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Bachelor's Thesis

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**Public confidence in the UN in Russia, China, Germany,
and the US**

Bachelor's Thesis

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Declaration

1. I hereby declare that I have compiled this thesis using the listed literature and resources only.
2. I hereby declare that my thesis has not been used to gain any other academic title.
3. I fully agree to my work being used for study and scientific purposes.

In Prague on
3.5.2023

Matěj Jurečka

References

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Abstract

This bachelor thesis is based on finding out whether there is a difference in the diversity in confidence in the United Nations - one of the most robust international organizations in the world - in authoritarian countries and liberal democracies with China and Russia being the representatives of authoritarian regimes while the US and Germany acting as the democracies. Through an analysis of the fractionalization by the standard deviation of answers from the World Values Survey questionnaire I compare the two ideologies and conclude that the authoritarian regimes do not affect the trust in the UN to the point where it would be more homogeneous as in the liberal democracies while also conducting a chi-squared test to check the statistical significance of the datasets.

Abstrakt

Tahle bakalářská práce je založena na zjišťování, zda existuje rozdíl v diverzitě důvěry v Organizaci Spojených Národů – jedné z nejrobustnějších mezinárodních organizací na světě – v autoritářských režimech a liberálních demokraciích kde Čína a Rusko slouží jako reprezentanti autoritářských režimů a Spojené Státy a Německo jako demokracie. Použitím analýzy frakcionalizace standardní deviací odpovědí na otázku z dotazníku World Values Survey porovnávám tyto dvě ideologie a zjišťuji, že autoritářské režimy neovlivňují důvěru v OSN do té míry, kdy by byla více homogenní než v liberálních demokraciích. Rovněž používám chi-kvadrát test pro ověření statistické důležitosti všech datasetů.

Keywords

International organizations – confidence – political trust – social trust – homogeneity – deviation – United Nations

Klíčová slova

Mezinárodní organizace – důvěra – politická víra – sociální víra – homogenita – odchylka – Organizace Spojených Národů

Title

Public Confidence in the UN in Russia, China, Germany, and the US

Název práce

Důvěra veřejnosti v OSN v Rusku, Číně, Německu a Spojených Státech.

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1. Introduction

The relevance of international organizations (IOs) has been questioned since their first appearances in the modern world. Since every individual has a different approach to aspects of life there is no question about the complicated and disunified views towards IOs. Arguments from across every point of the left-to-right wing scale as well as the different philosophical ideologies mesh into a debate questioning the need for international organizations. Challenging mainstream opinions and ideologies plays a key role in maintaining a healthy democratic society. Being confident in institutions on both the national and international levels helps with keeping stability and order within a state and prevents unprecedented events from happening and damaging society.

Confidence in institutions happens to be a very complex variable due to a variety of topics, views, and backgrounds combined in a single-worded or numerical answer. Believing in the state's institutions is a key predisposition for a well-functioning state. If confidence in them drops, the threat of instability quickly rises. In the case of confidence in the UN, the conditions change slightly. As it happens to be the largest institutional body in the world containing 193 member states and 2 observer states, the confidence of the public in an individual state does not affect its stability the same way it does on a smaller scale, nonetheless, if the confidence was to drop significantly, it may lead to a disconnection of the world and the possibilities of international cooperation would be much harder to achieve.

In this study, I will be examining the individual values of public confidence in the United Nations in four essential countries and will be comparing them. Case states are chosen for the purpose of comparing the values in a variety of political regimes across the spectrum. I will be choosing the People's Republic of China as an example of a communist regime, the Russian Federation as an example of an authoritarian regime, the United States of America serving as a typical Western democracy and Germany as a developed European country. This study aims to find out whether confidence in the UN is more homogeneous in Russia and China than in the USA and Germany. I will be working with this hypothesis and will be trying to prove it by analyzing the values extracted from a World Values Survey. The analysis will focus on finding the homogeneity or heterogeneity of answers of citizens in

each state. The potential homogeneity in opinions of populations will prove whether either the authoritarian or liberal regimes are in some way influencing the trust in the UN.

Each of the four states has a different approach towards the United Nations and equally, expects different outcomes of being a member. Russia, China, and the US joined with France and the United Kingdom are also permanent members of the Security Council (UNSC), a five-member core of the organisation possessing a veto power that can be exercised over any substantive resolution. The veto power happens to be a centre of many concerns over the need for it since it can be freely used by the permanent members of the Security Council in cases where the resolution would be imposing anything harmful towards one of the states. Having such a mechanism grants a great deal of efficiency in matters where all five members are indifferent in their opinions, however, if the resolution is in any way against tendencies of at least one of the members or is aimed directly at one of them in its nature, the idea of an international organization that would bring the countries and ideologies together fails and sometimes even deepens the differences. “The harmonious behavior of the powers at San Francisco generated a certain amount of popular opinion that although a time might come when the United Nations would find itself unable to act due to the employment of the veto, this contingency lay far in the future.” (Padelford, 1948) However, no one foresaw what it would mean for the functionality of the organisation throughout the Cold War. That said, a question of whether the state’s possession of the veto power affects how citizens perceive the United Nations.

As mentioned, each of the four chosen states has a different approach toward the United Nations. Leaders of the United States, Russia, and China taking part in the formation of the United Nations all agreed on the necessity of the organization continuing the tendency of cooperation between those great powers since they were the leading economies of the world. Coming from different backgrounds and having different values, all of them sought to maintain the influence of each country on the international stage. Based on the studies of the legitimacy of international organizations (Dellmuth, Tallberg, 2015; Dellmuth, Scholte, Tallberg, 2019) and studies on the influences of confidence in IOs (Arpino, Obydenkova, 2020; Newton, 2001; Torgler, 2008) I will be trying to find out whether the diversity of trust in the UN shows homogeneity in authoritarian states of Russia and China compared to the expected heterogeneous trust in the US and Germany.

2. Conceptual and theoretical framework

While confidence in the United Nations happens to be a thoroughly studied field, a comparison of authoritarian regimes with liberal democracies is lacking. This study is based on a few assumptions. As mentioned, confidence in institutions as a value reflects many aspects of a state and mainly its citizens. A study conducted by Brewer, Gross, Aday, and Willnat (2004) on data collected in the United States suggests the connection between trust in one's state and how one perceives and trusts other states. Brewer et al. also claim that citizens who see other nations as trustworthy are more likely to prefer internationalism. Their study confirms the hypothesis that both social and political trust have a significant influence on international trust while finding that social trust has a major one. In contrast, on the question of internationalism, they found that political trust is the key variable.

