoven, Askevis-Leherpeux, Hannover, Jaarsma, & Dardenne, 2002). Whatever the particular reason for the feelings of threat resulting from ethnic diversity, these feelings can easily turn into generalized attitudes of distrust and even distrust in members of the own in-group (Putnam, 2007).

Further complicating the research on the relation between ethnic diversity and generalized trust is that contextual socioeconomic resources and status might directly and indirectly influence racial attitudes and other generalized attitudes such as trust. Ross, Mirowsky, and Pribesh (2001), for example, find that net of individual disadvantage, residents of disadvantaged neighborhoods have low levels of trust as a result of high levels of disorder in their surroundings. This would imply that the impact of ethnic diversity is strengthened by the fact that people live in economically underprivileged communities or neighborhoods (Branton & Jones, 2005). These results remind us that socioeconomic resources should be integrated at least as control variables in a fully specified model.

Three Advances in Research on the Effects of Diversity

In order to assess the impact of ethnic diversity on generalized trust, we propose to consider three extensions of current work that will help to draw a more complete picture of this relationship. First, we argue for a broad comparative approach; second, we highlight the need for comprehensive measurements of diversity; and third, we highlight the importance of multilevel methods of analysis in this kind of research.

The first issue involves the question whether the findings about the negative effects of diversity on trust for the U.S. context might be easily transferable to other Western democracies. The form of ethnic diversity experienced in U.S. society is fairly unique with a mixture of an older cleavage (Afro-Americans/Whites), overlaid with more recent types of diversity resulting from various waves of immigration, for example, from Latin America or Asia (Sniderman & Piazza, 1993). In most Western European societies on the other hand, the presence of visible minorities is a recent phenomenon dating from the second half of the 20th century (Sniderman & Hagendoorn, 2007). Self-evidently, Western Europe too has always been ethnically diverse to some extent, but the resulting cleavages were until recently less visible and they had a different historical legacy compared to the ethnic cleavages in the United States. Therefore, comparative research is needed if we want to determine whether the findings for the United States can be generalized to Europe or other cultural contexts (Delhey & Newton, 2005).

For other reasons too, a comparison between the United States and Europe is highly relevant. For example, economic inequality, which is higher in the United States (Gottschalk & Smeeding, 1997), has a strong

negative impact on generalized trust (Rothstein & Uslaner, 2005) and might even exacerbate the effects of ethnic diversity (Branton & Jones, 2005). Empirical studies on the effects of diversity on trust outside the United States are scarce and usually are only one-country studies that reveal contradictory results. Evidence in Canada suggests that the percentage of visible minorities in the neighborhood has a negative impact on levels of generalized trust, whereas studies in Australia point out that linguistic fractionalization results in a modest negative impact on trust (Leigh, 2006; Stolle, Soroka, & Johnson, 2008). In the United Kingdom, the negative relationship between social capital and ethnic diversity disappears when taking the level of socioeconomic resources within the community into account (Letki, 2008). Given these mixed results, our first research question is to determine whether the U.S. findings on the negative relation between social diversity and generalized trust are valid for the European context as well.

The second extension of current research on diversity is the use of very fine-grained and dynamic measures of ethnic diversity, which go beyond current diversity indicators such as the percentage of Blacks, percentage of immigrants, or heterogeneity indexes at one point in time (Putnam, 2007; Taylor, 1998). There are two aspects of diversity measures that are important to test in this debate in the European context. First, diversity must be understood as a dynamic phenomenon (Blalock, 1967). The theoretical relevance is that we should not expect that a long-standing presence of ethnic minorities has the same effect on generalized trust as, for example, the rapid inflow of new immigrant groups into society. The different causal mechanisms of the threat hypothesis anchored in cultural distance and economic and political competition vis-à-vis majority groups are intensified with rapid changes of experienced diversity (Huddie, Feldman, Taber, & Lahav, 2005). Thus, the timing of diversity and its recent increase therefore should be of particular importance for generalized trust.

Furthermore, migration can take many different forms, such as labor migration, migration from former colonies, and the arrival of asylum seekers, and it can involve people from various backgrounds, not all of which are equally threatening to the majority population. Different forms of migration and different cultural and economic backgrounds of immigrants might trigger specific aspects of cultural or economic threat among the original inhabitants of a country (Citrin, Green, Muste, & Wong, 1997), which might differentially influence generalized trust. More specifically, because the general theoretical assumption is that generalized trust is harder to develop when people perceive dissimilarity between themselves and other groups of the population (Brewer, 1993; Uslaner, 2002), we would

expect generalized trust to be most threatened when the cultural distance between newly arriving and original populations (in terms of status, racial identity, language, visible traits, religion, or other background characteristics) is larger (Florack, Piontkowski, Rohmann, Balzert, & Perzig, 2003). Previous research has demonstrated that if cultural discordance occurs between immigrants and members of the host community, it will be more difficult to avoid feelings of hostility and prejudice (Rohmann, Florack, & Piontkowski, 2006) and ultimately to develop generalized trust.

