

# What Drives Citizens' Trust in State Institutions?

Large-Scale Survey Evidence on Process  
and Outcome-Based Trust in Morocco

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## Abstract

What drives citizen's trust in state institutions? There are longstanding debates on the pathways towards institutional trust: is trust driven by citizen's perceptions of policy outcomes or by their perceptions of the integrity and credibility of policy processes? This paper investigates this question using data from a large-scale survey of 5,916 Moroccans and argues that process matters more than outcomes for trust-building. The paper first shows that Moroccans' trust in institutions is strongly associated with positive evaluations of policy outcomes—including satisfaction with the delivery of public goods and services and with government's

economic performance. It then provides evidence that institutional trust is even more strongly and robustly associated with the quality of governance processes, and in particular with the perception that institutions function with integrity and make credible commitments. Going beyond policy variables, the paper also provides complementary evidence that institutional trust is contingent on individual-level social capital, including social trust, and socio-demographic factors. The conclusion briefly lays out the policy implications of this research and areas for future investigation.

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# 1 Introduction

Why do some economies grow while others stagnate or decline? Why do some countries have institutions that are better able to effectively regulate social and economic relations? Why have some countries managed to better preserve their economies and save more lives during the COVID-19 crisis? There is a growing consensus that trust in state institutions is a central piece of many of these puzzles. Existing research has demonstrated a positive association between trust and a range of development indicators, including economic growth, social cohesion and well-being (Fukuyama 1995, Knack and Zac 2001, Algan and Cahuc 2013, Algan 2018, IADB 2022).

The instrumental role of institutional trust in development originates from citizens' simple yet powerful belief that institutions - including state institutions - will act in a way that is consistent with their expectations of positive behavior (OECD 2017) and, therefore, that resources can be placed voluntarily at the disposal of the state and that this "act of trust will pay off" (Coleman 1990).<sup>1</sup> This belief, and the subsequent act of trust, ease social and economic exchanges. The development of institutions that are trusted (for e.g. to protect property rights or ensure contract enforcement) indeed reduce uncertainty in economic transactions and as such is a precondition to economic growth (North 1990).<sup>2</sup> Trust also facilitates collective action and increases citizens' compliance with their government's decisions. Research has shown that trust increases tax compliance (Dom et al. 2022, Prichard et al. 2019) as well as the ability of a political system to sustain policy reforms, notably by enhancing citizens' support to the allocation of public resources to policy goals (Marien and Hooghe 2011, Chanley et al. 2000), and allowing governments to win citizens' compliance with difficult policies, including with stringent health measures during the COVID-19 pandemic (Khemani 2020, Abi Rached and Diwan 2021, Devine et al 2021).

In that context, the cost of low social and institutional trust can be high for developing countries (Algan and Cahuc 2010).<sup>3</sup> Morocco is no exception - and the country's New Development Model (2021) recognizes the central role of trust for development.<sup>4</sup> Previous research by Foa, Liverani and Chauffour (2017) estimated that low levels of social trust (which, as we show below, is strongly correlated with institutional trust) created

<sup>1</sup>Coleman's (1990) definition of trust states that "An individual trusts if he or she voluntarily places resources at the disposal of another party without any legal commitment from the latter, but with the expectation that the act of trust will pay off".

<sup>2</sup>Arrow (1972), cited by Algan (2018) puts it simply "Virtually every commercial transaction has within itself an element of trust, certainly any transaction conducted over a period of time. It can be plausibly argued that much of the economic backwardness in the world can be explained by the lack of mutual confidence".

<sup>3</sup>The authors estimate, for example, that income per capita would have been 546 percent higher in Africa in 2000 (all else being equal) if the level of inherited trust had been the same as in Sweden.

<sup>4</sup>Government of Morocco. 2021. The New Development Model. Releasing Energy and Regaining Trust to Accelerate the March of Progress and Prosperity for All.

substantial constraints to the country's growth and that an increase of trust in Morocco could yield an economic dividend of about \$7.4 billion over the course of a decade. This cost also has social and political aspects. While Morocco stands out in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region for its relative stability, levels of institutional trust have remained around 40 percent (a median number for the MENA region and a globally low percentage) since the mid-2000s, with a sharp decline in 2018.<sup>5</sup> Morocco has witnessed a stream of social and political protests and upheavals since 2016. These episodes have ranged from geographically-localized protests in lagging regions to issue-based social mobilization by both low and middle classes. The COVID-19 pandemic also led to social unrest and protests including in the spring of 2021 when the government imposed a curfew during Ramadan and in late 2021 against the vaccination campaign.<sup>6, 7</sup>

What, then, is the most effective way to increase trust in institutions, and reap its developmental benefits? What are the drivers of institutional trust? In other words, what factors can drive individuals to update their belief about the trustworthiness of institutions? By presenting findings from a large-scale survey financed by the World Bank in Morocco in 2021, this paper contributes to a rich literature on the determinants of institutional trust.

Over the years, researchers have identified many correlates of trust and attempted to identify the extent to which they could be attributed a causal role in driving trust-building. One important correlate identified is the perceived or objective performance and quality of government to deliver public services (Keefer and Scartascini 2022 and Corbacho et al 2015) or to reduce economic inequality (Grimes 2017; Kettl 2017; Listhaug and Jacobsen 2017; Newton, Stolle, and Zmerli 2017). Many have also found strong negative correlation between trust and corruption (Braithwaite 1998; van der Meer 2010; van der Meer and Zmerli 2017). Additionally, the use of open government policies and initiatives, e-government, and social media in the resource management process have been shown to increase trust in institutions, albeit with some caveats (see Kumagai and Ilorio 2020 for a review of that specific branch of the literature).

The non-exhaustive list of potential drivers of trust described in the previous paragraph are often categorized as belonging to two important families of drivers of institutional

<sup>5</sup>Looking at the Arab Barometer waves, the percentages of people expressing having a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the government stands at 39 percent in 2006, then 42 percent in 2013, 43 percent in 2016, 29 percent in 2018 and 37 percent in 2022.

<sup>6</sup><https://apnews.com/article/coronavirus-pandemic-africa-health-north-africa-morocco-86e49c437629db0a51d508e94da306e1>

<sup>7</sup><https://www.reuters.com/world/africa/moroccos-vaccine-pass-stumbles-with-new-variant-looming-2021-12-07/>.

trust (see Kettl 2017,<sup>8</sup> Hakhverdian and Mayne 2012,<sup>9</sup> and Kumagai and Ilorio 2020): (i) outcome-based trust originating from repeated positive outcomes derived from public policy, and (ii) process-based trust originating from perceptions of a fair and transparent implementation and design process for public policy.

Outcome-based trust is understood as people’s trust in their governments “based on (past) performance and expectations.” (Kumagai and Ilori 2020); it stems from perceptions of the outcomes of public action, and the capacity of state institutions to deliver results – be they economic policy results or better public services. On the other hand, people’s engagement experience with the government and their perceptions that these interactions are ruled by a fair and transparent process can also influence the level of political trust. This is known as “process-based” trust and is determined by citizens’ satisfaction with the quality of public processes, including citizens’ perceptions of the transparency and credibility of data, information and policy decisions, as well as the level, depth, and quality of citizen engagement (e.g., engagement type, frequency, and responsiveness) in the government’s decision-making process, or the fairness of policy-making and service delivery processes.

Citizens’ satisfaction with the outcome and process of public action can undoubtedly diverge. Individuals can be dissatisfied with the outcomes of a given policy while being satisfied with the decision-making process – assuming, for example, that decisions were taken transparently or in a consultative manner – in which case, the quality of the process may allow government to earn legitimacy and the confidence of citizens. Conversely, citizens might be satisfied with the quantity or quality of a given public service, while being dissatisfied with the ways in which budget or policy decisions relating to that service were made.

