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Consequences of Ethnic Disturbance in a Refugee-Hosting State

A quantitative study on institutional trust in
Lebanon

Master's thesis in Political Science

Supervisor: Karin Dyrstad

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Abstract

The ethnic identity of a refugee population has recently gained attention within academia. Scholars claim that shared ethnic kinship between refugee populations and local populations in host states can contribute to an ethnic disturbance. There is, however, little knowledge of how this phenomenon affects host states with political power-sharing amongst ethnic groups. Therefore, this thesis will examine how the ethnic composition of a Syrian refugee population in Lebanon affects the Lebanese populations trust in political institutions. Lebanon has ethnic political power-sharing, and 90 percent of the refugee population share ethnic identity with one of the three major ethnic groups in Lebanon. Based on traditional literature on how institutional trust originates, ingroup-outgroup trust theory, and an ethno-political mechanism, I present an argument claiming a negative effect amongst the local population that does not share an ethnic kinship with the refugee population. Due to data limitations, I study the effect by conducting a two-part analysis. First, I examine the correlation of institutional trust in Lebanon and the arrival of Syrian refugees over time by using data from the Arab Barometer wave I-V and refugee data from Ethnic Power Relations. Lastly, by using the Arab Barometer wave V, I conduct an OLS regression analysis on the effect of ethnic identity on institutional trust in Lebanon. Findings present no support for the claim of shared ethnic kinship. Nevertheless, the arrival of Syrian refugees do correlate with a decrease in institutional trust in Lebanon.

Sammendrag

Den etniske identiteten til flyktningepopulasjoner har i den siste tiden fått økt oppmerksomhet i akademia, da flere forskere hevder at felles etnisk tilhørighet mellom en flyktningepopulasjon og den lokale befolkningen i vertslandet kan forårsake en forstyrrelse i den etniske demografien. Det er imidlertid lite kunnskap om konsekvensene av dette i stater med politisk maktdeling på tvers av etniske grupper. Denne oppgaven vil derfor undersøke hvordan den etniske identiteten til syriske flyktninger i Libanon påvirker den libanesiske populasjonens tillit til politiske institusjoner. Libanon har etnisk maktdeling i det politiske systemet, og 90 prosent av de syriske flyktningene deler etnisk identitet med en av de tre største etniske gruppene i Libanon. Basert på tradisjonell litteratur på hvor institusjonell tillit kommer fra, inngruppe-utgruppe teori, samt den etnopolitiske mekanismen, presenterer jeg et argument for å finne en negativ effekt blant den delen av lokalbefolkningen som ikke deler etnisitet med majoriteten av flyktningepopulasjonen. På grunn av databegrensninger studerer jeg effekten i en to-delt analyse, der jeg først undersøker hvorvidt det er en korrelasjon mellom høy tilstrømming av flyktninger og nedgang i politisk tillit over flere år ved bruk av Arab Barometer og Ethnic Power Relations. Til sist gjennomfører jeg en enkel OLS regresjonsanalyse på effekten av etnisk identitet på institusjonell tillit i Libanon. Funn viser ingen støtte for påstanden om delt etnisk tilhørighet, men viser likevel en korrelasjon mellom nedgang i tillit og ankomst av syriske flyktninger.

Preface

Det var kanskje ikke helt slik jeg hadde sett for meg at to år på master og mine siste år som student skulle bli, men jeg ville aldri ha vært foruten denne reisen heller. Å skrive master har vært utrolig lærerikt og utfordrende på samme tid, og det er mange som må takkes av ulike grunner. Jeg vil rette den største takken til veileder Karin Dyrstad for uvurderlig god hjelp underveis i arbeidet. Jeg har lært utrolig mye av deg, og det har vært veldig motiverende å jobbe med noen som er så engasjert i tematikken som du er!

En stor takk må også rettes til PRIO og da spesielt Halvard Buhaug, som lot meg ta del i TRUST-prosjektet og få finansiell støtte under masterskrivingen. Det har vært utrolig lærerikt og givende å ta del i arbeidet deres. Det var ikke helt etter planen å bli bitt av forskerbasillen, men det er vanskelig å unngå det når man jobber med en så kunnskapsrik og inspirerende gjeng.

Det må også rettes en sentimental hilsen til den fine gjengen på lesesalen som har gjort det verdt det å kripe opp til Dragvoll på en lørdag formiddag i 30 grader og perfekt badevær. Jeg setter utrolig stor pris på det fine lesesalmiljøet vi har hatt! Sigrid Bonde Tusvik skriver så fint om studenten i pandemien og hvor viktig de menneskene du møter i studieløpet kan være.

«... Jeg har glemt at det viktigste som student likevel ikke var festene, men hverdagen, det å gå et sted og møte folk som både utfordret deg og meningene dine eller ble en så god venn at du plutselig fant deg selv og ble en annen».

Maria, Marie, Elin og Eila: dere er mine «finne seg selv og bli en annen»-venner. Takk for verdens tørrste humor, og at dere har hatt tålmodighet med min emosjonelle berg-og-dal-bane på lesesal 9457!

Tusen takk til Martin, min kjære samboer og viktigste støttespiller i livet. Takk for at du minner meg på at det er lov å ta seg en pause når man er sliten.

Helt til slutt vil jeg si tusen takk til storfamilien som har hatt forståelse for stressnivået mitt, og spesielt mamma, min store helt som har vist meg at man kan få til akkurat det man vil i livet med riktig dose engasjement og pågangsmot. Takk for at du har lært meg at de viktigste tingene i livet ikke er skole og karriere, men å ta vare på seg selv og de folka man har rundt seg. Det har vært veldig hjelpsomt under de tøffeste periodene i masterskrivingen!

Sofie Hjorthol Grønset
Trondheim, juni 2021

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1 Introduction

The numbers of people forced to flee have never been higher (UNHCR, 2019). The Syrian civil war is one of the biggest contributors to these extreme numbers, forcing millions of Syrians to flee both internally in Syria and across country borders. A majority of the Syrians whom are forced to flee are crossing the border and settling in the neighboring country Lebanon. Lebanon has for over a decade struggled with economic development leading to an increase in population living in poverty and a political vacuum with numerous failing elections and serious allegations on the corrupt political system. The wave of protests during the Arabic spring did not affect Lebanon to the same extent as its regional neighbors, but was hit hard by the spill-over effect from its close neighbor Syria (Fakhoury, 2014).

As a consequence of the Syrian civil war, Lebanon is hosting the most refugees in the world per capita, with more than 1.5 million government registered Syrian refugees in addition to 200,000 Palestinian refugees and 18,500 refugees from other countries such as Ethiopia, Iraq and Sudan (UNHCR, 2020a). The high influx of refugees is putting several aspects of the Lebanese society under pressure. The economy of Lebanon has had a critical downfall the last ten years, and mid-October 2019 a substantial number of people took to the streets, protesting corruption, inflation, and poor ruling. While the situation in Lebanon is aggravating, empirical evidence indicate that the Lebanese population lacks trust in political institutions (Arab Barometer, 2019a; Christophersen, Liu, Thorleifsson & Tiltnes, 2013). Theory claims the importance of political trust (Mishler & Rose, 2001). A vast majority of research on the relationship between host population and migrants and how it affects the political landscape is limited to western countries (van der Brug & Hartevelt, 2021), with missing attention to those countries who receive the highest numbers of refugees, including Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, and several countries in Africa (Christophersen, 2020). The purpose of this thesis is to further investigate the ethnic implications of the high influx of Syrian refugees in Lebanon, and whether it has affected the Lebanese people's trust in its political institutions.

The thesis is part of the TRUST research project at PRIO¹, aiming to contribute and fill the gap where research on attitudinal impacts of hosting refugees in the global south is lacking. The TRUST project is funded by the Research Council of Norway, grant number 301065.

¹ Peace Research Institute Oslo.

As the PRIO project mainly focuses on eastern Africa, I chose to focus on Lebanon due to the relevance it has for the project's purpose. Given that Lebanon is extremely fragile with a paralyzed government, in addition to hosting the most refugees in the world per capita, this situation is pressuring the state systems to its limits; it is therefore to a great extent relevant to look into the mechanisms of political trust in Lebanon. As the majority of the refugees arriving in Lebanon have strong ethnic kinship with one part of the Lebanese population, researching the consequences of this is of great importance as it can contribute to a better understanding of how the ethnicity of refugee populations can affect the host state. My contribution to this project is therefore a theoretical argument for how ethnic identity of a refugee population can impact power-sharing states between ethnic groups.

Lebanon has a political system of confessionalism where political power is shared amongst the three major sectarian groups, Christian Maronites, Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims (Bahout, 2016). I present an argument that classifies Lebanon as an extreme case. Previous research on refugees in Lebanon has mainly focused on the economic and social consequences and failed to look into how political trust in Lebanon is affected by the high influx of Syrian refugees. There is also a lack of attention towards the sectarian power sharing system. Political trust is considered crucial for effective democracies, and it is therefore vital to further investigate the mechanisms that impact political trust in Lebanon (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 30).

1.1 Research Question

As the actualization and introduction has presented, the case of Lebanon has an interesting ethnic aspect which is meaningful to further pursue. The overarching research questions this thesis aims to investigate and answer is: does the ethnic identity of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have an impact on the institutional trust in Lebanon?

As there is a growing body of literature and empirical studies on the consequences of hosting refugees, only recently a small number of scholars have turned attention towards the ethnic denomination of a refugee population arriving (Vogt, Bormann, Rügger, Cederman, Hunziker & Girardin, 2015; Rügger, 2013). My argument for why the ethnic identity can impact institutional trust in power-sharing states derives from the traditional literature on origins of institutional trust claiming that cultural mechanisms can originate institutional trust - who you are and your identity affects who you trust. The traditional literature does however have limitations when investigating states with ethnic power-sharing as it does not offer insight in what happens when the ethnic equilibrium is disturbed, and the distribution of political power does not longer match the demographics.

I will therefore include the ethnopolitical mechanism in my argument, which argues that an ethnic disturbance contributes to a need for shift in power (Green, 2020). The power shift is argued to produce dissatisfaction amongst the losing groups, and a strengthened feeling amongst the winning group.

The analytical approach will be divided into two parts. The first part will present a figure graphically presenting the development in institutional trust amongst the Lebanese population (without looking at the sectarian aspect) and the arrival of Syrian refugees in Lebanon. Data for this analysis is retrieved from the Arab Barometer wave I-V and Ethnic Power Relations (2018). By looking at the two phenomena together, a correlating effect might be extracted and presented from the data analysis. For part two of the analysis the thesis will present an OLS regression analysis with institutional trust as the dependent variable and sectarian denomination as the main independent variable, using data from the Arab Barometer Wave V from 2018. By doing a regression analysis I will be able to investigate the effect of the different sectarian groups on institutional trust. The analytical approach is not the most ideal and have limitations regarding my research question, but the approach is considered the best fit with the available data².

1.2 Structure

I will first present definitions of the most central terms later used in the thesis, such as institutional trust, ethnicity and refugee in chapter 2. Furthermore, I have chosen to give a thorough introduction to the case of Lebanon in order to give an understanding of the socio-political situation of the country. I will therefore give an introduction to the political system, a historical context, and an introduction to the arrival of a large Syrian refugee population in Lebanon in chapter 3. After the presentation of the case of Lebanon, the thesis will present empirical research previously conducted on this topic. As the argument also needs to be substantiated in a theoretical approach as well, chapter 5 covers the theoretical aspect of the thesis and presents the literature on political trust before I look further in to institutional trust and how institutional trust is generated. Based on the empirical evidence and the theoretical mechanisms, I introduce my hypothesis in chapter 5.6, before I move over to the methodological chapter where my data and design with a quantitative approach is introduced. The dependent variable institutional trust and main independent variable sectarian denomination are described. Following this, the two-part analysis will be conducted with results and a discussion done consecutively. I will then sum

² See chapter 6.1 Research Design for more on how the analytical approach is compromised due to data limitations.

up the thesis and suggest further research on this topic in the final conclusion in chapter 8.

2 Definitions

As the thesis will describe and discuss phenomena such as ethnicity, political trust and refugees, I find it relevant to present how I approach the terms and what definition I pursue. I will describe the relevant terms and phenomena before the theoretical approach is introduced.

2.1 Political Institutional Trust

As the dependent variable in this thesis is a measure of trust, it is necessary to have an understanding of how trust is defined. Levi (1998, p. 2) defines trust as “the knowledge or belief that the trusted will have an incentive to do what one engages to do”, simply meaning that A trusts B to do X. Therefore, one can argue trust is a subjective evaluation of a specific relationship (Hardin, 2000). Political trust in general is a multi-dimensional term covering all aspects of the political system such as governments, political parties and specific politicians and representatives (Zmerli & Meer, 2017; Norris, 1999). In a system analysis of political support, Easton (1975) is a central figure in the literature on political trust and has presented a separation between *diffuse* and *specific* support when referring to trust in the political system. Whereas specific support is related to political authorities and their policy outputs, diffuse support is related to the fundamentality of the political system and the system as a whole. The operationalization of the term institutional trust in this thesis will be related to Easton’s (1975) term of diffuse support.