It is a contribution of this article to compare various static and dynamic measurements of diversity, such as the standard static measure (stocks of foreigners), several dynamic measures (increase/decrease over time), and measures of cultural distance (religious and cultural background, the presence of former colonial ties, and the socioeconomic status of the country of origin). In line with the perceived threat thesis, our hypothesis is that the population of the host society will be less trusting when it faces a rapid rise in the immigrant population over time and when the perceived cultural and religious distance or economic differences between immigrants and the majority group are larger.

A third, more technical problem is that most of the studies thus far relied on single-level analyses. However, diversity is a contextual phenomenon that individuals experience in their environment, and the inclusion of aggregate variables necessitates special modeling techniques to account for lower variance at the individual level and changed standard errors in multi-level data (Hox, 2002; Snijders & Bosker, 1999). The only methodologically sound way to deal with this kind of data structure is to use multilevel modeling.

Data and Method

In order to assess the relation between ethnic diversity based on immigration and generalized trust in Europe, we need measures of these two phenomena for a large number of European countries. Because no single data set offers all of this information, various data sources need to be combined. For the attitudinal indicators and sociodemographic control variables we rely on the results of the European Social Survey, which provides the data for the dependent and independent variables both measured at the individual level (NSD, 2003). The ESS survey was collected in 2002-2003 by means of uniform face-to-face interviews among representative samples of the population of 21 European countries.[1]

Figure 1
Generalized Trust in European Countries
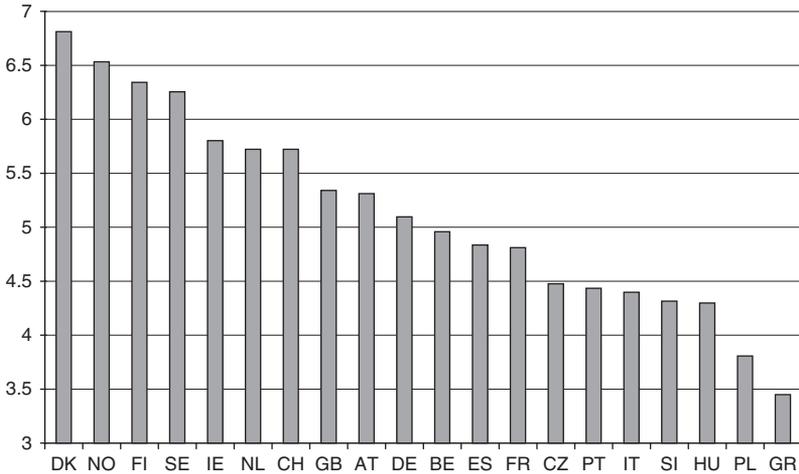
Note: The graph represents the mean scores per country on the generalized trust scale (standardized to a 0 to 10 range). The countries included in the European Social Survey are Denmark (DK), Norway (NO), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE), Ireland (IE), Netherlands (NL), Switzerland (CH), Great Britain (GB), Austria (AT), Germany (DE), Belgium (BE), Spain (ES), France (FR), Czech Republic (CZ), Portugal (PT), Italy (IT), Slovenia (SI), Hungary (HU), Poland (PL), and Greece (GR).
Source: European Social Survey 2002-03.

In this analysis, generalized trust at the individual level is used as the dependent variable. Analysis has shown that several measures of generalized trust form a well-tested scale that seems to be sufficiently cross-culturally equivalent (Reeskens & Hooghe, 2008), meaning that it can be used in a valid manner in comparative research. In this analysis, generalized trust is measured with a three-item scale, tapping the belief that "most people can be trusted." The three items proved to be one-dimensional with a Cronbach's alpha of .77 (Appendix A).

An interesting feature of using Europe as a setting for the analysis of generalized trust is that there is indeed a considerable degree of national variation across countries (Figure 1). In line with existing research, the ESS figures show that generalized trust is particularly high in Scandinavian countries such as Denmark, Norway, Finland, and Sweden, while it is lowest in Poland and Greece.

