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TRUST, CONFIDENCE AND SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT IN POST COMMUNIST SOCIETIES

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Abstract
This paper looks at trust and confidence in eight of the countries that have undergone transformation since the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991/2: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. It compares trust in people and reliance on family with trust/confidence in and satisfaction with government and governmental and welfare institutions. While the questions are not identical to those asked in previous research in post – soviet societies our findings would seem to be comparable – greatest trust in relatives and friends, less in people in general and least in politicians and institutions of social control. Levels of trust, both interpersonal and in institutions are not high in any of the eighth countries and there is some support for the view that trusting people is different from having confidence in institutions. However there are some interesting differences between the countries and there is some support for the view that trust and confidence are eroded by sudden and dramatic negatively perceived change.

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INTRODUCTION

This paper looks at trust and confidence – the psychological aspect of the 'social environment' that underlies the functioning of social institutions, forms of government and forms of socioeconomic organisation. The empirical focus is the experience of the citizens of eight of the countries that have undergone transformation since the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991/2: Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia and Ukraine. It compares trust in people and reliance on family with trust/confidence in and satisfaction with government and governmental and welfare institutions. Beyond this it looks at confidence/faith in the economic and political directions the countries are taking – faith in the future and confidence in 'things unseen' in the social environment. Given that the eight countries share a recent form of government and socioeconomic organisation and have all gone through (and are still going through) a painful transformation since1991 to a different social and economic order, we should expect similar reactions. The eight countries range across Europe and Central Asia, however, and have very different histories and historical cultures, so we shall also be looking for differences.

The collapse of the Soviet Union resulted in rapid, dislocating and sudden change resulting in the emergence of new political, economic and social structures and relationships. It is now widely recognized that the shock of the transition has had a major negative impact on the wealth, health and well being of the citizens of the former Soviet Union (e.g. Abbott in press, Abbott forthcoming a, b, Abbott and Sapsford forthcoming, Abbott and Wallace 2005, Abbott and Wallace forthcoming, Dudwick et al 2003, Field and Twigg 2000, Hutton and Redmond 2000, Nazpary 2002, Rose 2003, Veenhoven 2001), with the basis for citizenship being destroyed (Giddens 1994.) The security of the lives of the majority of the population has been shattered, with an increase in crime, a rise in unemployment, a dramatic decline in living standards and a sharp reduction in public spending on education, health and housing, together with a dramatic increase in inequalities, creating an 'hour glass society' – a society where people rely on relatives and close friends rather than the state for support and help in time of need (Lines 2001, Rose 1995). This has resulted in what has variously been describes as de-modernisation (Yanitsky, 2000), involution (Burawoy, 1997), cultural trauma (Sztompka 2002, 2004) or anomie (Abbott and Beck 2003).

However, while all the countries experienced economic, political and social transformations after the fall of communism and are trying to find new lifestyles and new economies in a very changed world, they have very different locations, cultural histories and physical conditions; the eight range across Slavic Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Further, the collapse has hit the different countries to differing extents and in different ways. Most are trying (in some cases struggling) to retain a developed economy, but at least one (Kyrgyzstan) has reacted to the collapse by reverting to a largely peasant/agricultural economic system. All experienced hyperinflation in the early 1990s, all have suffered a very substantial cut in GDP, although the decline had reversed in most of the countries by the mid-1990s and in all the countries by 2000. The decline in GDP has been particularly acute in Moldova and

Ukraine in Europe and Georgia in the Caucasus (UNICEF 2004). All have dropped on the World Bank's Index of Human Development - Russia for example dropped from 37th position in 1991 to 57th in 2002 while Moldova (113) and Kyrgyzstan (110) now rank below many of the countries of the 'third world' (UNHDR 2004). With the exception of Belarus, all the countries have made substantial progress in the privatisation of industry and agriculture (Jeffries 2003, 2004) and all have become much less equal societies, as measured by income differentials (Table 1). All the countries remain tied to Russia economically. Politically the transformation has been to authoritarian forms of government (Freedom House 2004) and Russia has lost its super-power status. There has been significant internal and external migration (legal and illegal) with at least two of the states (Armenia and Moldova) experiencing significant population decline because of it. There have been civil wars and territorial disputes in Armenia, Georgia, Moldova and Russia and since the research reported on here was carried out popular uprisings in Georgia, Ukraine and Kyrgyzstan. Moldova elected a communist government to power in 2001 and it has subsequently been re-elected. Except in Armenia and Georgia, there was a marked decline in life expectancy especially for men in mid life in the 1990s, but with signs of the decline stabilising or reversing by the end of the century (Abbott 2004).

Table 1: Key Changes and Indicators 1989 – 2001

	Armenia	Belarus	Georgia	Kazak	Kyrgyz	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine
Human Development Index 1991 – 2002 change in rank	- 35	- 24	- 48	- 24	- 27	- 49	- 20	- 25
Real GDP growth (1989 = 100) 2001	68.9	89.1	36.0	78.4	70.0	35.9	67.6	44.8
Change in GINI Index – earnings 1989 - 2001	+.23	+.11	+.20	-	+.25	+.14	+.25	+.21
GDP per capita PP$ 2001	3120	5520	2260	5870	1620	1470	8230	4870
% below $2 poverty line	43.5	2.0	18.9	15.7	49.1	55.4	25.1	23.7
% below $4 poverty line	86.2	22.0	54.2	31.6	88.0	66.0	50.3	63.0
Change in life expectancy 1989 – 2001 women	+ 1.2	- 1.9	- 0.2	- 2.0	+ 0.2	+ 0.6	- 2.3	- 1.4
Change in life expectancy 1989 – 2001 men	+ 2.0	- 4.0	+ 0.7	- 4.0	+ 0.6	- 1.0	- 5.2	- 3.6