Several scholars have made important contributions to the theoretical approach to political trust, and more specifically, institutional trust. Huntington defines political institutions as “stable, valued, recurring patterns of behavior” (Fukuyama, 2015, p. 462) whose most important function is to facilitate human collective action. Trusting an institution is defined as “trusting a person who holds an office defined by the rules that comprise the institution” (Offe, 1999, p. 65-76). Without institutional trust within a state, features of a wealthy and stable democratic society are claimed and proven to be unattainable, and can be a source of political decay (Fukuyama, 2015). According to Gamson (1968), political trust is seen as the probability that the political system will produce preferred outcomes even if left unattended. Political trust is vital in a democracy. Not only is the mass democracy unattainable without trust in institutions, but so are the features of a developed democracy that generate wealthy societies, such as personal security and freedom, welfare support and protection (Warren, 2018, p. 88).

Norris (1999) have argued that political trust does not mean trust in the system as a whole but the different dimensions of the political system – further elaborating that low trust in politicians does not necessarily reflect low political trust in the institutions. Defining political trust is therefore limited to specific political objects, more specifically institutions and the actors, institutions meaning parliament, government and the justice system, and actors meaning those who hold political positions such as party leaders, public officials, and legislators (Zmerli & Meer, 2017).

When theoretically approaching the dependent variable, it is important to be attentive to how the empirical source of data has operationalized the same term³. This thesis will limit the term political trust to institutional trust, and further limiting institutional trust to include those political institutions that are electoral⁴. In addition, I include trust in courts and legal system as it is a common operationalization of political institutions (OECD, 2017).

2.2 Refugee

The amount of migration research is increasing rapidly. The increased amount of literature has contributed to extensive knowledge of people on the move, but the term migration is a broad concept not identifying whether it is forced or voluntarily (Pisarevskaya, Levy, Scholten & Jansen, 2020). Refugees, asylum seekers, and migrants are often used without consistency, but there are legal differences in the definitions (Amnesty International, 2018). This thesis approaches the term in line with UNHCR's definition.

Someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion (UNHCR, 2007, p. 3).

In the context of Lebanon, it is however necessary to emphasize that the state of Lebanon has not signed and ratified "The 1951 Refugee Convention"⁵ and therefore does not pursue the same definition as the UNHCR in their policy (UNHCR, 2014). Despite this, the management of the refugee crisis is mainly delivered by the UNHCR which registers the refugees accordingly to the convention of 1951, and the Syrian forced to flee are categorized as refugees. The source of refugee data in Lebanon in the EPR-ER (2018) is based on numbers from UNHCR.

³ The Arab Barometer Wave V have included the police and civil society organizations in their question regarding trust in institutions. These are left out from my measurement of institutional trust.

⁴ See table 5.1 for the specific measurements included in the operationalization of institutional trust.

⁵ The 1951 refugee convention defines the term refugee, the legal obligations of the host state and the rights one has with a refugee status. See <https://www.unhcr.org/1951-refugee-convention.html> for more.

2.3 Ethnicity as Identity

Another important term to unravel is the term ethnicity and how it can serve as an identity. Social identity theory defines identity as “a person’s knowledge that he or she belongs to a social category or group” (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 225). Further, a social group is defined as “a set of individuals who hold a common social identification or view themselves as members of the same social category” (Stets & Burke, 2000, p. 255). Identity is a broad social concept grasping over several aspects of social belonging, and examples of such identity markers can be language, nationality, origin, or religion. The identity term relevant for this thesis is ethnicity. Ethnicity can be seen as a social identity. The term is broad and can cover several aspects, and my approach to the term ethnic identity or ethnicity is based on previous arguments as for how one can understand ethnicity by using different approaches.

An extensive field of literature on the effect of ethnic identity have contributed to different approaches to the term ethnicity. The fundamental argument of this thesis is based on who the refugees are and their ethnic identity, enhancing the need for a clear statement of how I approach the term. Chandra Kanchan (2006) has contributed to this field by stressing the need for a definition in order to develop theories on the effect of ethnicity.

A large body of work in comparative political science argues that ethnicity matters—for violence, democratic stability, institutional design, economic growth, individual well-being, and so on—and makes general, cross-country predictions about its effects (...). Claims as to why these variables matter for some outcome are always based on the assumption that ethnic identities have particular properties that explain the outcome. If we are to assess these claims and build new ones, we need some basis on which to judge which properties can reasonably be associated with ethnic identities. A definition provides an analytical basis for making this judgment (Chandra, 2006, p. 398).

The consequences of being inconsistent when researching effect of ethnicity is the same for the term political trust – it compromises the generalizability of the study findings. Traditionally the approach to define ethnicity can be separated in two theoretical approaches: the constructivist approach and the primordial approach. According to the primordial approach, we only have one fixed ethnic identity which is passed on intact through generations. The constructivist approach, on the other hand, resists the fixed ethnic identity-argument of the primordialist and argues that individuals have several ethnic identities to choose from, and that an ethnic identity can change over time. Furthermore, the constructivist separates between nominal and activated identities. While the nominal identities are those identities an individual is eligible to be a member of due to descend-based attributes, the activated identities are those identities one actively chooses to be a part of (Chandra, 2012, p. 9).

Examples of the classic primordialist would argue that ethnic diversity is consistently conflicting and tense, and that ethnic heterogeneous societies are incompatible with peaceful resolutions without a consensus-based system ensuring political representation of all ethnic groups. If this was true, however, all ethnic diverse societies would be in conflict, but most ethnic groups do co-exist without it leading to conflict (Fearon & Laitin, 1996, p. 717). An early contribution in the understanding of ethnic groups and conflict was made by Donald L. Horowitz (1985), where the term ethnic/ethnicity is unravelled. He builds his definition on the definitions previously made by Enid Schildkrout: "*the minimal definition of an ethnic unit [...] is the idea of common provenance, recruitment primarily through kinship, and a notion of distinctiveness whether or not this consists of a unique inventory of cultural traits*" (Horowitz, 1985, p. 53). Horowitz therefore outlined his definition of ethnicity as a phenomenon which can be defined by several factors: "ethnicity easily embraces groups differentiated by color, language, and religion; it covers "tribes", "races", "nationalities", and castes" (Horowitz, 1985, p. 53).

As shown, there is a common sense regarding the concept of ethnicity and that it functions as an umbrella term covering different categories of identities: sects, religions, languages, nationalities, dialects, physical differences, and casts to mention some (Chandra & Wilkinson, 2008, p. 519). The approach to the term in this thesis will therefore be an constructivist ethnoreligious approach, where the words, ethnicity/ethnic identity/sectarian denomination will be used interchangeably.

3 The Case of Lebanon

Lebanon is a country located in one of the most turbulent regions in the world in terms of political and religious tensions. Surrounded by Syria in the eastern and northern parts and Israel in the south, the country has continuously found itself trapped in a political turmoil where the most recent and still ongoing conflict, the Syrian civil war (2011-present) has had huge impacts on the small state of Lebanon (Young, Stebbins, Frederick, Al-Shahery, 2014). The conflict forced millions of Syrians to flee the country, and within two years after the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, the UNHCR had 794,091 Syrian refugees registered or waiting to register in Lebanon. The total number of Syrian refugees is expected to be higher due to non-registered and those who were already in the country, in total making 25 percent of the Lebanese population Syrian (Christophersen et al., 2013, p. 9). Even though the numbers are higher today, in 2021, Lebanon was already receiving the highest number of refugees in the region (UNHCR, 2020a). Lebanon is one of Syria's closest neighbors, but the relationship between the states was and still is tense, due to an inflamed history involving Syrian military presence in Lebanon from 1976-2005. The tensions are especially concentrated between Sunni and Shia Muslim groups, mobilized through different movements within Lebanon (Empatika & UNDP, 2019). The following subchapter will introduce the methodological aspect behind case selection before moving on to further elaborate on the case of Lebanon.

3.1 Case Selection

Choosing a case is the primordial task of a researcher as it sets an agenda for the study. However, choosing a fitting case for the study is a challenging task as the case would want to represent something more than the specific case and to be able to generalize it to other similar cases. Identifying such a representative case is a challenge. However, several case study types are identified in the methodological literature to help choose the best case: extreme, deviant, crucial, and similar. Choosing a case is often understood as the counterpart of random sampling. However, the two approaches have the same objectives with identical prerequisites: (1) a representative sample and (2) a helpful variation on the dimensions of theoretical interest (Seawright & Gerring, 2008, p. 294-296). This thesis aims to contribute to a better understanding of how political trust is affected by the arrival of refugee populations and contribute to a better understanding of the dynamics of the host-migration relationship. Lebanon is a good fit for looking at these mechanisms. It is an

extreme case of a heterogenous post-conflict state with low state capacity, hosting more than one million refugees. Findings from this thesis might tell us more about how high influxes of refugees can turn out in a fragile, sectarian democracy with a complex power-sharing system. I argue that the case of Lebanon is a case of a weak state with an ethnic fractionalization and a political system based on ethnic representation (Janmyr, 2016; Young et.al., 2014). In addition, the state receives a high influx of refugees who share ethnic kinship with one of the major ethnic groups, a context previously argued can contribute to a disturbance in the ethnic balance (Rüegger, 2013). The extreme case method can be applied when there is an extreme value of either X or Y. The value is defined as extreme when it is unusual and far away from the mean, such as the extremely high number of refugees in Lebanon. The problem with this type of case study appears when treating it as it was a representative case – something I acknowledge it is not.

The following chapter aims to illustrate the situation in Lebanon and the heterogenous society it is, giving a context to the chosen case.

3.2 Political System and Historical Context

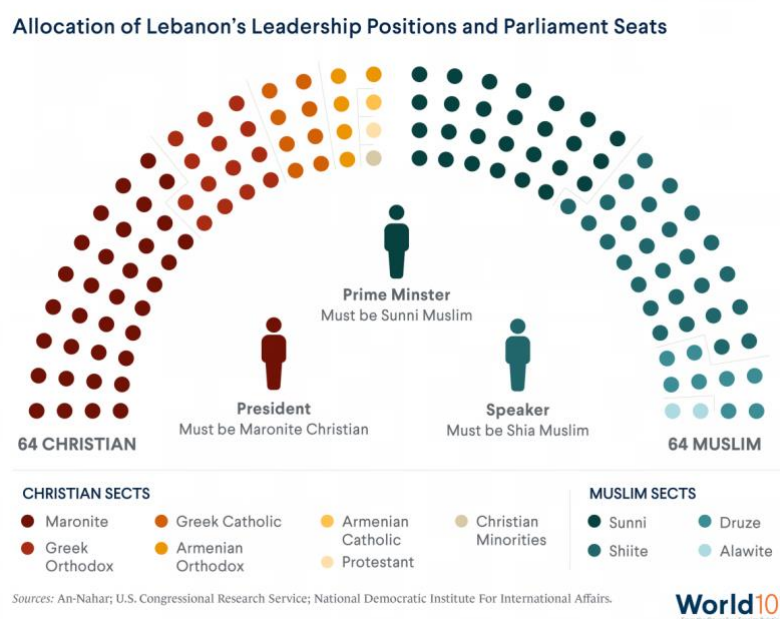
Lebanon's political system stands out amongst its fellow states of the Middle East. Of all the Arabic state systems in the Middle East, Lebanon has offered an alternative to the more traditional and regionally common system of pan-Arab nationalism – the idea that all Arabs should be united in a single state (Rubin, 1991, p. 1). The political system of Lebanon has been referred to as both confessional and consociationalist (Bahout, 2016; Makdisi & Marktanner, 2009). The essence of this system is sectarian power sharing, meaning the political power is shared and divided along sectarian lines. The Lebanese system is both praised and criticized, where some claim it makes Lebanon a stable and functioning democracy, and some argue the system has failed to prevent political crises and further prevents development (Makdisi & Marktanner, 2008, p. 88; Bahout, 2016). Despite the critics, Lebanon is often referred to as the only democratic state in the Arab Middle East, avoiding the political turmoil affecting the rest of the Middle Eastern countries when compared with its fellow regional states (Gade, 2016; Makdisi & Marktanner, 2009; Calfat, 2018).