The connection between confidence in own nation's institutions and confidence in the United Nations has been extended by Torgler (2007) when analysing data from the World Values Survey in 38 countries. However, contrary to Brewer et al. (2004), Torgler finds that generalized trust (social trust) has a lesser impact on trust in the United Nations than political trust. They also find a correlation between cosmopolitanism and trust in the UN. Logically, when one identifies themselves as a world citizen, they tend to have higher confidence in international organizations. Torgler also argues that married and separated and separated couples tend to have lesser trust in the UN than students, retired and employed people, education does have a positive impact.

On the other hand, Brewer et al. (2004) discovers the interesting disconnection between enjoying a high level of democracy and international trust in democratic states (USA). Another study by Arpino and Obydenkova (2008) found a non-linear relationship between the level of democracy and international trust. Analysis performed on data collected in the states of the European Union showed that trust in the UN was the lowest in non-democratic countries before the Great Recession in 2008, however, these numbers rose to be slightly higher after the crisis. It could be argued that not only countries in Europe might conform to this trend. Populations of non-democratic states tend to have higher trust in their respective government since non-democratic countries usually exercise higher control over their citizens by censoring the press and the media and suppressing self-expression therefore,

they can regulate their population's trust in international organizations. This could lead to an increased homogeneity of trust in the United Nations in such countries.

Freedom House, a non-profit organization focusing on freedom in the world, assessed Russia a "Not Free" (2023) status calling the regime a "Consolidated Authoritarian" (2022) one. Scoring incredibly low points on their Global Freedom Score as well as Internet Freedom Score, Russia happens to be in the firm hands of Vladimir Putin, and its population is heavily controlled by arguably not a freely elected government. Russia has always been a part of the United Nations. The Soviet Union, being one of the founding members getting a permanent seat in the Security Council has veto power, and therefore always had a great influence on the organization. Especially during the Cold War, the Soviets used the veto without hesitation on any resolution that seemed against them. As of today, the USSR and Russian Federation have used veto 122 times, which is significantly more than 82 times by the USA, 29 times by the United Kingdom, 17 times than the People's Republic of China and the Republic of China, and 16 by France (Dag Hammarskjöld Library, 2023).

Russia finds itself in a position of power due to its massive territory, legacy, history, and stagnant yet extensive economic wealth, on a pedestal of international relations. It is a force for every country to be reckoned with, as it is not afraid of exercising its strengths on the international battlefield. Being a member of the United Nations, the largest political body in the world only plays into Russia's hands. The rapid increase in control of its population, the press and media, the internet, and the political situation could cause an impact on how citizens respond to questions about the trust in its institutions, therefore affecting the confidence in the United Nations as well. Russia feels entitled to be one of the world's greatest superpowers and views the United Nations as a clear way to achieve its goal.

China, another permanent member of the Security Council, is marked as "Not Free" by the Freedom House (2023). The Chinese Communist Party in rule since 1949 possesses great control over the Chinese population. Its massive interference with human rights and day-to-day life grants the Chinese communist leaders almost perfect control over the political situation. Non-existent democratic principles combined with the largest population in the world (as of 2023) make China one of the largest authoritarian regimes. The Communist Party and especially the seven-member Politburo Standing Committee controls

the economy, political situation, ideology, and international engagements of the People's Republic of China. Xi Jinping, recently appointed a third five-year term as a general secretary of the CCP and the president, has been setting up directions for Chinese international relations and therefore China has acted under his oversight in the United Nations.

Great control over Chinese society by the communist regime might cause similar outcomes to questions about the international organization. Incredibly limited political freedom might lead to lower fractionalization of trust in the United Nations as citizens of the PRC might be scared of the regime to answer truthfully to any topics regarding politics. China has historically considered itself a major international superpower and as it yearns for international collaboration to expand its area of influence, an organization of such scale is a perfect mediator. Along with that, having a dominant position as a permanent member of the UNSC provides a protective mechanism against any resolutions regarding Chinese operations or Chinese acts.

It is important to mention the China-Russian relationship and cooperation. At first, as both nations were ruled by a communist regime in the 20th century, they found common ground in the polarized world of the Cold War. The Soviet Union has been one of the first countries to invoke the question of the Chinese seat in the General Assembly and the Security Council as China went through the revolution and the PRC called for the change. However, due to the different approaches to the communist ideology, Marxism-Leninism. The Soviet Union around the 1960s chose to "coexist" with the Western block, which Mao Zedong, the Chinese communist chairman, has not followed. In the 1970s, China shifted its focus heavily to self-development. A planned economy, market socialism, low international trade, and low export made China fairly isolated from the outside world. Throughout the 1980s China continued to develop and started to open itself to international trade and established its goals in international relations. After the fall of the Soviet Union and its transition to the Russian Federation, China renewed its approach towards Russia, and they signed a partnership treaty forming a friendly relationship. This development caused an interesting phenomenon of China seemingly coordinating its vetoes in the UNSC to Russia, while Russia uses its veto independently (Machaffie, 2022). As Oznobishchev (2017) points out, the two countries suffer from different conditions. China praises itself as the greatest while Russia dreams of

regaining the same greatness it once possessed, however, this situation only helps their relationship to be closer. That might be reflected in the general trust in international organizations and the United Nations specifically.

The United States of America always had a significant role in international relations ever since the shift from isolation to internationalism. As one of the largest economic powers with the arguably most capable army, the US engages in countless international organizations. Sitting on the Security Council as a permanent member they have a recognised say in almost any resolution or matter. Woodrow Wilson, a former president of the United States has been one of the first elite politicians to introduce the idea of an international organization of such scale. The League of Nations acted as a base outline of what IOs should look like and many mechanisms were either used or built upon by the architects of the United Nations.