(Sources: Abbott, 2002, UNHDR, 1992, 2004, UNICEF, 2004)

Trust and confidence

At one level the study of trust is about what people feel and believe and integral to an understanding of identity and social location (Moscovici 1988 – p. 12 in the English edition). Trust in this perspective is both a 'feeling' and a 'cognitive state': a feeling

of confidence in those around you and/or in things unseen, but also the perception of systems and relations as dependable. The concepts of trust and confidence are linked to a range of strategies for surviving and living within the social world, from isolationist survival to committed integration (or committed opposition). Trust enables people to collaborate, negotiate and trade under conditions of uncertainty and is especially important in complex societies (Misztal, 1996). A lack of trust results in powerlessness and a lack of control; trust increases the possibility for action and the exercise of agency. Furthermore, trust is cultural and normative and so trust, or lack of trust, tends to be deeply embedded in the culture of a society, in socially shared understandings – people act without consciously thinking about the trust they are investing or, conversely, the risks they are taking. A breakdown of social trust and confidence is a core element of what Sztompka has referred to as cultural trauma (1999, 2002, 2004).

In this paper we distinguish between 'trust' in people and 'confidence' in the nature of the social environment. (Attitudes to concrete institutions of government and welfare have elements of both concepts, involving both confidence in the social environment of which they form a part and trust in the individuals who form and administer them.) While it is a mistake to confuse the two (Dunn 1988), it may be argued that they are to some extent causally related – that confidence in institutions and the social environment is not possible without trust in people. Simmel (1950) points to the importance of *a priori* trust – the trust we are socialised into and bring to each relationship and talks of a reciprocal orientation of people to each other, something implicitly presupposed in social organisation – a concern for others at the root of social interaction. The notion extends into the concept of trust as expectations about others' behaviour (Misztal 1996; Lewicki and Bunker 1996), and even to tolerance of diversity and disagreement (Inglehart 1997). Expectations in turn condition behaviour: a willingness to trust is a willingness to risk making oneself vulnerable (Mayer *et al* 1995). Thus trust involves not just an interpretation of the situation based on experience but also a suspension of judgement – a leap of faith. Trust involves risk.

While political scientists have seen social trust as essential for the working of democratic political institutions (e.g. Almond and Verba 1963) and economists for the working of a market economy (e.g. Raiser, 1998) sociologists have seen it as an essential foundation for the exercise of agency in complex societies (Durkheim, Seligman 1997, Simmel 1950, Sztompka, 1999). Political scientists have pointed out that over and above institutional and legal frameworks, democratic trust and confidence in the democratic form of social order requires confidence that diversity, competition and dissent are relatively safe activities and, for continuing civil stability, some degree of confidence among both rich and poor that their interests will not be overridden. Studies that measure 'generalised trust' certainly suggest that there is more of it in democracies (Muller and Seligson 1994) and that where there is general trust there is civic involvement (Putnam 1995; Inglehart 1999). Beyond trust in persons and confidence or trust in political and economic institutions lies a broader confidence, which is the psychological substrate of the social environment. It consists in trust in the socioeconomic order – confidence that there are reliable regularities in the way social relations are ordered. Trust or confidence, in this sense, is both a reason for action and a precondition for action – trust in banks, trust in telephones, trust in doctors, as inclining us against keeping our money under the pillow, travelling to speak face to face, using alternatives to formal medicine.

Trust and confidence in the C. I. S

There is some evidence that there has been a breakdown of social trust and confidence in post-soviet societies (Sztompka, 1999) and a bias towards localised trust (Aberg and Sandberg 2003) which is seen as 'a rational and effective gamble' (Letki and Evans 2002: 19) with an emphasis on horizontal relationships (Letki and Evans 2002, Rose 1995) .In surveys of former communist countries (Miller *et al* 1998, 2001) about 70 per cent of respondents tend to distrust parliament, 23 per cent distrust ordinary citizens, 52 per cent on average distrust the coercive agencies (police, courts, security services), 31 per cent the army and 37 per cent the church and the media. Some degree of trust is shown in the president in some of the countries but in Russia at least this trust has been in the person not the office (Levada, 2004). In a 1996 survey, 71 per cent of Russians thought it impossible to trust anyone but close relatives, and only 19 per cent disagreed. The figures in a 2001 survey were 78 per cent and 11 per cent (Levada 2004). What is being described here is an atomised society – one in which trust is confined to small local pockets of interaction and there is little or no confidence in the social or economic future or the institutions which are being created or developed.

Some have suggested that a lack of trust and public confidence in former Soviet countries is symptomatic of identity loss as a general problem of transformations. Transformation changes institutions, and being tied into social institutions is a readily defensible source of identity. Some see it as a resurgence of traditional cultural values to fill the void left by the breakdown of communist institutions. High levels of trust in family and face-to-face acquaintance and in local networks and much lower levels of faith in national and governmental institutions were characteristic of the societies that made up the Soviet Union (Rose-Ackman 2001). Others regard current low levels of civic confidence as a product of previous oppression. Totalitarian socialisation foster feelings of fear and suspicion (e.g. Marková 2004b) uncertainly, distrust in communication and fear, helped stabilise the régime. Others view it as a reaction to the dysfunctional nature of the previous, 'communist' society (e.g. Kochanowicz 2004). The rhetoric of the Soviet bloc legitimated authority by achievement of public goals, but they were not effective in achieving them (Marková 2004b). Communism had no vision of civil society; its norms were totalitarian and integrationist: control of all spheres was integral to the vision (Kolakowski 1991). Where people remember effective government they remember services supplied centrally and dependence on arbitrary central decisions to supply or not to supply advice, education or treatment,

and they regret current lack of provision without showing any sign of fighting for its return or regarding it as something within their range of decision (Abbott and Wallace 2005).