3.2.1 A Sectarian Power Sharing System

The power-sharing system in Lebanon builds on a sectarian representation which was formally established as the state Greater Lebanon came to life on September the 1st 1920, under a French Mandate (Bahout, 2016, p. 4). The political system was based on a different

notion of identity, separating the Lebanese state from the other Arabic countries' pan-Arab nationalism. The confessional political system of Lebanon is an institutionalization of sectarian religious leaders, which grants the leader figures a broad power of the citizens' religious affairs such as wealthy endowments, marriage, and education (Henley, 2016, p. 4). Lebanon's demographics is consistent of no less than eighteen different sectarian groups within three overarching branches of religious groups: Christians, Muslims and Jews⁶. The majority of the groups are Maronite Christians, Sunni Muslims and Shia Muslims. See Figure 2.1 for an overview of how the different major and minor sects are politically represented and distributed.

Figure 2.1 Overview of the sectarian political system of Lebanon



Source: World101.

When the politicization of the sectarian groups was adapted, the distribution based the numbers of representations on the demographic balance within Lebanon with numbers from a national census conducted in 1932. At that time, the Christian population was in majority above the Muslim communities, leading to a greater representation amongst the Maronite Christian (Calfat, 2018). The 1932 census is the last time Lebanon had an official census. Therefore, it is expected to find substantial changes in the demography of Lebanon – being one reason for the state of Lebanon's reluctance to have an official count as it would weaken the legitimacy of today's ethnopolitical distribution (Faour, 2007, p. 910). Due to a missing official census in almost a hundred years, the data available on the

⁶ The 18 different sects in Lebanon are Sunni Muslims, Shia Muslims, Druze, Alawites, Isailittes, Maronites, Greek Orthodox, Greek Catholic, Latin Catholic, Armenian Orthodox, Armenian Catholic, Syriac Orthodox, Syriac Catholic, Coptic, Chaldean, Assyrian and Protestant and the Jewish community (Henley, 2016, p. 3).

demographics in Lebanon are not completely reliable because they are only an estimate, and it is difficult to know the precise percentage of each sectarian group (Jaulin, 2014).

The development of a sectarian political system was gradually from 1920 until the independence movement in November 1943. The National Pact was an unwritten agreement, further elaborated in Article 95 in Lebanon's constitutions, which laid the foundations of the sectarian political system in the post-colonial republic. Article 95 of Lebanon's 1943 constitution stated that religious sects should be fairly represented when forming the cabinet and public employment (Bahout, 2016, p. 7). The constitution also stated that this was a temporary solution and were meant to last for an unspecified period, but the sectarian system still prevails (Bahout, 2016, p. 5).

3.2.2 Lebanon as a Post-conflict Society

Lebanon has proven fragile and vulnerable to outside events throughout history, just as the Syrian refugee crisis has put several aspects of the Lebanese society under pressure in recent years. The war of 1967 between Israel, Syria, Egypt, and Jordan led to a high influx of Palestinian refugees settling in Lebanon, contributing to political and economic instability in Lebanon which further would develop into a civil war. The refugees from Palestine were predominantly Sunni Muslims, leading to a fear of sectarian disturbance amongst both the Christian and Shia community (Halabi, 2004). The spill-over effect of from the regional disturbance hit Lebanon hard despite the Lebanese officials attempt to limit the consequences (Makdisi & Marktanner, 2008). Despite an attempt to create this unity amongst the ethnic groups and the conflict over differences, a civil war broke out in 1975 and lasted until 1990, with great inclusion from Syrian and Israeli forces. The war onset had its uprisings in the 1960s when the Muslim community demanded change in power distribution, which the Christians had benefitted from. Lebanon suffered severe damage during the war, where approximately 90,000 people lost their lives, up to 100,000 were severely injured, and two-thirds of the Lebanese population experienced displacement during the 15-yearlong conflict (Haugbolle, 2011). The conflict seemingly had its uprising due to the political sectarianism, but the power-sharing system prevailed in the peace agreement, 1989 Taif Agreement – also known as the Document of National Accord (Calfat, 2018). The peace agreement led to a small change in power distribution, mainly benefitting the Shia Muslim community (Bahout, 2016).

The Lebanese Civil War was as much a regional conflict as an internal conflict as the Palestine-Israel conflict, the Cold War, the pan-Arab nationalism, and political Islam were just some issues dominating the region (Haugbolle, 2011). Intersecting with these external

issues, the division of power along the sectarian lines faced resistance amongst the Lebanese political elite and the population.

The sectarian division between the Sunni and Shia Muslims is still present in Lebanon, appearing through March the 8th movement and March the 14th movement. March the 8th consists of Shia Muslims in Lebanon supporting the Syrian and Iranian regime and their involvement in the Lebanese political system. March 14th makes up the countermovement, Sunni Muslims, anti-Syria, and Iran wanted the pan-Arab nationalism movement to withdraw from Lebanon. Syria's close ties with Lebanon's tense history and political involvement greatly affect the relationship them and contributed to increase sectarian divisions between them. Henley (2016) argues that the empowerment of the political leaders and sectarian matters hinders social integration among the various religious communities and contributes to strengthening the sectarian divisions. He claims that the different sectarian groups in Lebanon are invested in co-existing, and that there is not inherently sectarian hatred amongst the citizens. However, the political leaders who continue to promote narrow orthodoxies help perpetuate a sectarian system that hinders social integration, ensuring the division between sectarian groups and forcing its inhabitants to live obliged communally bound lives (Henley, 2016, p. 4).

Lebanon's political system of a confessional consociationalism is argued to be an underlining factor contributing to the tense relationship between the sectarian groups in Lebanon. The politicization of the heterogeneous society has been leading to a ethnic division not benefitting any of Lebanon's citizens except the elite political representatives with power (Henley, 2016). As the struggle for power seems to be continuing in Lebanon, the Syrian civil war broke out in 2011 – leading to hundreds of thousands of Syrians seeking refuge in Lebanon. The following subchapter introduces the Syrian refugee arrival to Lebanon.

3.3 The Arrival of Syrian Refugees to Lebanon

With Lebanon already being a vulnerable and fragile state with difficulties providing its citizens with basic needs and a growing sectarian divide before the arrival of the 1 million refugees, it is difficult to see how the arrival would not spill over to political unrest. Moreover, the historical backdrop between the two states is also considerable, closely tied together with a common history, shared borders, and strong religious ties. With the fresh memory of the arrival of armed Palestinian refugees in the 1960s that helped spark the outbreak of a civil war, the situation is challenging for Lebanese society (Dettmer, 2013).

An overwhelming majority of the refugees arriving from Syria to Lebanon are Sunni Muslims (Rüegger & Bohnet, 2018). As the flow of Syrian refugees to Lebanon started in 2011, the Lebanese government's approach to handling the situation was to have the refugees settle in Lebanese households, in which officials claimed were to encourage integration into the Lebanese communities (Itani & Grebowski, 2013, p. 4). The northern parts of Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley have been affected the most by the influx, and a smaller number settled in Beirut and other southern parts of Lebanon (UNHCR 2018). Itani and Grebowski (2016) argue that the refugees' settlement pattern would polarize the Sunni-Shia relationship as the Sunni Syrians settle with people from the same religious affiliation as themselves.

The arrival of Syrian refugees to Lebanon has several similarities when the Palestinian refugees arrive. The fear of another threat to the sectarian balance is prominent, but in the early ages of the Syrian civil war the Lebanese opened their borders and welcomed the displaced from Syria (Dionigi, 2016). However, as the crisis in the neighboring country did not seem to resolve and a spill-over effect internally became more evidently, the more restrictive policy against the Syrian refugees arose, aiming at returning the refugees as soon as possible.

3.4 Summary

I have put forward three essential notes for this thesis. Firstly, Lebanon has a political system of confessional consociationalism, a political system where the political power is distributed along sectarian lines according to the demographics of Lebanon. The system is based on an official census dated back to 1932. Therefore, the demographic balance is exceptionally fragile, as a shifting demography would potentially stress the need for power shift in the political system. Second, the extreme influx of refugees to Lebanon and an overwhelming majority of the refugees are Sunni Muslims. In addition, the political handling of the refugee situation amongst the Lebanese government has implied fear of a demographic disturbance, threaten to weaken the current political system. This would involve more power to the Sunni Muslims and less to the Maronite Christians and Shia Muslims. The third note enhances the previous regional events in Lebanon involving Syrian political involvement throughout history have contributed to both a tense political and social relationship between Lebanon and Syria, appearing through both ethno-religious and political groups and movements.

In order to further substantiate my argument, I will now present relevant research on forced migration with attention towards the ethnic identity of refugees.

4 Refugee Impact on Host State

This chapter will present relevant literature and research on how refugees can impact the host state, with special attention towards ethnicity and government response. The total number of refugees globally have never been higher as 3,4% of the world's population are forced to flee (UNHCR, 2020b; Alrababa'h, Dillon, Williamsson, Hainmuller, Hangartner & Weinstein, 2020). Research shows that a refugee lives in the host country for an average of 10 years, and not many resettle in a third country (Braithwaite, Salehyan & Sahun, 2019; Devictor & Do, 2016). This contributes to underline why it is important to get a better understanding of how refugees interact with the local host community and the societal impacts. The majority of the research do however focus on the Western hemisphere and fail to cover the global south which has the biggest flow of refugees between countries.

In the case chapter, I introduced how the historical backdrop with Palestinian refugees contributed to the civil war and how the Syrian refugees in Lebanon have highlighted existing sectarian tensions, increasing the fear of a new civil war. Previously quantitative research on refugee arrival has by now established that refugees are an important factor in the dynamics of conflict (Braithwaite et.al., 2019, p. 7). Among others, Salehyan & Gleditsch (2006) have found that a higher risk of experiencing civil war amongst the countries that receive refugees, due to the destabilization of the economy, security and the society as a whole. The majority of the research is concentrated towards Western countries, and research looking into the identity of refugees agree that Americans and Europeans prefer a shared cultural notion with the refugee population arriving on the host country (Dustman & Preston, 2007; Hainmueller & Hangartner, 2013; Hainmueller & Hopkins, 2015).

It is an important observation in relation to this thesis as for how the refugee group as one must be treated according to their ethnicity and not as one homogenous group, as the arrival of refugees can disturb the ethnic equilibrium (Braithwaite et.al., 2019, p. 9; Rügger, 2019;2013). Previous research has limited considerations to the different affiliations within a refugee population, but rather defined a refugee population as one group. Although, it is argued that the experience of fleeing together as a group can strengthen the ethnic ties and bonds of the refugee group (Lebson, 2013; Lischer, 2005).

4.1 Ethnicity

The ethnic aspect of the groups of Syrian refugees in Lebanon is the most central area of interest in this thesis. Addressing the ethnicity of a refugee population in empirical studies on refugee-host context is an up-and-coming field of research, but ethnic ties is pointed to as a conditioning factor for whether a refugee population will induce violence or not as they contribute to an ethnic disturbance in the host community (Braithwaite et.al., 2019, p. 9; Rügger, 2013). As I presented in chapter 2.3 "Ethnicity as identity", constructivism emphasizes that ethnically diverse societies are not inherently violent or conflict induced, but that this depends on the context. Political, demographical and institutional factors need to be taken into account when discussing the effect of ethnicity, as the relevance of ethnicity is much more powerful when it is included in a political power struggle or conflicts.

Fisk (2019;2014) has recently made important contributions to this field of research. In her study from 2019 she investigates if settling refugee camps increases communal conflict, where the concluding remarks are that regions with refugee settlements experience a significantly higher levels of communal conflict. The most interesting aspect of this study for my thesis is the finding that if the settlers have ethnic ties with the host region/country, the effect of is moderated, meaning that the chance of conflict will decrease. Rügger (2019;2018;2013) has made valid contributions as well, as she has recently been looking deeper into the ethnic aspect of refugees and the risk of civil conflict in the host state. She follows the same constructivist approach to the term ethnic groups and define it as "self-percieved communities with a shared culture and a common identity" (Rügger, 2019, p. 45). Her study proves the arrival of a co-ethnic group in a host state contributes to demographic changes within the society, but the refugees does not necesarrily impact the political power balance unless they share what Rügger (2019) refers to as "ethnic kinship with the local population". By strenghtening one part of the population the refugees put a challenge on the other group, disturbing the ethnic balance and increasing the risk of political violence – an indirect effect more expected to be found in hetergoenous societies such as Lebanon.

The percieved threat of a cultural out-group can also cover religious beliefs, and studies on this are finding strong support for this claim. Another empirical example of the ingroup-outgroup dynamic is from Bansak, Hainmueller and Hangartner's (2016) research, presenting how societies dominated by traditional christian beliefs are more prevalent to express negative attitudes towards Muslim asylum seekers. Rügger's (2019) argument is in line with this, stating that refugees can contribute to demographically strengthen the co-ethnic groups and enable the groups to challenge the dominance of political groups.