Many Americans show a great deal of international involvement and interest towards the outside, however, nationalistic tendencies and a certain level of self-centrism have always been present. Contrary to China and Russia, the USA is a liberal democracy built on the principles of freedom. The factor of fear while answering questions about political issues is greatly diminished. Although the case of not answering truthfully is not an anomaly, the general outcomes of studies based on public surveys are more trustworthy than in authoritarian regimes. As Brewer et al. (2004) observed, trust in international organizations is affected by both the trust in the nation's institutions and by the level of international integration of the individual.

The freedom of political choice might lead to higher fractionalization. Therefore, this should be the same case for Germany. As the Second World War came to an end, Germany was divided into two parts, hence creating an issue. The division caused a debate over how it should be addressed. When in 1971 China underwent a similar issue with multiple national governments as the seat in the Assembly and the Security Council has been granted to the PRC rather than ROC, which shed some light on the matter. After the escalation of the Cold War, the United States advocated for both the ROC and the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)(Gehrig, 2022). The post-war world heavily favoured the Western Allies. However, both FRG and German Democratic Republic (GDR) were admitted to the United Nations in 1973. Later, the two governments merged into creating one sovereign State in 1990.

Germany is a central European country with an intricate history. As a member of many major international organizations such as the EU, NATO, or the United Nations its population tends to be heavily connected to the outside world. Opposed to the authoritarian regimes of China and Russia, Germany enjoys political freedom. Citizens can freely express their opinions publicly and do not have to be afraid of harsh treatment from the government when they express concerns about it or the international relations of Germany. Among other factors, this might lead to higher political fractionalization in questions about trust in international organizations.

As mentioned, we can find correlations between trust in the United Nations and many other values. Generalized trust and political trust as two major influences can be found in all four countries studied in this thesis. Social trust plays a significant role in how one perceives society while political trust reflects one's view of state institutions. An interesting study conducted by Tan, and Tambyah (2010) confirmed the correlation while studying six Asian nations, one of them being China. The study focuses on Confucian Asia as Confucianism emphasises the importance of trusting each other while using data collected by the AsiaBarometer Survey from 2006. Tan and Tambyah found that citizens of China are generally very trustful of others supporting Delhey and Newton's (2005) study which marks China as a highly trusting society. The Chinese were also the most trusting in the central government out of the six scoring 1.78 ("1 = trust a lot", "4 = don't trust at all"). When asked about international organizations, namely the UN, the Chinese answered with an average of 2.35 ("1 = trust a lot", "4 = don't trust at all"). However, Tan and Tambyah found the correlation between generalized trust and trust in international organizations to be the weakest one out of the ones examined. This supports the claim of Brewer et al. (2004) which suggests that social trust is less significant compared to political trust.

As Debre (2022) argues, authoritarian regimes benefit greatly from being members of regional organizations with other countries under autocratic or authoritarian as the absence of interventionism and democratization. Debre states that institutionalized cooperation helps to maintain control over an autocratic country as well as prevent democratization. The impact of non-democratic regional organizations is clear. However, one might ask how being a member of an international institution based on democratic

principles affect authoritarian regimes and whether it does not help such regimes to flourish as they, for example in the cases of Russia and China, have a major say in global-scale issues.

The legitimacy of international organizations is affected by many factors. However, Dellmuth and Tallberg (2021) add the importance of elite communication. They find that the way elites speak about IOs affects their legitimacy in the eyes of citizens. When applied to authoritarian regimes, the leading power might have a great influence on the trust in IOs as they are sharing their opinions and current feelings towards them. In countries with limited sources of information and objectivity, the elite's communication might have a massive impact on how one perceives a certain international organization. Interestingly, in another article, Dellmuth and Talberg (2015) find that the representation of a citizen's interests does not affect the perception of the IO greatly creating a phenomenon that could not be expected when dealing with organizations, as the representation of one's views often comes first when forming an opinion about a political issue. Instead, they argue that legitimacy is affected by the organization's capacity to solve societal problems. Clear examples of intervention in issues might therefore affect one's trust in an IO more rather than the actual representation of one's political views. On top of that, citizens put great emphasis on their experience with the local (domestic) governments and institutions.

It remains important to find out how fractionalized the confidence in the United Nations is in those four countries. The main proposition of the thesis argues that the political views of citizens of countries under authoritarian regimes are generally less fractionalized due to the oppressive governments and control over populations of such states contrary to liberal democracies which, especially in the case of the United States of America, have a tradition of higher political fractionalization. As the US and Germany enjoy almost complete political freedom, it could be expected that they as representatives of liberal democracies might have higher diversity in the trust in international organizations. Authoritarian regimes, on the other hand, tend to diminish many forms of diversity in political issues. Therefore, the likeliness of homogeneity in confidence in the UN could be higher. As mentioned, the legitimacy of IOs is affected by the elite's communication (Dellmuth, Tallberg, 2021). In countries where the autocratic leader or the ruling party has a major say in international relations and political issues overall, the elite could greatly affect the trust towards the UN by publishing their opinions and their personal trust in the organization. Additionally, as the

flow of information is controlled and limited, the non-democratic regimes might publish information about an IO's interventions and actions affected by the regime's agenda. Due to that, the trust might fluctuate based on the current situation and international engagements. Therefore, I form a hypothesis:

H1: The public confidence in the United Nations in Russia and China is more homogeneous than in the United States and Germany.

3. Data

The data used to find out whether liberal democracies truly have higher fractionalization than authoritarian regimes will be taken from the World Values Survey. WVS is a program focused on international research and it studies the social, political, religious, and economic values of people around the world. A new survey is prepared every couple of years and is sent to institutions from close to every country in the world in so-called "waves" of research happening every 5 years. The survey contains questions ranging across all aspects of life presenting one of the most coherent sets of data in the world. Public confidence in the United Nations occurs as one of the questions asked in the section on trust in institutions. I will be taking the data from these data sets. The question appears in the survey in the Social Capital, Trust & Organizational Membership section as follows: "I am going to name a number of organizations. For each one, could you tell me how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal of confidence, quite a lot of confidence, not very much confidence or none at all?" (Haerpfer et al., 2020). I will be using data from the question regarding the United Nations. The answers are graded with numbers: 1 – "A great deal", 2 – "Quite a lot", 3 – "Not very much", 4 – "None at all"; additionally, -1 – "Don't know", -2 – "No answer" (Haerpfer et al., 2020). To test if and in what way has confidence in the UN changed over several years I will use data from the 7th wave of the WVS collected from 2017 to 2022, the 6th wave collected from 2010 to 2014, and the 5th wave collected from 2005 to 2009. Unfortunately, the 7th wave survey does not include the question about trust in the United Nations in the case of China. Upon approaching the secretariat of the WVS organization I have been given an answer that teams in charge of the survey in non-democratic countries at times tend to exclude some questions from the survey and the organization does not have any control over it as enforcing having every question may lead

to a potential ban of the survey in the country. Therefore, the analysis of the 7th wave will not include data from China.