As the main independent variables on the country level, we concentrate on measurements of immigration, diversity, and citizenship status. Because quite some research on this topic relies on the fractionalization index that was developed by Alesina and La Ferrara (2002), we also include this basic measurement of ethnic diversity in our analysis. However, this indicator is supplemented by various new diversity and immigration statistics drawn from the SOPEMI (Système d'Observation Permanente des Migrations) data set that was developed by the OECD (2005) from 1979 onwards. Although some questions have been raised about the degree of comparability of the OECD statistical sources (Lemaître, 2005), in practice they provide the most reliable data on migration available (Hooghe et al., 2008).

From the OECD database, we obtained information about the inflow and the stocks of foreigners in 2002, both in absolute figures and relative to the population size. The data set also includes information on the inflow of foreign workers and the share of all immigrants arriving from former colonies of the host country. The specific additional information about the immigrant type and background is important for testing which aspects of diversity might be particularly threatening to generalized trust. For example, information on foreign workers is used to test whether potential economic threats might influence levels of generalized trust, whereas the information on the country of origin of migrants allows us to examine whether the perceived cultural or religious distance between majority and minority groups influences generalized trust. For this, we used the proportion of immigrants who do not come from former colonies, assuming that diversity resulting from languages and cultures other than one's own might be more threatening to trust than immigrants who come from familiar colonies or linguistic areas. Moreover, we also calculated the ratio of immigrants originating from developing countries opposed to those from other OECD member countries because it is assumed that immigrants arriving from poorer countries are more threatening to trust than immigrants from OECD countries (Semyonov, Raijman, & Gorodzeisky, 2006; Sniderman, Hagendoorn, & Prior, 2004). A number of authors have also made the argument that a "clash of civilizations" can occur between various religious traditions, involving Christian and Islamic cultures (Huntington, 1996). Because all European OECD member states have a Christian tradition, we assume that the cultural distance will be larger if more immigrants arrive from predominantly Islamic countries, which in turn negatively affects generalized trust. Therefore, we also specifically included a variable documenting the number of immigrants from countries where Islam is the dominant religion.

In addition to static diversity indicators, all preceding the measurement of our dependent variable in the 2002 survey, we also include dynamic measures that capture the changes for each one of the static indicators for the period between 1996 and 2002 with the assumption that recent or rapid increases of diversity are particularly threatening to generalized trust. These dynamic indicators therefore represent the regression slope of the 1996-2002 trend line for that specific variable.

Finally, indicators capturing how open a country is toward immigrants have been included to test their effects on trust. Here we use the number, proportions, and average increase in requested and granted asylums and naturalization figures. We also calculate the proportion of requested asylum applications that was eventually granted. The assumption is that higher rates of asylum and naturalization can have negative effects on generalized trust as a society's openness for newcomers might enhance feelings of threat among the original inhabitants. In sum, we include a very broad array of diversity and immigration measurements; in fact, we include all possible diversity indicators available from the OECD that can be measured for the majority of our countries.[2] The resulting 26 diversity measurements are meant to capture the reality of an ever-increasing ethnic and cultural diversity in Europe in a detailed and complex manner (see Appendix B).

The combined data set including the ESS survey and the OECD data will be analyzed using a random intercept multilevel model. It has to be remembered that these are nested data, where respondents were sampled within different national contexts, and this implies that multilevel forms of analysis are called for. This method of analysis also entails a number of limitations. First, in ideal circumstances, multilevel analysis requires at least 30 observation units on each level (also known as the 30/30 rule, Maas & Hox, 2005). The fact that we only have data on 20 cases (i.e., 20 European countries) limits not only the number of independent variables that we can use simultaneously in the analysis; the limited number of cases also renders the analysis vulnerable to the effect of outliers. Therefore, we first identified the occurrence of outliers on the available diversity measures.

An example will help to highlight the outlier problem. A scatter plot of the bivariate aggregate relation between the stock of foreign population—1 of the 26 tested indicators—and trust (Figure 2) clearly reveals the outlier status of Switzerland: Whereas all other countries in Europe count less than 10% of nonnationals among their population, for Switzerland this figure is twice as high. This can be explained by the specific pattern of labor immigration to Switzerland, the small size of the country, and the geographical position of Switzerland. As can be seen in Figure 2, the outlier status of