Both process-based and outcomes-based trust have been studied in the experimental setting. One of the first examples of experiments to investigate trust involved the “investment” or “trust” games<sup>10</sup> based on a game theoretical approach (Berg, Dickhaut, and

<sup>8</sup>Kettl (2017) introduced the wholesale and retail dimensions for governments to earn citizens’ trust. He argued the wholesale level is for governments to earn trust through policy formulation — or in other words, at the macro level of government and citizen interactions — while the retail level relates to the governments’ ability to implement its policies at the micro-level, say through day-to-day interactions with citizens to deliver public services where governments could improve citizens’ experiences with them. Kettl (2017) also pointed out that transparency is a critical foundation for trust in government.

<sup>9</sup>They argue that people first assess institutions and government actors according to “the extent to which the democratic promise of political fairness and equality is made real by the rules, procedures, norms, and structures that guide and constrain the functioning of political institutions and the behavior of political actors” (p. 4). Second, they argue, citizen trust in institutions depends on an effectiveness criterion.

<sup>10</sup>Subjects have two options in this game. One is to earn a guaranteed sum by avoiding interaction with other individuals. The other offers the possibility of earning a significantly larger sum, but contingent on whether other subjects engage or not in opportunistic behavior. Trust matters because, although all are better off under cooperation, every participant has an

McCabe, 1995). Since then, there has been a growing body of work using experimental methods to measure trust, beliefs, and norms in different settings (see, e.g., Dufwenberg and Gneezy 2000; Burks, Carpenter, and Verhoogen 2003; and Johnson and Mislin 2011). Acemoglu and co-authors (2020) showed in an experimental setting that (truthful) information about reduced delays in state courts in rural Pakistan increases trust. Some researchers are now using a mixed method by applying the traditional trust game to large samples of respondents online (Aruguete, Calvo et al., 2021; Bejarano, Busso and Scartascini, 2021). A study by Murtin et al. (2018), combining an experimental design and a large-scale survey, bridged the two approaches and showed that self-reported measures of trust in institutions were validated experimentally.

This paper provides empirical evidence to support the hypothesis that processes were more important factors of trust than outcomes in the case of Morocco during the period studied. Results show that positive perceptions of the quality of policy processes correlate with institutional trust with more statistical significance and larger coefficients, and that the relation is more robust than the relation between satisfaction with policy outcomes and institutional trust. This is not to say that outcomes do not matter as we also find that policy outcomes – including positive perceptions of the delivery of public goods and services – are positively associated with Moroccan citizens’ trust in institutions. For example, citizens who are satisfied with the Government of Morocco’s (GoM) economic policies or with service delivery are more likely to report higher levels of trust in institutions. Yet, institutional trust is even more strongly associated with the quality of public policy and service delivery processes, and in particular with positive perceptions of public integrity and policy credibility. For example, citizens who perceive that the GoM manages public resources in a transparent manner or that policy announcements are effectively followed by actions are substantially more likely to trust institutions.

Given the nature of our dataset, which only captures a cross-section of trust-related data in Morocco, and the absence of an experimental or quasi-experimental element, the results presented in this paper have a limited capacity to identify a causal relation. To address this limitation to the maximum of our capability, we performed a range of robustness checks, checking our results against a large number of controls and alternative specifications. The findings also build on a growing body of evidence of recent policy research which argues that transparency, integrity and credibility are core drivers of trust (IADB 2022, Brezzi et al. 2021, Wang and Guan (2022), and Murtin et al 2018).

While our core finding relates to the pivotal role of policy performance and processes, our results also speak to the literature on individual-level determinants of trust, including social capital and socio-demographic characteristics. Studies have emphasized the importance of social and economic capital in explaining levels of institutional trust. Generalized social trust – the trust in individuals beyond one’s narrow community, embracing individuals for whom one has little prior information or moral claim – has been incentive to act opportunistically.

argued to positively influence institutional trust. Individuals with high levels of generalized social trust are, among other things, less likely to free ride on others (Tabellini 2010) and more likely to respect other members of their community and engage in civic activities, which nurture political trust and political participation (Almond and Verba 1963, Putnam 2000). Other scholars have emphasized the importance of economic capital, including individual economic characteristics: Murtin et al. (2018) shows for example that perceptions of social mobility and financial security are positively correlated with trust in government.

More generally, research has shown that demographic and socio-economic factors, including gender, age, income and education, also matter for trust in government – and can combine with perceptions of policy outcomes and processes to influence trust (Brezzi et al. 2021).

Our results provide empirical evidence on these questions and show that institutional trust is contingent on individual-level social capital and socio-demographic variables. Specifically, we find that individuals with lower levels of social trust, women, individuals living in rural areas, middle class individuals and youth are less likely to express trust in national institutions.

In the rest of the paper, we present and discuss our research and findings in more detail. In section 2, we discuss the context in which the survey took place, we describe the survey methodology and present characteristics and summary statistics of the sample. In section 3, we present our core empirical findings and the robustness checks we performed. In section 4 we provide some supplementary results. Finally, in section 5, we highlight the importance and implications of those findings for policymakers as well as future areas of research.

## 2 Survey Methodology and Data Description

### 2.1 Context

Morocco stands out in the Middle East and North Africa region for its relative social and political stability, and its capacity to reform. While the 2008/09 global economic crisis and the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings challenged the country’s stability, the Moroccan political system demonstrated its relative resilience, cohesion, and willingness to respond to its citizens, in contrast to other countries in the region that witnessed regime change, protracted political transitions and wars. The Moroccan political system responded to the wave of protests that spread through the country with a mix of redistributive policies and institutional reforms.

However, despite substantial growth, the country is constrained by a lack of inclusive development and the persistence of socio-economic vulnerability: 27.5 percent of the population remains at risk of falling into poverty<sup>11</sup>; job creation is slow, and unemploy-

<sup>11</sup>Macro Poverty Outlook, MENA region, October 2020. World Bank.



ment high, particularly among youth and women; and there is room to improve regional and social gaps in public services delivery quality and access (e.g. urban-rural, lagging regions, rich vs. middle class and poor). Evidence shows that inequalities increased in 2021<sup>12</sup> and Morocco boasts one of the highest Gini-coefficients in the entire North African region, ahead of countries such as Tunisia and Egypt<sup>13</sup>. Feelings of relative deprivation and social exclusion are particularly strong in lagging regions, which historically stand at the periphery of the Kingdom’s centers of power and economic activity<sup>14</sup>.

Such developments led King Mohamed VI to task a commission of experts and representatives from all parts of Moroccan society to draft a “New Development Model” in 2019. The report, completed and presented to the King in 2021, holds that “despite providing encouraging answers to popular and political expectations in the wake of the 2011 MENA region upheavals and in the 2008 financial crisis, a crisis of trust gradually took hold of the country, fueled by the slowing economic growth and growing social inequalities.”

## 2.2 Survey Methodology

The analysis presented in this paper is based on an original phone survey of 5,916 adult Moroccans conducted in May and June 2021. Given the COVID-19-linked guidance to limit contacts and the social distancing measures that were in place at the time the survey, the survey methodology consisted of computer-assisted telephone interviews (CATI). The survey was translated in Darija (the Moroccan Arabic dialect) and Amazigh and piloted in May 2021 to validate the clarity and the flow of the questionnaire. The quality review of the dataset was done in three ways. First, the survey firm’s software identified outliers in terms of length taken to answer each question as well as suspicious patterns in the answers. Second, the firm called back 2,416 respondents to confirm that they had participated in the survey. Finally, an in-depth call back review of 229 surveys stratified by interviewer was done in close collaboration with the research team to validate the effort of each interviewer.

The survey included 47 questions, with some questions containing multiple sub-questions. The length of the interview meant that it was necessary to provide a monetary incentive to increase the proportion of respondents who finished the survey. This was done through a mobile credit transferred directly to the phone of the participant.

The survey questions covered different dimensions of social and institutional trust, as well as many possible drivers and correlates of trust. The survey also captured geographic and socio-demographic information of respondents to assess how key variables varied at the

<sup>12</sup>According to the World Inequality Database (<https://wid.world/country/morocco/>), the top 10 percent’s share of the total wealth increased from 62.9 percent in 2020 to 63.2 percent in 2021.

<sup>13</sup>AUC/OECD. 2018. *Africa’s Development Dynamics 2018: Growth, Jobs and Inequalities*, OECD Publishing, Paris/AUC, Addis Ababa, <https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264302501-en>.