4. Methods

To either confirm or disprove the proposed hypothesis I will analyse the data collected by the World Values Survey to find out how fractionalised the answers of citizens of each country are. To measure the fractionalisation I will be using the method of standard deviation, as it reflects the deviation from the average accurately. Standard deviation provides a measure of the dispersion of analysed data in relation to the mean. Using a formula:

$$\sigma = \sqrt{\frac{\sum(x_1 - \mu)^2}{N}}$$

The symbol σ stands for the standard deviation, x_1 is the data point for which the deviation is measured, μ is the mean which in this case will be the average answer to the question of confidence in the UN, and N is the number of data points. Since the survey also includes answers “Don’t know” and “No answer” (Haerpfer et al., 2020) I am going to neglect them as a part of the standard deviation. Nonetheless, I am going to include them in tables and figures for each state to reflect the actual results of the surveys. On top of that, to ensure the statistical significance of the datasets I will be conducting a chi-squared goodness of fit test that can be found in Tables 4 – 6.

5. Empirical-analytical section

As mentioned, to test the hypothesis I will compare the data from surveys made by the World Values Survey organization and compare them to assess whether the hypothesis can be confirmed or denied. Using standard deviation will present a picture of the fractionalisation of the data from which I will be able to see if the trust in the United Nations is more homogeneous in the states of China and Russia compared to the United States and Germany. The more significant the deviation in liberal democracies and the less significant the deviation in authoritarian countries is, the higher the chance to confirm the hypothesis.

Firstly, it is important to see how the citizens of each country responded to the question of how confident they are in the United Nations starting with the earliest of used datasets, the 5th wave of the World Values Survey conducted in the years 2005 - 2009.

Table 1

5 th wave	China	Russia	USA	Germany
<i>A great deal</i>	98 (4,9%)	153 (7,5%)	51 (4,1%)	89 (4,3%)
<i>Quite a lot</i>	437 (21,9%)	576 (28,3%)	350 (28%)	627 (30,4%)
<i>Not very much</i>	215 (10,8%)	488 (24%)	544 (43,6%)	839 (40,6%)
<i>None at all</i>	56 (2,8%)	330 (16,2%)	254 (20,3%)	338 (16,4%)
<i>Don't know</i>	1170 (58,8%)	446 (21,9%)	-	157 (7,6%)
<i>No answer</i>	15	33 (1,6%)	25 (2%)	14 (0,7%)
<i>Missing; not asked</i>	-	7 (0,3%)	25 (2%)	-
<i>Total</i>	1991	2033	1249	2064

It is important to point out a few interesting phenomena. As seen in Table 1, the results from the Chinese survey show that the most answers were “Don’t know” at almost 60%. That could be explained through the connection between the cosmopolitan identity of an individual and their knowledge about an international organization (Dellmuth, 2016). The less one feels like a “world citizen”, the less likely one is to educate themselves in international matters. As China has traditionally been nationalist and focused on inner development rather than international involvement in the past, the Chinese identity is, compared to other international superpowers, less rich. The possession of a high level of ethnic unity and focus on self-development leads to a low level of cosmopolitanism. The cosmopolitan tendency in China mainly consists of the Chinese elite (Tyfield, Urry, 2010). The communist regime is highly nationalist. Its focus is on building a strong influential superpower, however, the absence of cosmopolitanism amongst the ordinary citizens might be the cause of the phenomenon seen in the table above.

Another thing that is worth pointing out is that most people in Russia have answered positively. On the other hand, many did not trust the UN very much and many, similar to China, have said that they do not know. That might be caused by the reasons mentioned above. While the devastating majority of people from China stated that they do not know, a considerable amount said that they trust the UN quite a lot. After looking at data from Russia, the answers were almost evenly distributed among all the options.

Results of the survey in the United States have revealed that most out of all people questioned have said that they are sceptical about the UN. Although the total number of questioned people has been significantly lower than in other countries, the majority of them chose the third option. It is interesting to compare that proportion to China. Despite the US being a liberal democracy highly globalized and oriented towards the international community it appears that citizens either do not support international engagements of the US or are rather sceptical of the UN. A similar trend can be seen in Germany. While most people answered with the third option, a considerable amount chose “Quite a lot”. In the cases of the US, Germany, and Russia one can find a complementary trend. In all three countries, most people answered with the second or the third option. As mentioned, it could be explained by the comparability of the relative freedom under the Russian regime at the time to the two liberal democracies.

The data from the 6th wave of the World Values Survey will serve as a second reference of the trust in the UN to examine how has the confidence developed. The 6th wave has been recorded in the years 2010 – 2014.

Table 2

6 th wave	China	Russia	USA	Germany
<i>A great deal</i>	195 (8,5%)	119 (4,76%)	98 (4,4%)	105 (5,1%)
<i>Quite a lot</i>	536 (23,3%)	716 (28,6%)	652 (29,2%)	782 (38,2%)
<i>Not very much</i>	281 (12,2%)	617 (24,68%)	986 (44,2%)	828 (40,5%)
<i>None at all</i>	74 (3,2%)	424 (17%)	437 (19,6%)	215 (10,5%)
<i>Don't know</i>	1074 (46,7%)	543 (21,7%)	-	108 (5,3%)
<i>No answer</i>	140 (6%)	46 (1,8%)	59 (2,6%)	7 (0,4%)

<i>Missing; not asked</i>	-	35 (1,4%)	-	1 (0,05%)
<i>Total</i>	2300	2500	2232	2046

As in the 5th wave, there are a few phenomena to point out. Firstly, the highest number of answers in China is still the option of “Don’t know”. That shows the absence of steps by the Chinese government to educate the population about the United Nations, its purpose, or its actions. Furthermore, the Chinese population itself is self-oriented and rather sceptical of the outside world. Secondly, this could be addressed to the fear of expressing one’s political opinion again. The communist regime in China does not support political expression, it only allows quite the opposite. Having an against-regime political opinion can be heavily punished. As communism is based on a shared unanimous ideological approach to the world and society, unfortunately in extreme cases such as the CCP the regime requires the complete abandonment of polarization or political opposition. Further analysing the Chinese responses one can notice that the second highest number of people answered with the second most positive option. When compared to the 5th wave, the Chinese responses were very similar in terms of proportions. Excluding the “Don’t know” answers, in the 5th and the 6th wave more people, in general, were inclined towards trusting the UN rather than not.