It is important that the consequences of ethnic kinship in a host-refugee situation is studied as it can contribute to increased knowledge of the receptiveness of the host state. Early empirical evidence from Pakistan and Malaysia shows that the government response to a refugee arrival can be characterized by the ethnic aspect. In Pakistan, the government was reluctant to host Bihari refugees from Bangladesh speaking Urdu due to a fear of ethnic clash with the host population (Khalidi, 1998, p. 3). Vietnam was also reluctant to host refugees on the basis of the same element, as they accused refugees from Vietnam of disturbing a political equilibrium (Stein, 1979, p. 717).

Some of the most robust empirical evidence connected to the argument of ethnic groups and refugee arrival in this context is, however, the arrival of Sunni Palestinian refugees to Lebanon in 1948 and then later on in 1967. The Arab Israeli war forced hundreds of thousands of Palestinians to flee from Palestine with thousands settling in Lebanon, also threatening to destabilize the sectarian power sharing system as the majority of the Palestinian refugees were Sunni Muslims. As a result of the Sunni's and Shia's discontent of the Maronites position in the political hierarchy, the Lebanese Civil War had its outbreak (Makdisi & Marktanner, 2009). The shift in the fragile demographic balance was in so a contributor to increased violence, and the empirical example contributes to underline how the ethnic identity of a refugee group can cause a political disturbance in the host community.

Early empirical evidence from Lebanon after Syrian refugees arrived demonstrated a fear of a new civil war in Lebanon. In a national poll from 2013, FAFO⁷ conducts research on attitudes towards Syrian refugees in Lebanon in which study findings indicate low trust in political institutions and higher degrees of trust in the Lebanese Armed Forces. 71% of the respondents agreed to the statement that it was either very likely or somewhat likely that a sectarian conflict would break out, and more than half of the respondents agreed that the Syrian refugees was a threat to national stability (Christophersen et.al., 2013, p. 6). In all, the study reveals an ambiguous relationship between the host community and the Syrian refugees. More recent research conducted by UNDP on the host-refugee relationship in Lebanon also indicated a negative trend in tensions between refugees and host communities, emanating from four main factors: economic, sectarian concerns, demographic disturbance and concerns on the security situation (Empatika & UNDP, 2019, p. 2). As a consequence of the observations, a "Tension Monitoring System" was established by UNDP and UNHCR to follow the emerging trends in Lebanon. The qualitative study findings indicate amongst other things, that the common Muslim identity of the Sunni Muslims from Lebanon and Syria contributed to unite the two groups, and the Lebanese

⁷ Fafo Institute for Labour and Social Research.

Sunni claimed the ethnic kinship was more important than their national identity (Empatika & UNDP, 2019, p. 6). Seemingly, the shared ethnic kinship between the Lebanese Sunni and Syrian Sunni are of relevance in this case.

4.2 Government Response

How the governing state responds to the influx of refugees is claimed to be the main mechanism in which the accommodation of refugees can affect political trust, explained by, as previously mentioned, an individual's evaluation of government performance. While it might be the most negative impacts, such as security threats and economical and environmental burden that has been given the most attention, Jacobsen (2002) notes that refugees can embody a recourse flow in form of international humanitarian aid, economic assets, and human capital. Jacobsen (2002) names these material, social and political resources as refugee resources, in which she claims can contribute to develop the host country in several ways if the host country are able to manage them. Lebanon has had trouble dealing with over a million refugees arriving with little state capacity in advance, and Jacobsen identifies three main challenges for the host state

- (1) Increased demands on the state bureaucracy to manage the denser population and plethora of aid agencies in regions where the state is absent or weakly represented.
- (2) Increased demands on the state apparatus to control and manage contested refugee resources, either for its own state building purposes, or to ensure that its citizens benefit from these resources.
- (3) Increased demands on the states security apparatus to control its border and address security threats posed by the spillover of conflict and troublemakers entering with refugees. (Jakobsen, 2002, p. 588)

With Lebanon already being a dysfunctional democracy with a paralyzed government unable to agree on new policies and implement government election, the probability that the Syrian refugees would put additional pressure on Lebanon was high when the refugee arrival started in 2011. As the refugees from Syria arrived in Lebanon, the government refused to establish refugee camps with the concern of it becoming a permanent solution, with deep fears that history would repeat itself from the Palestinian refugee flow in 1947 and 1968. The refugees were therefore living in households in the beginning of their arrival in 2011, hosted by the Lebanese population themselves. The country's refugee policy has received both negative and positive feedback, whereas the international community has praised its generosity and hospitality, but experts have criticized the response for being a "no response" (Fakhoury, 2017, p. 682). The two oppositions within Lebanon concerning

the situation in Syria were divided, and the formation of a refugee strategy would not lead to a consensus due to this. The political environment in Lebanon with three different governments in a 4-year frame, lack of an effective administrative system, a period of two years without a president and a complicated web of legislative governorates within Lebanon has left its mark on the handling of the refugee influx.

As the case chapter illustrated, Lebanon was struggling before the refugees arrived with increasing dissatisfaction with the government officials. Böhmelt, Bove and Gleditsch (2019) emphasize that state host capacity is an important factor as to how the host community is affected. They argue that big flows of refugees can pressure economic resources and create tensions, and that this relies on the host state's capacity. States with a high capacity on administrative and economic resources has better chances of coping with the pressure, also contributing to lower the grievance of the population (Braithwaite et.al., 2019, p. 9). A study on the impacts of Syrian refugees on host community welfare in Turkey, where 2.2 million Syrian refugees were settled in 2015, finds no negative effects, explained by the stability and effort to adapt within Turkey (Azevedo, Yang, & Inan, 2016). In Lebanon, the hostility towards Syrian refugees has increased, closely tied to the lack of action from the Lebanese government and the missing support from international organizations (HRW, 2017).

I consider the government-response mechanism to be relevant given the politicization of ethnic groups in the power-sharing system. The Lebanese government outputs are affected by the ethnic groups interest, and so is the response to the Syrian refugees, where the Sunni representatives are less reluctant to host Syrian refugees than the Shia and Maronite representatives (Fakhoury, 2017).

5 Theoretical Mechanisms

Based on previous research and the discussion of the political and ethnic realities of Lebanon, this chapter serves to develop a theoretical argument of how the arrival of refugees may impact institutional trust in a power-sharing context. It is however important to emphasize the lack of theoretical support for this claim, despite the fact that previous research often highlight the ethnic disturbance in host communities as a negative consequence of hosting refugees (Rüegger, 2019, p. 45). The theoretical approach will therefore be consistent of different theoretical claims, partly rooted in the origin of institutional trust and the cultural approach, as well as drawn from theoretical mechanisms from the ethno-political literature. The goal with building an argument on different theoretical approaches is based on a possibility to use the argument in similar cases as Lebanon, even though Lebanon is argued to be an extreme example of its case. By creating a more general argument, the findings can be adapted to other cases with political power sharing systems. Building a theoretical argument underlines the more general aspect of the thesis, and highlights Lebanon's more general case.

I start by presenting the explicit argument for how the link between Syrian refugees and institutional trust can be understood. Furthermore, the theoretical logic and framework behind the argument will be introduced. Reasons for why institutional trust matters will be touched upon, before the thesis pursues the origins of institutional trust. Central in the literature on political trust is the claim that it can originate both from institutional and cultural factors, and as the cultural approach is central in relation to this thesis' research question it will be given the most attention. In relation to the cultural approach and the political system of confessional consociationalism in Lebanon, the ethnopolitical perspective will be presented before the hypothesis is constructed in the latter part of this chapter.

5.1 Explicit Argument

I find it suitable to present my main argument for this thesis before I further substantiate my argument with theoretical mechanisms. Considering the presented information in the case chapter and what this illustrate Lebanon is a case of, I argue that the arrival of the Syrian refugee population can impact institutional trust due the predominance of the Sunni Muslims amongst the refugee population. Essential in the literature on political trust is the

theory which claim that cultural and institutional factors are origins of political trust, and as the sectarian identity is essential both in the Lebanese community and in the political system, I agree with the statement given by scholars before me, that a disturbance in the ethnic balance in a refugee context can be a contributing factor to political instability (Rüegger, 2019; Braitwaite et.al., 2019). I argue the imbalance would strengthen the Sunni Muslim population and reduce institutional trust amongst the groups that does not share ethnic kinship with the local population.

5.2 Why does Political Trust Matter?

Whether political trust matters or not has relevance for the research question. What are the gains of researching impacts on institutional trust? Democracies are dependent on political trust as it provides the system with legitimacy and ensures horizontal and vertical cooperation, horizontal meaning cooperation between citizens and vertical meaning between citizens and the state (Letki, 2018, p. 338). In contrast, authoritarian regimes will not need to be concerned about issues such as legitimacy as they use means as political manipulation and military power to suppress their citizens. Democracies need a form of compliance from its citizens, which further is unachievable without the institutional trust. Trust in institutions is of great importance for a functional democracy and for the state to have legitimacy. In regard to the ethnic fragmentation and disturbance in this case, trust in government is claimed to also be important in cases where the state needs to mediate between the demands of competing groups within the state (Hutchison & Johnson, 2011, p. 737). Political trust is therefore important to do research on, as it is essential in building stable and effective democracies. Furthermore, knowledge on what impacts trust can contribute to more effective policies to build trust.

Listhaug (2005, p. 836) has contributed to emphasize the importance of political trust, highlighting three aspects as for why political trust matters. The first aspect focuses on the representative democracy and how the political trust gives and indicator as for how the process of representation works. Listhaug (2005) points to how the elections are the citizens way of controlling the political process, and that in the period between the electorates the electorates are dependent on the quality of this dynamic process. The second aspect is the development of the economic role, where the past decades has seen an increase in the number of economic resources the government is controlling. This requires greater attention as the economic efficiency of the government is more important than before. The latter aspect as for why political trust matter relies on the knowledge about why some governments succeed better than other in the process of developing trust

between the citizens and the political sphere. Lebanon has struggled especially with building the political trust in Lebanon in the aftermath of two wars (Bahout, 2016).

Regardless of whether the context of research is a post-conflict society, a developing country, or a sustainable democracy, political trust is considered a key cornerstone for all contexts (Godefroidt, Langer & Meuleman, 2017). It is however relevant to stress the importance of political trust in the context of Lebanon as a post-conflict society even more. As the case chapter puts forward, Lebanon has a tense history with a recent civil war (1975-1990) and the July 2006 war between Israel and Hezbollah have had trouble building a stable state with economic development and interpersonal trust in the aftermath of the two major events (Bahout, 2016; Ghosn & Khoury, 2013). Maintaining and establishing a robust political trust is argued to be of high importance in such cases as Lebanon is an example of, as it can be a tool to avoid previous conflicts to arise (Dyrstad, Bakke & Binningsbø, 2021).

As it now has been established that political trust is of high importance both for the development of democracy and to avoid post-conflict countries falling back to conflict, it is natural to ask what consequences follow low political trust. This have for decades been discussed within academia regarding the consequences it has for the stability of the democratic political system (Marien & Hooghe, 2011, p. 267). A common argument in the scholarly debate is that a decline in political trust is big reason for concern as political trust is crucial to ensure stable and effective democracies (Warren, 2018). This statement meets resistance in some cases, as some claim it is an opportunity for new political systems to arise and a way for the population to pressure the current system and demand change (Listhaug, 2005, p. 836). A critical outlook on the political landscape can contribute to strengthen the democratic system and where new political systems can emerge.

The relationship between trust and democracy is complex, but the claim that trust in institutions and the political system are crucial in a democracy have been thoroughly documented by now (Mishler & Rose, 2001; Claassen, 2020; Fukuyama, 2015; Easton, 1975; Hetherington, 2005). Political neutral and impartial institutions are often referred to as one crucial element for the citizens to trust the system, namely the police, the courts and the civil service (Newton, Stolle & Zmerli, 2018, p. 48). The exact mechanisms for how scholars explain the linkage between individual trust and institutions are not understood too well, but it seemingly works at two levels: The first is the elite level, where the democratic system and its institutions constrain political leaders to behave in a trustworthy manner which further on are held accountable by the system. The separation of power, rule of law, regular elections, freedom of information and freedom of press are

some of these mechanisms to constrain the political power. The other level is the mass level, where the judicial system represented by the court and the enforcement of the police contributes to uphold trust amongst citizens with the same set of rights and duties (Newton et.al., 2018, p. 48).

Three features of an institutions have been identified in order for institutional trust to find place. First, the roles and the office are defined normatively, often being well-known mandates with expected areas of responsibility. Second, the motivations of the institutional holder must be known for the civilian, as professional positions within the government comes with certain norms and incentives. There are examples of the opposite in Lebanon, as the representatives within government have in previous years worked to promote and ensure their own religious group advantages in Lebanon (Henley, 2016, p. 5). The third feature are sanctions, as a tool to be in place in order to ensure that the professional is being held accountable to the norms of office (Warren, 2018, p. 88).

