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INTERCULTURAL CONTACT AND SOCIAL TRUST

A Quantitative Analysis on the Effect of High School Exchange on Social Trust

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The aim of this thesis was to investigate the effect of intercultural contact on social trust. The thesis focused on high school exchanges with AFS Intercultural in Finland. The research question was *Do intercultural experiences affect the level of social trust?* This thesis used the theoretical framework of interethnic contact theory and based on it proposed a hypothesis: *If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust.* Intercultural contact was expected to reduce prejudice and increase social trust, through making the unknown other more familiar.

To find an answer to this question, the study employed a natural experimental setting and analyzed data from a survey conducted for the purposes of this thesis. The sample comprised of two groups of Finnish high school students: one, that participated in a high school exchange program during academic years 2015–16 and 2016–17, and the other, that was planning to participate during the academic year 2017–18. The data were analyzed with OLS regression analysis.

The result of the study can be summarized in three main points. First, the hypothesis of this thesis did not get support from the data used, high school exchange did not increase social trust among the sample of this study. Second, contact theory received partial support based on this data since close personal contact with immigrants was associated with higher social trust. Third, the results gave support for the cultural perspective of social trust that sees trust as stable trait.

Keywords: social trust, contact theory, intercultural education, high school exchange,

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1. Introduction

Social trust is fundamental to well-functioning society and democracy. Increasing social trust can play an important role in addressing the issues of corruption and inequality. Social trust is of interest because it is related to many positive societal phenomena; positive views of democratic institutions, political participation, active civic organization engagement, tolerance towards minorities, and happiness (Uslaner, 2002). In the fields of Political Science and Economics, social trust is associated with better government performance, lower inequality, and corruption (Rothstein and Uslaner, 2005; Freitag and Bühlman, 2009; Rothstein, 2011; Charron and Rothstein, 2014; Andersen and Dinesen, 2016). It has also been studied in the fields of psychology and neuroscience.

Recent developments in Europe and other parts of the world have heightened the need for more intercultural awareness, understanding and tolerance. The war in Syria has created a flux of refugees to nearby countries and Europe. In many European countries, as a response to the refugee crisis, right wing politicians have gained support with their anti-immigration policies. Even without the refugee crisis, globalization has increased and accelerated the movement of people. Ethnic diversity is an unavoidable societal condition and it creates challenges on cooperation that need to be mitigated. Previous studies have argued that ethnic diversity decreases social trust (Knack and Keefer, 1997; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; Delhey and Newton, 2005; Schaeffer, 2013). However, diversity holds a lot of potential, especially, in increasing innovation and creativity.

Existing research in Political Science and Economics recognizes the critical role played by institutions, economic development and contact on increasing social trust. To date there has been little agreement on what could be done to increase social trust. Previous research has proposed economic development, institutional quality and interethnic contact as mechanisms to mitigate the negative effect of ethnic diversity on social trust (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005; Stolle et al., 2008; Charron and Rothstein, 2014). This thesis will look closer at interethnic contact. The aim of this thesis is to investigate the effect of intercultural contact on social trust. This thesis will use the theoretical framework of intercultural contact theory and look at intercultural high school exchange as a way to increase contact, reduce prejudice and increase social trust.

A search of the literature revealed few studies which have researched the potential influence of intercultural experiences and intercultural education on social trust. Cao et al. (2014) analyzed the influence of traveling on trust, Kong (2013) studied the effect of

intercultural experiences on trust in government, and Cahlíková (2014) investigated the effect of Erasmus exchange on particularized trust towards certain nationalities. However, none of these examined the effect of intercultural high school exchange on social trust. This thesis will, on its part, try to fill this gap.

The objective of this study is to investigate if high school exchanges have an influence on social trust. This thesis will examine the way in which intercultural experiences and contact affect generalized trust. More specifically, the aim of this thesis is to answer the question: *Does high school exchange affect the level of social trust?* More precisely, the effect of high school exchange with AFS from Finland on social trust will be studied. High school exchange was chosen as the type of contact in focus since it includes intense and unavoidable everyday contact with other cultures. Moreover, in many cases, it includes integration and deep understanding of the host culture. It also includes interaction with other exchange students coming from different countries. Furthermore, high school exchange is done usually around the ages of 16–18, when the understandings of a young person are still forming (Astin, 1977; 1993).

To answer the research question, a statistical analysis was done based on data gathered in a novel survey of the attitudes of high school students. This online survey was emailed to two groups of high school students in Finland – one, who had done, and the other, who were planning to do a high school exchange program with AFS Intercultural Programs[1]. With a response rate of 54.5 percent, the sample consists of 248 respondents. The data gathered for the purpose of this thesis were analyzed by using an ordinary least squares (OLS) regression, using SPSS software.

Understanding the link between high school exchange and social trust will help to clarify the role of intercultural education on building social trust. It would illuminate the role and possibilities of intercultural education on building better functioning societies. This study provides new insights into intercultural contact theory, with the case of Finland and by looking closer at one type of intercultural contact namely high school exchange.

The reader should bear in mind that the study is based on a sample in Finland, which is one of the most trusting societies in the world (EUROSTAT, 2017). The advantage of this approach is that the results found in this context would have strong generalizability, because if

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[1] The survey was done in cooperation with AFS Intercultural Programs ry. Who kindly forwarded the survey to the respondents.

high school exchange is found to have a significant effect when moving from a high trust country to a lower trust country, a similar effect can be expected to be found when having an experience in a higher trust country. The downside is that initial high levels of trust make improvement challenging.

The result of the study can be summarized in three main points. First, doing a high school exchange does not increase social trust in this sample, in the context of Finland. Second, contact theory gets partial support based on this data – close personal contact with immigrants is associated with higher social trust. Third, the first result, that high school exchange does not increase social trust, and the strong explanatory power of optimism together support the cultural perspective of social trust that sees social trust as a stable individual trait.

This thesis is organized as follows. Section 2 will present the theoretical background and previous studies related to high school exchanges, contact theory, and social trust and conclude with the hypothesis of this study. Section 3 will describe the case of Finland, explain the survey process, present the variables used in the statistical analysis and discuss the method of ordinary least squares (OLS) regression analysis. Section 4 will present the results of the OLS regression and discuss those findings. Finally, a summary of the main findings, limitations of this study, and suggestions for further research will be provided in the last section, section 5.

2. Theory and Previous Studies

In today's world, people move from country to country all the time, either by choice or necessity. Globalization and this movement of people create more situations and spaces where individuals from different groups meet and interact. Thus, multiculturalism is increasingly part of today's world.

Multiculturalism holds a lot of potential, like increased innovation and creativity driven by diversity, but it also creates challenges, like widespread mistrust and poor government performance, if its challenges are not addressed and its potential is not harnessed. Multiculturalism is often created by migration and it is connected to increased ethnic diversity. The implications of increased ethnic diversity are discussed later in section 2.1. One of the ways to overcome these challenges is through intercultural education, education through which

young people learn about communication and interaction between different cultures. This thesis, therefore, focuses on high school exchange programs as one form of intercultural education and the implications of this educational experience for students' social trust, understanding and acceptance of multiculturalism. Previous literature about the benefits of exchange programs for intercultural awareness and tolerance will be presented in section 2.2. The theoretical frame for understanding these benefits is contact theory, which claims that more interethnic contact leads to less prejudice and increased trust. The arguments of this theory will be discussed in section 2.3. Finally, social trust – *trust in an unknown other* – and its importance for an individual and the society at large will be discussed in section 2.4. To conclude this chapter, a hypothesis drawn from this previous literature will be presented.

2.1 Ethnic Diversity and Multiculturalism

Multiculturalism and ethnic diversity are assured and unavoidable in most of today's world. Multiculturalism refers to co-existence of several different cultural traditions in one country or a society. Ethnic diversity refers to existence of different ethnicities in a society. Some scholars argue that ethnic diversity is detrimental to economic growth (e.g. Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005; Ashraf and Galor, 2013; Michalopoulos and Papaioannou, 2013) and government performance (La Porta et al., 1999; Ahlerup and Olsson, 2012). Furthermore, ethnic diversity has been associated with high corruption, unrest, and crime (La Porta et al., 1999; Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005). It has been proposed that this negative relationship is due to the idea of diversity making collective action and cooperation harder by increasing transaction costs. This, in turn, translates to problems with the provision of public goods (Alesina and La Ferrara, 2005; Ahlerup and Olsson, 2012). This section will provide a short overview of the possible implications of diversity on social trust and present some mediating factors that can decrease that negative impact.

Many studies have found ethnic heterogeneity to be bad for economic development and the society at large. When investigating the influence of economic performance on social capita, Knack and Keefer (1997) found that ethnically homogenous populations have stronger social trust. Also, Alesina and La Ferrara (2002) found similar results of diversity's negative effect on social trust. Furthermore, Delhey and Newton (2005) studied 60 countries and found that more ethnically homogenous societies have a higher level of social trust and proposed that it might be because it is easier to trust people from the same ethnic background. Schaeffer's

(2013) meta-study of 172 studies proves how controversial the relationship between social trust and diversity is. Still, he found a slight majority confirming that high ethnic diversity lowers social trust. However, this has been more often the case in the field of economics than in research in political science. (ibid.) There seems to be an agreement on the problematics of ethnic diversity. What is not agreed on is whether the effect of ethnic diversity on social trust is direct or not and how it can be mitigated.

Some scholars have proposed that it is not diversity per se that has a negative effect on social trust. Uslaner (2006) argued that segregation in the society lowers trust. This argument is in line with the idea of the negative effects of inequality for the society (Rothstein, 2011). Diversity can have an indirect effect on social trust through inequality. Inequality, low social trust and corruption come together and form a trap that is hard to escape and can lead to a vicious circle (ibid.).

Scholars mainly agree on the negative effect of diversity on society, and some scholars have found mechanisms to mitigate this effect. Three main mitigating factors are institutional quality, high level of development and contact that increases trust between groups. Charron and Rothstein (2014) emphasized the importance of institutional quality for mediating the negative effect of ethnic fractionalization. They found that ethnic heterogeneity was not a significant factor explaining regional variation in social trust when institutional quality was controlled for (ibid.). In support of development as a mediating factor, Alesina and La Ferrara (2005) found that diversity at high levels of development can have a positive impact, or act as a mediating factor by diminishing the negative impact of diversity. Finally, Stolle et al. (2008) bring in the role of contact theory. They studied ethnic diversity and its effect on social trust. Diversity was found to be associated with lower interpersonal trust and regular contact and interaction with people from another culture was found to mediate the negative effect of diversity on social trust (ibid.).

Being in contact with people from other cultures in everyday life can reduce the negative effect of diversity. When young people learn to interact and cooperate in a multicultural environment when they are growing up, the ethnic and cultural differences later in life can be harnessed for innovation and creativity. In thinking of intercultural exchange as a key tool for improving multicultural sensitivity and tolerance, contact theory offers the most useful theoretical frame of the three perspectives introduced above. Thus, contact theory will be further discussed in section 2.3.

This thesis will focus on the possibilities of overcoming the challenges posed by increasing ethnic diversity, driven by globalization and migration. This thesis proposes high

school exchange programs as one mechanism that potentially increases intercultural contact and prepares youth to live in multicultural global and local environments. The next section will cover research on the benefits of exchange programs for an individual and in relation to trust.

2.2 Impacts of Intercultural Experiences

The studies done about high school exchanges are mainly limited to impact studies conducted by the exchange student organizations. However, AFS has a long research tradition including studies since 1980's. There are some studies focusing on the effect of intercultural experiences on trust, which will be shortly presented.

Hansel (2008) found that doing a high school exchange was related to less intercultural anxiety. Returnees were more comfortable around other cultures and felt less concerned about their safety when they are travelling. There was also a big impact on their life choices as adults – returnees were more likely to work with people from other cultures, marry from another culture and have international networks. (ibid.)

Bachner & Zeutschel (2009) reported in Youth for Understanding (YFU) impact study that exchange experience had influenced the tolerance, respect for other cultures, cooperativeness and interest in international affairs of the participants. These are all important and can be expected to influence the cooperativeness of the participants, but what is missing and needed, is a study measuring the impact of exchange programs on social trust, that is considered a precondition for a well-functioning society.

There have been few studies focusing on the effect of intercultural experiences on trust. Kong (2012) studied the effect of intercultural experiences on trust in government. Cahlíková (2014) studied the impact of Erasmus exchange on attitudes towards other nationalities. Interestingly, Cahlíková found that having done an Erasmus exchange decreased trust towards Southern Europeans, but the trust towards other nationalities did not change. However, this study focused on the attitudes towards other nationalities, not generalized trust. Cao et al. (2014) studied the impact of foreign experiences, namely travelling, on generalized trust. Even though Cao et al. generalized their results to support study abroad programs, there is still a gap in the research to study them explicitly. What is common in these studies presented here is that they have used the framework of contact theory, which will be discussed in the next section.