<sup>14</sup>Clementi, Fabio et al. *Polarization and Its Discontents: Morocco before and after the Arab Spring*. Policy Research Working Paper 9049. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

subnational level and across groups. The questions were grouped into several modules: dimensions of trust (which institutions or entities are being trusted), performance of the public sector, public communications and transparency, corruption and integrity, behaviors linked to trust, impact of COVID-19, and socio-demographic questions.

### 2.3 Sample Description

Many existing surveys covering Morocco have previously measured some aspect of trust, such as the Arab Barometer, the Afro-Barometer, the Gallup World Poll, and the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis (MIPA) surveys. An important added value of our survey, compared to existing opinion surveys, is the size of its sample which allows for sub-national inference. The international and regional instruments used to assess trust have shortcomings linked to their coverage which is often uneven both across countries and over time. Most of the other survey data come from a small sample (i.e., 1,000 to 1,500 respondents per country), precluding intra-country analysis and sometimes failing to be representative of the whole population.

The 5,916 respondents selected created a nationally representative sample of the population, age 18 and above. They were randomly selected using the quota method (age, gender, socio-professional category), following a stratification by region.<sup>15</sup> This allowed for each region, age, gender, and income groups to contain a relatively high level of respondents compared to other surveys described above. Selected sample statistics can be found in Table 1.<sup>16</sup>

In addition, the sampling strategy ensured representativity between urban and rural populations. According to the Haut Commissariat au Plan's 2014 population census, 41.12 percent of the population was rural. In the sample, 41.5 percent classified as rural. This addresses a common criticism of other widely used surveys in the region which disproportionately represent urban populations.

### 2.4 Timing of the Survey

The survey took place at a specific time of the COVID-19 crisis, and it is important to contextualize this period and to verify whether our data was not overly impacted by events that took place around the time of the survey. As mentioned above, the survey was implemented during the months of June and July 2021 close to the timing of Wave 6 of the Arab Barometer. As shown in Figure 1 using Arab Barometer data, trust in the government benefitted from an initial increase in third quarter of 2020 following the decrease in 2018 mentioned in the introduction. By 2021, when the study's survey took place, trust was back to levels more in line with the historical average. The increase

<sup>15</sup>Regions covered are Oriental, Fes-Meknes, Rabat-Sale-Kenitra, Beni Mellal-Khenifra, Grand Casablanca-Settat, Marrakech-Safi, Draa-Tafilalet, and Souss-Massa.

<sup>16</sup>To stratify the sample and determine the weights for each group, the sampling methodology used the HCP's latest available population census dating from 2014.

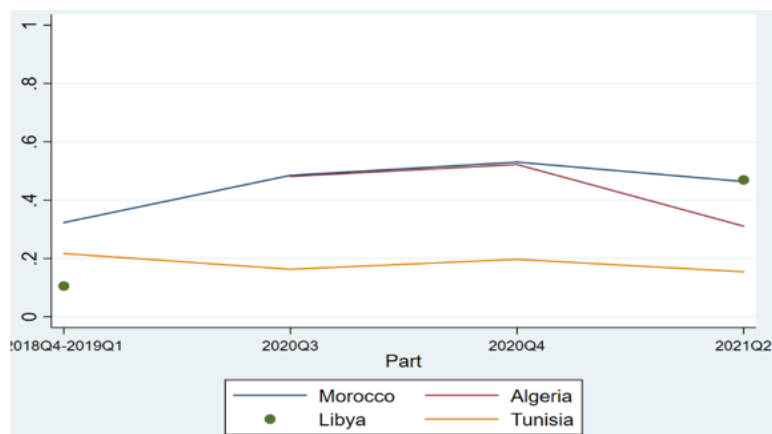
Table 1: Sample statistics of the World Bank’s 2021 survey

Age range	Data from HCP 2014			Sample data N=5916		
	Percentage Total age group	Percentage Men	Percentage Women	Percentage Total age group	Percentage Men	Percentage Women
18-19 years old	3%	50%	50%	4%	36%	64%
20-24 years old	7%	50%	50%	12%	49%	51%
25-30 years old	7%	49%	51%	19%	40%	60%
31-34 years old	5%	49%	51%	10%	43%	57%
35-40 years old	6%	49%	51%	19%	45%	55%
41-44 years old	4%	49%	51%	9%	65%	35%
45 -50 years old	5%	49%	51%	13%	47%	53%
51-54 years old	3%	49%	51%	6%	69%	31%
55-60 years old	4%	51%	49%	5%	51%	49%
61-65 years old	2%	51%	49%	2%	62%	38%
Over 65	4%	48%	52%	2%	71%	29%
Total	100%	49%	51%	100%	48%	52%

in trust in the initial stages of the pandemic may potentially be linked to the notion of crisis-induced trust dividend described by Khemani (2020).

Our results are consistent with the historical levels of trust observed in the country which suggests that they are unlikely to be overly affected by events that happened around the time of the survey. Historically, about 40 percent of Moroccans expressed a great deal or quite a lot of trust in the government. As shown in Figure 2 and discussed above, this number saw a sharp decline in 2018.

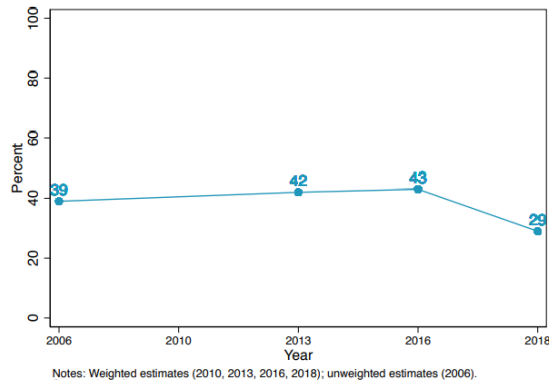
Figure 1: Trust in the government in North Africa during the Covid-19 crisis



Data source: Arab Barometer wave 6 (2021)

Figure 2: Trust over time in Morocco

**I'm going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them: Government**  
*% saying they have a great deal or quite a lot of trust.*

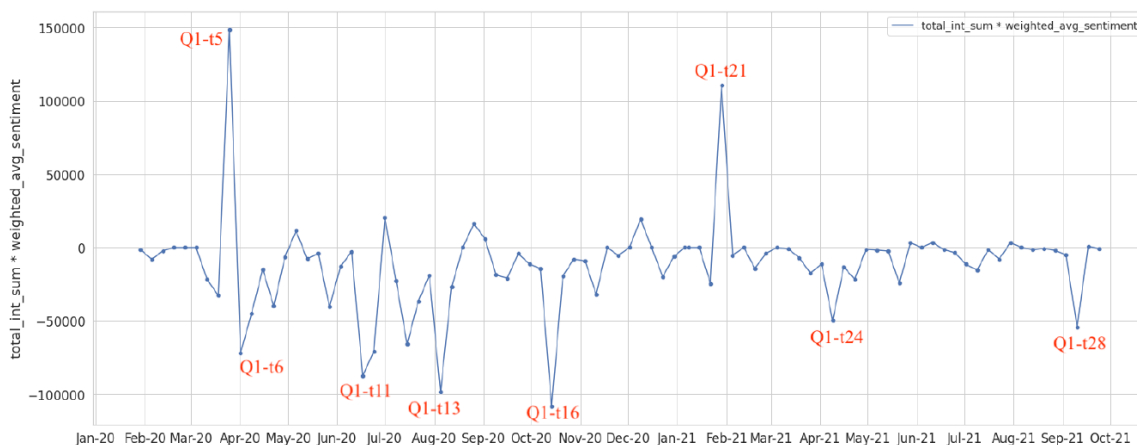


Source: Arab Barometer. 2019. Morocco Country Report.