Figure 2
Diversity and Generalized Trust: Switzerland as Outlier
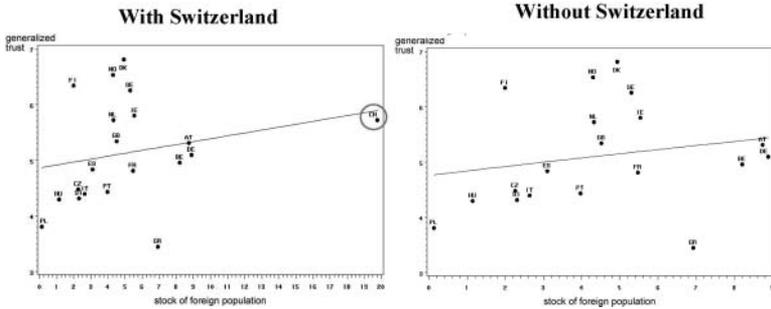
Note: The graph represents the plot of the country-specific mean scores on the generalized trust scale (0 to 10) and the associated stocks of foreign population (from OECD, 2005), in percentage of the population. The countries include Denmark (DK), Norway (NO), Finland (FI), Sweden (SE), Ireland (IE), Netherlands (NL), Switzerland (CH), Great Britain (GB), Austria (AT), Germany (DE), Belgium (BE), Spain (ES), France (FR), Czech Republic (CZ), Portugal (PT), Italy (IT), Slovenia (SI), Hungary (HU), Poland (PL), and Greece (GR).

Switzerland for this measure implies that the trend line for generalized trust is strongly tilted upward. If we remove the Swiss outlier, the slope of the trend line is reduced dramatically, and this removal does have significant effects on the results. For each of the models we will test the outlier function of each country for every diversity measure, and if outliers are found, we will present both results for the full data set as well as for the data set with the outliers removed.

In addition to the diversity measures, we include individual- and aggregate-level control variables in this analysis using the insights of previous studies on the determinants of trust. At the individual level, women tend to be more trusting than men, and age effects are also documented (Putnam, 2000; Uslaner, 2002). Gender and age are therefore obvious control variables. Based on the literature, we also expect that highly educated people and those with a steady form of employment or a secure income will tend to be more trusting (Bjørnskov, 2006). Because of the large number of missing data, it is very difficult to arrive at a reliable and comparable measurement of individual income levels across 20 countries. Therefore we included a subjective estimate of financial satisfaction of the respondent, and together with education levels these are good proxies for socioeconomic position.

Church attendance, too, tends to boost trust levels (Brehm & Rahn, 1997). We also expect recent immigrants to be less trusting than members of the majority ethnic group (Banting et al., 2006). Given the finding that political efficacy tends to have a positive effect on generalized trust, we also included a standard measurement of political efficacy (Hooghe, 2003). The micro-level model is summarized in the following equation:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\text{TRUST}_{ij} = {} & \beta_{0j} + \beta_{1j}(\text{GENDER})_{ij} + \beta_{2j}(\text{AGE})_{ij} + \beta_{3j}(\text{EDUCATION})_{ij} \\
& + \beta_{4j}(\text{EMPLOYMENT})_{ij} + \beta_{5j}(\text{FINANCIAL})_{ij} + \beta_{6j}(\text{CHURCH})_{ij} \\
& + \beta_{7j}(\text{IMMIGRANT})_{ij} + \beta_{8j}(\text{POLEFFICACY})_{ij} + R_{ij}
\end{aligned}
\tag{1}
$$

Self-evidently we also include a sufficient number of control variables at the country level in addition to the previously discussed diversity measures. Figures on the gross domestic product (GDP)/capita were obtained from the OECD (2005), while the Gini coefficient for income inequality is derived from the 2003 human development reports (United Nations Development Program, 2003). The equation for the country-level model is therefore as follows:

$$
\begin{aligned}
\beta_{0j} = {} & \gamma_{00} + \gamma_{01}(\text{GDPcap}_j) + \gamma_{02}(\text{INCOME\_INEQUALITY}_j) \\
& + \gamma_{03}(\text{DIVERSITY}_j) + U_{0j}
\end{aligned}
\tag{2}
$$

Results

Conducting multilevel regression analysis only makes sense if there is a sufficient level of variation in the dependent variable at the country level. According to the baseline (null) model, about 20.6% of the variation in generalized trust can be explained by country-relevant characteristics.[3] Given this high percentage, it is clear that a single-level regression analysis is not suitable for this investigation. In Table 1 we provide the results of the multilevel regression model with the test of all relevant individual-level variables together with two obvious country level control variables: GDP/capita and income inequality.