2.3 Contact Theory

Intergroup Contact Theory suggests that more interethnic contact leads to less prejudice and, through reduced prejudice, to more trust (Al Ramiah and Hewstone, 2013; Stolle et al., 2008; Uslaner, 2002). It was first introduced by Gordon W. Allport in 1954 in his contact hypothesis. Contact theory has been previously used in many studies related to ethnic conflicts and migration (e.g. Dinesen, 2011; 2012; Dinesen and Sønderskov, 2015; Schulz, 2008). This thesis tests contact theory in the case of high school exchange programs.

In this thesis, *contact* means contact with people from different cultures. This implies both unavoidable exposure or a voluntary 'decision' to interact. It is mainly face-to-face, but can also be virtual. Intergroup contact theory also studies the effects of extended and imagined contact, but they are not in the scope of this study. This section will provide an overview of the contact theory: the kinds of contact, the mechanisms that connect it to increased trust and decreased prejudice and some empirical research employing contact theory.

Interethnic contact is in general accepted to decrease prejudice, and the effect is argued to be stronger when the contact fulfills some preconditions. Allport (1954) emphasized the importance of the contact being equal, non-competitive, and having institutional support. Furthermore, common goals, long duration, and unavoidability would make the effect stronger. Finally, intergroup contact has the strongest effect on young people, since they might not yet have as strong of prejudices as older people. (Allport, 1954.) Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) did a meta-analysis of over five hundred studies and found a significant negative relationship between prejudice and face-to-face contact between different groups. More contact led to less prejudice. However, based on their meta-analysis, they saw the mentioned preconditions as facilitating but not essential since the positive effect persists even if these conditions are not fulfilled.

Besides these conditions, previous studies have emphasized the importance of close personal contact and friendships (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013). Close personal contacts are especially important since they can have secondary transfer effects (STEs), which mean that trust can be generalized further to other out-groups (Al Ramiah & Hewstone, 2013; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006). High school exchange generates opportunities for creating close friendships across cultures and nationalities.

In a study about residential exposure to ethnic and cultural diversity and its effect on trust, Dinesen and Sønderskov (2015) divided interethnic contact into observation and interaction. The observation was considered as 'unavoidable' exposure to different ethnicities and cultures. The interaction was defined as more intense contact and a decision to interact.

(Dinesen and Sønderskov, 2015.) While high school exchange is a choice made by an individual, it also leads to unavoidable contact with persons from other cultures. It has the potential to create better intercultural awareness and thus less prejudice, which would mean more opportunities to trust. All mentioned types of contact can increase trust through the same mechanisms, which will be discussed next.

Previous studies propose three main mechanisms, to increase trust and decrease prejudice, associated with contact. It can happen through decreased intergroup anxiety (Stephan and Stephan, 1985), increased empathy (Stephan and Finlay, 1999) and increased knowledge (Allport, 1954). Like Schulz (2008), Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) found in their meta-analysis that intergroup anxiety had the strongest contact effect and knowledge the weakest. Hansel (2008) argues that high school exchange programs reduce intergroup anxiety and increase empathy. Furthermore, such programs have an emphasis on increasing and sharing knowledge about different cultures – not only about the host country but about the home countries of all the other exchange students too.

In a study, using contact theory, about the impact of intercultural experience on social trust, Cao et al. (2014) examined the effect of the length and variety of visited foreign countries on generalized trust and found a robust relationship between the amount of countries visited and generalized trust. They argue that the diversity of international experiences is more important than the length (ibid.). The study proposes that "experiences that allow for contact with many different cultural or ethnic groups may increase the likelihood that one's impressions derived from interactions with these different groups will be generalized and applied to other groups and people" (ibid.: 518). The idea of contact with a variety of different cultures is applied in high school exchange programs when students engage with their peer exchange students from all over the world. Platforms for these kinds of encounters and cultural exchange are purposefully created at the orientation camps in the beginning, midterm and in the end of the exchange year (AFS, 2017). However, the study of Cao et al. falls short in controlling for other possible explanations. It does not control for optimism, which has been found to be a strong correlate of social trust.

Closely related to intercultural education, peace education aims to break stereotypes and encourage cooperation. According to Schulz (2008: 34), "the increased knowledge about the 'other' and the actual encounter cause a positive shift in mutual attitudes". His argument is also based on the contact hypothesis of Allport. Schulz sees adjusting perceptions as a natural response to interactions and experiences – positive and negative encounters can have different effects on prejudice and trust. However, Uslaner (2002) would disagree with this, since he sees

trust as a more stable characteristic and trusting people are, according to him, optimistic and do not let single encounters change their perceptions. The nature and different understandings of trust are discussed in the next section.

2.4 Social Trust

A considerable amount of literature has been published on social trust. These studies have focused mainly on the positive effects of social trust and the characteristics of a trusting individual or society. The importance of social trust is generally agreed upon. Social trust is an important building block of social capital, which has been argued to be associated with lower crime, better health, economic growth, and lower corruption among other things (Andersen and Dinesen, 2016). It is important since it enables cooperation and collective action (North, 1990). This section will start by defining social trust. Then, it will discuss the importance of social trust for an individual and for a well-functioning society. Finally, some proposed origins of social trust will be reviewed. Throughout this section arguments on why high school exchanges would be a way to influence the level of social trust will be presented.

2.4.1 Types of Trust

First of all, it is important to distinguish between generalized and particularized trust. Uslaner (2002) explains this difference through concepts of strategic and moralistic trust. Strategic trust is based on experience and it is the foundation for particularized trust. Both strategic and particularized trust are directed to a specific person and usually, they are stronger when that person is similar to us. This would mean that we trust people who are familiar to us and who have proved to us that they are trustworthy. If we have a negative cooperative experience with an individual, that would directly affect how much we trust them.

Moralistic trust is, according to Uslaner, the "idea that people are good in general". It can be understood more like a world view and an idea that "there is a common set of beliefs" among the people even though there are differences (Uslaner, 2002:193). This way of seeing the world is strongly related to optimistic personality and mostly learned from parents (ibid.).

Generalized trust is often defined through moral trust. Uslaner defines generalized trust as a "perception that most people are part of our moral community" (Uslaner, 2002: 26). Also, Delhey & Newton (2003) see social trust as coming from an "evaluation of the moral standard of their society" (in Rothstein, 2013). Cao et al. (1994) use a similar definition of generalized

trust as "the belief in the benevolence of human nature". This last definition is similar to Uslaner's definition of moral trust. However, he sees generalized trust as less stable than moralistic trust, which is a part of the generalized trust. (Uslaner, 2002)

The belief that people share similar values and morals is connected to the idea of intercultural education. High school exchanges teach students to see similarities between individuals from different cultures. Based on the Intercultural Development Inventory, one of the steps in intercultural development is to acknowledge similarities (Hammer et al., 2003; Hansel, 2006). It is not the final most developed stage, but it is crucial for further development. Hansel (2006) found out that most of the exchange students move to this step, if not further, during their high school exchange experience.

In this thesis, social trust is approached through its most common operationalization, where generalized social trust[2] – representing trust in an unknown other – is most commonly measured with the question: *Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?* This question has been used in the World Values Survey, European Social Survey, and many others. It is also related to the perceived fairness and helpfulness of others (Dinesen, 2012). The operationalization of the concept will be further discussed in the section 3.3.1. Previous research on the importance and implications of social trust will be presented in the following section.

2.4.2 Previous Research on Social Trust

Previous research has established that social trust is an important property of a well-functioning society. Generalized trust, or social trust, is important for cooperation and collective action, effective government and thriving democracy (Almond and Verba, 1963; Putnam, 1993; Dinesen, 2012). It is an enabling factor for collective action since it decreases transaction costs (Putnam, 1993; Uslaner, 2002). Social trust has also been associated with economic growth (Knack and Keefer, 1997). Furthermore, it is associated with tolerance, volunteering and donating to charity (Uslaner, 2002). Positive effects associated with individuals' lives are higher life satisfaction (Helliwell, 2003), optimism (Uslaner, 2002) and subjective health (Rostila, 2007). The direction of causality for many of these relations is debated, but the correlations are generally accepted. Lack of social trust is one of the determinants of the low

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[2] Generalized trust, social trust and generalized social trust are used interchangeably.

trust-corruption-inequality trap presented by Rothstein (2011). Also, Freitag and Bühlman, (2009) and Rothstein and Uslaner (2005) have found income inequality and the Corruption Perception Index to be the best correlates of generalized trust (see also Almond and Verba, 1963; Putnam, 1993; Rothstein, 2011).

However, the origin of trust is debated. Previous research has proposed ethnic fractionalization, economic inequality, civic participation, and institutional quality as determinants of social trust (Charron and Rothstein, 2014). The main lines of societal level explanations are society-centred and institution-centred explanations. The first, society-centred, so called Tocquevillian approach, emphasizes the long-term historical and cultural perspective of organization. The supporters of this approach argue for a norm and value sharing effect of voluntary associations. (Rothstein, 2011: 145–163.) Knack and Keefer (1997) and Putnam (2000) found that members of voluntary organizations are more trusting. The critics of this approach, among them Uslaner (2002), argue, that there is self-selection in joining associations – trusting individuals are more likely to join. Besides self-selection, some have also argued that association memberships can create particularized trust instead of generalized trust (Rothstein, 2011, p. 145–163; Charron and Rothstein, 2014).

The institution-centred approach emphasizes the importance of the quality of government for social trust (Rothstein, 2011, p. 145-163; Charron and Rothstein, 2014; Delhey and Newton, 2005). It argues that it is the institutions that enable social trust and social capital to grow. The emphasis is on trustworthy, impartial and uncorrupt government institutions (Rothstein, 2011, p.145–163). However, some argue that good institutions reduce the importance of social trust. When people trust institutions, the need to trust other people directly decreases. Both described perspectives, society- and institution-centred, examine social trust at the societal level. Since the unit of analysis and interest of this thesis lies on the individual level, it is important to move towards individual level explanations of trust.

There are two main ways to understand the individual level origins of trust, the cultural perspective and the experiential perspective (Uslaner, 2008; Dinesen, 2012; Delhey and Newton, 2005; Stolle and Hooge, 2004). *The cultural perspective* sees trust as a stable trait that is developed through parental socialization and passed from one generation to the next. Trust is not shaped by immediate experiences and it is not necessarily dependent on other's behavior. (Uslaner, 2008) In this way, the cultural perspective is related to moralistic trust.

The experiential perspective is characterized as 'lifelong openness' and it explains the formation and changes in the level of generalized trust through experiences and environment (Dinesen, 2011; 2012). Trust is formed to reflect the perception of others' trustworthiness

(Uslaner, 2008). It is more fragile and less stable (ibid.). This experiential perspective is also connected to the theories explaining low trust by ethnic fractionalization. When there is no interaction or no 'signs about the trustworthiness of the other', social trust is lower. (Dinesen, 2011; 2012; Dinesen and Sønderskov, 2015)

Essentially, high school exchange could work in both ways. The cultural perspective would operate through integrating an exchange student to a new culture and family at a young age and this could affect the extent that they trust others. The increase in trust would happen through personal growth and adjustment of values. Astin (1977; 1993) found college years, which are comparable to Finnish high school, important for value formation. However, understanding the experiential perspective is easier. Through high school exchange, one gets into contact with different people from different cultures, gets familiar with them and learns about the similarities and differences. This, in combination with intercultural education related to the exchange program, creates knowledge, understanding, and strategies for intercultural communication. During the time of living together and adapting to a new culture, the worldview of a young student is challenged in many ways. There is a possibility that this experience results in a new understanding about the similarity of people and a common set of beliefs among most of the people, which is also the definition of moralistic trust by Uslaner. It is possible that this can translate into higher generalized trust.

According to Uslaner (2002), the main determinants of generalized trust at the individual level are race, age, and education. White people trust more than others, older people trust more than young and highly educated people trust more than non-educated. Furthermore, Uslaner highlights the importance of optimism.

Trusting intentions are said to reflect basic optimism, and thus optimists are more likely to be generalized trusters (Uslaner, 2002: 112). Furthermore, more positive view of the future allows an individual to take more risks in trusting others. Even though the effect goes in both directions, the influence of optimism on social trust is twice as strong as the effect of trust on optimism. Optimism and trust are both influenced by parents (ibid.: 76–77). Trusting parents create trusting children. Basically, social trust is developed through "values from childhood" and "ideals from later in life". (ibid.) Also, Rothstein (2011) proposes education as a tool to increase trust and a way to escape the low trust-corruption-inequality trap.

