

The Impact of the European Debt Crisis on Trust in Journalism

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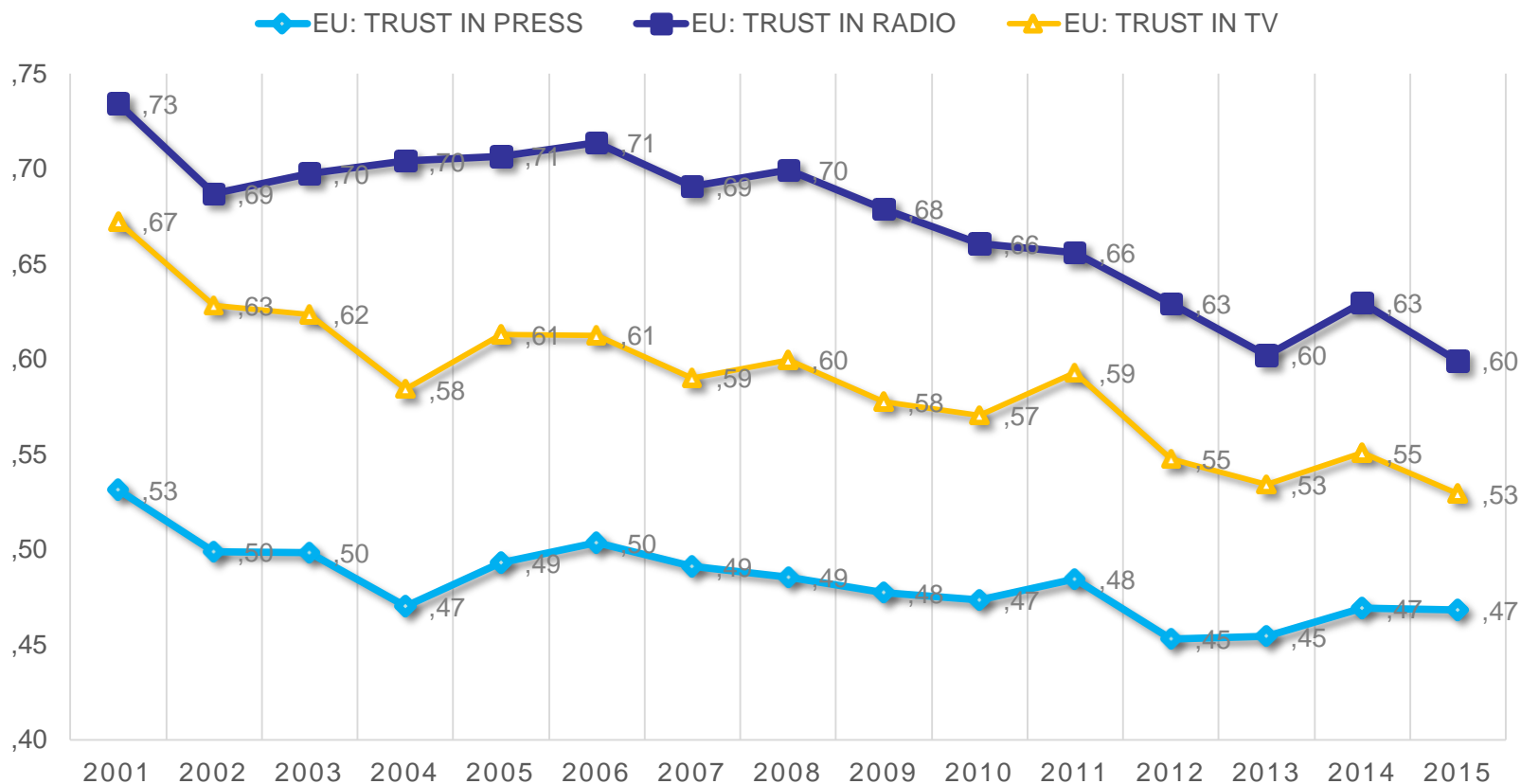
ECREA Conference 11.11.2016, Prague

Agenda

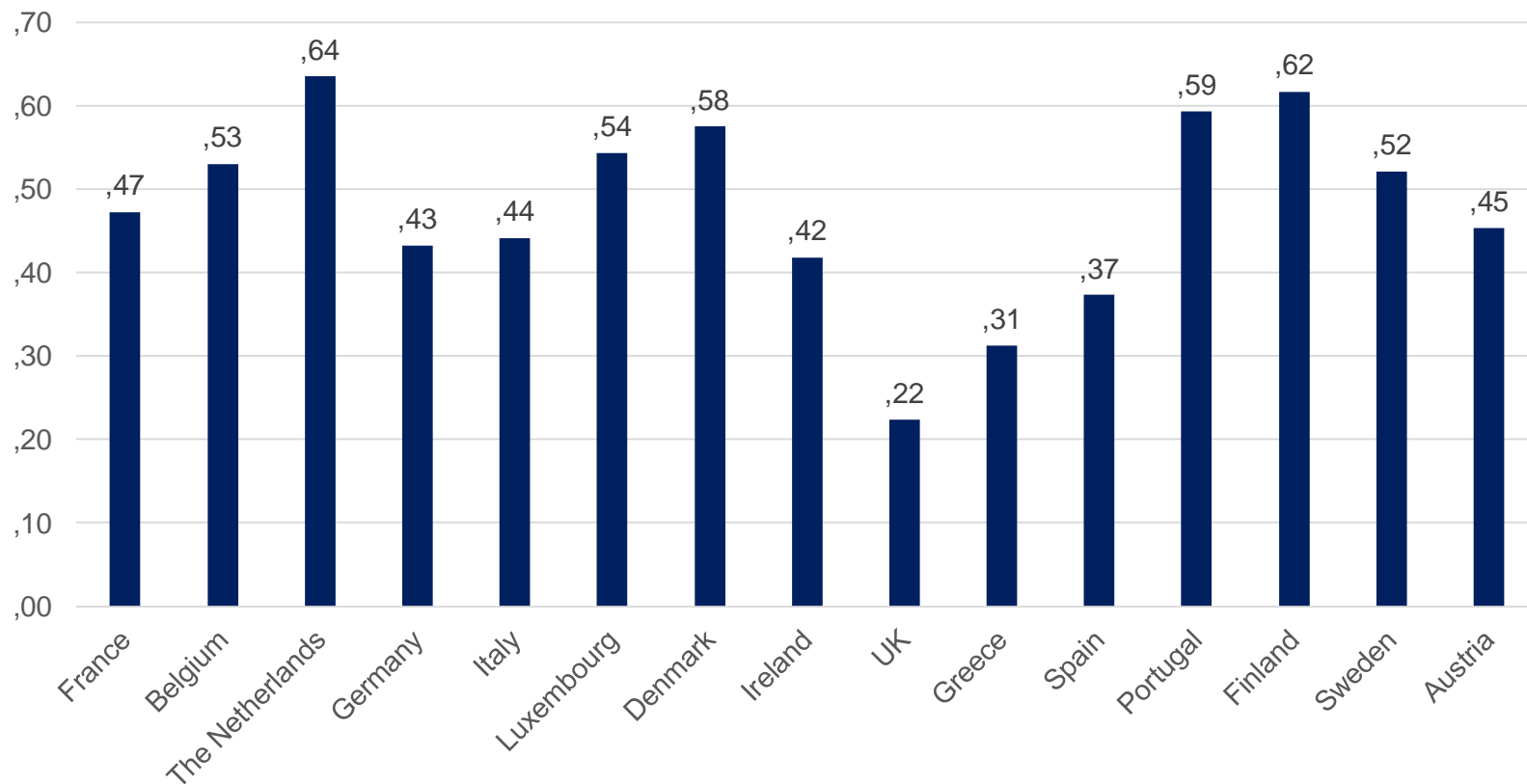
- 1) Problems
- 2) Theoretical background
- 3) Research questions
- 4) Methodology
- 5) Findings