A final check of the temporal validity of the survey consisted of using social media data to graph public sentiment over the relevant time period. This kind of parallel analysis of social media data can offer a low-cost alternative to validate temporal validity. This method is especially advantageous in a situation such as COVID-19 or ongoing conflict where conducting field surveys is not possible. It also allows to follow the evolution of a situation in real time through high-frequency data such as daily Facebook or Twitter posts. The main caveat of this methodology is that while it can provide a signal on public opinion which is related to trust, it is not a perfect proxy. The methodology consisted of downloading all the public Facebook posts containing keywords from either a government-themed list or a COVID-19-themed list. Using natural language analysis software, the 6 most popular posts of each week between January 2020 and September 2021 were analyzed to detect the overall sentiment of the period. This was then used to produce a plot presented in Figure 3 of public opinion that combines both these aspects.

The analysis of social media suggests that the time at which this report's survey took place, in May and June 2021, was not a moment that was experiencing abnormal movements in public opinion. This reinforces the robustness of the findings of the survey and our hypothesis that they contain relations and lessons that are broadly general for Morocco.

Figure 3: Sentiment analysis of Facebook data



Source: Authors' calculations

### 3 Empirical Analysis and Results

#### 3.1 Model – Empirical Specifications

This paper tests three hypotheses. The first hypothesis is the ‘outcome pathway’ to trust, for which we hypothesize that individuals who are satisfied with policy outcomes are more likely to express trust in institutions. The second hypothesis 2 is the ‘process pathway’ to trust, for which we hypothesize that individuals who are satisfied with policy processes are more likely to express trust in institutions. The third hypothesis is the relative predominance of the process pathway to trust, for which we hypothesize that satisfaction with policy processes has a larger effect on institutional trust than satisfaction with policy outcomes.

In order to test these hypotheses, we estimate the strength and statistical significance of a range of predictors of institutional trust using the following ordered logit regression model:

$$Y_{trust} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{outcomes} + \beta_2 X_{process} + \beta_3 X_{controls} + \gamma_r + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

#### 3.2 Dependent Variable

In the model specification, the dependent variable Y corresponds to institutional trust. It is operationalized as a categorical variable measuring respondents’ trust in the executive on a scale from 1 (no trust) to 4 (a lot of trust).<sup>17</sup> Given the variations in levels

<sup>17</sup>The survey asked: “For each of the following institutions, would you say that you trust them a lot, quite, not very much, or not at all: 1. the government ; 2. the parliament ; 3. justice ; 4.

of trust across institutions, we also test for the robustness of our results by running regressions with different operationalization of the dependent variable, including by using trust in legislative institutions as well as an index of trust in representative institutions (combining executive and legislative).

### 3.3 Independent Variables

Xoutcomes is a vector of independent variables that operationalize the ‘outcome pathway’ to institutional trust. These variables include measures of satisfaction with policy outcomes, including three measures of satisfaction with public service delivery (health, education, and water and sanitation), a measure of satisfaction with security and order, as well as two measures of satisfaction with government’s economic performance (in terms of job creation and poverty reduction). Given the high correlation of some of these measures we build two thematic indices combining relevant indicators. The first index is the index of satisfaction with economic performance, which averages two variables: satisfaction with the improvement of the poor’s living conditions and satisfaction with job creation; the second index is the index of satisfaction with social services which also averages two variables: satisfaction with health services and satisfaction with education services.

Xprocess is a vector of independent variables that operationalize the ‘process pathway’ to institutional trust. These variables include measures of public integrity, equity of treatment by the public administration, and policy credibility. Measures of public integrity include corruption perceptions, bribe incidence, satisfaction with anti-corruption measures and transparency of public resource management; given that they are highly correlated, we combine them in an integrity perceptions index which averages four variables that measure, respectively, perceptions of the frequency of corruption; perceptions that bribes, gifts or favors need to be made to get a better treatment by the public administration; satisfaction with the fight against corruption; and confidence in the government’s management of public funds.

All the independent variables of this study are operationalized as categorical variables organized on a scale of 1 to 4.

The phrasing of the survey questions for each variable is spelled out in Table 2.

Xcontrols corresponds to a vector of geographic and socio-demographic controls, including region, urban/rural location, age, marital status, number of household members, income level, education level, and employment status.

To account for potential correlations in error terms between individual observations belonging to the same region, all estimations have standard errors clustered at the region level.

Table 3 presents the summary statistics of the dependent and independent variables. the army; 5 : the police”.

Table 2: Description of the model’s variables

Variable	Question	Coding
<b>Variables measuring satisfaction with performance/outcomes (Hypothesis 1)</b>		
	To what extent are you satisfied with the government’s response to the following demands /concerns of Moroccan citizens (not at all, not very much, quite, very) :	
<b>Satisfaction with security services</b>	- Security and order?	1-4 (not at all-very)
<b>Satisfaction with social services (index)</b>		1-4 (not at all-very)
- Satisfaction with education services	- Management of public primary schools, middle schools and high schools?	
- Satisfaction with health services	- Management of public hospitals, health centres and dispensaries?	
<b>Satisfaction with water and sanitation</b>	- Public provision of water and sanitation services?	
<b>Satisfaction with economic performance (index)</b>		1-4 (not at all-very)
- Satisfaction with poverty reduction	- Improvement of the living conditions of the poorest?	
- Satisfaction with job creation	- Creation of job opportunities?	
<b>Variables measuring satisfaction with processes (Hypothesis 2)</b>		
<b>Perceptions of public integrity (index)</b>		1-4
- Transparency of public revenue management	To what extent do you believe that the government manages public resources in a transparent and trustworthy manner?	1-4 (not at all-very)
- Satisfaction with anti-corruption fight	To what extent are you satisfied with the government’s efforts to fight corruption? (not at all, not very much, quite, very)?	1-4 (not at all-very)
- Corruption perceptions	From your point of view, is corruption a practice that is very frequent, quite frequent, not very frequent or not frequent at all in Morocco?	1-4 (very - not all frequent)
- Bribery incidence	How often is it necessary to pay a bribe, make a favor or give a gift to get better services from the public administration? (very often, quite often, rarely, never)	1-4 (often-never)
<b>Policy credibility</b>	Do you think that public policy announcements are never, sometimes, often, or always followed by actions?	1-4 (never-always)
<b>Equity of treatment by the public administration</b>	In the last three years, at what frequency have you had the feeling of being treated inequitably by the public administration (never, sometimes, often, always)	1-4 (never-always)

Annex 1 provides more detailed descriptive statistics for all key variables. Descriptive statistics show that the country’s reformist drive in the post-Arab Spring has not yet fully delivered on citizens’ expectations with regards to policy performance. Satisfaction with economic performance and the delivery of social services is relatively low: 27 percent of respondents are quite or very satisfied with the government’s economic performance with regards to job creation or poverty reduction; and 30 percent of the population is quite or very satisfied with the management of public health and 35 percent with that of public education. Perceptions of public integrity, equity and policy credibility are also poor. For example, corruption and lack of transparency in the management of public resources remain core concerns of Moroccan citizens: 62 percent of respondents perceive that the management of public resources is not trustworthy, and only a third of the population (33 percent) is satisfied with Government of Morocco’s efforts to fight corruption. In addition, the lack of credibility of official policy statements is a salient issue. Only 21 percent of respondents think that policy announcements are often or always followed by actions. Finally, feelings of inequity also mar state-citizen relations: 42 percent of respondents report having been treated inequitably by the public administration.

### 3.4 Results

Table 4 reports the results of an ordered logit regression of trust in the executive (the dependent variable in our model (1)) on the above-mentioned independent variables. The outcome-based variables include satisfaction with security services, satisfaction with health and education services, and satisfaction with government’s economic performance (both in terms of job creation and poverty reduction). The process-based variables include perceptions of the integrity of public institutions (including corruption perceptions, bribery incidence, and perceptions of transparency in resource management), of policy

Table 3: Summary statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min.	Max.	N
<i>Dependent variable: institutional trust</i>					
Trust in government (main)	2.39	1.049	1	4	5916
Trust in legislative institutions	2.107	1.062	1	4	5916
<i>Independent variables</i>					
Satisfaction with security services	2.591	1.153	1	4	5916
Satisfaction with social services (index)	1.946	0.988	1	4	5916
Satisfaction with water and sanitation	2.356	1.166	1	4	5916
Satisfaction with economic performance (index)	1.841	0.97	1	4	5916
Integrity perceptions (index)	1.964	0.658	1	4	5916
Perceptions of equitable treatment	2.811	1.113	1	4	5916
Policy credibility	1.838	0.894	1	4	5916

credibility and of equitable treatment by the public administration. The estimations control for region, urban/rural location, age, marital status, number of household members, income level, education level, and employment status.