The challenge with social trust is its abstract nature. There is wide evidence that it is important and that it is related to many positive societal phenomena, but it is hard to define better than *trusting an unknown other*. Furthermore, the direction of causality between trust and other factors is hard to nail down. Many previous studies have found correlates for trust,

but few of them have found concrete ways to increase trust. This thesis will look at one concrete mechanism, namely high school exchange, and study its influence on the level of social trust. The next section will present the hypothesis tested in this thesis and the reasoning behind it.

2.5 Hypothesis

Overall, there seems to be some evidence to indicate that high school exchanges could be expected to increase social trust through increased contact with other cultures. The fulfilment of the conditions of Allport and the finding of increased tolerance in YFU returnees suggest that high school exchange students can be expected to show less prejudice and more social trust based on the intergroup contact theory, that states that people who have more intergroup contact show less prejudice than the ones without contact. Furthermore, the mechanisms associated with contact theory linking more contact to higher social trust – decreased intergroup anxiety, increased empathy, and increased knowledge – are present and affected through exchange programs. Finally, the opportunities to connect with other exchange students combined with the length of the experience in the host culture can be expected to increase trust, according to the theory of Cao et al.

Based on this theoretical framework a hypothesis has been formulated. More intercultural contact, in this case in form of high school exchange, is expected to decrease intergroup anxiety, increase empathy and knowledge, which is expected to lead to higher social trust. The hypothesis is:

H_1: If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust.

The data, measurement, and methods to test this hypothesis will be presented in the next chapter.

3. Methods and Data

To answer the research question, *do intercultural experiences affect the level social trust,* and test the hypothesis presented above, a statistical analysis was conducted based on data gathered in a novel survey of the attitudes of students that had or would study abroad. The questionnaire was designed based on previous research. More than half, 54.5 percent, of students responded giving a sample of 248 students. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS software (version 24). The variables were coded based on previous research. This section will present the method and research design, evaluate the data, material, and sources, operationalize the concepts and discuss the power and limitations of the methodological approach used. It will first, present the context of Finland, then, discuss the data and survey design and, finally, continue to the variables and operationalization of the concepts.

3.1. The Case: Finland

This study was conducted by studying high school students who have or are going to take part in an exchange program of AFS in Finland. Since there is individual and regional level variation in the level of social trust, the research question can be investigated in the context of Finland. Furthermore, Finland was chosen because of the feasibility to conduct a survey there. The timeframe of the thesis created limitations to the scope of the survey sample. The willingness of Finnish AFS to cooperate finally confirmed the decision. Furthermore, Finland is an interesting context to study social trust, because of its high level of trust (EUROSTAT, 2017).

Though societal context in Finland is favorable for social trust. Finland is known for its high-quality education. Further, Finland is one of the least corrupt countries according to the 2016 Corruption Perception Index, just after New Zealand and Denmark (Transparency International, 2017). Also, the income equality based on the Gini coefficient is comparably good at the global scale (OECD, 2016). All these factors play a role in the societal level social trust in Finland.

Finland being one of the highest social trust societies in the world is one of the possibilities and main limitations of this study. Finland is a good place to study contact theory since if there is an effect in Finland, the result is fairly generalizable to other countries with similar type of student exchange. Finding an effect in this context might prove to be challenging, but the potential of finding results is intriguing. Since social trust in Finland is

already high, it might be harder to find significant results. With high initial levels of trust, there is less space for improvement. However, there are regional and individual differences in the social trust levels. Furthermore, if results are found in this context we can be quite confident with them.

Finally, there is a chance of an opposite effect than expected in the hypothesis. This is mainly due to the context of Finland. This would mean that doing an exchange would make young people adjust their perceptions of others trustworthiness towards the level of trust in other countries, which would mean contact theory would not function in this context. Going almost anywhere in the world outside Finland would mean entering a lower trust society, with Denmark being an exception. The context of Finland might therefore explain a potential contradictory effect than the hypothesized.

3.2 Data and Survey Design

The contribution and the strength of this thesis come from the usage of primary data collected solely for the purpose of this thesis. The data for this study were collected by an online survey, that was distributed in cooperation with AFS Finland. It was a sample survey with closed-ended questions. It was sent to 455 high school students, of whom 248 answered giving a response rate of 54.5 percent. The sample included high school students who had done a high school exchange program with AFS Finland during academic years 2015–16 and 2016–17, and students who were planning to do an exchange during the coming academic year of 2017–18. The survey was sent through the mailing list of AFS Finland with the kind assistance of the volunteer coordinator of AFS in the beginning of March 2017. The respondents were given two weeks to answer the questionnaire. Since the response rate was satisfactory, no reminder messages were sent. The respondents were informed that they were invited to take part in this study about exchange students and the effects of the experience. No further details on the purpose of the study were given. The message included in the email sent to the participants can be found in Appendix 1. The survey was done using Google Forms since it is user and mobile friendly, it allows an unlimited number of questions and responses and it is available free of charge.

The respondents forming the sample of the survey were between fifteen and nineteen years old. Gender distribution was 79 percent female, 20.6 percent male, and 0.4 percent other. However, according to Delhey and Newton (2003) among others, gender makes little or no

difference on social trust in the Western countries. The respondents were from 69 different municipalities. The exchange programs' duration varied between four and twelve months and there was a total of 27 different destination countries. A list of the variables and their frequency distributions can be found in Appendix 2 (Table A and Figure A). The strength and limitation of this sample is that it includes mainly global minded youth from Finland. It is a strength since it enables a natural experimental setting and a weakness since it only includes specific kind of people, that can be expected to express high trust. This limitation could be mitigated by taking another country sample or by studying all high school students instead of just having a sample where everyone is interested in going abroad.

This research design enabled a good natural experimental setting that allowed to isolate the effect of exchange. The natural experimental setting in social sciences refers to an 'experimental' setting where the treatment is 'as if' naturally isolated (Dunning, 2008). In natural experimental setting, the groups should be balanced with respect to other factors potentially explaining the dependent variable (ibid.), in this case, social trust. In this study, the groups are similar in other terms than having done an exchange. According to Dunning (2008), natural experiments have an advantage of improving causal inference, however, this might be limited due to the not real randomization of the sample into groups. The following Table 1 presents the distribution and the main characteristics of the two groups. An expanded table including all the variables can be found in the Appendix 2 (Table A).

Table 1. Survey sample groups.

	N	%	Women %	Age (mean)	University education, mother %
AFS **exchange students and returnees** who did an exchange 2015–16 and 2016–17	135	54.4	77.0	17.69	71.7
High school students who are **planning** to do **an exchange** 2017–18	113	45.6	81.4	16.25	69.9
Total	248	100	79	17.03	70.6

The treatment group and control group are similar in all aspects except having the *treatment,* having done a high school exchange program. They are of similar age (between 15–19), gender distribution, educational level, social status and have an interest in going abroad

and having this experience. The educational level of mother or other legal guardian (question 7 in the questionnaire) was used as a proxy for socioeconomic status (e.g. Alesina and La Ferrara, 2002; Brehm and Rahn, 1997; Helliwell and Putnam, 2007). An interest in going abroad and having this experience is important for this study since it is possible expect that the respondents have had similar values and interests, pre-treatment. The main predictors of trust according to Uslaner (2002), age and education, are fairly constant in this survey design.

Surveying was chosen as a data collection method since there was no existing dataset combining variables of social trust and intercultural experiences. However, the Finnish youth barometer for this year 2017 will have questions about both trust and international experiences, which speaks for the topicality of the theme. But since the data from the youth barometer will be available sometime in 2018, using it was not an option.

Using survey as a data collection tool has a few important things to consider. Sampling, questionnaire, formulation and order of questions can affect the validity of answers. For this study, the questions were formulated based on questions used in previous surveys to minimize the problems with question formulation. The advantage of gathering primary data is that it allows for using up-to-date data and enables answering the research question presented. The disadvantages are a limited sample that can influence the generalizability of the results.

The limitations of surveys, in general, are that respondents might not give honest answers, they might understand and interpret the questions in different ways and culture might affect if extreme responses are given. Since this survey was conducted in Finland alone and only in Finnish, it is reasonable to expect no major language or culture effects. The challenge posed by different interpretations was partly tackled by simple and clear question formulation and using questions from previous surveys like WVS and ESS.

The questionnaire was designed specifically to help answer the research question posed in this thesis. It was divided into three parts, each of them focusing on different questions. The first part included questions about demographics (age, municipality, education) and questions for control variables (organizational membership, subjective health, life satisfaction etc.). The second part was about international experiences and the third part about trust and tolerance. The original questionnaire, as well as English translation, can be found in appendix 1. The next section will present the variables derived from the survey.

3.3 Variables

To be able to answer the research question and evaluate the hypothesis the analysis uses one dependent variable – social trust. The main independent variable is a dichotomous variable for a high school exchange. Additionally, other types of intercultural contact will be controlled for with the following variables: following foreign media, knowing people from other cultures and countries, having immigrant friends, spending time with immigrants in hobbies, countries visited, months lived abroad, and hosting an exchange student. Control variables based on previous literature on social trust are optimism, subjective health, religiousness, and political left-right divide. Frequency distributions and descriptive statistics of the variables can be found in Appendix 2. This section will present the operationalization of the concepts and the variables used in the analysis, starting from the dependent variable and continuing to independent and control variables.

3.3.1 Dependent Variable: Social Trust

The main dependent variable in this thesis is generalized trust. There are two approaches to generalized trust. One looks at generalized trust as an individual trait and the other looks at it as a societal property. This thesis focuses on individual-level social trust.

In previous literature, social trust is understood as *trust in an unknown other.* It is often measured with a dichotomous survey question first presented by Morris Rosenberg in 1956 (Uslaner, 2002): *Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people?* This question has been used in the World Value Surveys, European Social Survey, and many others. Different studies talk about social trust and generalized trust or generalized social trust, which are all mainly measured in the same way. For this study and to get a better grip of the whole scale and depth of social trust, the same three-item composite trust scale that Dinesen (2011; 2012) has used has been applied. Additional to the already mentioned trust question, it includes two other questions about the fairness and helpfulness of people[3]. Furthermore, the questions are posed with the answer scale 1–10, to get more variance to the data. This three-item composite trust scale was formed by taking an average of the three trust questions, which all had an original scale 1–10. Likewise,

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[3] "Do you think that most people would try to take advantage of you if they got the change, or would they try to be fair?" and "Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are mostly looking out for themselves?" (Dinesen, 2012; WVS)

the variable social trust gets the same values 1–10. The frequency distribution of the dependent variable can be found in Appendix 2.

The three-item composite trust scale used in this thesis has been criticized by Uslaner (2002), who argues that it does not add anything to the standard trust question. He sees the items measuring different concepts and having different time trends. However, in this study, the analysis is done with both the *three-item composite trust scale* and the *standard trust question*. This will increase the reliability and robustness of the results, and since the data is already there, it makes more sense to use it than not. Having the possibility to use both the standard question and the composite index provides a possibility to analyze both and see if there are any differences between the measures.

3.3.2 Independent Variable: Exchange

As the main explanatory variable, a dichotomous variable for a high school exchange was used, value 1 representing those who had done a high school exchange and value 0 the ones who had not yet done an exchange. All high school experiences longer than three months were accounted for. Slightly more than half of the sample, 54.4 percent, had done an exchange. The duration of the exchange would have been an interesting variable, but it did not have enough variation (see Figure A, Appendix 2). However, the control variables accounting for intercultural contact included a variable representing the time lived abroad.

Many high school exchange programs aim to increase intercultural awareness and broaden the world views of high school students. Some of them, like EF and STS, focus more on language skills, while others, like Youth for Understanding (YFU), aspire to increase intercultural knowledge and challenge stereotypes (YFU, 2017). Also, AFS Intercultural and Rotary Youth Exchange (RYE, 2016) focus on intercultural education and increasing understanding about cultural differences.

To increase intercultural awareness and reduce prejudice AFS Intercultural has divided its goals for the exchange programs into four levels: personal, interpersonal, intercultural, and global. Personal goals include improved self-awareness, critical thinking, and self-confidence. Interpersonal development includes empathy, communication skills, and commitment to others. Intercultural learning aims towards 'development of meaningful, long-lasting and deep friendships across cultures'. Global education goals are aiming towards the peace-building goals of 'elimination of intolerance, discrimination, and prejudice based on cultural differences' and 'global understanding and appreciation of interdependence'. (Hansel, 2008.)