A different trend can be seen in Russia. While over a fifth of all answers was still “Don’t know”, more people were not trustful of the UN. The highest number of answers was in the second most positive bracket, however, not a lot fewer people were not very much confident in the UN. Creating a resemblance with the 5th wave as with China, the percentages of people answering were comparable. It is interesting to see the difference between authoritarian states and liberal democracies. In both Russia and China, the overall highest level of trust (excluding the neutral answers in China) was 2 – “Quite a lot”, while the citizens of the USA and Germany found themselves less trustful with the most common answer being the number 3 – “Not very much”.

As Torgler (2008) in the study pointed out, the correlation between trust in the UN and political trust remains the most significant one. He argues that people cynical about domestic politics tend to be cynical about international ones too, people who remain

sceptical about their own government and do not feel that it fulfills their satisfaction tend to feel the same way about international organizations. When applying this to the case of the United States in the survey, one can find a reflection of what Torgler proposes. As the USA experiences a steady decline of political trust in the government and has since the 1960s, one could expect a similar trend to appear in the trust in the United Nations. However, we cannot see a highly noticeable change in the confidence between the 5th and 6th waves of the WVS. The same logic could be applied to Germany, as it is the second liberal democracy studied in this thesis. Although, the decline in political trust is harder to establish due to missing data from post-war Europe, therefore, one should not jump to conclusions of resemblance with the situation in the US (Newton, Kenneth, 1999). Similarly to the WVS data from the US, the data from Germany in the comparison of the two waves do not express this outcome.

Unfortunately, the 7th and most recent wave of the World Values Survey recorded in the years 2017 – 2022 does not contain data from China due to the local team not including the question about trust in the United Nations in the survey. Assumably, that has been done on the incentive of the Chinese government. After approaching the secretary of the WVS, the organization responded by having such issues with non-democratic countries. From time to time those countries exclude some questions as they seek to either protect or hide the data from the rest of the world. In the table below the data from China will be absent, nonetheless, it is important to put at least the other countries into perspective.

Table 3

7 th wave	China	Russia	USA	Germany
<i>A great deal</i>	-	78 (4,3%)	216 (8,3%)	74 (4,8%)
<i>Quite a lot</i>	-	338 (18,7%)	928 (35,8%)	626 (41%)
<i>Not very much</i>	-	548 (30,3%)	1014 (39,1%)	564 (36,9%)
<i>None at all</i>	-	510 (28,2%)	398 (15,3%)	135 (8,8%)
<i>Don't know</i>	-	322 (17,8%)	4 (0,002%)	114 (7,5%)
<i>No answer</i>	-	14 (0,8%)	36 (1,4%)	15 (1%)

<i>Missing; not asked</i>	-	-	-	-
<i>Total</i>	-	1810	2596	1528

The 7th wave offers a look into the contemporary world as it shows the most recent data collected on such a wide range of countries and provides the most up-to-date data in that regard. There have been several noticeable shifts in attitudes. Starting with Russia, the vast majority of people were feeling rather negative about the United Nations. Close to 60% of Russians answered with either the 3rd or 4th option. Compared to the previous waves their opinion towards the UN declined by a notable margin. That could be explained by the decreasing political freedom in Russia as it transitioned from a relatively free country to a tight and controlled authoritarian regime. The shift has rapidly increased in the most recent years as Russia under the rule of Vladimir Putin started acting very aggressively and decided to take action in matters it has been planning. One can only speculate how would the most recent events influence the trust in the UN of Russian citizens and hope that the question will be left included by the Russian team in the next wave of the survey. It is worth mentioning that there has still been a portion of positive answers, however, compared to the negative ones it did not change the overall outcome.

Answers that came out of the US show the same trend as the previous waves. The overwhelming majority of answers were on the 2nd and 3rd option putting the average right in the middle of the selection. The answer “Not very much” has been the most common one, however, “Quite a lot” has been a very close second. These results closely reflect German and Russian data from the 5th wave and the Russian, American, and German data from the 6th wave. Despite worrisome forecasts, the US has not been seeing such diversification of answers and decline that can be found in the political trust in government and governmental institutions in America. A similar trend can be seen in the case of Germany as the average answer lies between “Quite a lot” and “Not very much”.

Another piece of information the data show is the steady value of the answer “Don’t know” in Russia. Proportionally to the total number of people asked, the amount of the ones not sure about the answer has stayed approximately the same over the three waves. The same applies to Germany. Over the course of 17 years of WVS research, the number of not being

sure has not developed to either side. That could mean an absence of education about the United Nations not only in China since it shows an incredible amount of that value, but also in a central European country and Russia. The fact that the US data does not show this can spark interest. Again, it could be explained in many ways. Either the education about international organizations in the US is higher to other countries, or people from the US tend to express themselves more in political matters. The last phenomenon to point out would be that the number of people confident in the United Nations enough to choose the most positive answer has been very low. It is invoking the question of the legitimacy of international organizations of such scale, as they can easily seem too robust to either understand how they work or to sympathise with the actions and resolutions from all points of view of people of the world.

Finally, I am going to present the results of the standard deviation conducted on the three waves of the WVS. I am going to start with the 5th wave of the WVS. I will calculate the average and the standard deviation. To find whether the answers are more homogeneous in non-democratic countries of Russia and China I will be purposely excluding any answer except the main four: 1 – “A great deal”, 2 – “Quite a lot”, 3 – “Not very much”, 4 – “None at all”, therefore I will be able to either confirm or disprove the hypothesis. Figures 1 – 4 show the distribution of answers in the four countries.