Sztompka (1999, 2002, 2004), in developing a sociological analysis of the transition, argues that post-Soviet societies are experiencing cultural trauma as a consequence of the rapid, comprehensive, unexpected and radical/fundamental change; they are societies in which there has been a breakdown of social trust and a loss of a sense of agency together with feelings of uncertainty, insecurity, risk and personal suffering. Insecurity and uncertainty have become a normal experience of daily life for many citizens. The dislocation in the social structure has resulted in a breakdown in the normative patterns that define the expectation of actors, in the patterns of social relationships between actors, and in the embodied perceptions, habits and skills by which people produce and reproduce institutional and related structures. It is not only that structural change means that people's life chances have been transformed (and, for many, for the worse), but so have their understandings of how to make life choices and their ability actually to do so. Culturally shared templates are no longer appropriate for guiding behaviors in the changed socio-economic and cultural contexts.

The *Living Conditions, Lifestyle and Health* Survey

The *Living Conditions, Lifestyle and Health* Project includes a large-scale survey in eight of the former Soviet countries, of health, socio-economic conditions, psychosocial factors, political and social attitudes, views of the past and the future and lifestyle generally. The survey was carried out in the Autumn of 2001, using face-to-face interviews with versions of the questionnaire translated into the appropriate language, administered by local organizations know for their experience in survey research and trained and briefed by the Project's lead researchers. It covered a representative sample of the adult population aged 18 and over; samples were selected using multi-stage sampling with stratification by region and area. The sample size was 4000 in Russia, 2,500 in Ukraine and 2,000 in the remaining six countries, reflecting the relative sizes of the populations. In most countries pilot work was done prior to the surveys. Response rates in the main survey varied between 71 per cent and 88 per cent. (The percentage of eligible individuals who could not be contacted after three visits varied between 5 and 15 per cent, and the actual refusal rate varied between 4 and 17 per cent.) Item non-response was generally very low. (Further information on the project, including a number of reports and papers, can be found on the website – http://llh.ac.at.)

Many of the variables used in this paper were originally conceived as 4-point scales on which respondents agreed (1 or 2) or disagreed (3 or 4) with statements. The aim here was to force the expression of an opinion, even if their preference in either direction was only slight, but in practice a number of respondents (up to 20% for some items) endorsed the separate 'don't know' response. To avoid either losing this fraction of the sample or making unwarranted inferences about their attitudes these case have been re-imported as a mid-point to the (now 5-point) scale, given that they have deliberately neither agreed nor disagreed.

Caution must be exercised in drawing conclusions about underlying causes from correlational survey data, but it is hoped that the pattern of responses across a wide range of questions will begin to suggest lines of thought worth exploring further. To the extent that trust is created or eroded by transition to a market economy and an open form of government we would expect the countries to show the same pattern. To the extent that it is economically based, or based on the success with which the various regimes have been installed and maintained, we would expect marked differences, because both the economies and the emergent political systems have shown differing trends in the different countries. To the extent that economic success or social embeddedness underlie trust we would expect economic position to emerge as a factor.

Analysis of variance, including Sheffé's procedure for distinguishing 'ties' among categories, has been used below for convenience of exposition when comparing countries. The validity of using parametric statistics on short rating scales may reasonably be questioned, but more cumbersome nonparametric techniques confirm the same patterns.

results

Trust in people

Given the statement that 'a majority of the people can be trusted', about 20 per cent of respondents agreed strongly and just over 50 per cent agreed to at least some extent. Most of the rest disagreed, 17.5 per cent strongly (Table 2). There are substantial and statistically significant differences between countries, however, with Kyrgyzstan showing over 70 per cent who agreed, 35 per cent of them strongly, whiled Moldova has only 30 per cent agreeing and only 8 per cent strongly agreeing. The statistical significant remains even if these two outliers are removed (and also Georgia, whose overall agreement is also low). Older people and women were marginally more likely to be trusting than younger people and men but the differences were small even where significant and there was no evidence of systematic differences by economic circumstances.

Table 2: Trust in people

		'The majority of people can be trusted'				
		Agree	Quite agree	DK	Rather disagree	Disagree
Country.	Armenia	22.6%	23.0%	5.3%	19.6%	29.5%
	Belarus	17.5%	32.9%	7.5%	26.5%	15.7%
	Georgia	18.6%	17.6%	10.5%	33.2%	20.2%
	Kazakhstan	18.1%	39.0%	4.3%	26.4%	12.2%
	Kyrgyzstan	35.0%	35.5%	4.5%	16.0%	9.1%
	Moldova	8.0%	20.9%	7.5%	35.3%	28.3%
	Russia	21.8%	34.8%	5.2%	24.9%	13.4%
	Ukraine	15.0%	33.3%	5.7%	30.2%	15.8%
Total		*19.7%*	*30.3%*	*6.1%*	*26.4%*	*17.5%*

N= 18,428. 0.9% of cases had missing values on the 'trust' variable.