These goals can be seen responding to the challenges of increased ethnic and cultural diversity. Through achieving these goals, it would be possible to cooperate more effectively across cultures and reduce the problem of collective action in intercultural relations.

Intercultural exchange programs often refer to and base their work on Milton Bennett's developmental model of intercultural sensitivity. It includes a scale consisting of six developmental levels of intercultural sensitivity. The first three steps are *denial, defense,* and *minimization.* These are seen as ethnocentric, which means seeing one's own culture as central. Denial means unawareness of cultures. On the defense step, individuals see some cultures better than others or more threatening and divide the world between 'us' and 'them'. (Hammer et al. 2003; Hansel, 2008) Minimization is the step which is the most dominant approach among many returnees of AFS (Hansel, 2008). It means seeing common characteristics more important than the differing ones (Hammer et al. 2003; Hansel, 2008). At this step of intercultural development, we could expect moralistic trust, the idea that people share same moral values (Uslaner, 2002), to increase. Moving beyond this step would create benefits and advantages when the similarities and differences of different cultures could be harnessed to change and develop. However, this step still sees individual's own culture as central and a person might see parts of their own world view as universal.

The three next steps are *acceptance, adaptation,* and *integration.* These represent ethnorelativism, meaning seeing one's own culture in the context of other cultures (Hammer et al., 2003). People are seen to be "different, but equally human" (ibid.). The cultural differences are acknowledged and understood, not necessarily accepted as good views. Moving up on this scale is one of the important outcomes of intercultural exchanges.

Based on the goals of the exchange programs and the previous literature about intercultural contact, the expectation is that the relationship between high school exchange and social trust would be positive.

3.3.3 Control Variables

This study employs two sets of control variables. First set controls for other kinds of intercultural contact that the students might have, and the second set, controls for other factors influencing social trust. This section will explain and justify the choices of the control variables and present the expected effects for each control variable used in the analysis.

The variables accounting for other kinds of intercultural contact are: following foreign media, knowing people from other cultures and countries, having immigrant friends, spending

time with immigrants in hobbies, countries visited, months lived abroad, and hosting an exchange student. These are used to control for additional intercultural contact that might affect the level of social trust. Foreign media is a dichotomous variable, one representing following foreign media. Almost ninety percent of the sample reported that they follow foreign media. The variable friends includes foreign friends in Finland and friends and relatives abroad, it is a sum of the answers in two survey questions. The responses varied between zero and seventy. Countries visited and months lived abroad are simply the number of countries visited and months lived abroad, and it got values 1–35 and 0–156 respectively. Having immigrant friends and hobbies with immigrants get values 1–5, higher values representing more friends and time. Host gets values 0–2, two representing having hosted several exchange students, 1 having hosted one and 0 not having been a host for exchange students. Approximately one fifth, 22.2 percent, of the respondents had hosted an exchange student. All these variables present some kind of intercultural contact and they are expected to be positively associated with social trust.

Previous studies suggested optimism, subjective health, life satisfaction (Delhey and Newton, 2003; Uslaner, 2002), religiousness (Uslaner, 2002; Whiteley, 1999) and political left-right divide (Kumlin and Rothstein, 2005; Whiteley, 1999) as control variables. In this analysis questions about future and life satisfaction were combined and their average was used as a single optimism measure. Original variables had scales of 1–10, therefore also the new measure of optimism has a scale 1–10. Optimism is expected to have a positive effect on social trust, first, since a more positive view about the future allows an individual to take more risks in trusting others, and second, since being a trusting person reflects an optimistic attitude (Uslaner, 2002).

Also, subjective health, religiousness and political left-right divide were on a scale 1–10, higher numbers representing better perceived health, stronger religiousness and political right. In previous studies, higher social trust has been associated with better self-reported health (Andersen and Dinesen, 2016; Kawachi et al., 1999; Rostila, 2007). The mechanisms proposed to connect health to social trust vary from psycho-social factors to public service provision and informal social control (Rostila, 2007). The relationship has been mainly studied in the other direction, from social trust to health, but it is likely that the effect goes both directions and that is why health is included in the analysis. As a control variable subjective health is expected to have a positive coefficient.

Religiousness has been used by the literature as a control variable for social trust and it is hypothesized to increase in-group trust and bonding with other people from the same religion, which possibly leads to lower generalized trust. However, Protestant values have also

been previously associated with social trust (Nannestad, 2008). In today's world, sharing these protestant values does not mean being religious, but is more related to the cultural and religious background of a society.

The political left-right divide was used as a control variable in Kumlin and Rothstein (2005), where more leftist values were associated with higher trust, which is also the expectation in this thesis. Responding this question was left optional, to avoid students giving random uninformed answers. A response about political left-right divide was given by 235 students and this became the final sample used in the regression analysis.

Moreover, organizational memberships and municipality were used as control variables. Organizational membership was a dichotomous variable. Based on the society-centered Tocquevillian approach (see Knack and Keefer, 1997; Putnam, 2000), organizational membership is expected to be positively associated with social trust. Membership in a voluntary association is argued to have a socializing effect on democratic and cooperative values and norms (Rothstein, 2011: 149). Almost seventy percent of the respondents reported being a member in a voluntary organization.

Municipalities were recoded to nineteen regions according to the official Classification of Territorial Units for Statistics, NUTS 3, coding, based on the data from Statistics Finland (2017). These were used to check the robustness of the results to make sure that the regional differences in trust levels do not affect the results. A table providing a summary of the control variables can be found in Appendix 2.

3.4 Method

This analysis was conducted as a multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression using SPSS. The variables used in this study allowed using this method and did not violate the assumptions of OLS. SPSS offers opportunities for simple cross-sectional regressions and was therefore utilized in this study. OLS diagnostics can be found in Appendix 2 and are discussed shortly in the analysis.

The main limitations of OLS regression are the assumptions it poses. It is sensitive to outliers and it assumes no autocorrelation and heteroscedasticity. The residuals of the regression are expected to be linear, independent, and normally distributed. Even if the assumptions are met, it leaves a chance of multicollinearity and omitted variables. Most importantly using OLS requires enough data. However, the power of this method is, that if the

assumptions are met, the results can be generalized to the population, which is one of the main advantages of large-N studies, compared to qualitative studies.

4. Analysis

This thesis aimed to answer the research question *do high school exchanges affect the level social trust?* Based on the intercultural contact theory one hypothesis was proposed – H_1: If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust. The study was done as a quantitative OLS regression analysis and the results will be presented and discussed in the following sections.

4.1 Results

The data analyzed in this thesis consisted of a sample of 248 individuals. This sample was divided into two groups: control group and treatment group. The control group consisted of the students who have not yet done a high school exchange. The students who had done an exchange formed the treatment group. The dependent variable in the analysis was a three-dimensional composite index of social trust. The following Figure 1 presents the average score of social trust for the two groups.
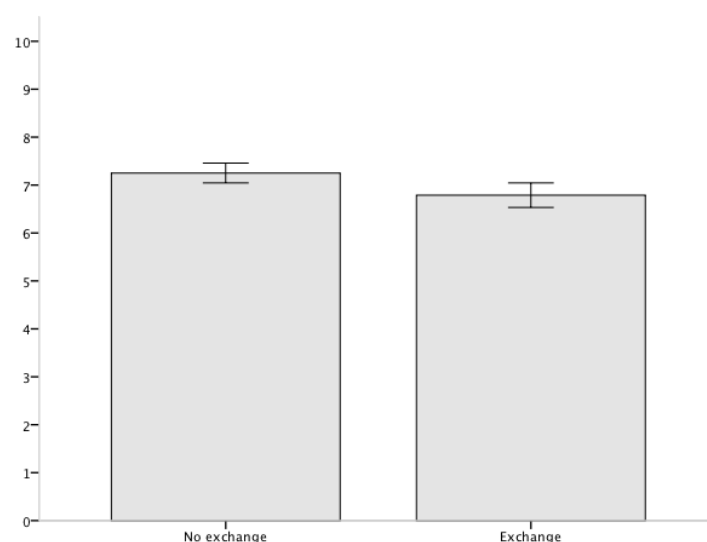
Figure 1. The average level of social trust for the control and treatment groups.

Figure 1 visualizes the average level of social trust for the control and treatment groups. The confidence intervals are not overlapping, which suggests that there is a difference in the levels of trust between the two test groups. The treatment group having lower social trust, which is surprisingly the opposite direction as proposed in the hypothesis of this study. The following Table 2 presents the Pearson's correlation coefficients between the variables of this study.

Table 2. Pearson's correlation. Dependent, independent and control variables.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1. Trust	-												
2. Exchange	-.176**	-											
3. Foreign media	.027	.004	-										
4. Friends	-.107	.257**	.083	-									
5. Immigrant friends	.155*	-.013	.117	.188**	-								
6. Hobbies with immigrants	.008	.017	.036	.108	.411**	-							
7. Countries visited	-.043	.171**	.021	.275**	.123	.182**	-						
8. Lived abroad	.025	-.055	-.024	.076	.017	.025	.109	-					
9. Host	-.095	.055	-.047	-.006	.014	-.031	.140*	.041	-				
10. Optimism	.360**	.057	.054	.008	.100	.096	-.029	.036	-.026	-			
11. Health	.275**	-.108	-.042	-.093	-.024	.111	-.079	.042	.016	.366**	-		
12. Member	.136*	-.110	.067	.089	-.025	.050	-.026	.014	-.009	.022	.091	-	
13. Left-right	.141*	-.074	-.042	-.029	-.056	-.104	.138*	-.057	.093	.168*	.067	-.024	-
14. Religiousness	.086	-.151*	-.067	-.090	.006	-.002	.021	-.046	.038	.064	.078	.106	.220**

** $p<.01$, * $p<.05$

Table 2 shows that the dependent variable social trust was significantly related with the independent variable exchange, $r = -.176$, $p < .01$. Further, social trust was significantly correlated with having immigrant friends, $r = .155$, $p < .05$, being optimistic, $r = .360$, $p < .01$, subjective health, $r = .275$, $p < .01$, being a member in a voluntary organization, $r = .136$, $p < .05$, and political left-right divide, $r = .141$, $p < .05$. This suggests that doing a high school exchange could lead to lower trust.

Another noteworthy result was that subjective health was significantly related to optimism, $r = .366$, $p < .01$. Furthermore, the independent variable high school exchange was significantly related to the control variables friends, $r = .275$, $p < .01$, countries visited, $r = .171$, $p < .01$, and religiousness, $r = -.151$, $p < .05$. These results suggest that doing an exchange is correlated with having more friends abroad, more countries visited and less religiousness. The relationship between high school exchange and social trust was further investigated with an OLS regression presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3. Multiple regression (OLS). The effect of intercultural high school exchange on social trust.

DV: Social trust (1–10)	Model 1 (bivariate)	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Exchange (0, 1)	-.479**	-.380*	-.442**	-.335
	(.176)	(.183)	(.166)	(.173)
Foreign media (0, 1)		.051		-.008
		(.280)		(.258)
Friends (n)		-.006		-.006
		(.004)		(.004)
Immigrant friends (1–5)		.195**		.196**
		(.071)		(.065)
Hobbies with immigrants (1–5)		-.068		-.116
		(.075)		(.070)
Countries visited (n)		.002		.006
		(.015)		(.014)
Months lived abroad (n)		.002		.001
		(.005)		(.005)
Host (0–2)		-.216		-.231
		(.149)		(.137)
Optimism (1–10)			.346***	.321***
			(.073)	(.073)
Health (1–10)			.130*	.150*
			(.064)	(.064)
Member (0,1)			.298	.369*
			(.178)	(.179)
Left-Right (1–10)			.045	.052
			(.040)	(.041)
Religiousness (1–10)			.003	-.001
			(.039)	(.039)
Constant	7.250***	6.815***	2.945***	2.631***
	(.130)	(.389)	(.650)	(.713)
R^2	.027	.043	.178	.199
N	235	235	235	235

*$p<.05$ **$p<.01$ ***$p<.001$. Standard errors within parentheses. Adjusted R-squared.

The main finding of this OLS regression analysis (Table 3) is that in the final model (Model 4) exchange is not significant at $p < .05$ level. The models 1–3 suggest a negative relationship between having done an exchange and the level of social trust. This is a rather surprising result, but when all the control variables are included that negative relationship loses its significance. The reasons for this unexpected result will be discussed in section 4.2.