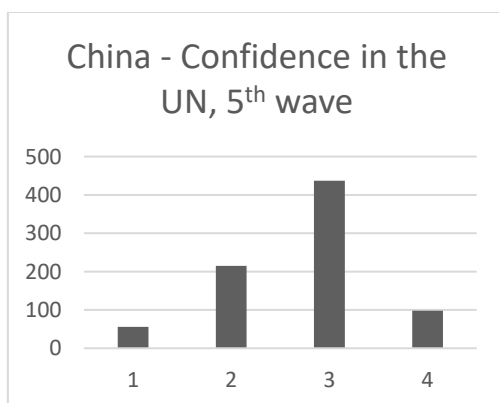


Figure 1

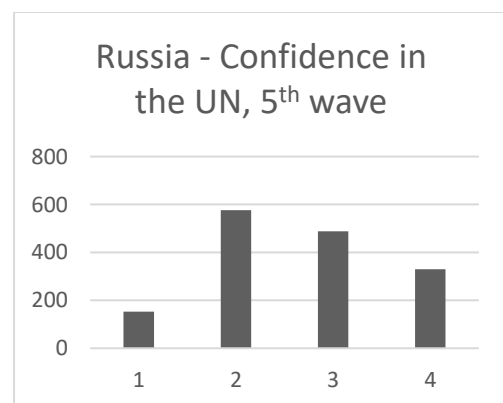


Figure 2

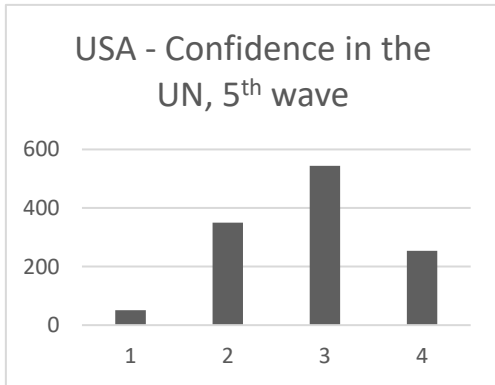


Figure 3

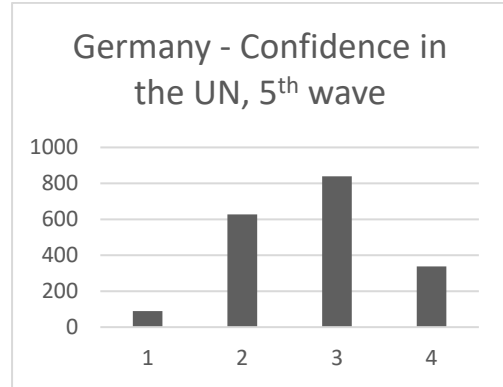


Figure 4

Table 4

5 th wave	Average	Standard Deviation	P-value (chi-squared)
China	2,2841	0,7657	0
Russia	2,6432	0,9244	1,0068E-228
USA	2,8349	0,8045	0
Germany	2,7533	0,7983	0

Table 4 then shows an average of answers in every country and the respective standard deviation. Every country's average has been somewhere between the answers 2 and 3. That means that during the 5th wave of the survey between the years 2005 and 2009 people were rather sceptical about the UN and did not fully trust it. The highest average has been recorded in the US, which shows that the citizens of the United States have not been fond of the UN. The second to most negative average would be Germany, another liberal democracy, then Russia, and lastly China with the highest difference in the average compared to the other countries. The data shows that both non-democratic authoritarian countries are more positive in terms of confidence in the UN than democratic ones. One must keep in mind that answers below 1 – “Don't know” and “No answer” have been excluded, therefore all of the conclusions are about the surveyed people that answered 1 to 4.

The standard deviation differs from the other values. Russia with the highest standard deviation is followed by the USA. Germany is in close third place while China has the lowest standard deviation. Even though the Russian average answer is more positive than the two democratic countries, its deviation is the highest one, therefore, the hypothesis cannot be

confirmed. However, one could argue that the Russian regime was less controlling in the years 2005-2009 less controlling compared to now, thus the data could be more like the democratic countries rather than China. China would, on the other hand, conform to the hypothesis if one would not include the overwhelming number of neutral answers.