The Lebanese government have by several occasions been accused of severe corruption within the government officials, and corruption was amongst other reasons why people took to the streets and protested in 2019 (Dølerud, Nordenson & Sogge, 2020). Corruption is stated as a clear enemy of trust, both in private and public life (Newton et.al, 2018, p. 49). A study done by van der Meer and Dekker (2011) find that trust in parliament is weakened by corruption, economic dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction with the political leaders, and worries of them not thinking of the citizens best and their opinion.

5.3 What Generates Institutional Trust?

Essential in this thesis is how the Syrian refugees can impact institutional trust, and in order to analyze this it is vital to understand what mechanisms are in play when institutional trust is generated. What does the traditional literature argue contribute to determine if we trust or distrust our political institutions? The source of political trust is a well-known debate within the literature, and both external and internal mechanisms of a society is proven to have an impact on political trust (Almond & Verba, 1963; Inglehart. 1997; Putnam, 1993; Mishler & Rose, 2001). In this subchapter I will present the two branches within the literature on origins of political trust: cultural and institutional theories.

Figure 3.1 Mechanisms of the cultural and institutional theories on micro and meso level.

	Cultural theories	Institutional theories
Meso level	Group identity	Government performance
Micro level	Individual socialization	Individual evaluation of performance

(Adapted from Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 34).

The two theories separate in mechanisms on micro level and macro level, but the relevance of the macro level disappears in this thesis as the macro level – Lebanon – is constant. As the field of interest is differences between groups within Lebanon, a replacement of the macro level with a meso level is suitable.

5.3.1 Cultural Theories

Within the theory on what mechanisms affect institutional trust, cultural theories grasp the explanations of social capital⁸, interpersonal trust and group identification (Dalton, 2004; Putnam, Leonardi & Neanetti, 1993; Offe, 2000; Scharph, 1997). The cultural approach begins with an assumption that trust has its basis in social relations. Putnam (1993) and Inglehart (1997) points in the direction of early stages of life and inter-personal trust which later in life is transferred to trust in institutions, an early contribution made by Almond & Verba (1963). Furthermore, they give attention to the cultural aspects and the environment one is surrounded with. From birth we are taught to trust or distrust others, in which the trust or distrust is shaped by how others in the same culture responds to others outside their own culture. Cultural explanations on microlevel focus on the individuals experience of socialization as an explanatory factor for variation of trust within societies. They emphasize the individual’s ability to evaluate institutional performance, and how this ability is impacted by its personal experience (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 31-32). Such determines of the individual can be age, education or previous face to face – experiences, but also factors that describes one’s identity, such as religion, sectarian belonging and ethnic background.

By applying the endogenous framework of institutional trust one can draw the link between ingroup-outgroup trust and institutional trust. People who have a shared identity are more likely to trust one another and further trust their governing institution (Lenard & Miller,

⁸ The field of social capital is big and will not be further substantiated in this thesis. For more on social capital, see Newton & Zmerli (2011). Three forms of trust and their association. *European Political Science Review*, Vol. 3(2), pp. 169-200.

2018, p. 57). Trust is therefore argued to function as the intervening variable that links national identity to positive outcomes such as democracy.

5.3.2 Ingroup – Outgroup Trust

There are several assumptions as to how a common identity can be a precondition for a trusting society. One is based on interaction between individuals, and another is based on the ingroup – outgroup theory, which discriminates between who belongs to the identity core and who do not.

Kramer (2018) conceptualize ingroup – outgroup trust as:

A set of assumptions, beliefs, and expectations held by members of one group regarding the likelihood that the actions of another group and/or its individual members will be beneficial, favorable, or at least not detrimental to their group's interests. Trust is contingent on the belief or prediction that they are trustworthy and/or are likely to behave in a trustworthy fashion (Kramer, 2018, p. 97).

Trust amongst groups have proven difficult to conceptualize as there are long-standing differences in preferences among scientist with different disciplinary backgrounds, from psychological emphasizes to social and structural measures. One approach to define trust in this manner is "anticipated cooperation" (Burt & Kneez, 1995). Another is Pruitt and Rubin's (1986) definition, stating that "trust is simply one individual's belief that another is positively concerned about his or her interests". The individually understanding of trust is also something that must be taken account for. Barber (1983) defined trust as

Socially learned and socially confirmed expectations that people have of each other, of the organizations and institutions in which they live, and of the natural and moral social orders that set the fundamental understandings of their lives (Barber, 1983, p. 64-165)

Knack and Keefer (1997) argues that political trust in heterogenous societies is generally lower than in homogenous societies as an explanation for the empirical findings that ethnic fractionalization leads to more particularized trust and complicates political cooperation. Collier (2001) also builds on the same argument, and state that societies divided by ethnicity are seen as less likely to reach cooperative solutions and chances for victimizing the minority are higher, explained by the fact that ethnic groups want different outcomes and favorize their own ethnic group (Cho, 2007).

As the case chapter illustrated, the group tensions between Sunni and Shia Muslims were on a rise as the Syrian civil war started, and the Sunni-Syrian refugees that arrived in Lebanon was expected to disturb the sensitive sectarian balance and reinforce and

strengthen those tensions. Individuals' social background and psychology is not to be denied regarding the influential levels of trust. Variables such as age, income, religion, sex, education and ethnicity are often considered to affect attitudes and behaviors, and the same thing goes for trust. Ingroup – outgroup trust addresses these intergroup relations.

As the claim that national identity is to function as a common perception of a bond that ties the citizens together within the same limited geographical area, it is interesting to adapt this notion to the case of Lebanon in which the confessional framework in Lebanon has prevented the development of a Lebanese identity (Calfat, 2018, p. 281). Instead, religious leaders have been representatives for an ethnic identity, and allowing the division of specific groups to be incorporated in the political system. This is claimed to have consequences for the perception of being a part of a common identity, as the interests of specific groups will be the overarching focus and not the well-being of the nation as a whole (Berg & Hjerm, 2010).

To sum up, the cultural approach stresses common norms and values often found in a national identity and inter-personal trust which has a spill-over effect on trust in political institutions. In this context, the aspect of identity is an interesting matter as the ethnic identity amongst the Lebanese population is strong and considered more important than their national identity (Empatika & UNDP, 2019, p. 6).

5.3.3 Institutional Theories

The competing theory claim that political trust is a consequence of good or bad institutional performance and not a cause of it. Central in this approach is the assumption on rational choice where the trustee determines trust based on a cost-benefit analysis (Hetherington, 1998). Hetherington is a strong supporter of the argument that political trust originates from institutional performance. An evaluation of the institutional performance is the origin of political trust, as institutions that perform well will generate trust and institutions that perform badly generates distrust (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 31). The source of institutional trust is also argued to be endogenous, but theoretics disagree on a contextual level within the institutional theory. For established democracies with sustainable political institutions over a long period of time, the aspect of economic development is emphasized, whereas in emerging democracies the institutional design can be just as relevant as the produced outcomes. Results from a study on political institutions in post-communist societies indicates that the citizens values those political institutions succeeded to tackle the struggle of corruption and increase the citizens freedom (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 36; Diamond, 1999).

Institutional design can therefore have consequences for government performance and further for public trust in institutions. As the institutional design in Lebanon is based on consociationalism⁹, there is with theoretical support for the reason, to assume that the system can affect one's institutional trust. Haddad (2002) studied the dissatisfaction of government in Lebanon and how it affects political trust amongst the Lebanese. The study indicates critically low satisfaction with the government, and the substantial negative evaluation of performance leads to a decrease in trust in parliament, government and the president. A rate of 70% percent agreed that the political officials are only looking out for their personal interests and only 5 percent believed the government did not waste that much money. These empirical findings suggests that my analysis will prove quite low values of institutional trust in Lebanon.

As this subchapter has presented the two main branches if origins of institutional trust, cultural and institutional, it is clear that there is limited theoretical literature on how institutional trust is originated in a confessional political system. The thesis will therefore draw from theoretical assumptions form the ethno-political literature as it in some sorts ties the complex aspect of ethnicity and politics together.

5.4 The Ethnopolitical Mechanism

The ethno-political aspect is one possible perspective to adapt when studying refugee impacts on the political attitudes in Lebanon. Karklins (1994, p. 4) defines ethno-politics as "any politics that impinges on the relative power or position of ethnic groups", a term which fits the political system in Lebanon to a great extent.

Green (2020, p. 9) has done research on ethnic groups in the Sub-Saharan part of Africa where he presents robust arguments regarding shifts in power and how this impacts the different ethnic groups within the countries. He points out that a power shift where a group ends up with less political power will produce dissatisfaction amongst the specific group none the less, but if the group have been historically dominant in the countries' politics, the loss will potentially be greater than any other groups as they have more to lose. The region of research in Green's contribution is close to the Lebanese context with a diverse ethnic composition of demographics. Another commonality is the aspect of ethnic favoritism where political leaders prioritize their own ethnic groups interests. In this aspect, some argue that a co-ethnic representative with political power will have an advantage over other ethnic groups, given access to state resources (Green 2020, p. 9). Having

⁹ See chapter 3 for further details on the political system in Lebanon

representatives in possession of political power can therefore contribute to a feeling of safety, and it can be reassuring as your interests close to your ethnic group are taken care of. Even though Green's (2020) contribution does not look into the mechanisms of political trust, it can be a supportive argument for how political trust can be affected indirectly by the ethnic disturbance.

5.5 Hypothesis

Based on the theoretical and empirical evidence as for how the relationship between ethnic kinship in a host-refugee relationship and institutional trust, I will now in line with my research question present my hypothesis for the findings in this thesis. An arrival of a large Sunni Muslim Syrian refugee population in Lebanon strengthens the perception of threat amongst the Shia Muslim population and the Christian population, leading to a decreasing institutional trust as it threatens the institutionalized sectarian balance. I therefore want to pursue the following hypothesis:

H1: the arrival of a Sunni Syrian Refugee population correlates with a decrease in institutional trust over time.

H1 is based on a general assumption that the Syrian refugees has a negative effect on institutional trust, based on the theoretical mechanism of the host state capacity to receive refugees and that the government response can impact institutional trust.

H2: the institutional trust will be lower amongst the Shia Muslim compared to the Sunni population in Lebanon.

H3: the institutional trust will be lower amongst the Maronite Christians compared to the Sunni population in Lebanon.

H2 and H3 derives from the same argument of the ethno-political aspect of the Lebanese context and the cultural explanation of institutional trust. The Sunni Syrian refugees contributes to an ethnic disturbance in a context where the political power is shared along sectarian lines, involving strengthening a central political kin-group in a tense political sphere between the sectarian groups. Simultaneously, this challenges the position of the other sectarian groups and threatens their political position.

5.6 Summary

Chapter 3,4 and 5 have presented background for case selection, an important actualization of the research question, theoretical approach for the dependent variable institutional trust and previously empirical evidence supportive of my argument. The thesis will from here move on to the methodological approach.

6 Methodological Approach

The methodological chapter will, in separate subchapters, present the chosen research design, a thorough description of the data from the Arab Barometer and the EPR-ER data set, and a justification to the chosen method of OLS for the regression analysis. The chapter will then describe the dependent, independent, and control variables before the thesis move on with the analytical part.

6.1 Research Design

The Middle East is a complicated region to research as there is a lack of consistency in the data, making it challenging to look at development over time and use a longitudinal methodological approach. It has consequences for the reliability and validity of the research. The validity of the research concept takes on the question regarding the correct operationalization and makes sure we measure what we want to measure in an adequate and trustworthy manner (Skog, 2010, p. 91). In an ideal analysis of the research question, I would want to use a more longitudinal approach to investigate the phenomenon over time and suggest a causal relationship between institutional trust and the arrival of refugees. If I had the necessary data on individual level which describes contact or exposure of refugees over time or geographical information suggesting closeness to refugees, the ideal analysis of this research would be approachable. Also, the sectarian denomination of each respondent would have been necessary to evaluate the differences I want to explore. Therefore, the limited amount of data available makes this challenging and is why I have chosen the presented research design as an alternative. The chosen alternative has limitations regarding the research question but is considered a good fit when taking the limitations in to account.

There is a variety of research designs that can be used to approach a research question. The research design is chosen based on what kind of data is available and what the research question is trying to answer. For example, as the research question want to investigate how Syrian refugees are affecting institutional trust in Lebanon, the relevant data for the research question must include variables on institutional trust in Lebanon, a measure of the arrival of Syrian refugees to Lebanon, and variables on the individual level, describing who the respondents are.