The strongest predictor of social trust is optimism with the highest standardized coefficient, beta = .285. This is as expected based on the previous studies. Optimism has often been found to be the strongest correlate of social trust. The relationship is significant at the highest level, $p < .001$ and positive. More optimism is associated with higher social

trust, $b = .321$. Increasing optimism by five steps, half of the scale, would increase trust by over 1.5 units. The size of the effect is comparable to the trust level difference between Sweden (6.9) and Germany (5.5) or, the lowest trust country in Europe, Serbia (4.2) and the average of 28 EU countries (5.8) (EUROSTAT, 2016).

The variable having immigrant friends is significant throughout the models. It has a standardized coefficient of 0.199 and it is the second strongest explanatory variable. Having immigrant friends is positively related to social trust, $b = .196$, $p < .01$. Moving from one end to the other on the scale of 1–5 would increase trust by 0.784 units. However, this effect could go to both directions, having higher trust can lead to having more immigrant friends or having immigrant friends can lead to higher generalized trust. This will be analyzed in more detail in section 4.2.

Furthermore, subjective health and membership in a voluntary organization are significant at the $p < .05$ level. Higher subjective health is associated with higher social trust, $b = .150$. Both health and social trust are measured at the same scale of 1–10. Moving from one end of the scale to the other in health is associated with a 1.35-unit increase in social trust. This result is in accordance with the results of the previous studies.

Being a member of a voluntary organization is measured at a dichotomous scale one representing being a member. Being a member of a voluntary organization is associated with 0.369-unit higher trust in comparison to non-members, $b = .369$, $p < .05$. This result is as expected based on the previous studies. The rest of the control variables in the model are statistically insignificant at the $p < .05$ level, so they will not be discussed further.

The amount of explained variance in the final model based on adjusted R-squared is 19.9 percent, $r^2 = .199$, which is slightly more than in the model 3, $r^2 = .178$. Model 2 including only intercultural contact controls explains only 4.3 percent of the total variation in the model, $r^2 = .043$. This suggests that both control variable groups are important and that they have some overlap. Adding the intercultural contact controls to the bivariate model decreases the size and significance of exchange. It decreases also with trust controls, but not as much and the level of significance stays the same.

One possibly important explanatory factor is missing from the regression. It is the destination country of the exchange. The following figure, Figure 2, visualizes how the location of the exchange in terms of destination countries affects trust. However, since some of the country samples are so small (see Figure B, Appendix 2), it is not possible to draw any conclusions based on this.
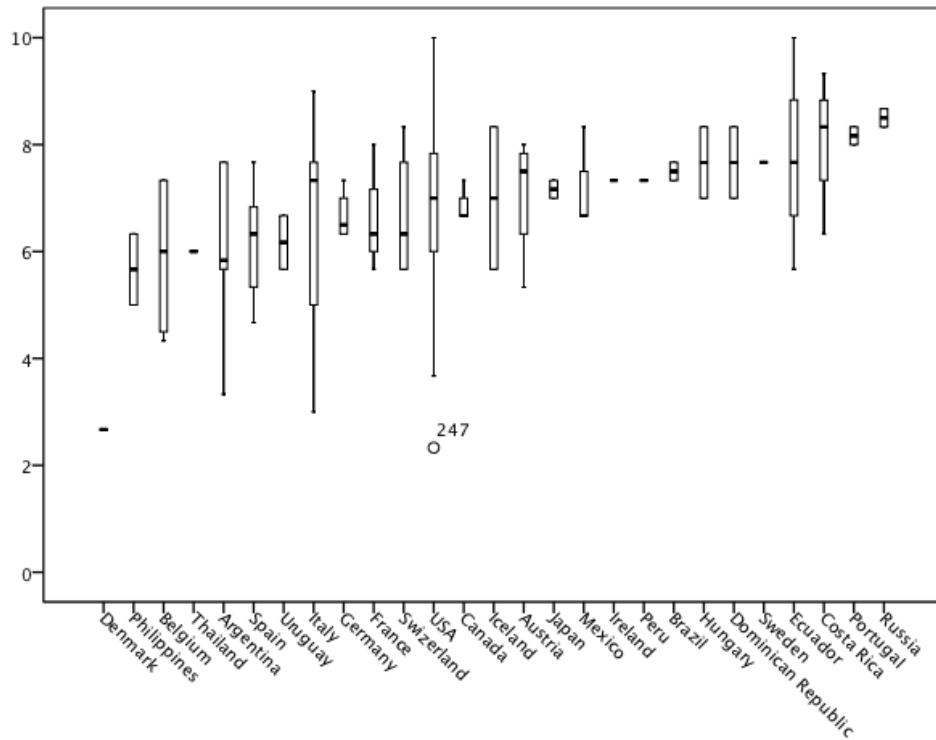
Figure 2. Average social trust and exchange destination country.

This figure shows that the destination countries do not follow any obvious kind of order. High-trust countries are mainly in the middle and in the end of the scale. Low trust countries are all over. To be able to draw conclusions about the destination country effect, bigger samples from each destination country group would be needed[4].

According to this analysis, being optimistic, having immigrant friends, having good health, and being a member of a voluntary organization can all be positively associated with social trust. However, these results give no support for the H_1: If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust. The possible explanations for these results will be discussed in section 4.2.

4.1.1 OLS Regression Diagnostics

OLS post-regression diagnostics were analyzed to establish whether the model was an accurate representation to the data and if the model can be used to generalize beyond the sample. Plots including leverage and residuals (Figure D) found in Appendix 3 do not reveal any outliers.

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[4] A subsample of the countries, non-Western countries, was added to the regression as a dummy variable. However, the result was not significant. (see Appendix 3, Table F, Model 2)

Regarding residuals, this would mean absolute values over ±3 and in the leverage more than 0.120 or 0.160[5] (Field, 2009: 245). Furthermore, Cook's distance (Table D, Appendix 3) does not display values over 1, which means it does not reveal any influential cases (ibid.: 217). Based on this it is possible to say that the model fits the data.

Table C in Appendix 3 shows that tolerance and VIF values of the model 4 do not indicate that there is any evidence of collinearity between the independent variables. The values lie between the accepted thresholds in the case of VIF below 8 and Tolerance above 0.2 (Field, 2009: 224). To check for heteroscedasticity, the residuals were plotted against the predicted values by using the Studentized deleted residuals (SDRESID) on the Y-axis and the standardized predicted values (ZPRED) on the X-axis (see Appendix 3, Figure C). Figure C shows no serious concern associated with heteroscedasticity. The normality of the distribution of the residuals can be seen in the Figures E and F (Appendix 3). Durbin-Watson test got a value of 1.90, which suggests that there is no autocorrelation. Values below one and above three indicate possible autocorrelation (Field, 2009: 221). Since the assumptions of OLS are met, the model should be generalizable beyond the sample (ibid.: 220).

4.1.2 Robustness Tests

When the same regressions were run with the simple trust variable, that accounts only for the basic trust question *Generally speaking would you say that most people can be trusted, or that you can't be too careful in dealing with people*, the results remain similar (see table B, appendix 3). The independent variable exchange comes out insignificant as in the main model. The sign and significance levels remain the same for having immigrant friends and optimism. The level of significance for subjective health is lower in this model, but it remains significant at the $p < .05$ level. The coefficient's size does not change remarkably. Only membership in a voluntary organization, which was significant ($p < .05$) in the main model, comes out insignificant. Other variables stay insignificant as in the main model. The amount of explained variance in the dependent variable in this model is slightly smaller, $r^2 = .162$, compared to the $r^2 = .199$ in the main model. From this, we can conclude that the results for exchange and optimism are robust and reliable.

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[5] The limit for leverage is calculated by the formula: (2k+1)/n, which in this case becomes (13+1)/235. Values two or three times above this should be paid attention to.

To account for the influence of home region, the robustness of the results was further tested by adding a regional control NUTS3 (Table F, Appendix 3), since there were not enough cases to use individual regions to create a multilevel model (see Table E, Appendix 3). The variable NUTS3 was not significant and adding it to the model did not change the results.

4.2. Discussion

This thesis is based on the theoretical framework of contact theory, which suggests that more intercultural contact leads to less prejudice and more social trust. This thesis looked at the case of high school exchange programs as a tool to increase interethnic contact. More specifically Finnish students of AFS Intercultural were studied. To understand the results better, they will be discussed in relation to the theoretical framework of this thesis. First, the answer to the research question will be discussed. Second, the results will be reviewed through the contact theory, to analyze what kind of support the theory gets from this analysis. Finally, this thesis will be situated in the bigger context of social trust research and the definition and meaning of social trust will be reflected upon.

4.2.1 Do high school exchanges affect Social Trust?

High school exchanges were expected to increase trust because they include intense and unavoidable everyday interaction with different cultures and possibly also integration to a new culture. Furthermore, high school exchange is done at a young age, when individuals do not have as strong prejudice and are still forming their understanding of the world. Moreover, high school exchange has a strong link to intercultural education, through which students learn about intercultural communication and interaction. High school exchanges were hypothesized to have implications for students' social trust, understanding and acceptance of multiculturalism.

The results of this study presented in the previous section show, that in the case of Finland, doing high school exchange does not increase social trust. The results of the analysis do not support the hypothesis of this thesis: *If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust.* The null hypothesis of no relation cannot be rejected.

There are three possible explanations for this result. First being, that the results are correct, and there is indeed no relationship between high school exchange and social trust – doing high school exchange does not affect the level of social trust. This is the result based on

the answers of 235 Finnish high school students, who responded based on their own views and experiences, during spring 2017. This is a rather surprising result and contradictory to the contact theory. However, the second explanation might give some more insights to this result.

The second possible explanation for the result is that Finland is a special case. The context of Finland was already discussed in the methods section and it was anticipated to possibly have an influence the results. As Finland is one of the highest trust countries in the world, it is even more challenging to increase social trust from already high initial levels. Going almost anywhere in the world outside Finland would mean entering a lower trust society. Denmark is the only country having a higher level of social trust than Finland, but in the sample of this thesis, the only observation regarding high school exchange in Denmark displayed distinctively low trust (see Figure 2). The destination country effect on trust was analyzed by plotting the trust levels against each other in a boxplot and by including a dummy of exchange done in a non-western country, but since samples from most of the countries were small, it is impossible to draw any clear conclusions about the effect of the destination country.

The last explanation is that due to the limitations of this study, the results are not reliable and do not correspond reality. This could be due to measurement errors related to the variables and the survey design, or the ambitious and challenging sample. However, even with these limitations, this thesis found partial support for the arguments of contact theory, which will be discussed next.

4.2.2 Does intercultural contact increase Social Trust?

Contact theory suggests that more intercultural contact leads to less prejudice and increased social trust. Mechanisms suggested to link contact to higher social trust are decreased intergroup anxiety, increased empathy, and increased knowledge. These mechanisms are also found in high school exchange programs.

This thesis tested the contact theory in the context of Finnish high school exchange programs. Even though the hypothesis of this thesis could not be accepted, there is still some support for the contact theory. The results speak for the argument of different kinds of contact having different effects. They show that as expected based on the contact theory, close personal contact, in this case having immigrant friends, is positively associated with social trust. As Al Ramiah and Hewstone (2013) and Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) suggested, having close personal contacts is important, especially for the secondary transfer effects (STEs), through which trust can be generalized further to other out-groups. Based on this study we can see that

more intense contact based on a decision, interaction as Dinesen and Sønerskov (2015) call it, can have an effect on social trust. Observation and unavoidable exposure to other cultures (ibid.), cannot be said to have an effect based on this study.

However, there is a chance of reverse causality here. The direction of the causation is debatable and needs further research. Being a trusting individual can facilitate meeting people from different cultures. In this case, it is more likely that the effect goes to both directions. Moreover, there might be an omitted variable, that influences both having immigrant friends and social trust. One possibility would be that diverse residential areas create possibilities for contact with immigrants. However, this would go against the ethnic diversity argument, that claims that more ethnic diversity lowers the level of social trust. Based on the previous studies of intergroup contact theory and the results of this study, it is likely that having immigrant friends leads to higher social trust through the STEs.

Even though the results of this study were not as expected, it is still reasonable to expect based on the contact theory, that high school exchange could have a positive effect on social trust in some other contexts. It will be left to future studies to investigate this. The next section will try to situate the results to a larger context of social trust research.

4.2.3 What is Social Trust?

To situate the results of this thesis to the larger field of social trust research, this section will first discuss the definition of social trust in the light of the results. Then, it will present some evidence in support of the cultural perspective of social trust. Finally, it will briefly discuss the other variables that were significant in the model.