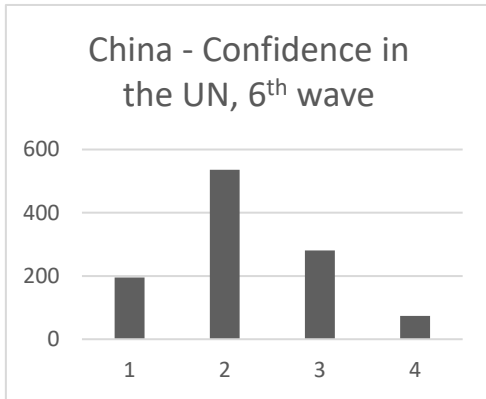


Figure 5

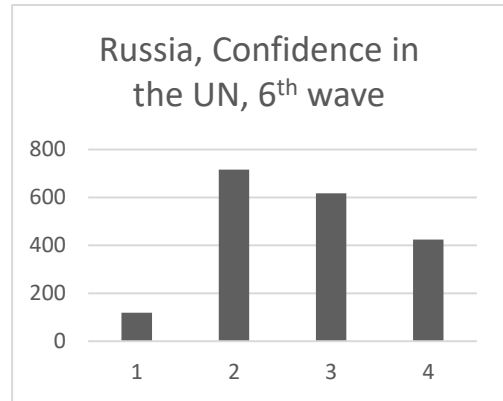


Figure 6

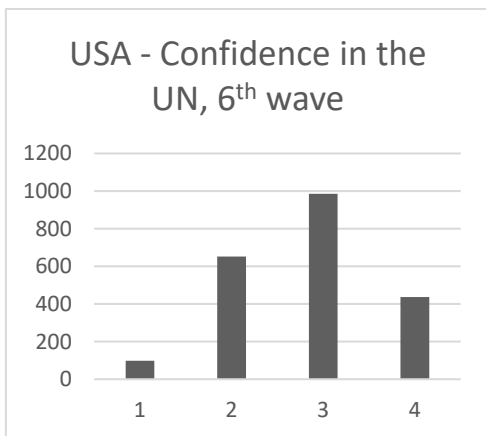


Figure 7

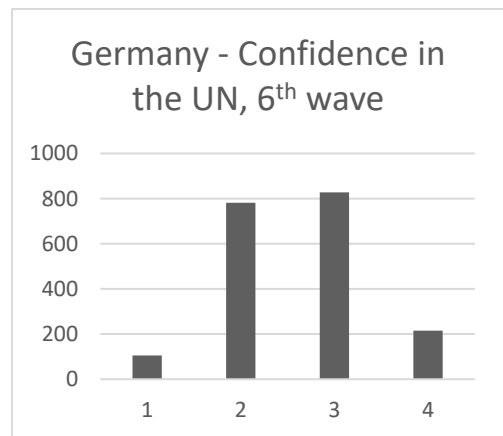


Figure 8

Table 5

6 th wave	Average	Standard Deviation	P-value (chi-squared)
China	2,2155	0,8155	0
Russia	2,7175	0,8843	7,2714E-295
USA	2,8109	0,8038	0
Germany	2,5974	0,7566	0

Figures 5 – 8 again show the confidence in the UN in each country while excluding answers that are not 1 – 4. This once more majorly affects the average in Table 5 in China,

as the neutral answer has been the most popular by far and Russia had a significant amount of those as well. Nonetheless, there is a slight change in the ranking. China stays in first place with the lowest (most positive) average followed by Germany, Russia, and then the US. Chinese and American averages stayed essentially the same while Germany experienced a development towards the positive and Russia a decline in confidence in the UN. However, the standard deviation in China has changed fairly significantly compared to the previous wave. Russia experienced a drop in the deviation as well as Germany, while the values from the US have stayed the same which is interesting. As the USA is finding itself in a decline of political trust and has been over the past half-decade, the average answer and the standard deviation do not follow that trend from the 5th to the 6th wave. Nonetheless, the hypothesis can once again not be confirmed. The authoritarian regimes are contrary to expectations showing higher standard deviation over the democratic states.

Lastly, the 7th wave of the WVS conducted between the years 2017 and 2022 will show the most up-to-date results in this regard. As mentioned, the local team in China has not included the question of confidence in the UN in their country's survey. The WVS organization said, that this occasionally happens with non-democratic states as they might consider some information dangerous for the world to know. It is left to imagine why the Chinese government decided that the trust in the UN in particular could be harmful to publish, especially after having no issues with it in the previous waves. Due to this issue, the last part of the analysis will include the data from the previous 6th wave.

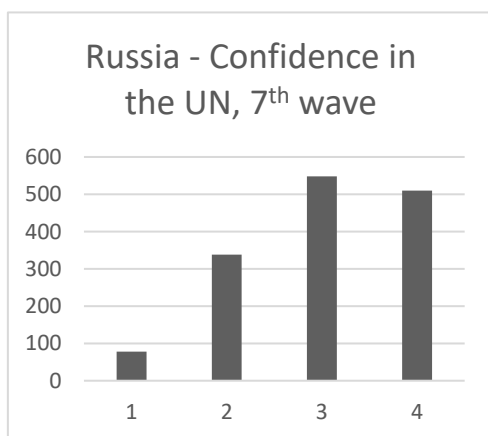


Figure 9

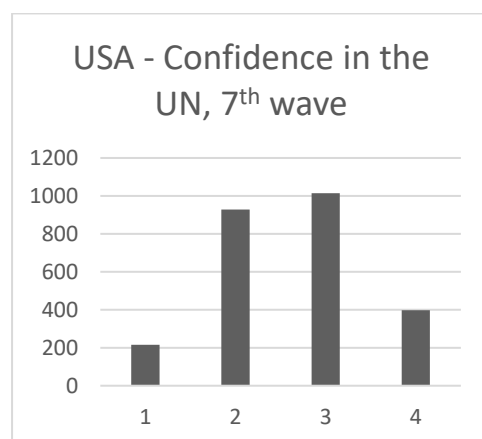


Figure 10

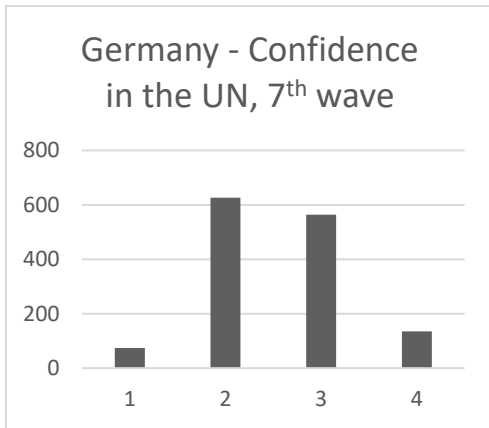


Figure 11

Table 6

7 th wave	Average	Standard Deviation	P-value (chi-squared)
China*	-	-	-
Russia	3,0109	0,8874	1,0635E-168
USA	2,6236	0,8458	0
Germany	2,5432	0,7398	1,2367E-301

*Data for China are in the 7th wave absent.

Once again, the Russian average answer has risen. Since 2017, Russia has vetoed 17 UN Security Council resolutions about either the situation in the Middle East or the Russian invasion of Ukraine, many times backed by China. This might influence the citizens through the Russian media as they portray the world as if it was trying to harm Russia. The neutral answer of “Don’t know” – not included in the average and standard deviation – has also dropped significantly compared to previous rounds of the survey. People of Russia might therefore feel less trustful of the UN. The second most negative average belongs to the US. It happens to be the first time since 2005, as both previous waves showed a very similar one. The second democratic state has experienced almost no change in the average compared to the previous wave. The Chinese data from the 6th wave show the highest average trust in the UN not considering the neutral answer. China could be considered the most trusting of the UN out of the four examined countries.

The deviations changed slightly as well. The most noticeable one happened in the US, as the deviation has risen by four hundredths. Germany experienced a slight drop of 2

hundredths. Interestingly, the standard deviation of Russian answers stayed essentially the same. On top of that, it was the highest deviation in answers of all four countries. This only disproves the hypothesis even more. Sadly, the data from China cannot be more up to date, however, one can with confidence say, that the hypothesis can be denied. Not only that, but the reality is quite the opposite. Russia has had the highest standard deviation in all three waves of the survey. Taking even the neutral “Don’t know answer” into account would not change the fact, that the answers of Russian citizens were more spread than the other countries. Russian confidence in the UN is not more homogeneous than the ones of democratic countries. It seems that the authoritarian regime does not have an impact on that.