6.1.1 Analytical Approach

Due to data limitations, the best analytical approach for this thesis is not possible. The analytical approach is therefore an approach where we cannot confirm the hypothesis, but we cannot discard the hypothesis either. I have chosen to separate the analysis into two parts. The first part of the analysis will look at institutional trust in Lebanon over time and the correlation with the arrival of Syrian refugees. The Arab Barometer is the most consistent research project measuring institutional trust in Lebanon. The Ethnic Power Relations data set has a thorough overview of the ethnic composition of refugees arriving to Lebanon. Graphically presenting institutional trust over time and the arrival of Syrian Sunni refugees can potentially indicate a correlating effect the arrival of refugees has on institutional trust.

In the second and last part of the analysis, the thesis will be looking into differences in institutional trust amongst the sectarian groups in Lebanon in 2018 by doing an OLS regression analysis with data from the Arab Barometer. This analysis does have limitations regarding the research questions, but the findings will be discussed according to the theoretical argument and previous research and arguments on the case of Lebanon.

6.2 Data

In this chapter, the two data sources used to assess whether it is likely that the influx of Syrian Sunni refugees affects institutional trust in Lebanon differently amongst the sectarian groups. The Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) and Arab Barometer round 1-5 (2006-2018) is presented. The Arab Barometer is a regional survey project published in waves representing different years from 2006-2018. Even though the data describes multiple snapshots of the same questions regarding socio-economic aspects of Lebanon, the respondents are not the same for every year. When the same people are interviewed over several waves, the data is categorized as longitudinal cross-section data. However, as the Arab Barometer does not interview the same set of people, the data can be categorized as pooled cross-sections, known as repeated cross-sections (Longhi & Nandi, 2015, p. 4). As the waves differ slightly in how specific questions are asked regarding political-institutional trust, it is necessary to have a thorough representation of each wave in separate subchapters.

6.2.1 The Arab Barometer

In order to answer the research question, the analysis will be using The Arab Barometer as a source for the dependent variable (institutional trust) and all variables on the

individual level (sectarian denomination, age, sex, education and governorate)¹⁰. The Arab Barometer¹¹ is a quantitative research network focusing on the MENA region. Through reliable public opinion surveys with face-to-face interviews, the research covers several social, political, and economic aspects affecting the region, such as evaluation of government performance, political trust, assessment of the economic situation, and political affiliation, to mention a few. The Middle East is a region that throughout history has been characterized by conflicts, religion, and tensions between ethnic groups, both social and political. Therefore, the empirical research done by the Arab Barometer on this region is enriching. It contributes to creating knowledge on the region's development and taking the pulse on the status quo. The data is, although less consistent and appears quite untidy in comparison with public opinion survey from other regions of the world, such as the well-known European Social Survey¹² (ESS) with data on the European countries and Afro Barometer with data from the African continent¹³. As previously stressed several times in this thesis, the Middle East is a turbulent region, and it is only to expect that the data is a reflection of the region.

The survey has been conducted five times, with the 6th wave currently ongoing in the following countries: Algeria, Bahrain, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Tunisia, Qatar, and Yemen (Arab Barometer). The waves are conducted in different years. Wave I (2006), wave II (late 2010- early 2011), wave III (2013), wave IV (2016), and wave V (2018). For this thesis, I will include all waves from I to V to assess the development of institutional trust in Lebanon in the period 2006-2018. The mode of data collection is Interviewer Adminstrated Paper and Pencil Interviewing (PAPI) in all waves, with a sampling design of stratified sampling, the strata being sect and governorate. Stratified sampling is, together with cluster sampling and simple random sampling (SRS), one of the most popular sampling designs. The design can be separated into two different types, depending on whether subsamples are collected with different selection probabilities or the same selection probabilities. The design does not require knowledge of the complete list of all population units and is considered a cheaper solution than SRS (Longhi & Nandi, 2015, p. 133).

¹⁰ All variables are described in chapter 6.5 and 6.6.

¹¹ For more about the Arab Barometer, their history and mission, see <https://www.arabbarometer.org/about/the-arab-barometer/>

¹² ESS is a cross-national survey conducting research on attitudes, behaviors and beliefs in more than 30 countries. See <https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/about/>.

¹³For more about the Afro Barometer, see <https://afrobarometer.org/about>

6.2.1.1 Wave I – 2006

The Arab Barometer Wave I has a sample design of stratified area probability sample where the targeted population is citizens aged 18 and above. The sampling frame is based on an estimated population from 1999, which is later updated in 2007. The project was supervised by The Center for Strategic Studies at the University of Jordan in cooperation with the Statistics Lebanon Establishment. The national poll was carried out in November 2006 with 1,200 respondents separated in two strata, governorates and sects. Further separated in 6 different governorates and 4 different sects – the sects being Sunni, Shia, Druze and Christian (Arab Barometer, 2007a).

The poll can be summarized into five thematic areas: democracy, citizenship, religion in private and public life, and matters concerning the Arab region. In questions regarding the evaluation of political institutions, the questionnaire covers trust in the prime minister, the courts and political parties, and parliament with the question: "I am going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them. Is it a great deal of trust, quite a lot of trust, not very much trust, or none at all?". The range of answers is from 1 to 4, with 1= a great deal of trust, 2= quite a lot of trust, 3= not very much trust, and 4= none at all (Arab Barometer, 2007b).

6.2.1.2 Wave II – 2011

The empirical data in Arab Barometer wave II 2010 in Lebanon (N= 1195) has the same sample design as the previous wave and the same targeted population for measurement. The strata are governorates and sect, with the same six governorates, and Sunni, Shia, Christian, and Druze represented in the sectarian dimension (Arab Barometer, 2012a). The survey was conducted by Statistics Lebanon and took place in two periods, the first period between November 24th and December 6th, 2010, and the second one in April 2011. The survey builds on the same thematic areas as wave I but included aspects such as the role of women in society.

In the evaluation of political institutions, the questionnaire included questions about the government, the courts, the parliament, and political parties, with the question "I will name a number of institutions, and I would like you to tell me to what extent you trust each of them" with answers ranging from 1 to 4 where 1= trust it to a great extent, 2= I trust it to a medium extent, 3= I trust it to a limited extent and 4= I absolutely do not trust it (Arab Barometer, 2012b).

6.2.1.3 Wave III – 2013

The third wave has a field period from July 3rd to July 26th, 2013 and contains 1200 observations. The strata are governorates and sects, with a total number of 17 strata. In questions regarding the evaluation of political institutions, the third wave has fewer indicators than the previous waves (Arab Barometer, 2014a). Compared with the indicators in the preceding waves, only parliament and government are included in the third wave. The question sound is "I will name a number of institutions, and I would like you to tell me to what extent you trust each of them», with answers ranging between 1-4, with 1=I trust it to a great extent, 2= I trust it to a medium extent, 3= I trust it to a limited extent and 4= I absolutely do not trust it (Arab Barometer, 2014b).

6.2.1.4 Wave IV – 2016

The fourth wave of the Arab Barometer is affected by the Syrian civil war and the aftermath of the Arab spring. The survey is conducted between July 20th 2016 to August 16th 2016, a period in which Lebanon had been without a president for two years (Arab Barometer, 2018a). The number of Syrian refugees in Lebanon called for attention. In addition to having a sample of Lebanese citizens as a targeted population, 300 Syrian refugees were also interviewed. For the purpose of the research question, these observations will be deleted as they do not belong to the population I am looking into. As a part of the analysis includes development over time, including 300 observations from a different population will not make sense. In this wave, we find an increase in the number of indicators on institutional trust compared to the former waves, covering the government, parliament, courts and legal system, and political parties (Arab Barometer, 2018b). The format of the question is "I am going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them». The answers range from 1 to 4, with 1= a great deal of trust, 2= quite a lot of trust, 3= not very much trust and 4= no trust at all.

6.2.1.5 Wave V – 2018

Arab Barometer wave V is the newest wave published and will be used in both parts of the analysis. The data is collected in a period between September 21st, 2018 to October 19th, 2018 and has more than a thousand observations compared to the previous waves with a total number of 2400 observations (Arab Barometer, 2019b). The sampling design and sampling frame are the same as the previous waves, and strata are governorates and sects. There are 23 strata with no Sunni or Christian population in El Nabatieh (North and South), no Shia population in North, no Druze population in Beirut, North, South, and EL Nabatieh.

The wave includes several indicators of institutional trust with trust in government, courts and legal systems, parliament, political parties, and prime minister/president, covering all of the indicators included in the previous waves. The question measuring political-institutional trust is "I am going to name a number of institutions. For each one, please tell me how much trust you have in them", with 1= a great deal of trust, 2= quite a lot of trust, 3= not a lot of trust and 4= no trust at all (Arab Barometer, 2019c). This wave will be the source of data for my part two of my analysis.

I will be using all of the waves mentioned above in the first part of the analysis, together with the Ethnic Power Relations (EPR) data set. For part two of my analysis, I will only be using the fifth wave.

6.2.2 Ethnic Power Relations (2012-2017)

The EPR data is a family of data sets first introduced in Vogt, Bormann, Rügger, Cederman, Hunziker and Girardin (2015) and was later updated in 2019. The data set family provides valuable data on politically relevant ethnic groups and their access to state power in every country in the world. Integrated with this comprehensive data set is the EPR-ER data, providing information on the ethnic composition of refugees between neighboring countries from 1975 to 2017, covering every country in the world (Rügger & Bohnet, 2018). The countries are close to each other with a maximal distance between country borders of ≤ 950 km, with the refugee group being no less than 2,000. It identifies the three largest ethnic groups in the arriving state and the total number of refugees in that country. The data is based on information from UNHCR (2014) and UNRWA (2010). When coding the data, they have based their definition of ethnicity on the same grounds as in this thesis, including ethnoreligious factors. The definition of ethnicity in EPR is based on Webber (1976) and is defined as "a subjectively experienced sense of commonality based on a belief in common ancestry and shared culture" (Vogt et al., 2015, p. 1329). The EPR data set will be used together with The Arab Barometer to operationalize the influx of refugees and analyze the effect it has on institutional trust.

Matrix 5.1 Ethnic identity of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon from 2012-2017

Year	Total refugees	Ethnic group 1	Ethnic group 2	Ethnic group 3
2012	126939	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)
2013	851284	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)
2014	1147494	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)
2015	1062690	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)
2016	1005503	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)
2017	992127	Sunni Arabs (90%)	Druze (5%)	Christians (5%)

Source: Rüegger & Bohnet, 2018.

The matrix above illustrates the arrival of Syrian refugees to Lebanon. In the EPR-ER data set, the country of origin, country of arrival, and the three biggest ethnic groups are included. The matrix indicates that for all six years from 2012-2017, the Sunni Arabs are the dominant group for each year with a 90% representation each year, and with the Druze and Christian being a minority making up 10% altogether. From 2012 – 2013 the arrival of refugees from Syria spiked drastically from 126,939 in 2012 to a total number of 851,285. Calls for the Syrian refugees to return to their home country in the political and public debate started in 2017, and in 2015 the Lebanese government instructed the UNHCR to suspend all new registrations on refugees from Syria. In addition, the government introduced new border restrictions, which made it difficult for Syrian refugees to arrive in Lebanon (Dionigi, 2016).

6.3 Ordinary Least Squares

The primary tool of analysis in this thesis is based on Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression, and the methodological approach is chosen due to a convenience with the interpretation of the results. A regression analysis allows us to explore to what extent one variable affects other variables. The overarching goal is often to investigate whether and to what extent one or a scale of variables (X) is a cause of (Y) and how the independent variable affects the dependent variable. When assuming a causal relationship between X and Y, the most straightforward connection between the two variables is the linear. OLS is the estimation method based on the least-squares principle, where the goal is to minimize

the sum of squared errors (SSE¹⁴) as much as possible. In a regression analysis, we try to estimate the parameters and represent the constant and represent the regression coefficient. The constant is the value of Y when X=0 and the regression coefficient tell us about the number of units Y increases (or decreases) with when X increases with one unit. A linear regression needs to fulfill some prerequisites and assumptions in order to be valid. Mehmetoglu and Jakobsen (2017) identify these assumptions and divide them into assumptions based on model specification errors and assumptions about the residuals. In the following subchapters, the assumptions relevant for large N-analysis are presented.

6.3.1 Model Specification Errors

6.3.1.1 All Relevant and Non Irrelevant Variables

The first assumption regarding the model specification error is the inclusion of relevant variables and excluding irrelevant variables. This assumption is more of a theoretical assumption. The researcher should be attentive to which variables are expected to influence the dependent variable based on previous research and theoretical arguments (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017, p. 135). Generally, in social sciences, we can only prove tendential causal relationships, but I will be using cross-section OLS in the analysis. I will not have development in trust over time, which means I will only prove a correlating effect and not a causal relationship. When trying to prove anything in social sciences empirically, the main problem is to account for no other intervening relationship. If we find a correlation between X and Y, and we want to investigate if Y is a cause of X, we also need to be able to prove that there is not any underlying factor Z that is a cause of Y and correlates with X. If this is not the case, we have spurious correlation, meaning the correlation between X and Y does not reflect a causal relationship between those X and Y (Skog, 2010, p. 39).