In the social trust literature, generalized social trust is often operationalized as trust in an unknown other. The definition of the concept is best understood through the concept of moralistic trust, and as Uslaner (2002: 193) defined it as an understanding of a 'common set of beliefs' existing among people. This definition is strongly correlated with optimism and Uslaner claims that moralistic trust is transferred through parental socialization from one generation to the next. Through this definition of moralistic trust, it is easy to move towards the definition of social trust. Delhey and Newton (2003) see social trust mirroring the moral standard of the society, whereas Uslaner sees high social trust coming from an understanding of shared moral community. Intercultural education and exchange were expected to shape the understanding of shared values and morals. Cao et al. (1994) define social trust as a 'belief in the benevolence of human nature'. Based on this understanding of trust, it should not be

affected by experiences and the behavior of others. This definition of Cao et al. comes very close to optimism, which was found to be positively correlated with social trust as expected.

The results of this study support the idea of social trust building on moralistic trust. It seems that there is something very fundamental in social trust. If social trust in essence reflects a value or even a worldview about the goodness of people, it is even harder to influence. The idea employed by Uslaner (2002; 2008), Dinesen (2012) and Stolle and Hooge (2004), among others, about stable generalized trust gets support from this study. Experiences, in this case high school exchanges, were not found to have an effect. Furthermore, optimism was found to be the strongest determinant of the level of social trust. The relation to optimism has also been emphasized in Uslaner's definitions of stable generalized trust. Both of these results, the relation to optimism and the lack of effect, speak in favor of the cultural perspective of social trust.

The result of this thesis is in accordance with the cultural perspective of social trust, which sees social trust as stable individual trait transferred from one generation to the next through parental socialization (Stolle and Hooge, 2004; Uslaner, 2008; Dinesen, 2012). In contrast, contact theory builds on the experiential perspective of social trust. When there is no interaction or no 'signs about the trustworthiness of the other' social trust is expected to be lower (Dinesen, 2011; 2012; Dinesen and Sønderskov, 2015). Since the high school exchange was not found to impact the level of social trust in this study, we can see that immediate experiences, in this context, do not shape social trust as expected in the experiential perspective, where also environments and experiences can affect the level of trust (Dinesen, 2012; Dinesen and Sønderskov, 2015). Another option is that high school exchange is not an impactful enough experience to have an influence on the 'cultural' social trust. At least not in all cases.

The relationship between optimism and social trust has been discussed also in the previous literature. Uslaner (2008) claims that trusting intentions reflect basic optimism, but also that optimists are more likely to take risks in trusting others. Based on his research the influence of optimism on social trust is twice as strong as the effect of trust on optimism. Someone could argue that there might be a problem with reverse causality, but it has been found in previous studies, that the relationship is and goes to both directions. Further, there could be an omitted variable impacting both, optimism and social trust. That could be a contextual factor or for example the social status of an individual. Since the study was conducted in Finland and the region was controlled for in the analysis, it is probably not the regional differences in Finland that could affect both. Also social status could impact the level

of trust. However, in the data of this study, it was measured with a proxy variable of the educational level of mother, and there was not enough variation in the variable to draw conclusions based on it.

The two other control variables demonstrating a significant relationship with social trust were subjective health and membership in a voluntary association. First, subjective health was found to be positively associated with social trust. This result is in accordance with the previous literature. However, the direction of the causation is hard to capture. Previous studies argue that social trust leads to better subjective health, through individual attributes or social environment (Rostila, 2007). However, there is also a possibility that healthy people are less dependent and more capable of taking risks in trusting others. Further, another possibility is that the positive association might come through optimism affecting both variables. In the correlation analysis subjective health was found to be related to both optimism and social trust. Nevertheless, the significant and positive association between health and social trust confirms the previous findings.

Second, a positive relationship was found between membership in a voluntary association and social trust. This result speaks for the Toquevilliain idea of voluntary associations having a socializing effect, especially in democratic and cooperative values (Rothstein, 2011: 149). However, this result is questionable, since the whole sample of the study is associated with AFS Finland, which is a voluntary association. They either already are members or are going to be members of this organization. Therefore, it is hard to draw any conclusions based on this result.

The results of this study give some support for the contact theory, but more importantly, they follow the cultural perspective of social trust. This perspective does not claim that the level of trust cannot change, but instead, it is not shaped by immediate experiences. In this thesis, high school exchange was expected to be such a profound experience that it could have had an effect on social trust, independent of the perspective taken. However, the results of this study show that in the context of Finland, high school exchanges do not affect the level of social trust. The following section will summarize the findings and limitations of this thesis, present some theoretical and policy implications that can be drawn from this analysis and finally suggest some directions for future research.

5. Conclusion

This thesis set out to study the impact of high school exchange programs on social trust. Its objective was to answer the research question *do high school exchanges affect the level social trust?* To answer this question the theoretical framework of intercultural contact theory was used to formulate one testable hypothesis, H_1: If students have done a high school exchange, then students will express more generalized social trust.

Based on this study it is not possible to give a conclusive generalizable answer to the research question, do high school exchanges affect the level social trust? OLS regression analysis revealed that in the case of Finland and in the sample of this thesis the answer is no, but this result is not generalizable, because of the distinctiveness of the Finnish context. As discussed in section 3, Finland is a special case when it concerns social trust. It is the country with second highest social trust in the world, only after Denmark. This could have had an effect on the results of this study.

The main findings of this study can be summarized in three main points. First, as mentioned above, the result does not support the hypothesis of this thesis, high school exchange did not increase social trust among the sample of this study. Second, contact theory gets partial support based on the results since close personal contact with immigrants is associated with higher social trust. Third, the first result, high school exchange not increasing social trust, and optimism being the strongest explanatory variable support the idea of the cultural perspective of social trust.

On one hand the second result of this thesis supports the intergroup contact hypothesis, which is based on the experiential perspective of social trust, and on the other hand, the third result supports the cultural perspective. Taken together, it is likely that the two perspectives are not exclusive and neither of them explains the origin of social trust conclusively. Social trust forms through both socialization and experiences in life.

There are, however, some evident problems in this study. Studying such an abstract concept as social trust creates problems with the measurement and the validity of the measure. This thesis used a common operationalization of social trust to minimize this risk. However, the issue with the validity of the measures persists. Work to create more sophisticated measures for social trust should be continued.

Further, the sample of this study created some evident limitations. The context of Finland made the findings less generalizable based on the evidence of this study. Since social trust is already expected to be high in Finland, and especially among the youth that are aiming

to do an exchange, finding an effect is challenging. This limitation could be mitigated by taking another country sample or by studying all high school students instead of just having a sample where everyone is interested in going abroad. However, due to the time and financial restrictions of this thesis it was not a feasible option this time. Another interesting approach would be to do a longitudinal study, where it would be possible to assess if the level of trust changes when more time has passed after the exchange.

The limitations related to the data are its inability to control for the destination country effect, due to the small sample in each destination country group and the non-response rate of the survey, which might cause bias in the empirical analyses, especially as the non-responses could be interpreted as an indicator of low social trust. Further, the gender distribution of the sample might be a cause of bias in the results. These will be left for the future studies to assess.

The limitations of this thesis highlight the importance of continued research on the role of intercultural education on social trust. This thesis took a step, but due to the distinct context of Finland, results remain inconclusive. Similar studies could explore different contexts where improvements in social trust would be more achievable. Future studies should also look at the other societal effects, like social trust, of high school exchanges. Furthermore, the relationship between optimism and trust should be investigated, especially its implications for institution building and policy planning.

Moreover, it is important to maintain and create policies and structures that increase equality. Society needs to be fair and offer opportunities for the future so pessimism will not take over. Finally, it is good to emphasize, as Rothstein (2011) has suggested, education is a key in creating social trust. The results of this thesis suggest that policymakers should develop policies and social structures that will create spaces and opportunities for cross-cultural encounters, which encourage and enable creating friendships across cultures within a country and further enable harnessing the potential of multiculturalism for innovation and creativity.

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Appendix 1. Survey

Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures

Follow Us

Hei!
Lähetän ohessa viestin AFS:n vapaaehtoiselta Maari Alangolta. Toivottavasti sinulla on hetki aikaa vastata kyselyyn!

Ystävällisesti tervehtii
Satu Kuivalainen
vapaaehtoiskoordinaattori, AFS-toimisto

****

Hei!
Olet saanut kutsun tähän kyselyyn, koska olet AFS:n vaihto-oppilaana vuonna 2016-17. Kyselyyn vastaaminen kestää alle 10 minuuttia. Sinun kokemuksesi ja mielipiteesi on tutkimuksen onnistumisen kannalta erittäin tärkeä.

Kysely on osa pro gradu -tutkielmaani Göteborgin yliopiston International Administration and Global Governance -maisteriohjelmassa. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on selvittää minkälaisia vaikutuksia kansainvälisillä kokemuksilla ja kansainvälisyyskasvatuksella on, niin yksilöön kuin yhteiskuntaankin.

Pääset kyselyyn tästä tai kopioimalla osoitteen selaimeen https://goo.gl/forms/FINzHboc9stwlBg83
Vastaathan kyselyyn mahdollisimman pian! Näin autat 07/08 Italian returneen maisteriksi. Kiitos jo etukäteen!

Ystävällisin terveisin
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Survey questionnaire – English

Part I

1. Age

_____ *years*

2. Gender
        1   Female
        2   Male
        3   Other
        4   I don't want to answer

3. Municipality

4. What type of school do you go to?
        1   Middle school
        2   Vocational school
        3   Gymnasium
        4   Double-degree

5. Which year did you start in your current education?
        1   2016
        2   2015
        3   2014
        4   2013
        5   before 2013

6. What language do you speak at home?
        1   Finnish
        2   Swedish
        3   Other,
                            what? _____

7. What is the highest level of your mother's (or legal guardians) education?
        1   Elementary education
        2   Vocational training
        3   Matriculation examination
        4   Higher education (University or university of applied sciences)
        99   I don't know

8. What was the average grade of your last school certificate? (4-10)

9. How religious would you say you are?

Not religious at all   *Very religious*
          1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

10. How often do you follow the news?
        0   Never
        1   Now and then

2   1-2 days a week
3   3-5 days a week
4   6-7 days a week

11. How interested are you in politics?

Not interested at all   *Very interested*
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

12. In political matters, people talk of "the left" and "the right." How would you place your views on this scale, generally speaking?

       Left   *Right*
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

13a. You are or are going to be a member of AFS. Are you a member of any other kind of voluntary organization?
      0   No
      1   Yes

      13b. What kind of organizations are you a member of?
               Sport organization
               Organization or club related to the school
               Organization or club related to church or religion
               Scouts
               Environmental organization
               Charitable organization
               Political organization or political party
               Humanitarian or peace organization
               Other

14. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your life, in general?

Very dissatisfied   *Very satisfied*
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

15. All in all, how would you describe your state of health these days?

      Very bad   *Very good*
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

16. What do you think in general about your future after graduating from your current education?

My future seems very unsecure   *I'm confident about my future*
      1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Part II

17a. Have you taken a part on a high school exchange program? *Longer than 3 months.*
    0   No
    1   I'm planning to
    2   Yes

    17b. If you answered *yes,* how long was the program?
        ___ *months*

    17c. If you answered *yes,* where did you go?
        _____ *(country)*

    17d. If you answered *I'm planning to*, how long program are you planning to do?
        ___ *months*

18. Have you taken part on a language course or another shorter intercultural program abroad? *Shorter than 3 months.*
    0   No
    1   Yes

19. Have your siblings taken part in a high school exchange program?
    0   No
    1   Yes

20. Has your family hosted an exchange student?
    0   No
    1   Yes, once
    2   Yes, several

21a. Have you lived abroad? <u>*Not* including high school exchange.</u>
    0   No
    1   Yes

    21b. How long?
        ____ *months*

22. Do you follow foreign media?
    0   No
    1   Yes

23. Do you speak any other languages besides Finnish and/or Swedish? How many?
    0   No
    1
    2
    3
    4   More than three

24. Do you have friends or relatives abroad? How many? *Approximately*

_____

25. Are you personally acquainted with any foreigner who lives in Finland? How many?
Approximately

_____

26. How many countries have you visited?
　　　　Number of countries visited ____

Part III

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

Can't be too careful　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Most people can be trusted*
　　　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6　　7　　8　　9　　10

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

Most people would try to take advantage of you　　　　　　*Most people try to be fair*
　　　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6　　7　　8　　9　　10

29. Would you say that most of the time people try to be helpful or that they are most looking out for themselves?

Looking out for themselves　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Try to be helpful*
　　　　1　　2　　3　　4　　5　　6　　7　　8　　9　　10