Problems: A decline of trust

Data:
Eurobarometer
2001-2015

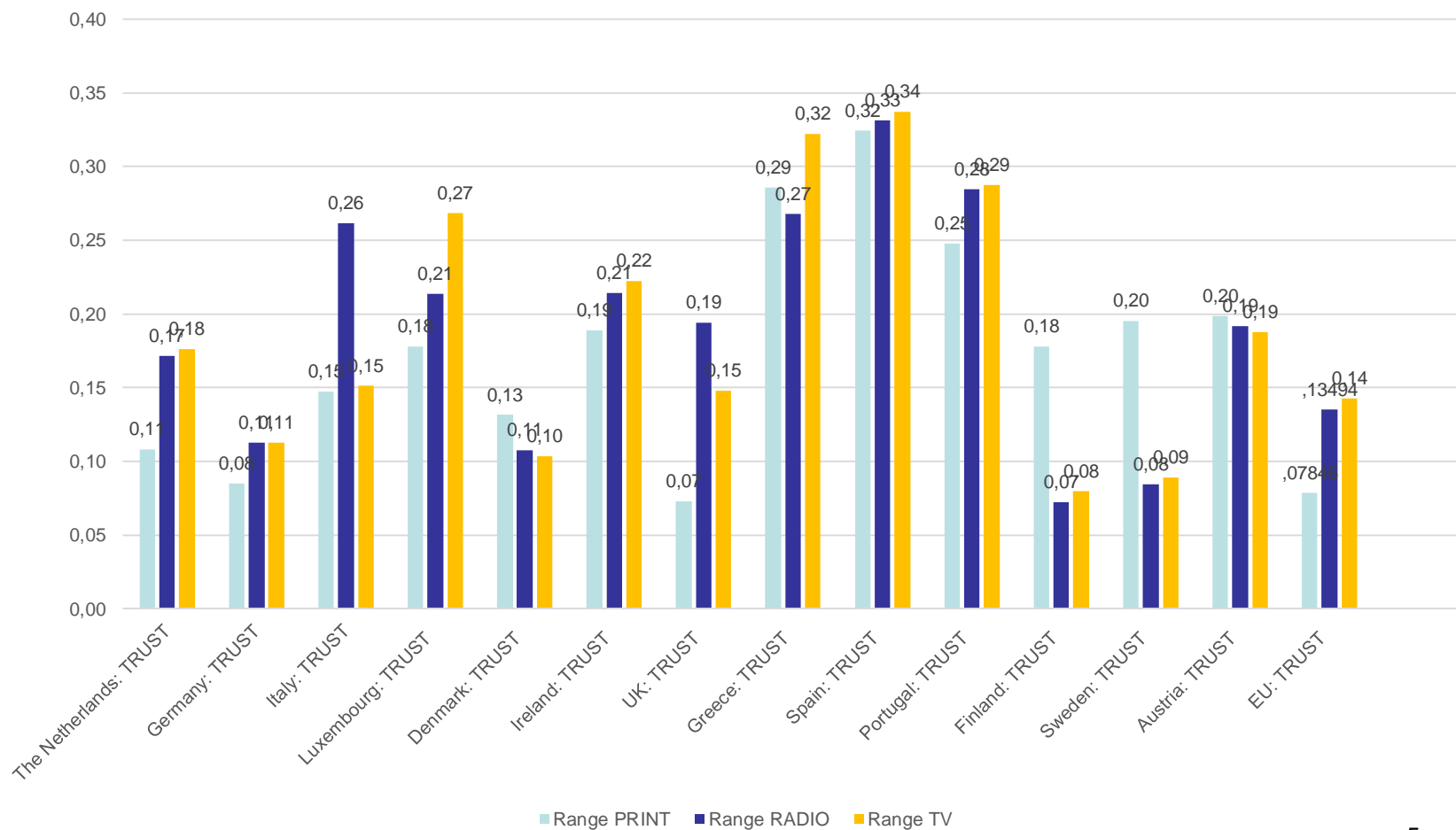


Problems: Differences between countries



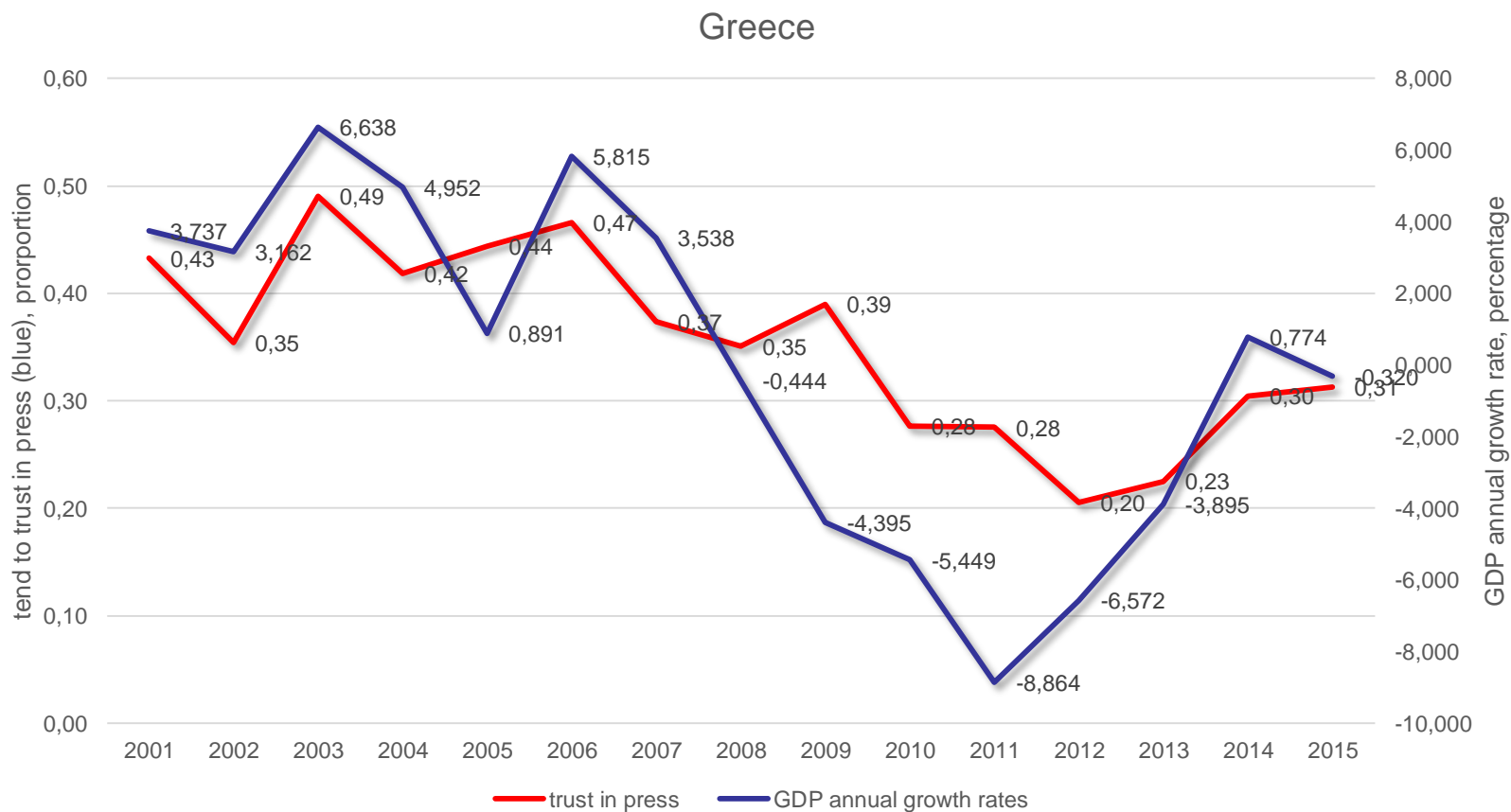
Tend to trust in press 2015, percent in countries

Problems: Different ranges in countries



Problems:

Trust in media varies with the economy?



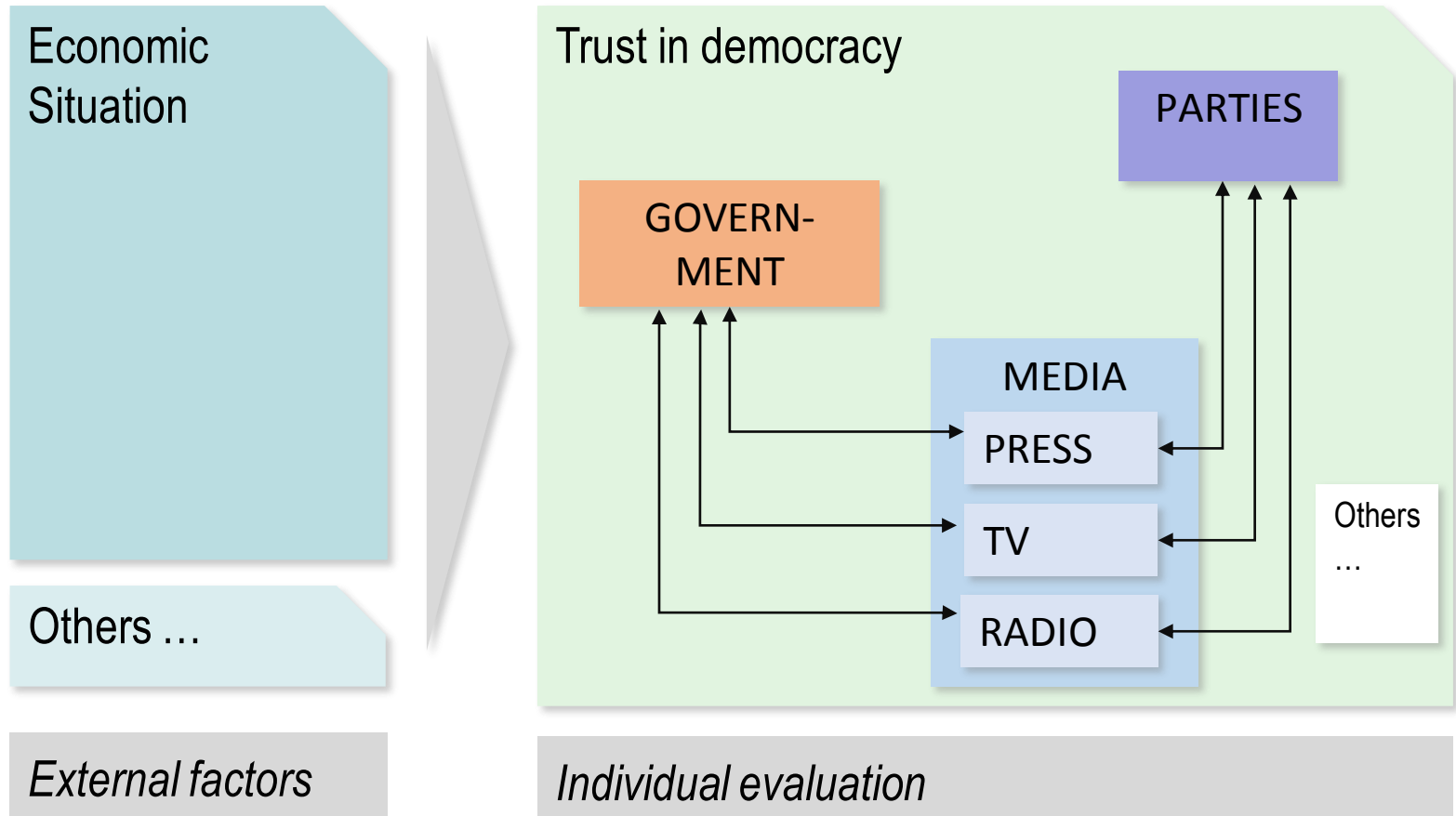
Theoretical background

- In recent years, communication research has paid increasing attention to the role of macro-level factors in explaining media phenomena and audience attitudes (e.g., Goldman & Mutz, 2011, Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Iyengar et al., 2010; Moehler & Singh, 2011; Norris & Inglehart, 2009).
- institutional theories view political trust as resulting from the satisfactory performance of political institutions (Mishler & Rose, 2001): When they fail to perform, citizens distrust them.