Relatives or friends were seen as the main people to turn to for support and help in times of crisis. 'If you needed money', for instance, the first recourse would be relatives in 54 per cent of cases and friends in 22 per cent. (Less than two per cent nominated a bank as their first recourse, and only 14 per cent said they would go to any public source such as a bank, their employer or a branch of government at all – including those who nominated some other source as first recourse.) If there were problems with the house, over 70 per cent say their first solution would be to fix it themselves or turn to the family; 22 per cent nominated friends as first recourse, and this rises to 45 per cent if we include people who would turn elsewhere first. Thirty per cent would rely on a friend to go with them if they were out alone after dark. If their child did not do well enough to get into university, 56 per cent would do something about it themselves, a further 13 per cent would turn to people in their networks, and networks are mentioned (not necessarily as first recourse) by 28 per cent of the sample. The story is therefore one of self-reliance or dependence on relatives or to a lesser degree friends or networks. (The pattern is much the same for all the counties, for men and women, for all age groups and for those in different material circumstances).

There is, however, a significant minority of people who have no one whom they can reliably trust to provide support and help. Over a quarter of respondents were far from socially embedded even at the local level, describing loneliness as one of their problems. Over twenty per cent said they do not have a friend with whom they can discuss important matters. Between 5% and 12% could not identify a 'person they can best share their private feelings and concerns with'. Between 8 per cent and 12 per cent said there was no-one to whom they could turn to express feelings or seek help (the figure grows to 11-19% if we include people 'not sure'), and 35 per cent had no-one to turn to when depressed.

Confidence in government

The level of trust in government is not high and democratic institutions do not command high respect (Table 3). About 55 per cent of the total sample expresses some degree of trust in their President, 37 per cent in the national government and the

regional Governor, 28 per cent in the National Parliament and only 15 per cent in the political parties. Thirty-seven per cent distrust the President (18% greatly), 54 per cent (26%) distrust the national government, 50 per cent (25%) distrust the regional Governor, 61 per cent (30%) distrust the National Parliament and 70 per cent (39%) distrust political parties. Differences between countries (Table 4) are significant and consistent. The Kyrgyz and the Belarusians show the greatest trust, with the Russians and the Kazaks not far behind (but Russians and Kazakhs show more trust in the National President and Kazakhs show the most trust in the National Parliament). Georgia and Ukraine show the least trust throughout, with the Georgians coming lowest on everything except for trust in the President, where the Ukrainians fall below them. (Differences by material circumstances, age and gender were relatively small even when significant and formed no easily interpretable pattern).

Table 3: Trust in government (percentage agreement)

	Trust in ..				
	President	National Government.	National Parliament	Regional Governor	Political Parties
Greatly trust	23.7	11.6	8.4	11.6	4.2
Quite trust	31.2	25.4	19.7	24.8	11.2
DK	8.1	8.9	10.8	13.7	14.2
Rather distrust	18.9	28.0	30.7	24.5	31.4
Greatly distrust	18.1	26.2	30.4	25.4	39.0

Table 4: Trust in government (means, by country)

	Trust in ..				
	President	National Government.	National Parliament	Regional Governor	Political Parties
Armenia	3.10	3.57	3.75	3.43	3.89
Belarus	2.49	2.84	2.97	3.01	3.65
Georgia	3.41	4.49	4.49	4.18	4.44
Kazakhstan	2.31	2.91	3.19	2.76	3.79
Kyrgyzstan	2.47	2.72	2.93	2.89	3.37
Moldova	2.89	3.44	3.64	3.54	4.05
Russia	2.15	2.96	3.42	2.93	3.87
Ukraine	3.72	3.85	4.03	3.68	4.12

Note: lower scores (out of 5) denote stronger trust on the part of the respondent.

Levels of satisfaction with the current government are low (Table 5). Not much more than ten per cent of those who were able to rate the performance of the government gave positive approval and 63 per cent give the current government a negative rating. There is some expectation of improvement in the future – a positive rating of about 40.9 per cent and a negative rating of about 33 per cent by those able to give a rating. What is most evident is the high rating given to the government of the USSR with over 70 giving a high approval and less than 10 percent a negative grading. There are, however significant differences in the ratings given by country with 94 percent of Georgians giving a negative rating to the government in power in 2001, 75 percent of Armenians and Ukrainians, 72 percent of Moldavians, 59 percent of Kyrgyz, 46 percent of Russians, 44 percent of Kazakhs and 38 percent of Belarussians. In terms of future expectations the most optimistic are the Russians and the Kyrgyz with just

over 50 percent of those able to rate their expectation of the government in 10 years time gave a positive rating. The most pessimistic about the future were the Armenians, Moldovans and Ukrainians, where only around 30 percent of respondents give a rating gave a positive one. There were significant differences in the ratings given to the former USSR, however; more than half in each country gave a positive rating, ranging from nearly 87 percent in Kyrgyzstan to 55 percent in Russia.

Table 5: Satisfaction with current government and expectations for the future (% agreement)

	Satisfaction with activities of current government	Expectation of government in ten years	Approval of Soviet Government
Highest approval/expectation	1.9	16.2	36.0
2	9.5	24.7	34.1
3	25.6	26.1	21.1
4	26.7	15.8	6.0
Lowest approval/expectation	36.3	17.2	2.8

Table 6: Past, present and future government (means, by country)

	Satisfaction with activities of current government	Approval of Soviet government	Expectation of government in ten years
Armenia	4.16	1.76	2.81
Belarus	3.49	2.79	3.07
Georgia	4.73	1.34	3.08
Kazakhstan	3.69	2.69	3.19
Kyrgyzstan	3.68	2.25	3.22
Moldova	3.98	2.04	2.93
Russia	3.66	2.60	3.11
Ukraine	4.35	1.94	2.81

(low scores indicate greater satisfaction)