The results in Table 1 confirm previous research on generalized trust: All theoretically relevant variables have a significant effect on the trust scale. Women prove to be more trusting than men, and older people are more trusting than younger respondents. Socioeconomic status has powerful effects as well: Education, employment status, and financial satisfaction are

Table 1
Multilevel Regression Model for Generalized Trust

	Parameter	t-Value
Fixed part		
Intercept	2.697***	3.78
Gender (reference male)		
Female	0.173***	9.36
Age	0.002**	3.05
Educational level (reference lower)		
Secondary	0.078**	2.74
Higher	0.261***	7.35
Employment status (reference employed)		
Unemployed	–0.144**	–2.97
Other employment status	0.086***	4.23
Financial satisfaction	0.285***	22.34
Church attendance (reference often)		
Sometimes	–0.167***	–6.28
(Almost) never	–0.233***	–7.79
Immigration status (reference majority)		
Born abroad	–0.104**	–2.97
Political efficacy	0.434***	31.06
Gross domestic product/capita (in thousands $US)	0.084***	6.26
Income inequality (Gini index)	–0.059**	–2.88
Random part		
Level 1. Individuals (residual variance)	2.926***	135.42
Level 2. Countries (intercept variance)	0.166***	3.13
R^2 at individual level = 22.03%		
R^2 at country level = 67.90%		

Note: Entries are results of a multilevel regression analysis, with generalized trust scale as dependent variable.
Source: European Social Survey 2002-03 (n = 36,697 in 20 European countries).
*p < .01. **p < .001. ***p < .0001.

positively related to generalized trust. Those who are attend church have higher trust levels than respondents who are not or only weakly religiously involved. On average, people who are born abroad are less trustful than those born within the country. Political efficacy is positively related: Respondents with high scores on political efficacy also score higher on the generalized trust scale. With respect to the two country-level variables, the strong relation of gross domestic product with generalized trust is confirmed: The wealthier the nation, the higher the levels of trust of its citizens.

Income inequality affects the level of the trust as expected: People are more trustful in countries with low levels of income disparity.

The next step in the analysis is to test the effect of the diversity measures supplementing the baseline multilevel model as reported in Table 1. It should be pointed out that the limited number of cases at the country level ($n = 20$), the risk of multicollinearity, and the large number of country-level variables to be tested make it impossible to include all the country-level variables simultaneously. Therefore we tested a total of 26 different models, each time including the entire baseline model (as reported in Table 1), supplemented by one additional country-level diversity variable. In the forthcoming tables, we only report the results for that single additional variable; the remainder of the results of each and every model could not be reported because of lack of space. Generally though, the overall results for all control variables remain the same for all models (the full 26 models can be downloaded from www.kuleuven.be/citizenship).

In Table 2 we list the results of the analyses of several static diversity measures on generalized trust. The left columns present the results for the analyses with the full data set, whereas the right columns present the results excluding the countries that reached an outlier status. Interestingly, the standard measure of ethnic fractionalization does not influence levels of generalized trust in the European context. Of the 10 additional static diversity measures from the OECD data set—ranging from the absolute figures of immigrants in 2002 to the proportion of immigrants coming from Islamic countries—only 1 proved to have a significant negative relation with generalized trust in the full data set, namely, the inflow of foreign workers in 2002. This effect, however, is rendered nonsignificant by removing the outlier of Germany from the analysis.

Testing our models on both the full data set and on the data set excluding the outliers in general does not lead to substantial changes in the results. Only two changes merit attention. First, the relative percentage of foreigners in the country reveals a significant coefficient once the outlier of Switzerland is removed. In other words, high "stocks of foreigners" (in percentage of the population), as it is called in the OECD data, seem to reduce generalized trust among the population. Second, one could argue that the inflow of immigrants from countries other than the former colonies has a negative effect on trust once France is removed as an outlier. Given the fact that basically only the United Kingdom, Spain, and France have had huge colonial empires at one point in history, self-evidently the removal of France from the analysis reduces the substantial meaning of this observation.

However, increases of diversity might be even more influential for feelings of threat and generalized trust than static forms of diversity. The analysis of

Table 2
Effect of Static Diversity Measures on Generalized Trust

	Full Data Set			Without Outlier(s)		
	Parameter	t-Value	n	Parameter	t-Value	n (Outlier Country)
Fractionalization Index	-.818	-1.36	20	-.827	-0.75	18 (Belgium, Switzerland)
Inflow of foreigners in 2002 (in thousands)	-.000	-0.86	20	-.000	-0.04	19 (Germany)
Inflow of foreigners in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)	-.031	-0.91	20	-.048	-1.21	19 (Switzerland)
Stocks of foreigners in 2002 (in thousands)	-.000	-1.18	20	-.000	-0.34	19 (Germany)
Stocks of foreigners in 2002 (percentage of the total population)	-.024	-0.98	20	-.101	-2.45**	19 (Switzerland)
Inflow of foreign workers in 2002 (in thousands)	-.002	-1.65*	16	-.005	-1.48	15 (Germany)
Inflow of foreign workers in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)	-.007	-0.16	16	.004	0.06	15 (Ireland)
Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 from countries other than former colonies	-.012	-1.58	20	-.020	-2.16**	19 (France)
Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 from other language areas	-.005	-0.55	20	-.003	-0.28	19 (Spain)
Ratio of sending development countries/sending OECD countries	-.142	-0.37	19	-.257	-0.59	18 (Ireland)
Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 from Islamic countries	.001	0.13	19	.007	0.56	18 (France)