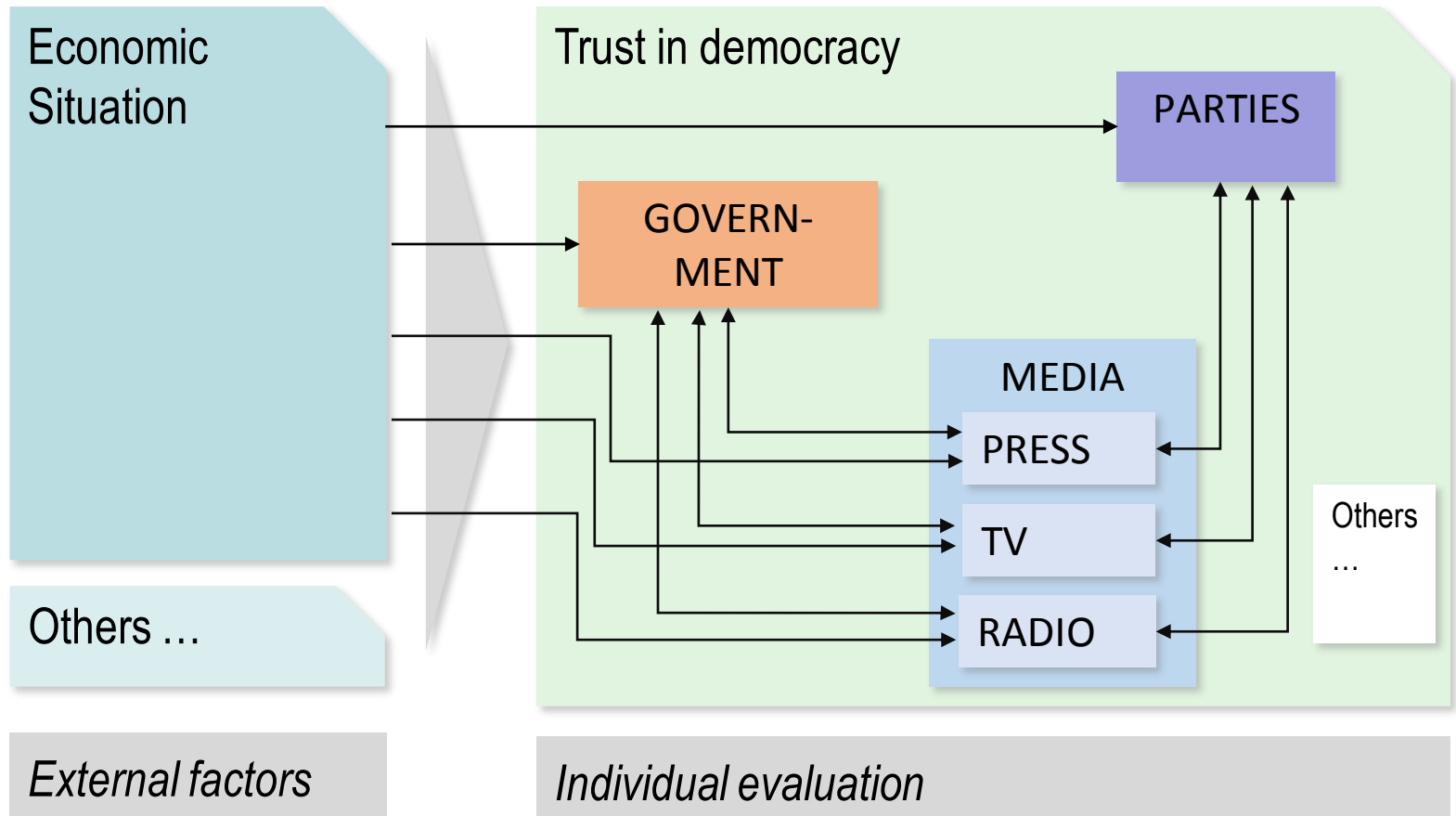
Theoretical background

- Several studies supporting institutional explanations of political trust have focused on economic variables. Such studies found that economic performance indicators such as economic growth, low unemployment, and low inflation rates are related to political trust (e.g., Alesina & Wacziarg, 2000).
- In addition, in more prosperous societies interpersonal trust is also higher (Inglehart, 1999, p. 94).
- We know that trust in media is linked with the trust in the political system and democracy (Tsfati/Ariely 2013).

Theoretical background



Theoretical background



Theoretical background

- 2014 Eurobarometer data indicate that people in a bad financial situation don't tend to trust in the media as much as people in a good financial situation.
- The economic situation influences the trust in political institutions and in their problem-solving competence. (Zmerli/Newton/Montero 2006)
- So we ask: Are the citizens' disappointments with political decisions which cause an economic crises projected on the mediator – the journalists?
- However, the institutional approach to political trust implies that media trust will vary not only with the economic and political context, but also with the structure and content of media systems (Norris, 2000, 2011).

Research questions

RQ1: What connection is there between the economic situation, the trust in political institutions and the tendency to trust in media?

RQ2: Is there an impact of the European debt crisis on the tendency to trust in media in the affected countries?

RQ3: Are there differences between different media channels, like press, TV and radio?

RQ4: How will media trust develop? Is a prognosis possible?