Only about a quarter of the total sample were at all satisfied with the way democracy was developing in their country (Table 7). Over half considered it the best system, despite its faults, but over 20 per cent disagreed. About 40 per cent thought things would be better if communism were restored (and about the same proportion disagreed), small proportions favoured monarchy or government by the army, but over a third thought a strong *un*democratic leader could solve their problems (though about 44% disagreed). Again there are significant differences between countries but their interpretation is not immediately obvious. Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are the most satisfied with how democracy is developing, followed by Belarus and Russia (with Georgia the least satisfied, followed by Moldova and Ukraine), but it is Georgia and Belarusians that show the greatest approval of democracy as a form of government, with Moldova showing the least. The Kyrgyz are also the most likely, along with the Armenians, to suggest that things would be better under communism (with Belarus the least likely). Ukrainians, Moldovans and Armenians are also the most likely to suggest a strong dictator as a solution to their problems, along with Ukraine and Moldova, and Belarus and Georgia the least likely. (The Kyrgyz were most likely to endorse rule by the army and the Armenians to endorse monarchy, with

Georgia the least likely for both responses, but the proportion endorsing either was small.)

	democracy is developing in our country	have deficiencies, but it's better than any other form of government.	better if the Communist system were restored.	better if the army governed the country.	better if the monarchy in our country were restored.	parliament were free elections abol strong leader cam who would be able problems quickly.
Agree	5.9	29.5	24.8	4.2	3.0	19.7
Quite agree	18.6	27.2	14.7	5.8	3.8	16.5
DK	14.1	20.8	17.7	18.4	21.1	19.9
Rather disagree	33.1	10.9	14.8	17.1	14.2	13.2
Disagree	28.4	11.6	28.0	54.4	57.8	30.7

Table 8: Satisfaction with form of government (means, by country)

	Satisfied: how democracy is developing in our country	Democracy may have deficiencies, but it's better than any other form of government.	We could live better if the Communist system were restored.	We could live better if the army govern-ed the country.	We could live better if the monarchy in our country were restored.	We could live better, parliament were diss elections abolished a leader came to power be able to solve all pr quickly.
Armenia	3.60	2.40	2.47	3.88	3.61	2.93
Belarus	3.42	2.34	3.56	4.29	4.24	3.56
Georgia	4.29	2.22	3.34	4.56	4.44	3.17
Kazakhstan	3.21	2.42	3.12	4.15	4.33	3.27
Kyrgyzstan	3.12	2.45	2.34	3.70	4.34	3.0
Moldova	3.82	2.76	2.98	4.09	4.15	2.92
Russia	3.51	2.58	3.24	4.10	4.21	3.25
Ukraine	3.84	2.54	3.26	4.16	4.25	2.86

Note: low scores denote strong agreement that the respondent has this freedom.

Confidence in social institutions

About a third of the sample have confidence in the education system and the health system (but nearly two thirds would trust doctors, nurses etc.) and about 18 per cent have confidence in the welfare system. Well over half the sample are at least to some extent dissatisfied with all three – see Table 9. Over half express distrust of the courts and the police (and also the trade unions and the mass media), a third distrust the army, and about a quarter distrust the church. This does not add up to a solid endorsement of social institutions and the ways in which they have developed during the transition.

Table 9: Satisfaction with and trust in social institutions

	Satis with Education System	Satis with Welfare System	Satis with Health System	Trust the courts	Trust the police	Trust the army	Trust the Church	Trust Trade Unions	Trust Mass media
Definitely satisfied/ trust	6.9	3.9	5.4	8.4	8.8	23.8	30.8	7.5	14.0
Quite satisfied/ trust	24.5	14.6	22.1	22.9	22.5	35.3	30.6	17.8	33.3
DK	10.7	6.7	6.1	12.3	9.4	10.6	11.6	23.3	7.9
Rather dissatisfied /distrust	30.1	32.4	32.1	27.3	28.6	15.0	13.3	22.1	26.2
Definitely dissatisfied /distrust	27.8	42.4	34.3	29.1	30.7	15.2	13.7	29.4	18.6

There are significant differences between countries. Table 10 shows mean values on these variables by country (with a lower value indicating *greater* satisfaction or trust). The countries differ significantly on all variables, using one-way analysis of variance, and Sheffé's procedure suggests a consistent grouping. For education, welfare, health, the courts, the police and the Trade Unions the most satisfied/trusting are Belarus and Kyrgyzstan, followed by Kazakhstan, generally Armenia and often Russia. Georgia stands out as consistently less satisfied/trusting than any of the other countries, and Ukraine and Moldova are consistently not a great deal better. Trust in the Army shows a similar pattern except that Armenia stands out as the most trusting For the mass media Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan are the most trusting and Russia the least, with the rest about equal in the middle. The church also shows a different pattern, with Georgia, Moldova, Belarus and Armenia at the top and Russia distinctly at the bottom.