30. How much do you trust people from following groups *in general*
　　　　a. Your family
　　　　b. Your neighbourhood
　　　　c. People you know personally
　　　　d. People you meet for the first time
　　　　e. People of another religion or belief
　　　　f. People of another nationality
　　　　g. People of another ethnicity
　　　　h. Immigrants
　　　　i. Refugees

Not trust at all　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　*Trust completely*
　　　　1　　　　　　　　2　　　　　　　　3　　　　　　　　4

31. How much do you trust the people from following countries?
　　　　a. Sweden
　　　　b. Russia
　　　　c. Estonia
　　　　d. US
　　　　e. Somalia

       f. China
       g. Iraq
       h. Ukraine
       i. Vietnam

Not trust at all			*Trust completely*
1	2	3	4

32. On this list are various groups of people. Which of them you would not like to have as neighbours?

Drug addicts
Heavy drinkers
People from a different ethnic background
Immigrants
Foreigners
Refugees
People who speak a different language

0   not mentioned
1   mentioned

33. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements
    a. It would be good, if more foreign people would come to Finland
    b. Finnish youth should travel more
    c. I have friends from an immigrant background
    d. I could not imagine being in a relationship with an immigrant
    e. Racism is a serious problem among the youth and it's not addressed enough
    f. It is important that my friends were born in Finland
    g. Finland should accept more refugees
    h. Finland has a responsibility to help people, who are fleeing from war or human suffering
    i. My friends' religion does not matter to me
    j. I spend time with immigrants in my hobbies and other activities
    k. Foreigners have diversified Finnish culture
    l. Racism has decreased among Finnish youth
    m. Many foreigners come to Finland just to enjoy our social benefits
    n. Finland becomes better place to live, when people from other countries move here

Strongly disagree	*Disagree*	*Neither agree nor disagree*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
1	2	3	4	5

Osa I

1. Ikä

_____ *vuotta*

2. Sukupuoli

1	Nainen
2	Mies
3	Muu
4	En halua sanoa

3. Kotikunta

4. Missä opiskelet?

1	Peruskoulu
2	Ammattikoulu
3	Lukio
4	Kaksoistutkinto

5. Milloin aloitit nykyiset opintosi?

1	2016
2	2015
3	2014
4	2013
5	ennen vuotta 2013

6. Mitä kieltä/kieliä puhut kotona?

1	Suomi
2	Ruotsi
3	Muu,

mikä? _____

7. Mikä on äitisi korkein koulutus?

1	Perusaste
2	Ammattikoulu
3	Ylioppilas
4	Korkeakoulu (AMK tai yliopisto)
99	En tiedä

8. Mikä oli viimeisen koulutodistuksesi keskiarvo? (4-10)

9. Kuinka uskonnollinen olet?

En ollenkaan uskonnollinen   *Erittäin uskonnollinen*

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

10. Kuinka usein seuraat uutisia?

0	En koskaan
1	Silloin tällöin

46

      2   1-2 päivänä viikossa
      3   3-5 päivänä viikossa
      4   6-7 päivänä viikossa

11. Kuinka kiinnostunut olet politiikasta?

En ollenkaan kiinnostunut   *Erittäin kiinnostunut*
            1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

12. Politiikasta keskusteltaessa puhutaan usein vasemmistosta ja oikeistosta. Mihin sijoittaisit oman kansasi tällä asteikolla yleensä ottaen?

     Vasemmisto   *Oikeisto*
            1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

13a. Olet tai tulet olemaan Suomen AFS:n jäsen. Kuulutko jäsenenä johonkin muuhun seuraan, kerhoon, yhdistykseen tai järjestöön?
      0   En
      1   Kyllä

    13b. Jos vastasit edelliseen kysymykseen kyllä, minkälaiseen seuraan, kerhoon, yhdistykseen tai järjestöön kuulut?
                    Urheiluseura tai liikuntajärjestö
                    Koulun tai oppilaitoksen kerho
                    Seurakunnan tai muun uskonnollisen yhteisön nuorisotoiminta
                    Partiolippukunta
                    Luonnonsuojelu- tai ympäristönsuojelujärjestö, luontojärjestö, eläinsuojelujärjestö tai kerho
                    Hyväntekeväisyysjärjestö, avustusjärjestö tai vammaisjärjestö
                    Jokin poliittinen nuoriso- tai varhaisnuorisojärjestö tai jonkin puolueen perusjärjestö
                    Ihmisoikeus- tai rauhanjärjestö
                    Muu, mikä?

14. Kuinka tyytyväinen tai tyytymätön olet elämääsi kaiken kaikkiaan?

Erittäin tyytymätön   *Erittäin tyytyväinen*
            1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

15. Kuinka tyytyväinen olet terveydentilaasi?

Erittäin tyytymätön   *Erittäin tyytyväinen*
            1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

16. Mitä yleisesti ottaen ajattelet valmistumisen jälkeisestä tulevaisuudestasi?

Tulevaisuuteni näyttää hyvin epävarmalta   *Olen tulevaisuuteni suhteen luottavainen*
            1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

Osa II

17. Oletko suorittanut vaihto-opintoja ulkomailla? *Yli 3kk kestäneet vaihdot.*
       0   En
       1   En, mutta suunnittelen osallistuvani
       2   Kyllä

    17b. Jos vastasit *kyllä*, kuinka pitkä vaihtosi oli?
        ___ *kuukautta*

    17c. Jos vastasit *kyllä*, missä maassa olit vaihdossa?
        _____ *(maa)*

    17d. Jos vastasit *suunnittelen osallistuvani*, kuinka pitkään ohjelmaan suunnittelet osallistuvasi?
        ___ *kuukautta*

18. Oletko osallistunut alle 3kk kestäneeseen opiskelijavaihtoon tai kielikurssille? *Kesto alle 3 kk.*
       0   En
       1   Kyllä

19. Onko sisaruksesi osallistunut vaihto-oppilasohjelmaan?
       0   Ei
       1   Kyllä

20. Onko perheesi isännöinyt vaihto-oppilasta?
       0   Ei
       1   Kyllä, kerran
       2   Kyllä, useammin kuin kerran

21a. Oletko asunut ulkomailla? *Vaihto-oppilaskokemustasi <u>ei</u> lasketa.*
       0   En
       1   Kyllä

    21b. Jos olet asunut ulkomailla, kuinka pitkään?
    Anna vastaus kuukausina. Jos et osaa sanoa tarkkaa kuukausimäärää, arvioi kesto suurin piirtein. Vaihto-oppilaskokemustasi <u>ei</u> lasketa.
        ___ *kuukautta*

 22. Seuraatko ulkomaista mediaa?
       0   En
       1   Kyllä

23. Puhutko muita kieliä kuin suomea ja/tai ruotsia? Kuinka montaa?
       0   En
       1

2
3
4   Yli kolmea

24. Onko sinulla ystäviä, perheenjäseniä tai muita läheisiä, jotka asuvat ulkomailla? Kuinka monta?

_____

25. Tunnetko ulkomaalaisia, jotka asuvat Suomessa? Kuinka monta?

_____

26. Kuinka monessa maassa olet käynyt Suomen ulkopuolella?
        Olen vieraillut ____ maassa

Osa III

27. Tuntuuko sinusta yleisesti ottaen siltä, että useimpiin ihmisiin voi luottaa, vai että sinun täytyy olla erittäin varovainen ollessanne tekemisissä muiden ihmisten kanssa?

Ei voi olla liian varovainen   *Useimpiin ihmisiin voi luottaa*
        1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

28. Oletteko sitä mieltä, että useimmat ihmiset tilaisuuden tullen yrittäisivät käyttää sinua hyväkseen vai luuletteko, että ihmiset yrittäisivät olla reiluja?

Useimmat ihmiset yrittäisivät   *Useimmat ihmiset yrittäisivät*
käyttää minua hyväkseen   *olla reiluja*
        1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

29. Katsotteko, että useimmiten ihmiset pyrkivät olemaan auttavaisia toisia kohtaan vai että enimmäkseen he ajattelevat vain omaa etuaan?

Ihmiset ajattelevat enimmäkseen   *Ihmiset yrittävät enimmäkseen*
omaa etuaan   *olla auttavaisia*
        1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   10

30. Miten paljon luotatte eri ryhmiin kuuluviin ihmisiin?
        a. Oma perheesi
        b. Oma naapurustosi
        c. Ihmiset, jotka tunnet henkilökohtaisesti
        d. Ihmiset, jotka tapaat ensimmäistä kertaa
        e. Toiseen uskontoon kuuluvat ihmiset
        f. Toisen kansallisuuden omaavat ihmiset
        g. Toiseen etniseen ryhmään kuuluvat ihmiset
        h. Maahanmuuttajat
        i. Pakolaiset

En luota ollenkaan   *Luotan täysin*
        1   2   3   4

31. Kuinka paljon luotat ihmisiin seuraavista maista?
- **a.** Ruotsi
- **b.** Venäjä
- c. Viro
- d. Yhdysvallat
- **e.** Somalia
- **f.** Kiina
- **g.** Irak
- **h.** Ukraina
- **i.** Vietnam

En luota ollenkaan   *Luotan täysin*

      1   2   3   4

32. Mitä seuraavista ryhmistä et haluaisi naapuriksesi?

        Huumeriippuvaiset
        Alkoholistit
        Toiseen etniseen ryhmään kuuluvat ihmiset
        Maahanmuuttajat
        Ulkomaalaiset
        Pakolaiset
        Eri kieltä puhuvat ihmiset

0   ei mainittu
1   mainittu

33. Oletko samaa vai eri mieltä seuraavien väitteiden kanssa?
- **a.** Olisi hyvä, jos Suomeen tulisi enemmän ulkomaalaisia
- **b.** Suomalaisnuorten pitäisi liikkua enemmän ulkomailla
- **c.** Minulla on maahanmuuttajataustaisia ystäviä
- **d.** En voisi kuvitellakaan maahanmuuttajaa puolisokseni
- **e.** Rasismi on nuorten keskuudessa vakava ongelma, johon ei puututa tarpeeksi
- **f.** Minulle on tärkeää että ystäväni ovat syntyneet Suomessa
- **g.** Suomen tulisi ottaa vastaan nykyistä enemmän pakolaisia
- **h.** Suomella on velvollisuus auttaa ihmisiä, jotka pakenevat sotaa tai inhimillistä kärsimystä.
- **i.** Ystäväni uskonnolla ei ole minulle mitään väliä
- **j.** Harrastus- tai järjestötoiminnassa, jossa olen mukana, on myös maahanmuuttajia
- **k.** Ulkomaalaiset ovat monipuolistaneet suomalaista kulttuuria
- **l.** Rasismi on vähentynyt viime vuosina suomalaisten nuorten keskuudessa
- **m.** Monet ulkomaalaiset tulevat Suomeen vain käyttääkseen hyväkseen verovarojamme
- **n.** Suomesta tulee parempi paikka elää, kun ulkomailta muuttaa tänne ihmisiä

Täysin eri mieltä   *Täysin samaa mieltä*

1   2   3   4   5

Appendix 2. Descriptive statistics

Table A. The average values of the variables by treatment and control groups.