Methodology

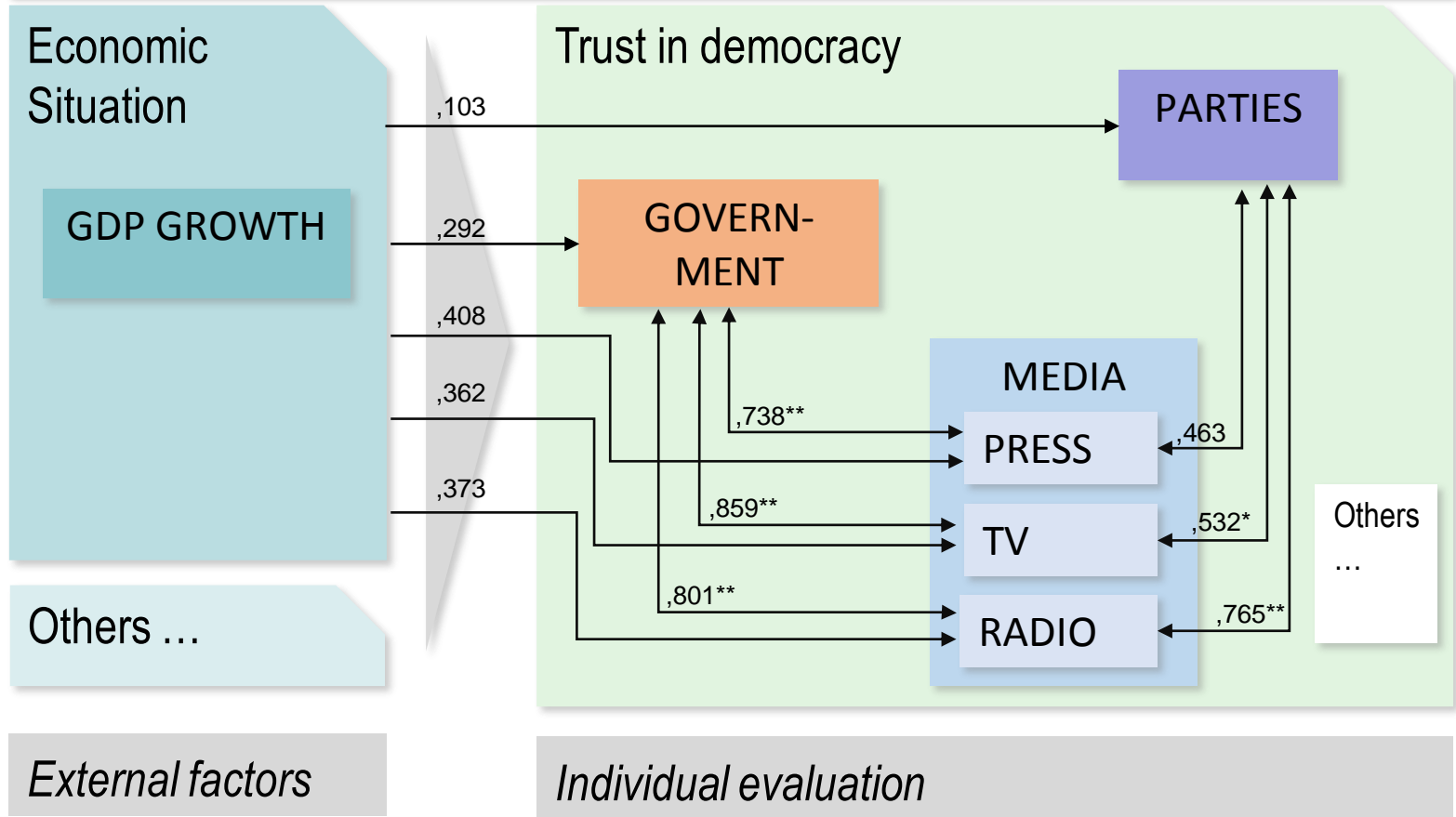
- Secondary data analysis: Survey data and economic indicators
- The study analyses the **Eurobarometer empirical survey** primary data on microdata level. This survey was carried out in November 2015 in the 28 member states of the European Union and several candidate states.
- Time serial analysis can be executed beginning in 2001. For the Eurobarometer survey around 1.000 people were interviewed in each state (EU 15).
- Data on **economic situation** (GDP growth rates), indicating the extend of the European debt crisis, are added from OECD.

Results: RQ1

- *RQ1*: What connection is there between the economic situation, the trust in political institutions and the tendency to trust in media?

Results: RQ1

EU:



Results: RQ1

- There's no overall connection in the EU-15 between the economic situation and the trust in political institutions or the tendency to trust in media
- But: This doesn't hold everywhere

Results: RQ1

	Correlation GDP growth with...				Correlation GDP growth with...		
Countries	Trust in press	Trust in radio	Trust in TV	Countries	Trust in press	Trust in radio	Trust in TV
Ireland	-0,13	0,26	0,20	France	0,48	0,31	0,26
UK	0,10	0,31	0,37	Belgium	0,18	0,40	0,06
Greece	0,81	0,78	0,81	The Netherlands	0,61	0,51	0,11
Spain	0,75	0,76	0,65	Germany	-0,44	0,35	-0,01
Portugal	0,24	0,26	0,21	Italy	0,38	0,57	0,56
Finland	-0,11	-0,01	-0,05	Luxembourg	-0,38	-0,37	-0,27
Sweden	-0,10	0,03	0,11	Denmark	0,10	0,32	0,40
Austria	0,24	0,28	0,29	EU	0,41	,373	,362