Table 10: Satisfaction with and trust in social institutions – mean values, by country

	Satis with Education System	Satis with Welfare System	Satis with Health System	Trust the courts	Trust the police	Trust the army	Trust the Church	Trust Trade Unions	Trust Mass media
Armenia	3.25	4.10	3.56	3.56	3.46	1.92	2.38	3.63	3.04
Belarus	2.82	3.17	3.03	3.04	3.03	2.30	2.31	3.11	3.06
Georgia	4.36	4.69	4.43	4.27	4.41	3.68	2.24	4.16	3.12
Kazakhstan	3.38	4.05	3.59	3.43	3.48	2.56	2.57	3.46	2.71
Kyrgyzstan	2.86	3.43	3.09	3.15	3.06	2.24	2.45	3.20	2.61
Moldova	3.74	4.10	3.98	3.53	3.52	3.07	2.31	3.69	3.10
Russia	3.60	3.86	3.69	3.32	3.46	2.47	2.74	3.27	3.29
Ukraine	3.62	4.22	3.98	3.50	3.59	2.87	2.58	3.53	2.97

The social environment

Between 65 and 80 per cent of the total sample considered they now had the right to speak freely, to travel, to join organisations and to join religions (Table 11); the lowest agreement was for religion and the highest for freedom of speech. About 50 per cent said they do not have to be afraid of illegal arrest, and about 32 per cent said they were free to take an interest in politics. On the other hand, between 15 and 20 per cent did *not* agree they had freedom of speech or travel or the right to join any organisation they liked, about 29 per cent did not feel free to join any religion and 48 per cent still feared illegal arrest. Fifty-seven per cent did not feel free to take an interest in politics, and not much more than 50 per cent said they had taken part in political discussions and would do so in the future. Six per cent said they had been on strike and 11 per cent that they had taken part in demonstrations; eleven per cent said they would do one or both in the future. Eighty-seven per cent had voted at least one, and 82.5 per cent said they would do so again. There is significant but only low/medium correlation between the different freedoms.

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Table 11: Political freedom (percentage agreement)

	I have the right …					
	to say what I think	to join any organization I like	to travel freely anywhere I want	to join any religion	I need not be afraid of illegal arrest	I can take an interest in politics.
Agree	60.1	48.1	51.6	49.7	26.5	17.6
Quite agree	20.9	21.8	19.4	15.7	13.5	14.1
DK	4.0	9.8	6.2	6.1	12.4	11.3
Rather disagree	9.5	10.1	10.9	6.3	15.5	16.2
Disagree	5.5	10.3	11.8	22.2	32.1	40.9

Table 12: Political freedom (means, by country)

	I have the right …					
	to say what I think	To join any organization I like	to travel freely anywhere I want	to join any religion	I need not be afraid of illegal arrest	I can take an interest in politics.
Armenia	1.83	2.39	1.81	3.54	2.73	3.74
Belarus	1.90	2.03	2.09	2.12	2.98	3.40
Georgia	1.67	2.57	2.40	2.98	2.93	3.95
Kazakhstan	1.96	2.23	2.26	2.22	3.22	3.53
Kyrgyzstan	1.55	2.01	1.86	2.56	3.46	3.39
Moldova	1.99	2.24	2.19	1.85	3.40	3.26
Russia	1.74	1.91	2.05	2.17	3.16	3.29
Ukraine	1.77	1.89	2.30	1.72	3.16	3.52

Note: a low score denotes a high level of agreement with the statement

There are significant differences between the countries but no readily interpretable pattern to these differences. Kyrgyzstan and Georgia claim the greatest freedom of speech, followed by Russia and Ukraine, and Belarus, Kazakhstan and Moldova claim the least. Three of these four countries are also at the top for freedom to join organisations (but Georgia is at the bottom, lower even than Moldova and Armenia). Moldova, Russia, Kyrgyzstan and Belarus feel the most free to take an interest in politics, and Armenia and Georgia the least. Armenia, Georgia and Belarus are the least worried about illegal arrest, and Moldova and Kyrgyzstan the most. Ukraine and Moldova claim the greatest freedom of religion and Georgia and Armenia the least.

Fear of crime is also a measurer of trust in ones social environment. Just over 50 percent of respondents were afraid of theft from the home, being robbed on the streets and or being harassed on the street (Table 13) These three items factor together – chronbach's alpha 0.9 (ranging from 0.84 Kyrgyzstan to 0.95 Georgia). Women and older people were significantly more likely to be worried about crime. There were also significant differences between the countries with the Moldovans noticeably most concerned and the Armenians least concerned. The Georgians were also less concerned than the citizens of the other countries with the exception of the Armenians. The other five countries formed a broad group grouping. Women were significantly more worried about crime than men and older people than younger ones. Just over 30 percent of respondents are worried or very worried about sexual attach – just over 38 percent of women and 22 percent of men with concern declining with age. Again there is least concern in Armenia and Georgia and most in Moldova. Twenty per cent of respondents were worried about the possibility of attack because of their ethnicity - with little difference by age or gender. There were large and significant differences by country. There was least concern in Belarus (7.5%) and most in Kyrgyzstan (37%) with there being relatively high levels of concern in Armenia (32.1 %) and Georgia (28%).

Table 13: Fear of Crime

	Not worried	Not very worried	Worried	Very worried
Theft from house	28.6	14.4	19.6	36.4
Harassed on street	26.9	17.2	22.1	33.9
Theft on street	28.6	17.8	20.4	33.2
Sexual attack	51.7	17.1	11.5	19.7
Ethnic attack	66.1	14.0	7.0	13.0

Economic Confidence

In economic terms, 58 per cent of the sample said their household situation had deteriorated over the past ten years (24 per cent badly); only eighteen per cent said it had improved even a little. Sixty-one per cent said they had barely enough income for food and clothes and a further 23 per cent had not even that. Eighty per cent of the sample are dissatisfied with their own and their household's financial situation. About 40 per cent are dissatisfied with their working conditions; at another point of the questionnaire about the same proportion describe dissatisfaction with work as one of their problems.