Table 4: Correlates of trust (ordered logit model)

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust	Institutional trust
Satisfaction with security services	0.681*** (0.0613)							0.247*** (0.0526)
Satisfaction with social services		1.003*** (0.0760)						0.249*** (0.0854)
Satisfaction with water and sanitation			0.740*** (0.0399)					0.269*** (0.0542)
Satisfaction with economic performance (Index)				0.938*** (0.0788)				0.167** (0.0709)
Integrity perceptions (Index)					1.476*** (0.103)			0.638*** (0.108)
Equitable treatment by the administration						0.164*** (0.0417)		0.126*** (0.0313)
Policy credibility							0.698*** (0.100)	0.348*** (0.0584)
Region	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Urban/rural	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Gender	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Income	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Marital status	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
No. of HH members	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Income	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Education	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment status	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,916	5,916	5,916	5,916	5,916	5,916	5,916	5,916

Standard errors clustered by region in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

The results presented in Table 4 suggest that institutional trust in Morocco is tied to positive perceptions of both policy outcomes and processes. All regression coefficients reported in Table 4 are positive and statistically significant at the 0.01 level (except for economic performance at the 0.05 level). These positive coefficients indicate a positive relation between institutional trust and the different independent variables tested. They show that as perceptions of government performance, integrity or equity improve, trust in institutions also increases.

The consistently larger coefficients strongly suggest the larger effects of the process-based variables. Specifically, regression results show that:

- Integrity appears to play a particularly significant role in feeding trust in institutions.

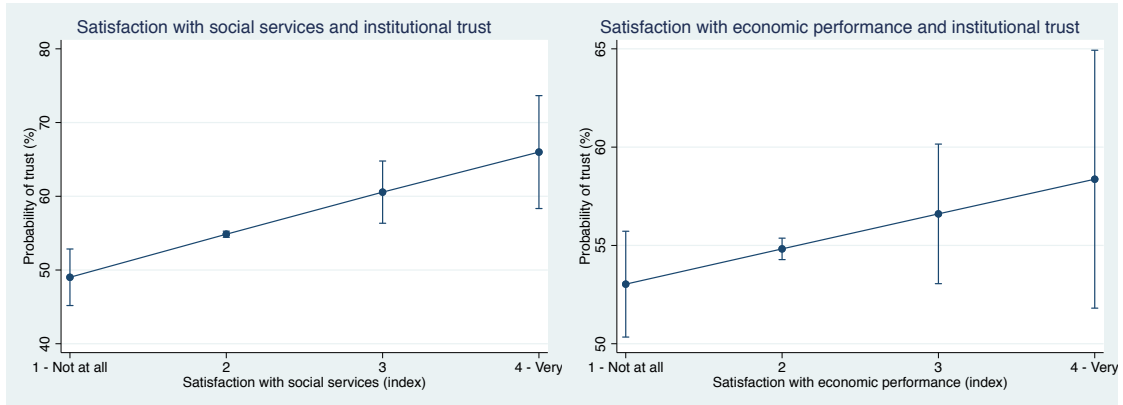
- Policy credibility is also a strong lever of institutional trust.
- Equity matters: perceptions that the public administration treats citizens equitably feed trust in institutions.
- Satisfaction with public service delivery and economic performance are also trust generators – though, interestingly, the coefficient for economic performance is smaller than for other dimensions of public action.

The trust dividend associated with citizens' positive perceptions of public action (both outcomes and process) is large. In practice, as illustrated by Figures 4 and 5, citizens' positive perception of public action is associated with an increase in the probability of trusting institutions; this increase ranges from 5.4 to 43.6 percentage point for different dimensions of public actions.<sup>18</sup> Figure 4 reports the predicted probabilities of reporting trust in government for respondents with different levels of satisfaction with public policy performance, including the provision of social services (health and education) in the left quadrant and performance of economic policy (which includes job creation and poverty reduction) in the right quadrant. Figure 5 reports levels of institutional trust for individuals with different levels of satisfaction with the quality of policy and service delivery processes, including with regards to integrity, credibility and equity.

Satisfaction with government performance (outcome) is systematically associated with higher levels of institutional trust. First, as shown in Figure 4, satisfaction with public service delivery has a multiplier effect on institutional trust: individuals very satisfied with social services are more likely to report trust in executive institutions than those who are not satisfied at all, by up 17 percentage points (i.e. 49.0 percent of individuals who are not satisfied at all with social services report trusting executive institutions compared to 66.0 percent of individuals who are very satisfied with these services). Second, satisfaction with the government's economic performance is also positively associated with institutional trust: individuals who are satisfied with the government's economic policies, including in terms of poverty reduction and job creation, are more likely to report trusting executive institutions by 5.4 percentage points (53.0 percent to 58.4 percent).

<sup>18</sup>All the estimated predictions are derived from a logit model regressing trust on all drivers and controlling for relevant geographic and socio-demographic variables. All other predictors are held at their mean.

Figure 4: Trust dividends of better government performance



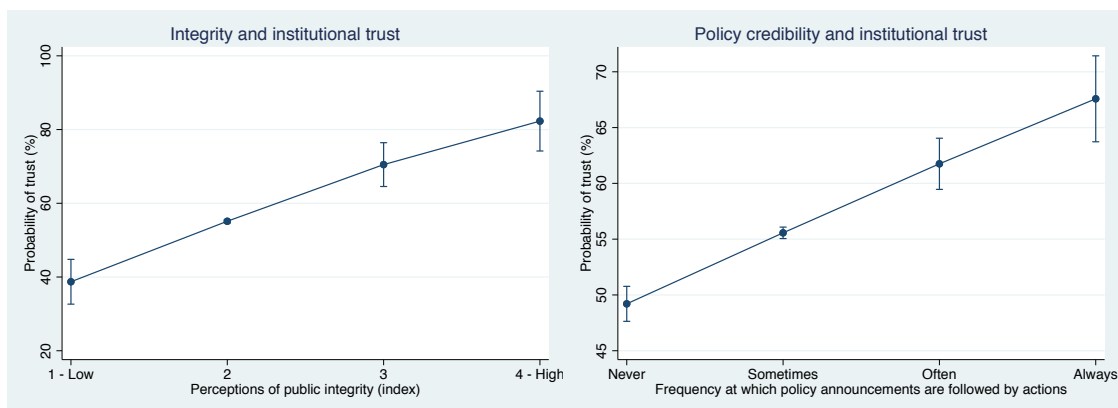
(a) Social services

(b) Economic performance

Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021). Note: the estimated predictions are derived from a logit model regressing trust in the executive (coded as a binary variable) on the range of independent variables presented in our model and controlling for relevant geographic and socio-demographic variables.

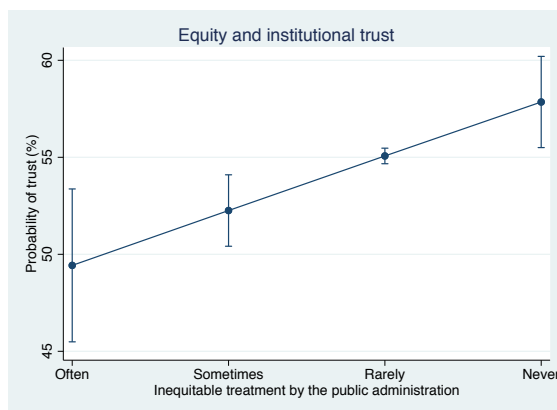
Satisfaction with the quality of public processes – and in particular with public integrity and policy credibility – is associated with a higher trust dividend than satisfaction with policy outcomes. As shown in Figure 5, integrity and credibility matter substantially for institutional trust – arguably more than government performance. Public integrity has a large positive pay-off: individuals who have a very positive perception of public integrity are 43.6 percentage points more likely to trust the government than individuals who have very negative perceptions (respectively 82.3 percent vs 38.7 percent report trusting government). Individuals who believe that policy announcements are often or always followed by actions are more likely to trust legislative and executive institutions by 12.5 to 18.4 percentage points, compared to those who do not believe in the credibility of policy announcements (67.6 percent of those who think that announcement are always followed by actions trust executive institutions, compared to 55.6 percent of those who think it is often the case and 49.2 percent, of those who think it is never the case). In addition, equitable treatment by the public administration comes out as a critical driver of trust in Morocco: individuals who perceive to have always been treated equitably by the public administration are more likely to trust institutions by 8.4 percentage points compared to those who perceive to have been treated inequitably (respectively 57.6 and 49.4 percent report trusting executive institutions).