6.3.1.2 Linearity

The OLS analysis assumes that the relationship between X and Y is linear, assuming that an increase in the dependent variable is the same for every unit increase on the independent variable. Skog (2010, p. 237) emphasizes that there are no good reasons for assuming a linear relationship between X and Y in social science, but the methodology is used due to mathematical convenience. Although necessary, it is necessary to keep in mind that a linear model can be close to reality only for a limited area of value but not necessarily realistic for the whole area.

¹⁴ The SSE is a measurement of the distance between the observed and predicted parameter

6.3.1.3 Absence of Multicollinearity

The assumption about multicollinearity is regarding the X variables and how two X variables cannot be 100% correlated. Explanatory variables that correlated can steal explanatory power from each other and thus have consequences for the interpretation. Avoiding this problem should be manageable by ensuring that I do not include independent variables that explain the same phenomenon in the model. Solving the multicollinearity problem is relatively easy as one can only remove one variable from the equation – if it measures the same as another variable, the loss will be limited anyhow (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017, p. 146).

6.3.2 Assumptions about the Residuals

6.3.2.1 Homoscedasticity

The subsequent assumption that needs to be fulfilled is homoscedasticity, meaning the equal distribution of the variance of the residual term around the regression line. In a regression model, the residual term around the regression line should have the same size for all values on the independent variable. If this is not the case and we identify an unequal distribution, the model suffers from heteroskedasticity (Skog, 2010, p. 246). Heteroskedastic residual terms can indicate unequal distributed variables and further reflect how the model potentially lacks essential variables that should be included in the model. When testing for homoscedasticity, one can also discover another assumption of the conditioned mean of zero, which is based on the distance between the point of data and the regression line. In regression analysis, the residuals will be placed both above and beneath the regression line.

6.3.2.2 Normally Distributed Errors

This assumption has first and foremost implications for the statistical testing of the hypothesis. However, in large N-analysis, this is usually not a problem as a higher number of observations will affect the distribution of errors by moving them closer to a normal distribution (Skog, 2010, p. 250).

6.3.2.3 Uncorrelated Errors

Independence between observations is of importance for this assumption as correlated errors mean we have an autocorrelation. Autocorrelation is rarely a problem with cross-

sectional data with a random sampling technique but can be an issue with time-series data (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017, p. 150).

6.4 Measuring Institutional Trust

Regression analysis is a quantitative analytical measure of the relationship between a dependent variable (X) and an independent variable (Y). The dependent variable represents the phenomenon I am trying to explain, which is institutional trust. As the theoretical background for understanding institutional trust was presented earlier in the thesis, it is also necessary to have a robust argument for how I operationalize it in the analysis. Measurement of political trust has since the very beginning of the literature been a problem regarding operationalization, as there has been a lack of consistency between the use of trust in political institutions and government performance evaluation (Catterberg & Moreno, 2005, p. 33). As a part of my analysis, I will be looking into a measurement of institutional trust and its development over time and limit the operationalization to questions regarding trust in institutions and not include evaluation of government performance. In order for it to be comparable over time, it is vital that the variable in each wave has measured institutional trust the same way. The ambiguity in the social science literature on political trust has severe consequences for the operationalization of the phenomenon. It raises questions regarding the findings in previous studies on political trust. This has consequences for the generalization of the research, as one cannot be entirely confident that the measures are the same.

The data on institutional trust used in this thesis is, as previously mentioned, gathered from five waves of the Arab Barometer. Unfortunately, there is little consistency on what political institutions the questionnaires in the different waves are asking about (see figure below for an overview).

Figure 5.1 Overview of variables on institutional trust wave I – IV.

Wave	Prime minister/president	Government	Parliament	Political parties	Courts and legal system
I	X		X	X	X
II		X	X	X	X
III		X	X		
IV		X	X	X	X
V	X	X	X	X	X

The matrix illustrates the challenges of looking at institutional trust over time by using the Arab Barometer. For the first part of my analysis, I have chosen to only use the *trust in parliament* as a measure of institutional trust. The variable is a suitable operationalization of the research question and is the only measurement which is observed for all years. However, it is also suitable as it represents the sectarian power-sharing to a greater extent than what the government or the courts and legal systems would. The parliamentary seats are divided between the sectarian groups according to the demographic spread in Lebanon.

Figure 5.2 Descriptive statistics of dependent variable institutional trust 2006-2018.

Year	N	Mean	Min	Max
2006	1164	2.10	1	4
2010	1371	1.84	1	4
2013	1192	1.60	1	4
2016	1194	1.47	1	4
2018	2398	1.69	1	4

6.4.1 Institutional Trust Scale

For the second part of my analysis where I am looking into differences in institutional trust amongst the sectarian groups in Lebanon, I have chosen to use an index of several measurements of institutional trust. By doing so, I avoid the following issues:

- 1) In a linear regression analysis, the dependent variable should be a continuous variable with no less than 5 categories (as the categories on each indicator of

institutional trust are only ranging from 1-4 it is not suitable for such). By merging several indicators, I will have more categories, and the problem with continuity in the variable is avoided.

- 2) Using an index for institutional trust which observes the same phenomenon will increase the reliability and validity of the results¹⁵.

There can be several ways to measure what one wants to measure, and when research generalizes topics with less detailed information, such as institutional trust, it can be appropriate to create a scale consisting of several variables measuring the same phenomenon (Skog, 2010, p. 97). A scale is in so reduced data, consistent of variables in which reflect the same content in the variables (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017, p. 270). What measurements that are included in a scale is based on the theoretical and conceptual assumptions, but statistical analytical tools can contribute to knowledge on whether it is appropriate or not. Such analytical tools are correlation matrices, factor analysis and Cronbach's alpha. The different tools will now be presented.

Table 5.1 Correlation matrix of indicators of institutional trust

(1) Trust in president/prime minister	1.000						
(2) Trust in political parties	0.42	1.000					
(3) Trust in local government	0.43	0.34	1.000				
(4) Trust in government	0.61	0.47	0.46	1.000			
(5) Trust in parliament	0.53	0.49	0.47	0.68	1.000		
(6) Trust in courts and legal systems	0.45	0.37	0.42	0.52	0.56	1.000	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	

Table 5.1 is a correlation matrix of the variables indicating institutional trust. The matrix presents how the different indicators correlation with each other, and all variables are positive correlated, some more than others. The highest correlation is found between trust in parliament (5) and trust in government (4) with a correlation coefficient R=68, indicating that an increase in the trust in parliament also gives an increase in trust in government, and vice versa. The lowest correlation coefficient is found between the trust in local

¹⁵ See chapter 6.7 for more on reliability and validity

government (3) and trust in political parties (2) with $R=0.34$. The high correlation between government and parliament is comprehensible as they are two political institutions central in the parliamentary political system of government. The low correlation between local government and political parties is also understandable, as political parties in Lebanon are often representatives for sectarian groups and not the political system as the local government represent.

Factor analysis is also a statistical tool that can be used when reducing a large amount of data into one variable. The analysis identifies dimensions within the variables by detecting factors explaining the correlation between the different indicators. Central in a factor analysis is the number of factor loadings and the eigenvalue of the factors. The factor analysis with a principal component analysis method illustrates an eigenvalue well above 1 ($=3.73$) and the indicators charge the same factor, meaning they measure the same dimension (Ringdal, 2007).

Based on the successful correlation matrix and factor analysis the last reliability test can be carried out. The Cronbach's Alpha is a measurement informing to what extent the constructed scale will match another scale based on variables measuring the same term. In so, the alpha indicates whether the measurement is generalizable, and further tell us something about the reliability of the scale (Skog, 2010, p. 99). The reliability coefficient $=0.84$, which is sufficient in order to create the scale of institutional trust (Ringdal, 2007, p. 87).

The dependent variable institutional trust is therefore a scale consistent of the following variables measuring institutional trust: *trust in government*, *trust in parliament*, *trust in political parties*, *trust in local government*, *trust in president/prime minister* and *trust in courts and legal systems*. The scale institutional trust is ranging from $\text{min}=1$ and $\text{max}=3.333$ with 15 different categories between min and max. 1= no trust at all, and 4=a great deal of trust.

Table 5.2 Descriptive Statistics of indicators of institutional trust and dependent

variable Institutional Trust	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
President/Prime Minister	1210	1.821	.863	1	4
Political Parties	1208	1.73	.805	1	4
Local government	2397	2.004	.849	1	4
Government	2394	1.735	.799	1	4
Parliament	2398	1.693	.785	1	4
Court and legal system	2398	1.932	.803	1	4
Institutional trust	1200	1.812	.612	1	3.333

Table 5.2 presents the included indicators and the scale of institutional trust. The local government has the highest mean with a value of 2.0004, and the parliament has the lowest with a value of 1.693. The scale of institutional trust (in bold) has a mean of 1.812 with a total N=1200.

The theoretical argument for including all these indicators in the scale of institutional trust is based on the structure of the political system in Lebanon. For example, including the president/prime minister in the scale could in some cases be a misleading indicator as it involves single individuals and in so addressing personalities and not institutions. However, the president and prime minister also represents a political institution and can based on this argument be included. Political parties could also be challenging as political parties in Lebanon are classified by their ethnicity, representing the different sectarian groups and interests. Although, the political system in Lebanon is deeply rooted in the sectarianism and excluding indicators with a sectarian notion I argue would be misleading as an important aspect of the political system as a whole would be lost. The parliament, government and local government are anyway characterized by the sectarian power sharing system. The most important element to be attentive to is how institutional trust is defined in the theoretical approach and make sure the term is operationalized in line with the definition. As noted in chapter 2.1 political institutional trust where I defined institutional trust, I also enhanced I would be focusing on those political institutions which can be categorized as electoral. Compared to what the Arab Barometer Wave V have included as institutions, this involves excluding trust in the police and civil organizations (Arab Barometer, 2019b). In addition to cover the electoral politics, the courts and legal system is included. This is not covered by the electoral aspect but is included as it is a common indicator of a political institution in scientific research on political trust (OECD, 2017).

6.5 Main Independent

For the second part of the analysis, I want to investigate if the level of institutional trust is different depending on what sectarian denomination the observations identify themselves with. Therefore, the main independent variable *sectarian denomination* is a categorical variable on a nominal level where each category is mutually exclusive to one another, each category representing the three majority sectarian groups in Lebanon which is also a majority in the political system. The variable has 4 categories: Maronite, Sunni, Shia, and other. See Table 5.3 for descriptive statistics.

Table 5.3 Descriptive statistics of main independent variable: sectarian denomination

	Freq.	Percent	Cum.
Maronite	633	26.39	26.39
Sunni	652	27.18	53.56
Shia	600	25.01	78.57
Other	514	21.43	100.00
<hr/>			
N	2399	100.00	

6.5.1 Control Variables

Standard socio-demographic indicators such as age, gender, education, and governorate are included in my analysis. Including control variables in the analysis is a statistical approach to control for underlying factors, and the inclusion of the chosen variables is based on the assumption that they can affect both the main independent and dependent variable. In separate subchapters, I will describe the control variables and argue why they are relevant to include.

6.5.1.1 Gender

Controlling for gender is appropriate as previous research shows differences in institutional trust among females and males. While some studies find that women are more trusting than men (see Paterson, 2008; Schoon & Cheng, 2011), other studies find that women are less trusting (see Leigh, 2006). In order to operationalize gender in the analysis, the variable gender is coded as a dummy variable with "man" as reference category (=0) and woman as the other category (=1). The observations are 50% male and 50% female.

Figure 5.4 Descriptive statistics of control variable woman

Woman	Freq.	Percent
Male (=0)	1200	50
Female (=1)	1200	50
<hr/>		
N	2400	100

6.5.1.2 Education

The education variable is a categorical variable on nominal level coded as a dummy set, with categories ranging between no education (=1) and a master's degree or more (=6). Higher levels of educations are claimed to be associated with higher levels of trust (see Hooghe, Marien & Vroome, 2012; Abramson, 1983; Deary, Batty & Gale, 2008; Schoon & Cheng, 2011), but this effect is claimed to be different in highly corrupt societies such as Lebanon (Hakhverdian & Mayne, 2012). As the educational level is considered having an effect on institutional trust, it is also valid to assume that educational level can vary across groups as well. Amongst others, the educational system in Lebanon varies across the sectarian groups (Baytiyeh, 2017).