There are consistent and statistically significant economic differences between countries (using analysis of variance with Sheffé's procedure). Kyrgyzstan, Belarus or Kazakhstan come out as the best on all the economic variables – the least deterioration, the best economic position, the greatest satisfaction – though, as we have seen, the 'best' is not good by the standards of Western Europe. Russia follows them closely (overtaking Kyrgyzstan on satisfaction with personal income). Georgia, Armenia, Moldova and Ukraine lie consistently at the bottom end of the distribution, with Georgia and Armenia generally doing worse than the other two.

Expectations that one's economic situation is likely to improve is an indicator oh hope (trust) for the future and Table 11 shows that about 40 per cent of the sample expect their economic situation to improve in the next five years (more in Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, less in Moldova and Ukraine). About 26 per cent expect it to get worse (more in Armenia, Ukraine and perhaps Moldova, less in Georgia, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan). Thus for the most part the countries whose economy is least damaged are most hopeful for the future, but there are exceptions to this rule. At the level of individuals there is significant correlation between hope for future economic position and both current economic state (Tables 14 and 15) and extent to which the household situation has deteriorated over the past five years (Table 16). (The two are about equal in the size of their effect.)

What do You think the economic situation of your family will be in five years?		Country.								Total sample
		Armenia	Belarus	Georgia	Kazakh-stan	Kyrgyz-stan	Moldova	Russia	Ukraine	
	Will improve significantly	4.4%	2.9%	6.9%	3.7%	6.2%	1.5%	2.6%	1.9%	3.5%
	Will improve	32.3%	35.3%	44.1%	40.9%	53.2%	32.3%	34.3%	27.8%	37.2%
	Will stay without changes	21.2%	36.3%	31.3%	39.4%	20.1%	36.4%	37.9%	35.8%	33.0%
	Will worsen	29.6%	21.7%	13.3%	14.4%	16.9%	23.0%	22.1%	26.5%	21.2%
	Will worsen significantly	12.5%	3.9%	4.4%	1.7%	3.7%	6.8%	3.0%	8.0%	5.1%
Total		100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Table 15: Current and expected economic situation

		What do You think the economic situation of Your family will be in five years?				
		Will improve significantly	Will improve	Will stay unchanged	Will worsen	Will worsen significantly
Current economic situation of household	Very good	36.4%	54.5%	8.0%		1.1%
	Good	9.7%	63.9%	24.0%	2.2%	.3%
	Average	3.3%	44.5%	35.0%	15.5%	1.8%
	Bad	1.4%	20.6%	37.0%	34.7%	6.3%
	Very bad	.7%	12.9%	21.6%	37.1%	27.7%
Total		3.5%	37.2%	33.1%	21.2%	5.1%

TABLE 16. Living conditions and expected economic situation

	What do You think the economic situation of Your family will be in five years?				
	Will improve significantly	Will improve	Will stay without changes	Will worsen	Will worsen significantly
The money is not enough even for our nutrition	1.2%	15.6%	30.3%	38.3%	14.6%
The money is just enough for food and clothes	2.9%	38.6%	35.5%	19.9%	3.2%
It is enough to buy TV, fridge, but not enough for car/flat	6.8%	55.7%	30.1%	6.8%	.6%
We can purchase expensive goods (Car, flat)	13.1%	61.2%	21.6%	2.7%	1.4%
Total	3.4%	37.1%	33.2%	21.2%	5.1%

Table 17: changes over the past ten years and expected economic situation

How have Your household's economic situation changed during the past ten years?	What do You think the economic situation of your family will be in five years?				
	Will improve significantly	Will improve	Will stay without changes	Will worsen	Will worsen significantly
Definitely improved	18.5%	59.6%	15.8%	5.3%	.8%
Quite improved	6.4%	62.8%	25.2%	5.0%	.6%
Stayed without changes	2.4%	43.4%	41.6%	11.5%	1.2%
Rather worsened	1.9%	27.6%	36.3%	29.6%	4.5%
Definitely worsened	1.5%	18.9%	29.5%	35.8%	14.4%
Total	3.5%	36.9%	33.1%	21.3%	5.1%

Discussion

In this paper we have looked at trust and confidence in eight former Soviet countries, ten years after the dissolution of the Soviet Union: trust in people, trust and confidence in government and the institutions of government, and confidence in the social environment – welfare provision, the economy and the future of civil society. Trust in people should not be confused with confidence in the state and its institutions and the economy (Dunn 1988), but we have argued that confidence in institutions and the social environment is not possible without some degree of trust in people. We have used Simmel's notion of trust as a form of social relation implicitly presupposed in social organisation – a concern for others at the root of social interaction – and as a set of as expectations about others' behaviour which justifies and renders tolerable the risk of making oneself vulnerable to unknown others (see Mayer *et al* 1995). While the questions are not identical to those asked in previous research our findings

would seem to be comparable – greatest trust in relatives and friends, less in people in general and least in politicians and institutions of social control

Levels of trust in people are by no means high in the CIS. Only half our respondents agreed rather than disagreed that a majority of the people can be trusted; about twenty per cent of respondents agreed strongly, but about the same proportion disagreed just as strongly and just over 50 per cent agreed to at least some extent. There are substantial and statistically significant differences between countries; the proportion agreeing with the statement ranges from 70 per cent to 30 per cent and the proportion agreeing strongly from 35 per cent to 8 per cent. Over 80 per cent did have someone on whom they could rely and in whom they confide, but this was a relative in about 70 per cent of cases of cases and a friend in about 30 per cent. Relatives or friends were nominated as the main source of help and support in times of crisis, when people were asked to whom they would turn if they had money, housing or schooling problems.