Figure 5: Trust dividends of integrity, credibility and equity



(a) Integrity

(b) Credibility



(c) Equity

Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021). Note: the estimated predictions are derived from a logit model regressing trust in the executive (coded as a binary variable) on the range of independent variables presented in our model and controlling for relevant geographic and socio-demographic variables.

### 3.5 Robustness Checks

The previous results are robust to various model specifications, including operationalizing the dependent variable as legislative institutions; or an index of representative institutions (combining executive and legislative). They are also robust to the inclusion of additional controls, including a control for individuals' intrinsic positive attitude. Robustness checks are presented in the tables below.

Table 5 shows the results of different model specifications of an ordered logit regression of institutional trust on relevant drivers, and reveals that the regression coefficients are broadly similar whether the dependent variable is defined as trust in the executive

(column 1), in the legislative (column 2) or an index of both (column 3). One of the main differences is that policy credibility is more strongly associated with trust in the executive than in the legislative, possibly reflecting the stronger attribution of policy responsibility to the executive.

Table 5: Correlates of trust (ordered logit model): Alternative dependent variables

	(1) Trust in the executive	(2) Trust in the legislative	(3) Trust in representative institutions (index)
Satisfaction with security services	0.247*** (0.0526)	0.250*** (0.0513)	0.255*** (0.0529)
Satisfaction with social services	0.249*** (0.0854)	0.304*** (0.0625)	0.295*** (0.0726)
Satisfaction with water and sanitation	0.269*** (0.0542)	0.284*** (0.0540)	0.266*** (0.0478)
Satisfaction with economic performance (Index)	0.167** (0.0709)	0.171*** (0.0619)	0.184*** (0.0629)
Integrity perceptions (Index)	0.638*** (0.108)	0.580*** (0.102)	0.600*** (0.105)
Equitable treatment by the administration	0.126*** (0.0313)	0.137*** (0.0414)	0.132*** (0.0333)
Policy credibility	0.348*** (0.0584)	0.270*** (0.0744)	0.314*** (0.0671)
Region	✓	✓	✓
Urban/rural	✓	✓	✓
Gender	✓	✓	✓
Income	✓	✓	✓
Marital status	✓	✓	✓
No. of HH members	✓	✓	✓
Income ✓	✓	✓	✓
Education ✓	✓	✓	✓
Employment status	✓	✓	✓
Observations	5,916	5,916	5,916

Standard errors clustered by region in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

Table 6 shows the results of our main model with an additional control for individual positive self-assessment in column 2. The variable “positive perceptions of individual situation” corresponds to a self-assessment of individual’s living conditions (on a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 are the worst possible conditions and 10 the best). The dependent variable “institutional trust” refers to trust in the executive. This control variable helps

account for the potential intervening effect of individual-level optimism or general state of mind on the day of the interview, as these could theoretically bias perceptions of public policy or directly affect individuals' propensity to trust, and therefore interfere with our results. Results are robust to the inclusion of this additional control and show that satisfaction with policy outcomes and processes is tied to individuals' trust in institutions, independent of their perception of their own situation.

Table 6: Correlates of trust (ordered logit model): controlling for optimism bias

	(1) Institutional trust	(2) Institutional trust
Satisfaction with security services	0.247*** (0.0526)	0.246*** (0.0522)
Satisfaction with social services	0.249*** (0.0854)	0.245*** (0.0871)
Satisfaction with water and sanitation	0.269*** (0.0542)	0.268*** (0.0534)
Satisfaction with economic performance (Index)	0.167** (0.0709)	0.166** (0.0708)
Integrity perceptions (Index)	0.638*** (0.108)	0.635*** (0.106)
Equity perceptions	0.126*** (0.0313)	0.122*** (0.0302)
Policy credibility	0.348*** (0.0584)	0.346*** (0.0585)
Positive perceptions of individual situation		0.0338 (0.0290)
Region	✓	✓
Urban/rural	✓	✓
Gender	✓	✓
Income	✓	✓
Marital status	✓	✓
No. of HH members	✓	✓
Income	✓	✓
Education	✓	✓
Employment status	✓	✓
Observations	5,916	5,916

Standard errors clustered by region in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

## 4 Social Capital, Socio-Demographics and Trust

While this paper focuses on institutional trust, the survey also contained variables related to social trust. In the literature, the concept of social trust is often closely linked to the concept of social capital popularized by Putnam. Social trust represents trust between individuals within society, across a range of social ties. Social trust can be measured by asking respondents to assess their degree of trust to a generalized ‘other’ (radius of trust), or to a list of different categories of individuals, starting from those who are close (e.g. friends and family) and extending to those who are more distant (e.g. people met for the first time, foreigners).<sup>19</sup> In this section, we explore the interaction between social trust and institutional trust.

We estimate the relation between institutional trust and social trust, as well as other socio-demographics, using the following model:

$$Y_{institutionaltrust} = \alpha + \beta_1 X_{socialtrust} + \beta_2 X_{controls} + \gamma_r + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

Controls include a range of socio-demographic variables including: gender, urban/rural location, age, education, and income.

Levels of social trust in Morocco appear to be quite low. The survey data indicates that only 56 percent of respondents think that Moroccans trust each other. It also shows that interpersonal trust in Morocco is disproportionately geared toward in-groups, such as family, friend, and neighbors, rather than toward more distant groups such as individuals from a different religion, locality or nationality. Specifically, 94 percent report having high or very high levels of trust in their family; compared to 63 percent who report high or very high trust levels for friends, 63 percent for neighbors, 60 percent for work colleagues, and as low as 28 percent for people of other locality or nationality.<sup>20</sup> This echoes a previous World Bank study that found that “while low trust in outgroups is a

<sup>19</sup>Generalized social trust is measured in standard survey items by simply asking whether respondents feel that “in general, people can be trusted” or whether “you can’t be too careful” whom you trust. This measure of interpersonal trust fails to differentiate between different types of social ties. In contrast, the notion of a radius of trust explores particularized trust, this is the trust that individuals have across a range of social ties. In surveys, the radius of trust battery questions ask respondents to assess their degree of trust not to a generalized “others”, but to a list of different categories of individuals, starting from those that are close, such as neighbors, friends and family, and extending to those that are more distant, such as for example people met for the first time or foreigners. The latter approach, labeled “radius of trust”, thus helps assess not only the degree of trust but also the extent to which individuals are willing to extend their trust beyond their narrow community, to embrace individuals on whom they have little prior information or moral claim.

<sup>20</sup>These figures are consistent with the survey estimates of the Moroccan Institute for Policy Analysis, which has tracked social trust in its three publications, see MIPA 2020a, MIPA 2021, MIPA 2022. In 2020, MIPA found that family is the most trusted social institution. The Moroccans surveyed feel that family as well as close friends are the most trustworthy people within their entourage: 95.2 % of Moroccans surveyed saying they trust family while 42.9 % of

syndrome among both lower middle and upper middle-income countries, it is particularly extreme in the case of Morocco.” (Foa, Liverani and Chauffour 2017). It is noteworthy that these patterns of interpersonal trust appear to be a characteristic shared with other MENA countries.

As shown in Table 7, there is a strong correlation between social and institutional trust. Among individuals who strongly believe that Moroccans tend to trust each other, 66.5 percent also report trusting political institutions, compared to 41.0 percent of those who believe that Moroccans do not trust each other at all – a gap of over 25 percentage-point. One explanation for that correlation is that interpersonal trust beyond in-group ties creates an environment conducive to the establishment of the rule of law and thus the building of trust in political institutions.