Note: Entries are results from 11 separate multilevel regressions as reported in Table 1. Every model included all the variables reported in Table 1 (not reported here for lack of space, available from www.kuleuven.be/citizenship) and the additional diversity measure at the macro level (reported here).
*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$.

the rise in migration flows between 1996 and 2002 does not reveal major significant results (Table 3). Only one variable reaches significance at the .10 level: the rise in the number of foreign workers arriving in the country over the 1996 to 2002 period. A sharp increase in the number of foreign workers seems to reduce trust levels. Again however, a check on outliers seems useful: Italy clearly has an outlier status in this analysis. While in the past the country used to attract a very limited number of foreign workers, since the year 2000 Italy has experienced an unprecedented increase in the number of foreign workers. When we exclude Italy from this analysis, this relation is rendered insignificant with a *t*-value of –0.75.

Other controls for outliers do not lead to substantially different results. Only for the increase in the percentage of immigrants arriving from Islamic countries, we do not find one but three outliers: Spain, Denmark, and Norway. Here too, we could remove these outliers for reasons of uniformity, but it remains to be discussed whether such an analysis can still be considered as valid or meaningful. Overall however, hardly any indicators of dynamic changes in diversity have a statistically significant effect on generalized trust.

Finally, we also test immigration-related variables on asylum and naturalization (Table 4). These variables tend to be very reliable because all included countries keep track of these figures in a consistent manner. Not a single one of these variables, however, even comes close to reaching statistical significance. The number of asylums requested or granted, the increase of asylums, the naturalization rates, or any ratios thereof do not significantly relate to trust in either the full model or the outlier investigation.

Discussion

Our investigation into the relation between ethnic diversity and generalized trust in European societies has built on earlier work, but at the same time we were able to incorporate major innovations. Utilizing appropriate multilevel models we tested whether a variety of diversity indicators influence individual levels of generalized trust.

In important ways, our analysis has confirmed results of earlier studies. At the individual level all usual suspects were confirmed: Men, older people, lowly educated respondents, and the unemployed are less trusting. Ethnic minorities are also less trusting on average. Yet contrary to previous studies, this comparative analysis in the European context did not lead to the obvious and clear-cut conclusion that rising ethnic diversity or even the

Table 3
Effect of Dynamic Diversity Measures on Generalized Trust

	Full Data Set			Without Outlier(s)		
	Parameter	t-Value	n	Parameter	t-Value	N (Outlier Country)
Average increase of foreigners inflow (in thousands)	.000	0.14	19	–.000	–0.51	18 (Spain)
Average increase of foreigners inflow (per 1,000 inhabitants)	.112	0.53	19	–.464	–1.09	17 (Spain, Portugal)
Average increase of foreign workers inflow (in thousands)	–.023	–1.84*	16	–.000	–0.75	15 (Italy)
Average increase of foreign workers inflow (per 1,000 inhabitants)	.064	0.27	16	–.288	–0.55	14 (Ireland, Portugal)
Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from countries other than former colonies	–.098	–1.20	20	–.050	–0.56	19 (France)
Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from the different language areas	–.069	–1.15	20	–.187	–1.33	18 (Spain, Ireland)
Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from predominantly Islamic countries	–.117	–1.27	19	–.371	–3.02**	16 (Spain, Norway, Denmark)

Note: Entries are results from seven separate multilevel regressions as reported in Table 1. Every model included all the variables reported in Table 1 (not reported here for lack of space, available from www.kuleuven.be/citizenship) and the additional diversity measure at the macro level (reported here).
*$p < .10$. **$p < .05$.

Table 4
Effect of Openness to Migration Measures on Generalized Trust

	Full Data Set				Without Outlier(s)	
	Parameter	t-Value	n	Parameter	t-Value	N (Outlier Country)
Asylum requests in 2002 (in thousands)	–.000	–0.30	19	–.000	–1.44	18 (Great Britain)
Asylums granted in 2002 (in thousands)	–.000	0.12	18	–.000	–1.10	17 (Great Britain)
Asylums granted in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)	.280	0.36	18	–.779	–0.42	16 (Great Britain, Switzerland)
Average increase of granted asylums (in thousands)	.000	0.95	18	.000	0.73	17 (Great Britain)
Average increase of granted asylums (per 1,000 inhabitants)	.050	0.98	18	.094	0.88	17 (Great Britain)
Naturalizations in 2002 (per 1,000)	–.000	–1.33	18	–.000	–1.39	16 (Germany, Great Britain)
Naturalization ratio	–.001	–0.43	18	–.001	–0.23	17 (France)
Asylum ratio	.002	0.10	19	–.039	–1.39	18 (Denmark)

Note: Entries are results from eight separate multilevel regressions as reported in Table 1. Every model included all the variables reported in Table 1 (not reported here for lack of space, available from www.kuleuven.be/citizenship) and the additional diversity measure at the macro level (reported here). Results were not significant at the .10 level.