Trust and confidence in government is also low. Just over half of the total sample express some degree of trust in their President (with evidence from other research to suggest that it may be the person rather than the office that inspires the trust, the opposite of findings in the West). Thirty-seven per cent trust in the national government and the regional Governor, 28 per cent in the National Parliament and only 15 per cent in the political parties. Thirty-seven per cent distrust the President, 54 per cent distrust the national government, 50 per cent distrust the regional Governor, 61 per cent distrust the National Parliament and 70 per cent distrust political parties. Levels of satisfaction with the current government are low: 44 per cent declare themselves dissatisfied overall and 57 per cent express disapproval of their government's overall performance. Only a quarter of the total sample were at all satisfied with the way democracy was developing in their country. Over half considered it the best system, despite its faults, but over 20 per cent disagreed. About 40 per cent thought things would be better if communism were restored (and about the same proportion disagreed), and over a third thought a strong *un*democratic leader could solve their problems (though about 44% disagreed). About a third of the sample had confidence in the education system and the health system and about 18 per cent had confidence in the welfare system. Well over half the sample were at least to some extent dissatisfied with all three.

Looking at political and social freedom, between 65 and 80 per cent of the total sample considered they now had the right to speak freely, to travel, to join organisations and to join religions; the lowest agreement was for religion and the highest for freedom of speech. Between 15 and 20 per cent said they did *not* they had freedom of speech or travel or the right to join any organisation they liked, about 29 per cent did not feel free to join any religion and 48 per cent still feared illegal arrest. Over half express distrust of the courts and the police, a third distrusted the army, and about a quarter distrusted the church. There were also high levels of fear of crime, with just over half of the respondents concerned about becoming a victim.

Experience of economic deterioration was widespread. Fifty-eight per cent said their household situation had deteriorated over the past ten years (24 per cent badly). Sixty-one per cent said they had barely enough income for food and clothes and a further 23 that they did not have even this basic level of income.

Confidence in the future was not high. Forty per cent of the sample expected their economic situation to improve in the next five years. About 26 per cent expected it to get worse, and the remainder expected no change or did not know. Asked if they expected future improvement in their government and its performance, the vast majority expressed no expectation of change or said they did not know how the government would perform in the future. (By way of comparison, the former Soviet government was rated positively by over 69 per cent of the sample.) Thus the overall analysis of this survey echoes the results of earlier surveys in particular countries: low trust in government and its institutions, low trust in people other than immediate family and friends, little confidence in the economy and little confidence in the future.

Some have seen current low levels of civic confidence as a product of previous political oppression, but the lower level of satisfaction with and confidence in the economy and their material situation suggests that for many this is not a sufficient explanation. Some have seen it as a general problem of transitions, a result of mutation social institutions which formerly provided a readily available and defensible source of identity. (This might be modified by the current level of deprivation and disruption experienced by particular groups of informants.) Others would see it as a resurgence of traditional cultural values to fill the void left by the breakdown of communist institutions. High levels of trust in family and face-to-face acquaintances and much lower levels of faith in national and governmental institutions are said to have been characteristic of the societies that made up the Soviet Union. Looking at differences between the eight countries in the survey – which range across Europe and Asia and have very different social and political histories and cultures - can help to decide between the two remaining types of explanation. To the extent that countries do not differ, or their differences are correlated with economic position, then the problem of confidence is one general to transitions, because the eight countries all share a recent form of government and socioeconomic organisation and have all gone through (and are still going through) a similarly painful transition since 1991 to a different social and economic order. (To the extent that confidence varies with economic status we might want to say that the transition has not necessarily been equally painful in all countries, however.) To the extent that there are differences not predictable from economic position, we might more readily attribute the loss of confidence to local political/social conditions or, where these do not account for the differences, to a reversion to local cultural norms.

Levels of trust, both interpersonal and in institutions are not high in any of the eighth countries and there is some support for the view that trusting people is different from

having confidence in institutions. However there are some interesting patterns (Table 18). Belarus has the highest levels of trust in political and economic institutions and satisfaction with economic and democratic progress, but levels of generic trust are not the highest. Belarus has the highest levels of trust/confidence in all the aspects we have considered, with the exception of freedom of speech, expectation of economic improvement and general trust in people.. It is also the country that has experienced the least economic and political change since 1991 (Table 1). The other countries where respondents were more trusting and/or confident are Russia, Kazakhstan, and Kyrgyzstan. What these three countries have in common with Belarus is a stronger economic recovery than in the three countries – Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine - that exhibited low levels of trust /confidence. Trust/confidence in government and social institutions does therefore seem to be at least partly influenced by economic and political change rather than levels of poverty and/or growth in inequalities. Belarus has also moved to the most authoritarian political system - although at the time when this survey was conducted all the governments were categorised as authoritarian - and it has not experienced any of the civil wars or territorial conflicts experienced by some of the other countries; it has made little move to privatise industry or decollectivise farming and has maintained high levels of employment. There is thus some support for the view that trust and confidence are eroded by sudden and dramatic negatively perceived change.

Table 18: Ranking of countries on attitudinal statements

	Least, worst	Most, best
Can trust majority of people	Georgia, Moldova	Kyrgyzstan, Russia
Trust in government	Georgia, Ukraine	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia
Trust in social institutions	Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine	Belarus, Kyrgyzstan
Have freedom of speech	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Moldova	Georgia, Kyrgyzstan
Free to take interest in politics	Armenia, Georgia	Belarus, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia
Safe from illegal arrest	Kyrgyzstan, Moldova	Belarus, Georgia
Satisfied with progress of democracy	Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia
Satisfied with economic position now	Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Ukraine	Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan
Expect economy to improve	Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine	Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan

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