Table 7: Social and institutional trust (ordered logit model)

	(1) Institutional trust	(2) Institutional trust
Interpersonal trust	0.383*** (0.0483)	0.375*** (0.0495)
Region		✓
Urban/rural		✓
Gender		✓
Income		✓
Marital status		✓
No. of HH members		✓
Income		✓
Education		✓
Employment status		✓
Constant	-0.793*** (0.156)	-0.233 (0.426)
Observations	5,916	5,913

Robust standard errors in parentheses

\*\*\* p<0.01, \*\* p<0.05, \* p<0.1

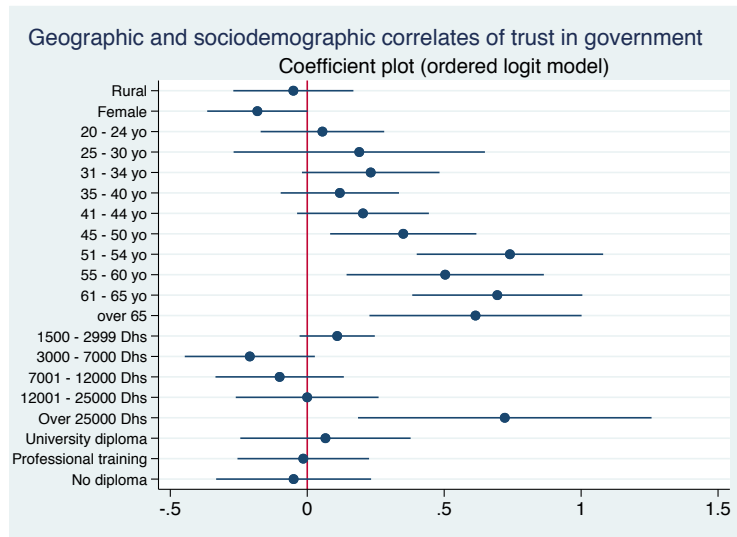
Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

Socio-demographics also matter for trust. Figure 6 plots the coefficients of an ordered logit regression of trust in government on relevant geographic and socio-demographic variables. The coefficients show the direction and strength of the correlation between respondents said they do not trust other Moroccans. The least trusted part of society is strangers or people whom they have met the first time: only 19.4 % of respondents said they trust people they have met for the first time. These numbers were consistent with those observed in 2021 and in 2022.



different variables and the level of institutional trust. A positive coefficient (represented at the right of the red line) indicates a positive correlation.

Figure 6: Trust and socio-demographic characteristics: Coefficient plot



Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

This graph shows that institutional trust is tied to individual-level socio-demographic determinants, including gender, age and income. First, gender and trust are closely related. Men have considerably higher levels of institutional trust than women (respectively 62 and 48 percent report trusting executive institutions). This is congruent with Moroccan women’s lower levels of civic engagement and political participation and could be a reflection of more systemic patterns of social and political exclusion. Second, there is a positive linear relation between age and institutional trust. Levels of institutional trust increase with age, with about 49.5 percent 18-35-year-old reporting trust in executive institutions, compared to an average of 60 percent of individuals above 35 years old. This is consistent with the evidence that youth are more likely to participate in protests, vote less and emigrate more.

Finally, there is a U-shape relation between income and institutional trust: low- and high-income groups have higher trust levels than medium-income groups. Levels of institutional trust are disproportionately higher among the highest income group, with 81 percent of individuals earning above 25,000 dirhams per month reporting trust in executive institutions. Levels of institutional trust among individuals earning less than 3,000 dirhams per month reach up to 60 percent. Institutional trust plunges among individuals in the median income group (3,000-7,000 dirhams), with only 45 percent

of individuals in this group reporting trust in executive institutions.<sup>21</sup> In addition, institutional trust is slightly higher in rural areas than in urban areas, with respectively 58 and 54 percent of the population reporting trust in government.

These socio-demographic factors have a cumulative impact: our statistical model approximates that a high-income male age 51-54 has an 81 percent probability of trusting the government, compared to 46 percent for a low-income female age 20-24.

## 5 Conclusion

This paper shows, using a large-scale survey on trust in Morocco, that positive perceptions of policy outcomes and positive perceptions of policy processes are both associated with trust in institutions but that the effect of process-based drivers appears to be greater. Policy outcomes indeed matter, as positive perceptions of the delivery of public goods and services are positively associated with Moroccan citizens' trust in institutions; yet, we find that the relation between trust and process-based drivers such as policy credibility and public integrity is stronger.

This paper also contributes to the broader understanding of institutional trust by documenting the substantial variation in trust over individual-level demographic and socio-economic factors. Data analysis provides empirical insights on these questions and shows that institutional trust is contingent on individual-level social capital and characteristics. Specifically, the paper finds that individuals with lower levels of social trust, women, individuals living in rural areas, middle class individuals and youth are less likely to express trust in national institutions.

Some of the paper's findings related to perceptions of public action or socio-demographic factors and institutional trust are surprising and could warrant further research. For example, findings show that trust in institutions is not correlated in a linear way with measures of income. Institutional trust according to households' income level follow a U shape, where households with the lowest income and the highest income express the highest levels of trust in institutions. The reason for this non-linearity is not instantly clear. Also, it appears that improved access to services sometimes generates a lower trust dividend than could be expected. Trust in government is indeed below the levels that could be expected given the objective improvements in infrastructures and access to services over the past two decades.

Additional data collection and experimental studies could help further understand the drivers of trust in public institutions and address concerns related to endogeneity and reverse causality. For example, future research could investigate how trust in public institutions evolves with election cycles and major policy or reform decisions. Additional survey waves would also have the significant advantage to enable time-series analysis

<sup>21</sup>This finding echoes empirical evidence that while welfare inequalities are declining in Morocco, vulnerable and lower middle-class households have a relatively worse perception of the evolution of their living standards than better-off households. See Clementi et al. 2019.

and to look at the evolution over time of trust in institutions, with the same degree of disaggregation. Also, future data collection could provide data on subnational institutions, including at the municipality levels. Other surveys on trust in Morocco (MIPA trust index, Arab barometer) show stronger trust in local elected governments than central government. Additional research could try to tease out the causes of such variation.

The paper's findings have important policy implications. In particular, by highlighting the relation between transparency and institutional trust, the results echo ongoing debates about the need for critical (rather than blind) trust to generate positive spillovers for development (Zmerli and Van der Meer 2017, Norris et al. 2019). It is only when citizens have the information to critically evaluate policies, and the institutional channels to contest them and hold officeholders accountable, that they can place their trust - and resources - at the disposal of state institutions. When such space is limited, mistrust can turn into distrust, challenging stability and development opportunities.

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## **A Annex 1. Trends in the dependent and independent variables**

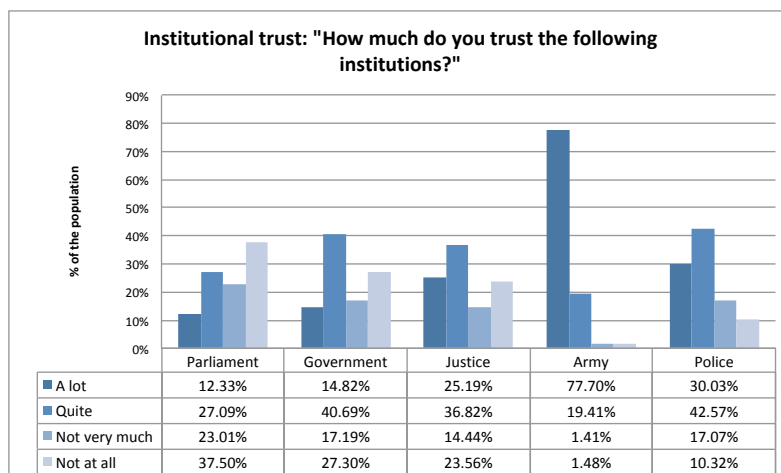
### **A.1 Dependent variable**

This paper focuses on trust in representative institutions, and in particular in executive institutions. It is noteworthy that institutional trust in Morocco varies across institutions: citizens report varying levels of trust in different components of the state apparatus (see Figure 7). Citizens' trust in institutions that are tasked with ensuring law and order is significantly higher than their trust in judiciary, executive or legislative institutions. Indeed, security institutions are endowed with a remarkably high level of trust. 97 percent of respondents trust the army (78 percent trust it a lot; 19 percent quite a lot), and 73 percent of respondents report trusting the police (30 percent a lot; 43 percent quite a lot), indicating high levels of trust in the country's security apparatus. The justice system also fares well, with a 62 percent trust rate – though only 25 percent of respondents report high level of trust. In contrast, elected representative institutions comparatively suffer from a relative trust deficit: the executive garners the trust of 55 percent of Moroccans and the legislative 39 percent. Among trustful citizens, only a small share report high levels of trust (respectively 15 and 12 percent of respondents for the executive and the legislative).