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influx of foreigners had significant detrimental effects on generalized trust. While we tested 26 different measurements in separate models, in only 2 cases did we find significant results: the inflow of foreign workers and the increase in the inflow of foreign workers. These findings might suggest that perceived competition on the labor market might indeed have a detrimental effect on generalized trust. On the other hand, these findings should not lead to far-reaching conclusions. If one conducts 26 analyses, the odds are indeed that at least a few of them will lead to significant findings. Furthermore, both effects are rendered nonsignificant when one removes the outliers in the analysis (Germany and Italy, respectively).

Because such small N studies are generally vulnerable to the effects of outliers, we also conducted an additional step in the analysis, in which all results were checked for their stability by removing the outliers from the data set. This additional analysis revealed that the negative coefficients of three diversity measures reached conventional significance levels when the outliers were removed.

It is always difficult to interpret nonsignificant findings, but that is especially the case in small N multilevel analysis. Whereas t-values are generally in the order of one for the diversity variables, with the few exceptions noted, the problem is that the small sample size of this analysis can yield an underestimation of the t-value (Hox & Maas, 2001). So we should be aware of the risk that this analysis might underestimate the significance of the effects. Furthermore, it has to be acknowledged that the sign of many coefficients of diversity measures tends to be negative.

Including the small N problem, the related underestimation of t-values, and the outlier issues into our analyses, we still cannot conclude that ethnic diversity or its recent rise have a robust negative effect on generalized trust in the European context, therefore disconfirming earlier findings in North America. However, we do acknowledge a negative although weak and inconsistent tendency in the relationship between diversity and generalized trust in Europe as well.

We do not wish to question the validity of earlier research demonstrating a significant negative relation between diversity and social cohesion indicators. Yet comparing this analysis to earlier studies, there are several plausible reasons why we obtain different results. First of all, this study is the most comprehensive one available when it comes to the vast variety of diversity indicators tested. We are therefore in a better position to evaluate which aspects of diversity seem most threatening to the European populations and which aspects are not.

Second, our results are based on appropriate multilevel modeling. Of course, other authors too pay attention to this problem. In his well-known

2007 article, Putnam explicitly acknowledges the dangers of single-level regression models. In the single-level model he presents, the standardized regression coefficient of ethnic fractionalization on trust is only .04.[4] When Putnam goes on to test the effect in a more appropriate multilevel model, the significance of the coefficient is substantially reduced. To make the comparison as correctly as possible, we also conducted a single-level test, leading to the same results as in the Putnam analysis.[5] In our analysis too, the effects are strongly reduced when tested with an appropriate multilevel model.

A third issue that might cause different results has to do with the fact that many analyses seem to be sensitive to outliers. Our own analysis shows how sensitive small N studies are to the effect of outliers; excluding the disproportionate influence of outliers on the results yields slightly different regression parameters in some cases. Our analysis therefore suggests that in the field of quantitative comparative research more attention needs to be paid to model assumptions and particularly to the influence of outliers.

Finally, we have to acknowledge that our measurements are situated at a relatively high aggregate level, namely, that of the country. Previous research has relied on diversity measures at the municipal level or at the level of census tracts, thus attempting to capture the diverse character of daily social interactions. Of course, diversity at the country level does not capture the composition of neighborhoods or work environments. Although it is entirely plausible that an analysis of actual social interactions with diverse others reveals different results, in this article we intended to test economic or cultural threats caused by the presence of minority groups within the national economy and culture, a presence that is certainly discussed in the media and everyday life nationally (Sniderman et al., 2004). It is also interesting to note that our diversity measurements show a substantial range across European societies, in the example of percentage of foreign nationals, the range is between 1% in Poland and 9% in Germany. While self-evidently within Germany the actual percentage of foreigners shows a strong variation, for example, in relation with the degree of urbanization, it seems still plausible to assume that inhabitants of a major city in Germany will be confronted much more often with cultural and ethnic diversity than inhabitants of a similar city in Poland. Given the difficulty of obtaining census tract data across Europe linked to survey data, therefore we do consider the use of national-level diversity data as an important first step toward examining the relationship between diversity and trust comparatively. A next step in the analysis certainly would be to supplement this analysis with more fine-grained

information about specific European societies, integrating information from the local or community levels where available.