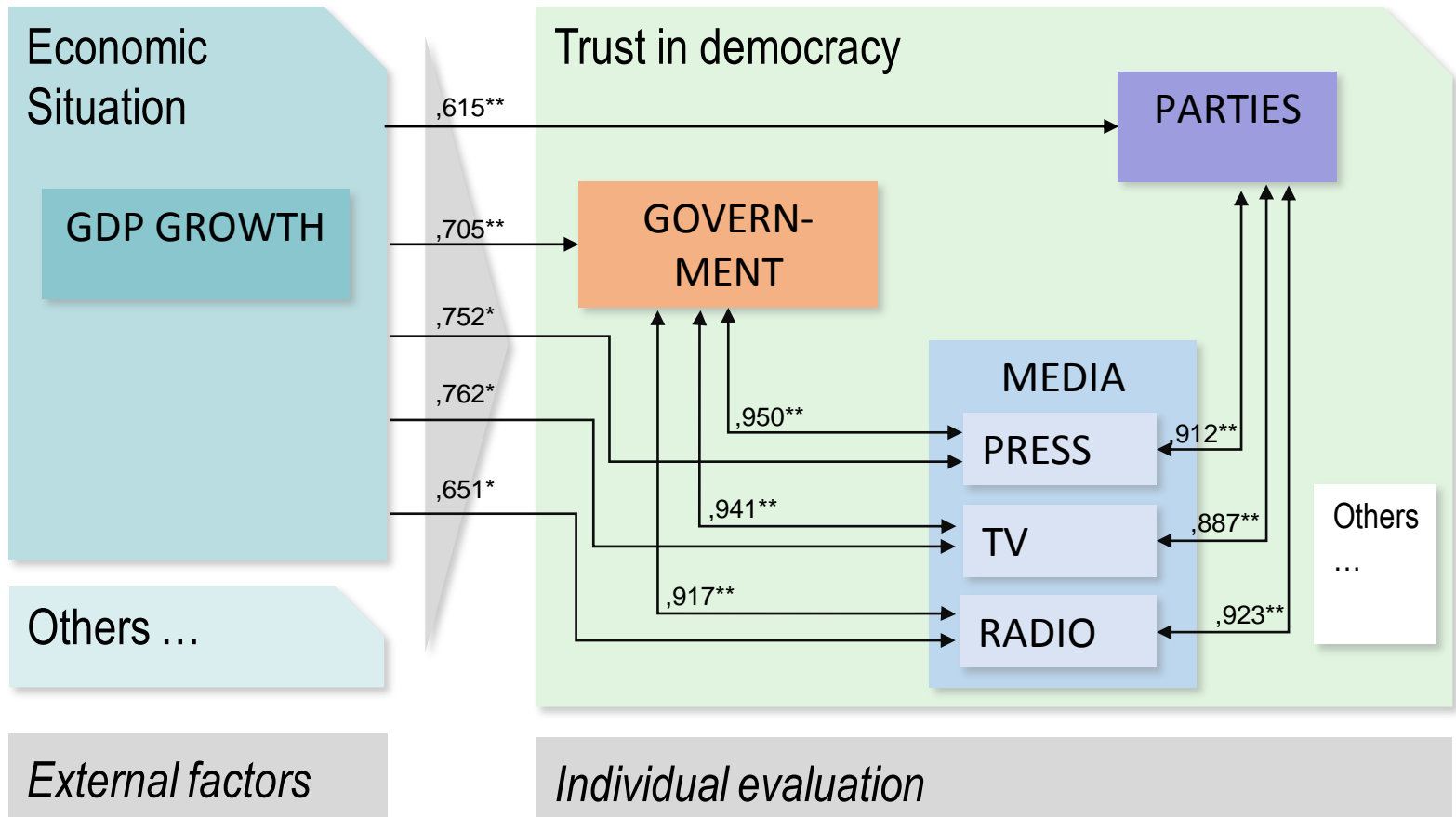
Pearson correlations

Results: RQ1

- In some countries, strong connections exist between the economic situation and the trust in political institutions or the tendency to trust in media

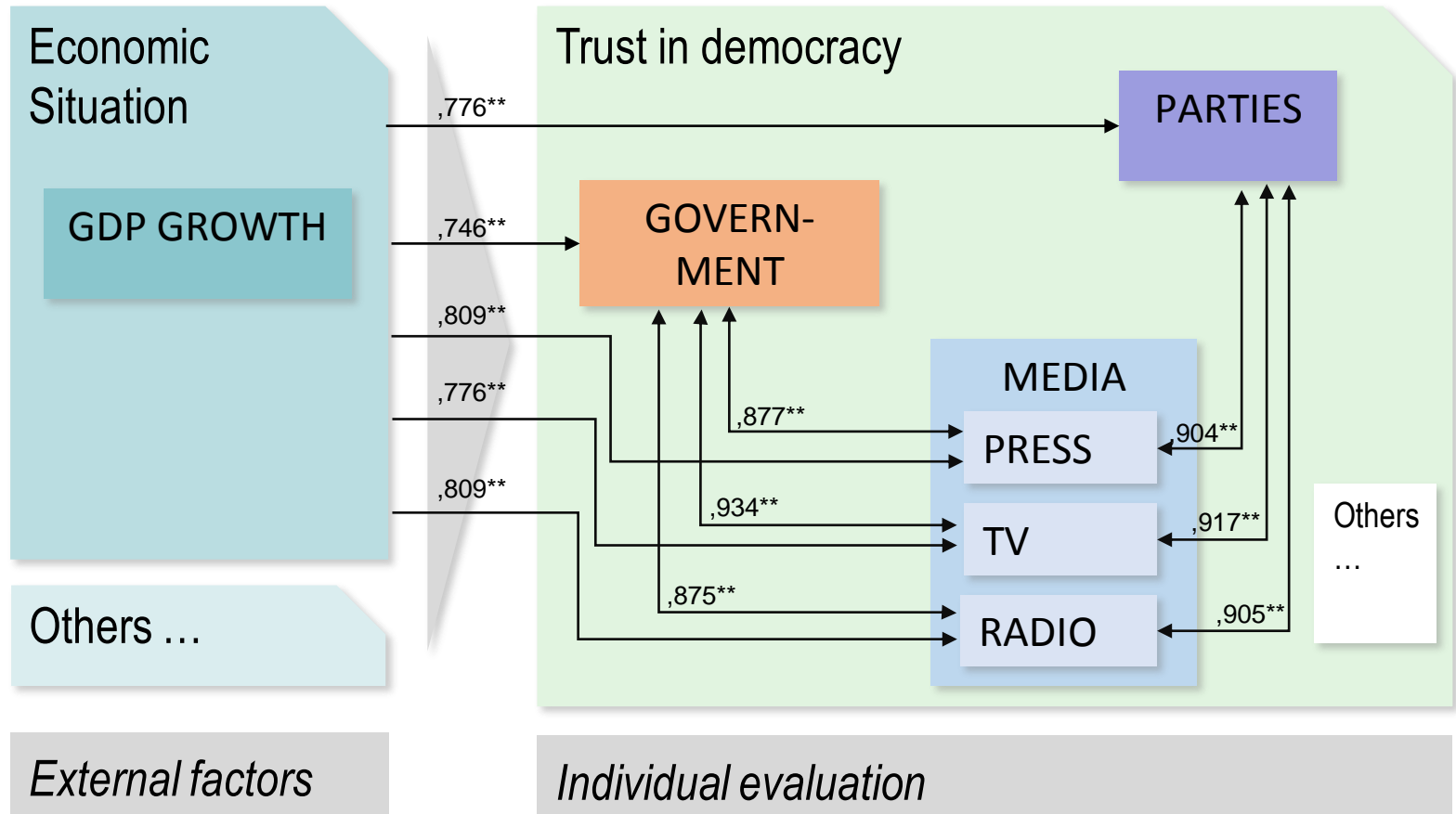
Results: RQ1

SPAIN:



Results: RQ1

GREECE:

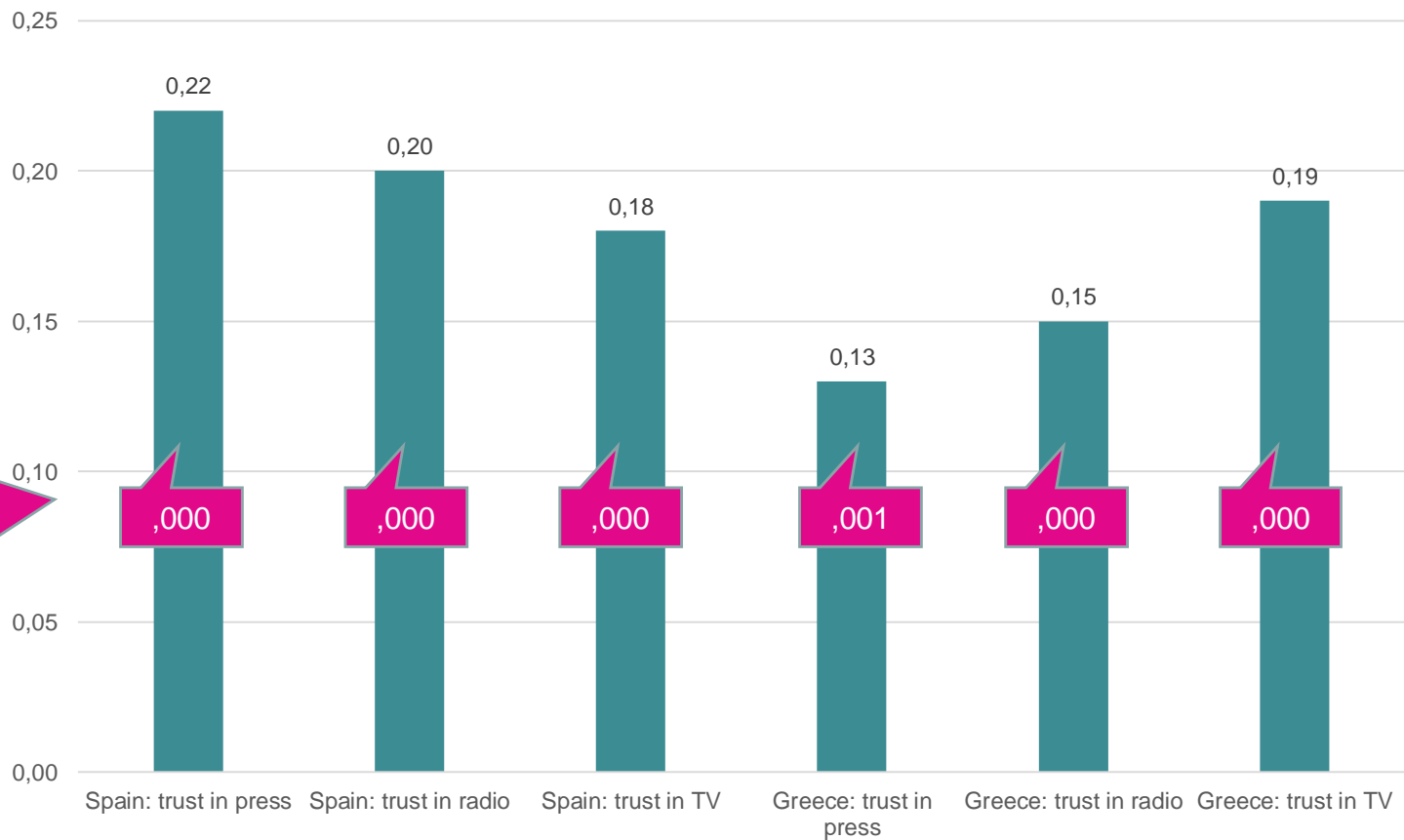


Results: RQ2

RQ2: Is there an impact of the European debt crisis on the tendency to trust in media in the affected countries?

Results: RQ2

Differences trust before and since crisis 2009



High significant differences (t-test, significances):

Results: RQ2

The 2009 crisis effected the strong relation between economy and trust in media in Greece and Spain

		Greece: TRUST IN PRESS	Greece: TRUST IN RADIO	Greece: TRUST IN TV	Spain: TRUST IN PRESS	Spain: TRUST IN RADIO	Spain: TRUST IN TV
Gross domestic product (GDP), volume, annual growth rates, percentage	Excluding crisis years (2001-2008)	,647	,663	,626	-,266	-,189	-,484
	Including crisis years (2001-2015)	,809**	,776**	,809**	,752**	,762**	,651*

Results: RQ2

- There exists an impact of the European debt crisis on the tendency to trust in media in the affected countries.

Results: RQ3

RQ2: Are there differences between different media channels, like press, TV, and radio?

Results: RQ3

- No differences in the effect of the 2009 crisis in the affected countries
- Trust in radio is higher than trust in press and TV

Results: RQ3

- In several countries there are high differences between trust in press, TV and radio:

Country	Mean TRUST IN PRESS	Mean TRUST IN RADIO	Mean TRUST IN TV	Country	Mean TRUST IN PRESS	Mean TRUST IN RADIO	Mean TRUST IN TV
France	,5210253	,6143233	,4140047	UK	,1951040	,6174500	,5319307
Belgium	,5750260	,6999107	,6565520	Greece	,3544467	,4531833	,3062960
The Netherlands	,6273007	,7667727	,6686773	Spain	,5011220	,6064993	,4519353
Germany	,4723880	,6585033	,5956540	Portugal	,5969233	,6779727	,6816520
Italy	,4237193	,5324087	,4352400	Finland	,5859933	,8078373	,7453533
Luxembourg	,6013487	,6625960	,5998293	Sweden	,4237060	,8096493	,7028020
Denmark	,5242900	,7671980	,6976160	Austria	,5792793	,7110747	,6974267
Ireland	,4237133	,7154567	,6596380	EU	,4833340	,6725467	,5884113

Results: RQ4

***RQ4:** How will media trust develop? Is a prognosis possible?*

Results: RQ4

Conditions:

- There is a strong connection between economic development and trust in media
- Economic development is projected. (e.g. OECD Economic Outlook)