These low levels of trust in representative institutions are reflected in the voting and political behavior of Moroccan citizens. The low voter turnout at 50.3 percent during the 2021 parliamentary elections can be understood as a signal of the low levels of trust in representative institutions. The broader context of social protests is also symptomatic of the low-trust environment: Morocco has witnessed a stream of protests since 2016. These episodes have ranged from geographically localized protests in lagging regions, such as the Hirak protests in the Rif, the coal mine protests in Jerada or the demonstrations sparked by water shortages in Zagora, to issue-based social mobilization by both low and middle classes, such as during the 2018 social media-led boycott of three market-dominating firms in the dairy, mineral water and fuel distribution sectors.



Figure 7: Variations in institutional trust



Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

These results are consistent with data from MENA countries , as well as OECD countries. For example, a recent OECD report found that “the level of trust people have in public institutions differs. On average in the OECD area, 72% of the population trust the police, 49% trust the civil service, 37% trust the national government and about one in three trusts their national parliament” (Brezzi et al. 2021).

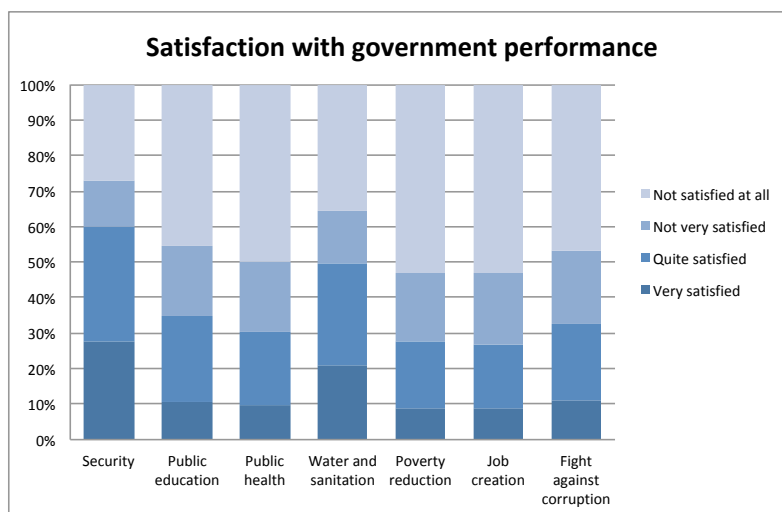
## A.2 Independent variables

The main hypothesized determinants of institutional trust in this study include satisfaction with public performance (which help capture perceptions of policy outcomes); and perceptions of public integrity, policy credibility and equity (which help capture citizens’ perceptions of policy/institutional processes).

### (i) Satisfaction with public performance

Survey data suggests that the country’s reformist drive in the post-Arab Spring has not yet fully delivered on citizens’ expectations with regards to policy performance: levels of satisfaction with the government’s policy performance indeed vary substantially across policy areas (see Figure 8). Levels of satisfaction with security services are expectedly high: 60 percent of the population is quite or very satisfied with the maintenance of law and order in Morocco. In contrast, satisfaction with economic performance and the delivery of social services is relatively low. A mere 27 percent of respondents are quite or very satisfied with the government’s economic performance with regards to job creation or poverty reduction; and only 30 percent of the population is quite or very satisfied with the management of public health and 35 percent with that of public education.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with government performance varies across policy areas



Data source: World Bank survey on trust (2021)

(ii) Perceptions of public integrity and policy credibility

Corruption and lack of transparency in the management of public resources remain core concerns of Moroccan citizens: 62 percent of respondents perceive that the management of public resources is not trustworthy, and over 91 percent believe corruption is very or quite frequent. In addition, only a small share of the population (33 percent) is satisfied with government’s efforts to fight corruption. This diagnostic is shared by the Instance Nationale pour la Probité, la Prévention et la Lutte Contre la Corruption. Corruption perception figures are also in line with other survey estimates. For example, Afrobarometer survey data indicates that 85 percent of respondents believe at least some members of government are involved in cases of corruption, and 73 percent believe that government is doing badly at fighting corruption in the public administration (Afrobarometer Round 7, 2016). In the private sector, Moroccan entrepreneurs report that corruption is the most important obstacle holding back private sector development in the country (World Bank Enterprise Survey 2019). Over 78 percent of Moroccan citizens believe that at least some businessmen are involved in cases of corruption (Afrobarometer Round 7, 2016).

In addition, the lack of credibility of official policy statements is a salient issue. Only 21 percent of respondents think that policy announcements are often or always followed by actions. This lack of policy credibility arguably reflects the gap between the expectations created by Morocco’s ambitious reform agenda since 2011 and its effective implementation.

(iii) Perceptions of equitable treatment

Finally, feelings of inequity also mar state-citizen relations: 42 percent of respondents

report having been treated inequitably by the public administration. In addition, over 81 percent of respondents believe that rich and influential individuals benefit from preferential treatment by the judiciary system. These figures on inequity perceptions are corroborated by other survey data. According to 2018 data from the Arab Barometer, Moroccans report high levels of dissatisfaction with the government's capacity to narrow the gap between rich and poor, and dissatisfaction is highest among the poorer segments of the population: 77 percent of those who have income levels below the median believe that the government is performing badly in that regard vs. 64 percent of those that have income levels above the median. In addition, 57 percent of Moroccans are dissatisfied with the government's performance in reducing regional inequalities. There is also a widely shared belief that institutions are skewed to benefit the well-off: the overwhelming majority of Moroccans believe that a well-off person is more likely to bribe public officials or use personal connections to avoid paying taxes (81 percent, compared to 69 percent of ordinary citizens) or to escape justice (72 percent vs. 31 percent of ordinary citizens).

These figures are consistent with popular discourse: feelings of inequity have indeed been central in many recent protest movements (including, for example, during the 2016 protests in the Rif region which started off with an outrage against hogra, Darija for deprivation of dignity or humiliation, associated with officials' abuse of power and corruption; the crisis was spurred by the death of Mohcine Fikri in October 2016, a fish seller crushed in a garbage truck in Al Hoceima in an attempt to retrieve his 500-kilogram fish load, which had been illegally caught and confiscated by the police).

## **B Annex 2. Triangulating estimates**

The estimates of institutional trust presented in this paper are broadly consistent with other survey data (including Arab Barometer, Afrobarometer and MIPA), indicating the strong reliability of survey results. The MIPA has tracked institutional trust in its three publications (MIPA 2020, MIPA 2021, MIPA 2022) and its trust estimates are broadly consistent with our findings – though they allow to capture variations across time, arguably related to specific political or electoral developments. MIPA, the Afro Barometers and the Arab Barometers (shown in Figure 8) consistently find that in Morocco, the army and the police experience the highest levels of trust followed by the courts and then the representative institutions. In 2020, MIPA found that Moroccans had overall very low levels of trust in institutions that govern them, especially the youngest respondents of the survey, such as 32.7 percent of trust in parliament, 22.6 percent for political parties, and 23.4 percent for the Government. However, they had really high contrasting levels of trust in non-elected institutions such as the police (78.1 percent) and the military (83.3 percent), which in the study enjoyed the highest levels of trust or confidence expressed by the surveyed citizens.