The implication of our study certainly does not mean that ethnic diversity would or could not create social tensions or social problems. But our analysis has revealed that diversity does not exert the consistent and strong negative effects often attributed to it. For societies and countries that are confronted with a sudden increase in diversity, the question "Who are we?" might indeed become salient and might be perceived as troublesome. What we hope to have demonstrated, however, is that even paying attention to a variety of diversity measures and methodological safeguards, the full-blown negative relationship between ethnic diversity and generalized trust does not hold across Europe.

Appendix A
Factor Loadings on Generalized Trust

Variable Name	Indicator	Factor Loading
PPLTRST	"Most people can be trusted or you can't be too careful."	.74
PPLFAIR	"Most people try to take advantage of you or try to be fair."	.78
PPLHLP	"Most of the time people helpful or mostly looking out for themselves."	.65

Note: Cronbach's α = .77.

Factor Loadings on Political Efficacy

Variable Name	Indicator	Factor Loading
POLCMPL	"Politics too complicated to understand."	.47
POLACTIV	"Could take an active role in a group involved with a political issue."	.50
POLDCS	"Making mind up about political issue."	.45
PLTCARE	"Politicians in general care what people like respondent think."	.63
PLTINVT	"Politicians interested in votes rather than peoples opinions."	.57

Note: Cronbach's α: 0.65

Information About the Scales

Generalized trust: Ranging from 0 to 10
Financial satisfaction: Ranging from 1 (*very difficult on present income*) to
　4 (*living comfortably on present income*)
Political powerlessness: Ranging from 1 to 5
Gross domestic product per capita: Ranging from US$10,560 to US$36,600/capita

Appendix B
Explanation of the Used Macro Variables

All indicators taken from Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD, 2005)/SOPEMI, unless otherwise indicated:

- Fractionalization index: taken from Alesina and La Ferrara (2002)
- Inflow of foreigners in 2002 (in thousands)
- Inflow of foreigners in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)
- Stocks of foreign population in 2002 (in thousands)
- Stocks of foreign population in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)
- Inflow of foreign workers in 2002 (in thousands)
- Inflow of foreign workers in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)
- Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 coming from other countries than the former colonies (for Belgium, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, and United Kingdom)
- Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 coming from other countries than the same language area
- Ratio of sending development and sending OECD countries (ratio of foreigners arriving from OECD and from developing countries)
- Percentage of the inflow of foreigners in 2002 from predominantly Islamic countries
- Average increase of foreigner inflow in thousands, 1996-2002
- Average increase of foreigner inflow (per 1,000 inhabitants), 1996-2002
- Average increase of foreign worker inflow (in thousands), 1996-2002
- Average increase of foreign worker inflow (per 1,000 inhabitants), 1996-2002
- Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from other countries than former colonies, 1996-2002
- Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from other countries than the same language area, 1996-2002
- Average increase in the percentage of inflow of foreigners coming from predominantly Islamic countries, 1996-2002
- Asylum requests in 2002 (in thousands; from UNHCR, 2000, 2004).

(continued)

Appendix B (continued)

- Asylums granted in 2002 (in thousands; from UNHCR, 2000, 2004).
- Asylums granted in 2002 (per 1,000 inhabitants)
- Average increase of granted asylums (in thousands), 1996-2002
- Average increase of granted asylums (per 1,000 inhabitants), 1996-2002
- Naturalizations in 2002
- Naturalization ratio: The ratio of the naturalizations in 2002 and the inflow of foreign population in 1995; a time-series analysis revealed that a time lag of 7 years works very well to explain the naturalization figures
- Asylum ratio: The ratio of the requested and granted asylums in 2002 (from UNHCR, 200, 2004, and own calculations)

Notes

1. In this analysis, we had to exclude the outlier of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, with only 465,000 inhabitants and a very high proportion of non-nationals, mostly from other European Union member states. As a result, the data set for this analysis includes 20 European countries.

2. Data that were available for just a limited number of Organization for Economic Co-Operation and Development member countries could not be included in the analysis, in order to avoid small N problems.

3. Individual-level variance: 3.1497; country-level variance: 0.8152. The intraclass (in this case: intracountry) correlation therefore is: $0.8512/(0.8512 + 3.1497) = 0.2056$.

4. This small effect is significant, and it clearly receives emphasis in the text.

5. Using an inappropriate individual-level model, we obtain a standardized regression coefficient for the relation between "relative stock of foreigners" on generalized trust of -0.06 (t-value $= -12.18$; $p < .0001$) for the whole sample and -0.14 (t-value $= -26.01$; $p < .0001$) if we exclude Switzerland.

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