This allows a prognosis of trust in media

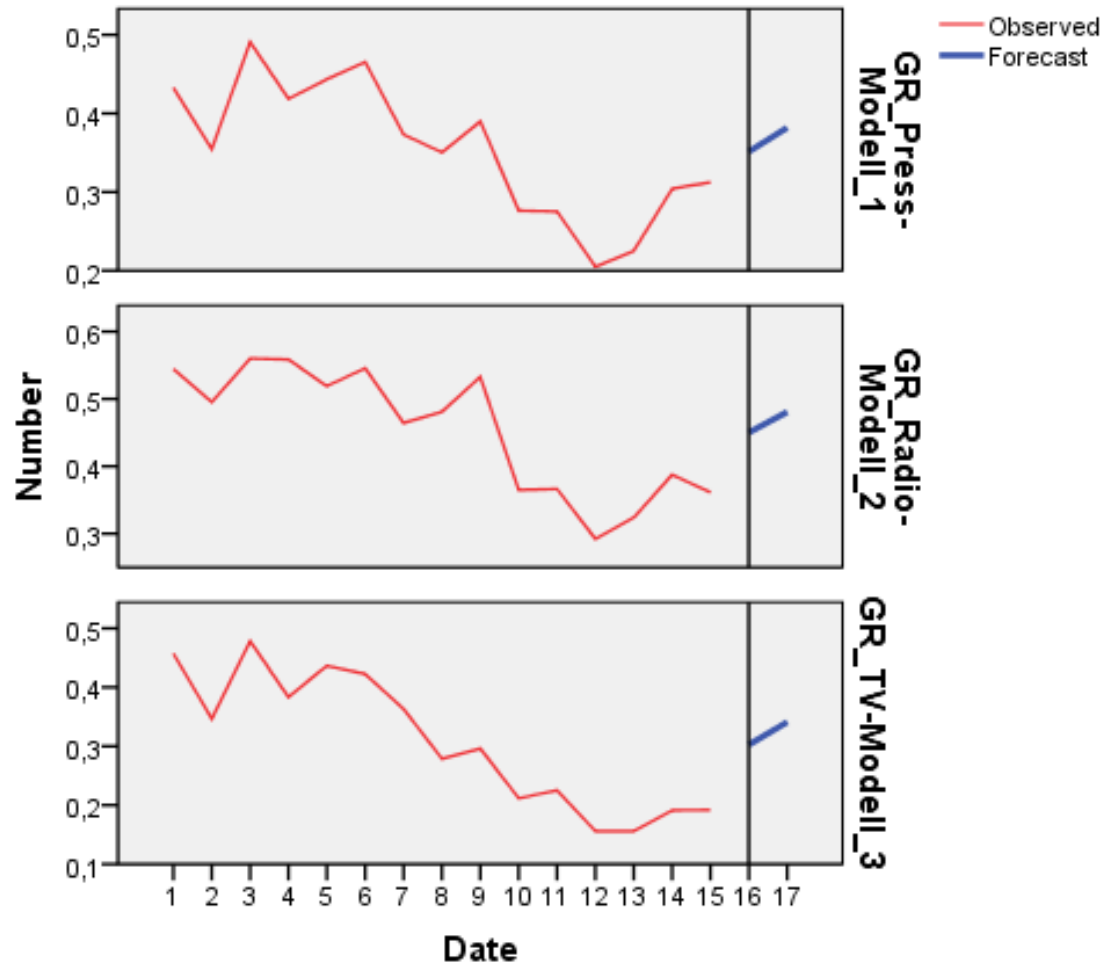
- Procedure: ARIMA-modelling

Results: RQ4

Greece:

Model	Number of Predictors	Model Fit statistics
		Stationary R-squared
TRUST IN PRESS	1	,647
TRUST IN RADIO	1	,564
TRUST IN TV	1	,611

Modell		2016	2017
TRUST IN PRESS	Forecast	,35138	,38188
	UCL	,46757	,49807
	LCL	,23519	,26569
TRUST IN RADIO	Forecast	,45010	,48078
	UCL	,58907	,61975
	LCL	,31113	,34180
TRUST IN TV	Forecast	,30240	,34112
	UCL	,46161	,50033
	LCL	,14319	,18191

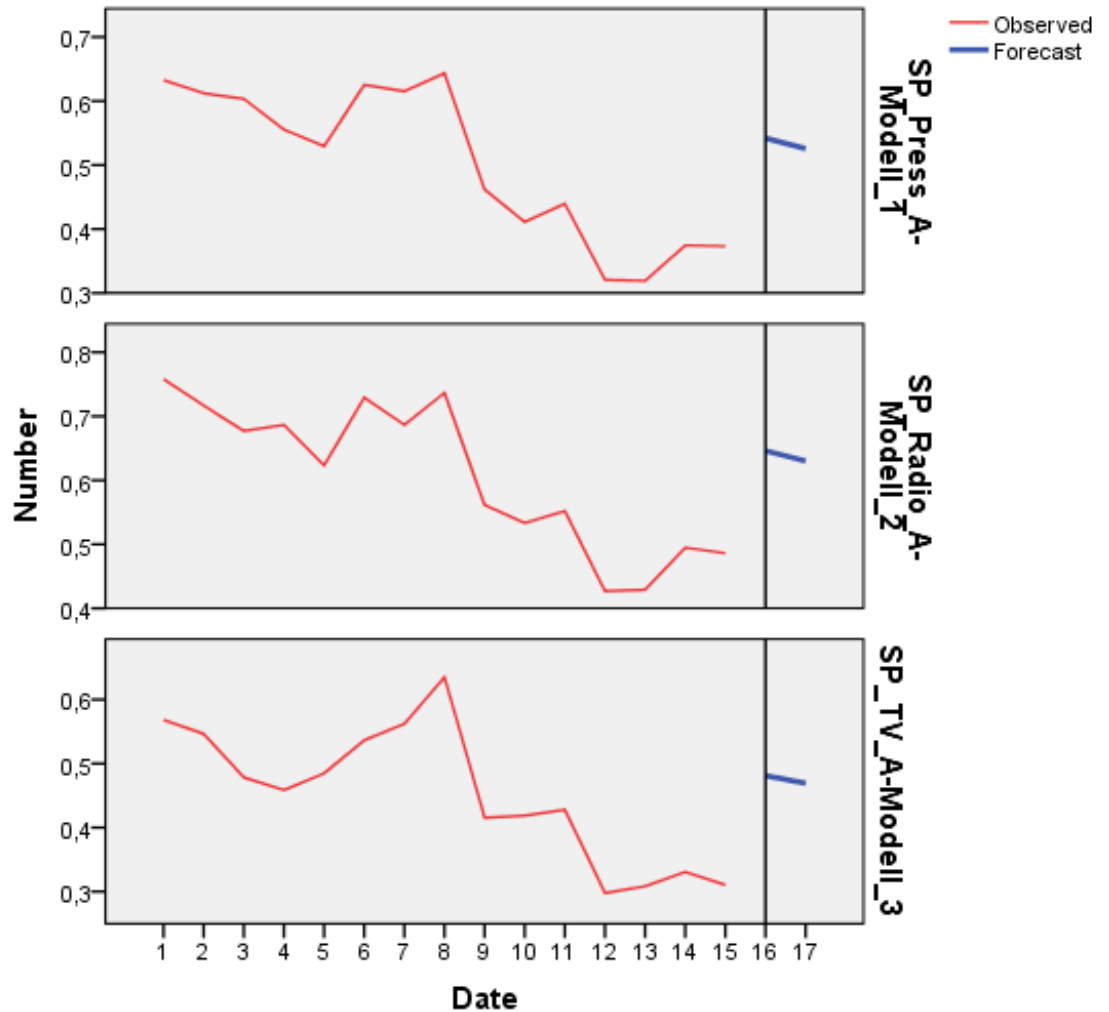


Results: RQ4

Spain:

Model	Number of Predictors	Model Fit statistics
		Stationary R-squared
TRUST IN PRESS	1	,426
TRUST IN RADIO	1	,440
TRUST IN TV	1	,277

Modell		2016	2017
TRUST IN PRESS	Forecast	,54188	,52543
	UCL	,74694	,73049
	LCL	,33682	,32037
TRUST IN RADIO	Forecast	,64610	,63012
	UCL	,83971	,82373
	LCL	,45249	,43651
TRUST IN TV	Forecast	,48097	,46926
	UCL	,68414	,67242
	LCL	,27781	,26609



Findings

- Trust in media is connected with the trust in democratic institutions
- A connection between trust in media and the economic development exists only in a few countries.
- These are the states effected by the european debt crisis: In these countries, there exist are strong connections between the economic situation and the trust in political institutions or the tendency to trust in media
- In these countries we found significant differences between trust in media before and trust in media after the beginning of the european debt crisis 2009

Findings

- Trust in media declined significantly since the beginning of the european debt crisis 2009
- If there is a strong connection between economic development and trust in media, forecasting is possible: A growing of the economy will effect an increase of trust in media

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