|	min–max	Survey question(s)	AFS **exchange students and returnees** who did an exchange 2015–16 and 2016–17	High school students who are **planning** to do **an exchange** 2017–18	Total
		N	135 (54.4 %)	113 (45.6 %)	248
Women %	-	2	77 %	81.4 %	79 %
Age	*15–17*	*1*	17.69	16.25	17.03
University education of mother %	-	7	71.1 %	69.9 %	70.6 %
Social Trust	*4.33–9.67*	*27–29*	6.79	7.25	7.00
Trust	*2–10*	*27*	7.00	7.80	7.28
Fair	*2–10*	*28*	6.90	7.00	7.15
Helpful	*3–10*	*29*	6.47	6.80	6.57
Optimism	*4.5–10*	*14 & 16*	8.06	7.93	8.00
Religiousness	*1–9*	*9*	2.84	3.41	3.10
Left-Right	*2–9*	*12*	4.84	5.40	4.98
Member	-	*13a*	65.2 %	74.3 %	69.4 %
Subjective health	*4–10*	*15*	8.07	8.70	8.21
Duration of the exchange	*4–12*	*17b*	10.26 months	-	-
Foreign media	-	*22*	89.6 %	88.5 %	89.1 %
Friends	*0–70*	*24 & 25*	20.95	9.06	15.53
Immigrant friends	*1–5*	*33c*	3.51	3.54	3.52
Hobbies with immigrants	*1–5*	*33j*	3.26	3.24	3.25
Countries visited	*1–35*	*26*	13.27	11.05	12.26
Months lived abroad	*0–156*	*21b*	3.06	4.80	3.85
Hosted an exchange student	-	*20*	24.5 %	20.4 %	22.2 %
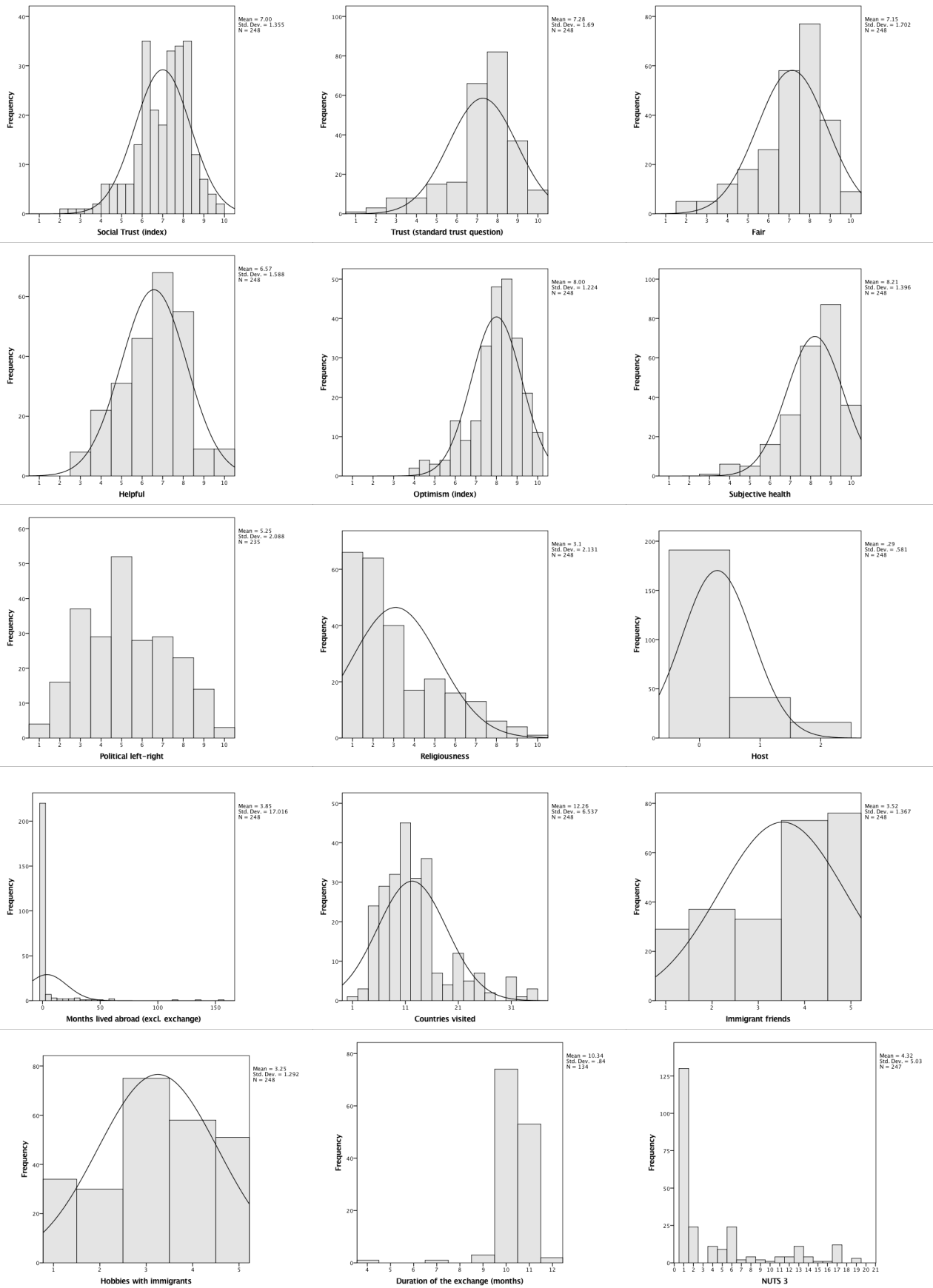
Figure A. Frequency distributions of the variables.
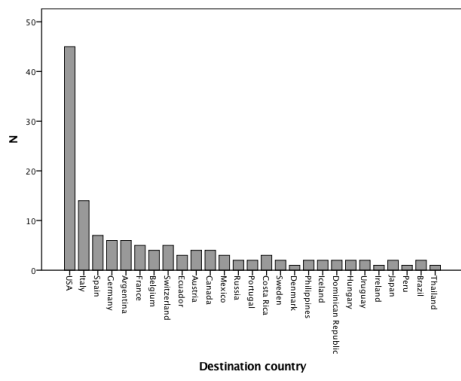
Figure B. Destination country distribution.

Appendix 3. Regression tables and diagnostics

Table B. Multiple regression (OLS). The effect of intercultural exchange on social trust (standard trust question).

DV: TRUST (1-10)	Model 1 (bivariate)	Model 2
Exchange (0, 1)	-.631**	-.432
	(.220)	(.221)
Foreign media (0, 1)		.170
		(.330)
Friends (n)		-.009
		(.005)
Q33C Immigrant friends (1–5)		.177*
		(.084)
Q33J (1-5)		-.139
		(.089)
Countries visited (n)		.012
		(.017)
Months lived abroad (n)		.003
		(.006)
Host (0–2)		-.188
		(.176)
Optimism		.363***
		(.094)
Health		.175*
		(.082)
Member		.430
		(.229)
Left-Right		.039
		(.053)
Religiousness		.038
		(.050)
Constant	7.607***	2.249*
	(.162)	(.914)
R^2	.030	.162
N	235	235

Table C. Collinearity statistics.

|	Tolerance	VIF
EXCHANGE1	.853	1.173
FOREIGN MEDIA	.964	1.038
FRIENDS	.821	1.218
Q33C	.780	1.282
Q33J	.777	1.286
C_VISITED	.823	1.215
L_ABROAD_M	.962	1.040
HOST	.961	1.041
OPTIMISM	.807	1.240
HEALTH	.817	1.224
MEMBER	.942	1.062
LEFTRIGHT	.865	1.156
RELIG	.909	1.100
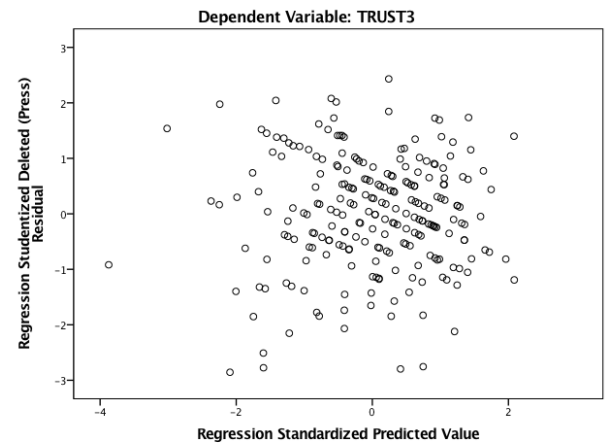
Figure C. Studentised deleted residuals (SDRESID) and the standardized predicted values (ZPRED).
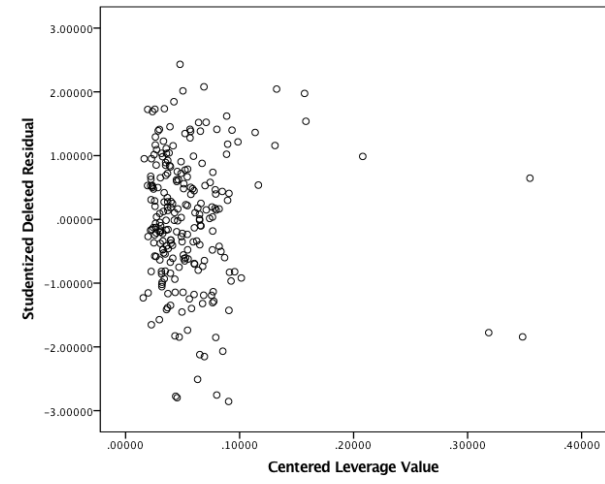
Figure D. Central Leverage Values and Residuals.
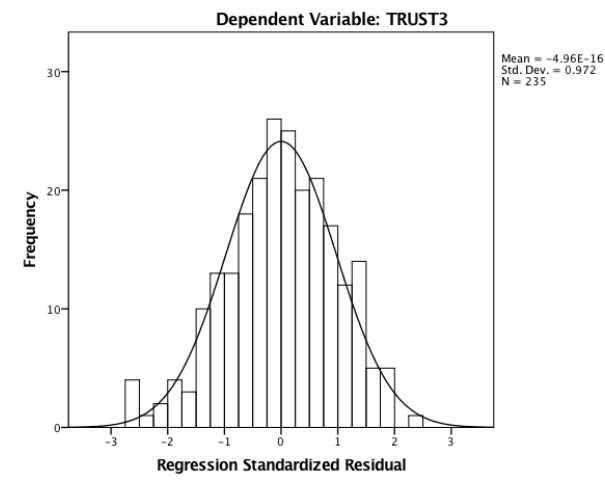
Figure E. The distribution of Residuals.
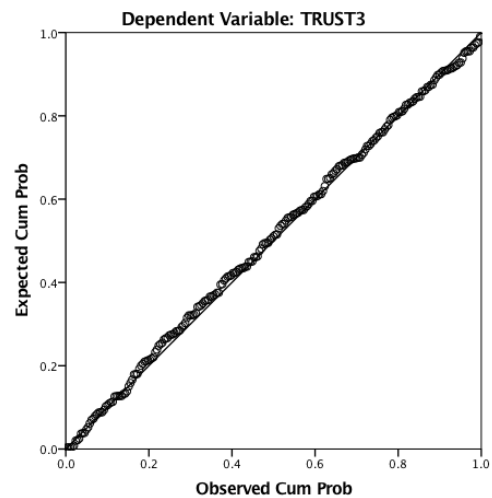
Figure F. P-P Plot. The distribution of Residuals.

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Table D. Cook's Distance for the final model.

	Case number	Cook's D	Sig. F
1	69	.131	1.000
2	198	.106	1.000
3	245	.059	1.000
4	196	.053	1.000
5	10	.048	1.000
6	80	.047	1.000
7	136	.033	1.000
8	31	.032	1.000
9	212	.030	1.000
10	184	.028	1.000

Table E. Frequency table. NUTS3 regions.

NUTS 3	Frequency	Percent
1 Helsinki-Uusimaa	130	52.4
2 Varsinais-Suomi	24	9.7
4 Satakunta	11	4.4
5 Kanta-Häme	9	3.6
6 Pirkanmaa	24	9.7
7 Päijät-Häme	2	.8
8 Kymenlaakso	4	1.6
9 Etelä-Karjala	2	.8
10 Etelä-Savo	1	.4
11 Pohjois-Savo	4	1.6
12 Pohjois-Karjala	4	1.6
13 Keski-Suomi	11	4.4
14 Etelä-Pohjanmaa	4	1.6
15 Pohjanmaa	1	.4
16 Keski-Pohjanmaa	1	.4
17 Pohjois-Pohjanmaa	12	4.8
19 Lappi	3	1.2
Total	247	99.6
Missing	1	.4
Total	248	100.0

Table F. Multiple regression (OLS). Including regional control (Model 1) and destination country effect (Model 2).

DV: TRUST3 (1-10)	Model 1	Model 2
Exchange (0, 1)	-.334	
	(.173)	
Exchange outside W (0, 1)		.788
		(.403)
Foreign media (0, 1)	-.007	-.418
	(.258)	(.536)
Friends (n)	-.006	-.012*
	(.004)	(.006)
Q33C Immigrant friends (1–5)	.196**	.196
	(.066)	(.124)
Q33J (1-5)	-.116	-.117
	(.070)	(.149)
Countries visited (n)	.006	.027
	(.014)	(.026)
Months lived abroad (n)	.001	-.007
	(.005)	(.010)
Host (0–2)	-.229	-.162
	(.139)	(.145)
Optimism	.321***	.173
	(.073)	(.145)
Health	.149*	.234
	(.065)	(.122)
Member	.368*	.789*
	(.180)	(.345)
Left-Right	.051	.077
	(.041)	(.079)
Religiousness	.000	-.017
	(.040)	(.086)
Region (NUTS3)	-.002	
	(.017)	
Constant	2.652***	2.665*
	(.731)	(1.323)
R^2	.196	.101
N	235	126

*p<.05 **p<.01 ***p<.001. Standard errors within parentheses.