On the other hand, China could fit into the expectation, but only during the 5th wave of the WVS in the years 2005 – 2009. In this time period, China had the most positive and warm feelings towards the UN not considering the neutral answer. However, the neutral answer is incredibly significant since it makes for more than half of all people questioned. Even though the hypothesis could be relevant to that, it could not be applied fully. In the 6th wave, China still had the lowest average, however, the standard deviation has risen and placed third in the context of the four examined countries. Moreover, the neutral answer remained the absolute most significant. Thus, the hypothesis cannot be confirmed. Confidence in the UN has not been more homogeneous in China or Russia compared to the US and Germany.

After conducting the chi-squared analysis of the datasets of each country for each wave I can disprove the null hypothesis due to the p-value being less than alpha (0,05) in all cases, while the majority was significant to the point where the p-value happened to greatly near zero.

6. Conclusion

The purpose of this thesis has been to fill a gap in research about the comparison of confidence in the United Nations in non-democratic and democratic countries. The chosen examples of non-democratic countries were Russia, an authoritarian regime with a strong leader in control of the state, and China, as a prime example of a communist regime under the full control of the Communist political party. The first democratic state chosen was the

arguably most studied liberal democracy of the world and simultaneously the largest economy, the United States of America. Germany served as another liberal democratic country located within Europe and being the heart of the European Union and working as a counterpart to not only the authoritarian regimes but also the US since its population sometimes shows different results in surveys compared to traditional European democracies.

The main idea behind the thesis was to establish, whether the regime of a state could influence how varied the confidence in the UN is with the hypothesis being constructed around the homogeneity of the latter. The theory behind it was that authoritarian regimes are known to control the flow of information; therefore, they can portray the UN to their liking, altering the news and information towards the desired by the respective government. Moreover, citizens of such countries could be less likely to express how they truly feel about political issues in surveys such as the WVS due to the potential harm they could bring upon themselves by the governments that are known for their harsh actions towards people expressing their political opinions not aligned with the regime. On the other hand, both ambassadors for democracy were expected to show a higher level of diversity in the case of trust in the UN, especially the US since its population is known to be very polarised and expressive of its political opinions. Germany was expected to have a higher diversity in the answers due to the freedom of speech and expression as well. Thus, democratic countries were expected to demonstrate heterogeneity in the answers.

However, the findings were different. After an analysis of the data collected by the World Values Survey in the 5th wave conducted 2005-2009, the 6th wave conducted 2010-2014, and the 7th wave conducted 2017-2020 the data showed that the hypothesis could not be applicable. Based on an analysis of the average answer on a scale of 1 to 4 of the confidence in the United Nations, one being the most positive and four the most negative, and the analysis of the standard deviation of answers from each country one could deny the existence of a clear connection between an authoritarian regime and the deviation in confidence in the UN. When excluding the neutral answer of “Don’t know” from the data to explicitly show the standard deviation, which for the case of China and Russia has caused a major decrease in the data sample since the majority of the Chinese and a significant number of people from Russia stood neutral on the topic, the deviations sometimes showed quite the opposite of what was expected. China showed some evidence of a higher homogeneity in

answers in the 5th wave of the survey, however, that changed in the next wave. Russia, on the other hand, had the highest standard deviation in all three waves, usually very significantly. Germany, as a democratic country, had the highest homogeneity in both the 6th and 7th waves and placed very close to China in the 5th wave. The US showed higher diversity than Germany, but not as much as Russia. The democratic states were expected to have higher heterogeneity in the answers; however, the standard deviation of answers proved the expectation wrong. The hypothesis can therefore be denied, as the research showed that public confidence in the UN in Russia and China is not more homogeneous than in the US and Germany.

Trust in international organizations is influenced by many aspects. Political and social trust (Brewer et al., 2004; Torgler, 2007), as well as values like the financial status or achieved education of an individual, democracy, and corruption (Newton, 2001), are usually considered the most important ones. The expectation of this thesis assumed that there would be a clear distinction between the authoritarian regime as their citizens can experience the same issues in terms of government oppression or the lack of free media and liberal democracies as they provide freedom and accessibility of information incomparable to the authoritarian ones. Although the analysis of data from China showed results that would fit the preposition, one could not say the same about Russia. It is interesting that despite the similarities in the foreign policy of both China and Russia were the results different. Russia as a self-proclaimed hegemon and arguably an important player in the field of international relations has been searching for someone to oppose the US with and found the perfect fit in China, as the Chinese policy seems to act as an alternative and opposition to the US. The Chinese-Russian partnership is glorified by both sides and strategically beneficent to both. However, confidence in the UN happens to be different from one country to the other.

Germany, as a central European liberal democracy, has shown great conformity to homogeneity in the trust of the UN. The decreasing tendency of the standard deviation throughout the years 2005-2022 only confirmed the fact that the citizens of Germany do not feel very trustful of the UN and are together on that topic. As the only one not being a member of the UN Security Council of the countries analysed Germany showed the more positive results out of the two democracies. The US was feeling more negative about the UN

and experienced a higher diversity in opinions which is not irregular as the population of the US is often polarized on political topics.

In conclusion, this thesis offered a previously unexplored comparison of the trust in the United Nations in authoritarian countries to liberal democracies and found that the homogeneity in answers in the authoritarian regimes was not present. The deviations showed different results to the hypothesis, which has not been proven. By running a chi-squared goodness of fit test I was able to reject the null hypothesis and proved that the data to be statistically significant. The hypothesis was based on the literature studying the legitimacy of international organizations (Dellmuth, 2016; Dellmuth, Scholte, Tallberg, 2019; Dellmuth, Talberg, 2021) and the values that affect the confidence in the UN, such as the social and political trust (Newton, 1999; Newton, 2001; Torgler, 2008; Dellmuth, Talberg, 2015) or the institutional trust ((Muñoz et al., 2011). By comparing the regimes I was not able to establish a clear distinction between the two ideological archetypes of governments and their influence on the confidence in the United Nations.

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