Table 5.5 Descriptive statistics of education

Education	Obs.	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
No education	19	.089	0	1
Elementary education	197	.275	0	1
Basic education	442	.388	0	1
Secondary education	730	.46	0	1
Bachelor's degree	803	.472	0	1
Master's degree	209	.282	0	1

6.5.1.3 Age

Political trust is claimed to vary amongst different age groups. Empirical evidence state that political trust increases by age (Mishler & Rose, 2001; Patterson, 1999), but findings also suggest that the relationship between age and political trust is curvilinear. The age variable is a categorical variable with values between min=18 and max=92. The mean age is 40.26 and the total N=2400.

6.5.1.4 Governorate

Lebanon is geographically divided into eight regions, referred to as governorates, and is so in the Arab Barometer wave V as well. The governorates being Akkar, North, Bekaa, Baalbek, Beirut, Mount Lebanon, South, and Nabatieh. Most of the governorates are characterized by one dominant sectarian group and controlling for governorate will contribute to a better understanding of the variation of institutional trust. The governorates are also highly characterized by employment sectors and economic situation (Makdisi & Marktanner, 2014).

The control variable *governorate* has observations on all of the official governorates in Lebanon, with a total N=2400. Mount Lebanon is the most represented governorate.

Table 5.6 Governorate

Governorate	Freq.	Percent
Akkar	160	6.67
North	330	13.75
Bekaa	150	6.25
Baalbek	150	6.25
Beirut	250	10.42
Mount Lebanon	960	40.00
South	260	10.83
Nabatieh	140	5.83
<i>N</i>	<i>2400</i>	<i>100</i>

6.6 Reliability and Validity

In order to avoid drawing the wrong conclusions in social sciences one need to ensure solid reliability and validity of the measurements, both empirically and theoretically. Reliability is concerning the consistency of measurements in the analysis and whether repeated measurements will give the same result (Ringdal, 2007, p. 86). The validity of the research is concerning the measurements of the concepts or terms, and whether one measures what one wants to measure. Whereas the reliability is an empirical question, the validity is a theoretical assumption (Ringdal, 2007, 86). The validity is ensured by being consistent in the theoretical approach to institutional trust and how the variable is operationalized in the analytical approach. Executing a limited analytical approach is also for the sake of the validity of the research. As a more ideal approach for the research question would include the development in institutional trust (decreasing or increasing) amongst the sectarian

groups, the early waves of Arab Barometer have reduced numbers of ethnic groups and are only referring to Muslims or Christians without specifying sectarian identity (e.g., Maronite, Orthodox, Sunni, Shia, etc.). In addition, the operationalization of the dependent variable institutional trust differs in the early waves as well, which would reduce the validity if I chose to deviate from my own operationalization presented in chapter 2.1. Pursuing a limited approach was therefore for the sake of the thesis' validity.

In relation to the reliability of the research, the Arab Barometer is an acknowledged high-quality provider of data on citizens of the Arab world. As I mentioned in the data description, chapter 6.2, the Arab Barometer uses a sampling method to ensure a representative sample of the Lebanese population. In relation to this, I consider the reliability of the data to be satisfactory.

6.7 Summary

This chapter has presented the methodological approach for this thesis research question. The limitation of longitudinal data on individual level compromises the analytical method, and the chosen methodological approach is not the most ideal one. But considering the data limitations and the research question, I have argued that the two-part analysis is the best fit for the purpose of this thesis. The two-part analysis will proceed as follows: The first step will present a graphic illustration of the development of institutional trust from 2006 – 2018 using data from the Arab Barometer (2006;2011;2013;2016;2018). In the same graph, the arrival of Syrian refugees from years 2012 -2017 will be presented by using data from EPR-ER (2017). The purpose of illustrating the two phenomena is to investigate whether a decrease in institutional trust correlates with an increase in Syrian refugees. Part two of the analysis is a OLS regression analysis on the dependent variable *institutional trust*¹⁶ and main independent variable *sectarian denomination*¹⁷ in order to reveal differences in institutional trust amongst the three major sectarian groups in Lebanon. By pursuing this approach, I will be able to assess whether the arrival of Sunni Syrian refugees covaries with a decrease in institutional trust, and whether this decrease is biggest amongst the major political groups in Lebanon that does not share a sectarian identity with the Sunni Syrian refugees.

¹⁶ See chapter 5.5 for description of the dependent variable

¹⁷ See chapter 5.6 for description of the main independent variable

The methodological approach will be a tool in pursuing the following research question: does the ethnic identity of Syrian refugees in Lebanon have an impact on the institutional trust in Lebanon?

With the following hypothesis:

H1: the arrival of a Sunni Syrian Refugee population correlates with a decrease in institutional trust over time

H2: the institutional trust will be lower amongst the Shia Muslim compared to the Sunni population in Lebanon in 2018

H3: the institutional trust will be lower amongst the Maronite Christians compared to the Sunni population in Lebanon

7 Analysis & Discussion

The aim for this chapter is to present the analytical results and discuss the empirical findings in line with the theoretical argument presented in chapter 3 and 4. The empirical analysis will be divided into two parts. In the first part I indicate by using descriptive statistics how the institutional trust has changed in Lebanon from 2006-2018 using the five waves from Arab Barometer as presented in the methodological chapter. In the same graph that I indicate the development of institutional trust, I will also present the influx of Syrian refugees to Lebanon by using data from EPR-ER 2012-2017. The analysis will then move to a regression analysis, where I further investigate the differences in institutional trust amongst sectarian groups within Lebanon. The regression analysis will rely on data from the latest wave of Arab Barometer – wave V.

7.1 Analysis Part 1: Correlation between Institutional Trust and Arrival of Syrian Refugees

As for the first part of the analysis I will present a graphic illustration of the arrival of Syrian refugees from 2012-2017 and the development of institutional trust from 2006-2018. According to H1, the arrival of a Sunni Syrian Refugee population correlates with a decrease in institutional trust over time.

Figure 7.1 Correlation between institutional trust and arrival of Syrian refugees

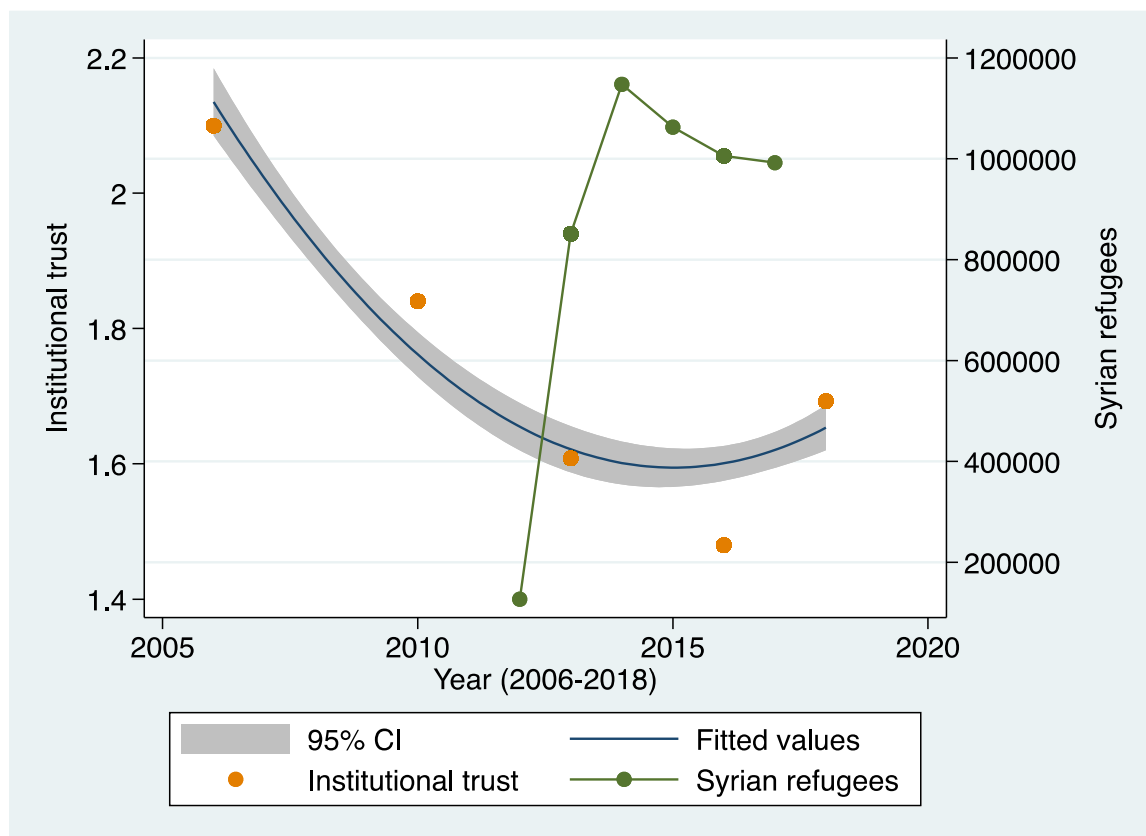


Figure 6.1 presents the development in institutional trust, with values on the Y (1) axis and the amount of registered Syrian refugees in Lebanon along the Y (2) axis. The mean values are plotted in orange for each year with observations: 2006, 2010, 2013, 2016 and 2018. The second Y-axis are values for the number of Syrian refugees registered in Lebanon. Highlighted in grey is the confidence interval, which is a statistical measurement of whether the estimates have true values of the parameter. Based on the graph we find that the estimates are close to the fitted values, indicating that the quality of the findings are sufficient.

7.1.1 Results and Discussion

The mean values for institutional trust in the years between 2006 – 2018 are plotted along the Y (1) axis and have values ranging from 1 to 4, with 1 being no trust at all and 4 indicating a lot of trust. The mean values for each year are 2006=2.1, 2010=1.84, 2013=1.61, 2016=1.48, and 2018=1.693 (see appendix 1 for descriptive statistics). The graph indicates a critical downfall in institutional trust from when the first wave was conducted in 2006 to the fourth wave in 2016. The biggest drop in trust is found between the years of 2006-2010 but considering the year interval being larger between these rounds than other rounds, this might not be the most accurate indicator. The figure shows an interesting development in institutional trust between the years of 2016 and 2018 where there is an increase from a mean of 1.47 in 2016 to 1.69 in 2018. The fitted values are predicted values for development in trust.

Figure 6.1 illustrates a drastic increase in Syrian refugees arriving between 2012 and 2013. The trend is increasing until 2014 when the highest number of refugees with the total amount of 1,147,949 registered by the UNHCR (EPR, 2019). By 2015, the trend has shifted, which was an expected result considering the shift in the political and social attitudes towards the Syrian refugees. The Lebanese government urged the UNHCR to stop registering new Syrian refugees, closed the border between Syria and Lebanon making it challenging for new refugees to arrive (Fakhoury, 2017).

Taken together, there seems to be an overlap in time between the two phenomena of interest: the large influx of Syrian refugees partly coincides with a decline in political trust. However, it is worth noting that there is a probability for several drivers of force for the change in trust. But we cannot totally exclude the hypothesis assuming a correlation between migration and trust over time. This approach is based on a scientific-theoretical approach where we can never prove or confirm a hypothesis and based on Figure 6.1, we cannot throw away a hypothesis assuming a negative correlation between migration flow and institutional trust.

In the following paragraph, I discuss the correlation and draw on examples in which can explain the development in trust and how the high numbers of migration can impact institutional trust. The examples will be linked to the sectarian argument as well as draw on other explanations for the low institutional trust in Lebanon.

In the very beginning of the Syrian civil war when the Syrian refugees fled from the Assad family's regime, the Lebanese government pursued what is referred to as an "open-door" policy for the Syrians in need of relocation. The policy was more of a no-policy, where

Syrians could freely move across the border between Syria and Lebanon without any constraints. The lack of political will and interest to address the high influx was continuous as the monthly average of Syrian arriving was approximately 47,000, which could easily enter Lebanon with any form of ID (Dionigi, 2016, p. 11). "The Treaty of Brotherhood, Cooperation and Coordination" (1992) between the two neighbors are highlighted as one reason for the free movement across the borders, a UN treaty stating that the two countries will cooperate on political, economic and security related matters in order to reach common interests. But as the refugee numbers increased and reached more than a million, there was still little political attention towards the refugee situation from the Lebanese politicians. The shifting governments in Lebanon was a contributing factor to this, being occupied with the handling of internal political disagreements instead.

The lack of political will and capability to address and manage the situation led to frustration amongst the people of Lebanon who experienced increased competition over jobs and resources as a consequence. Lebanon's economy was in a critical downfall and the total number of people living in poverty was increasing by each year (Braithwaite, Chu, Curtis & Ghosn, 2019). As chapter 4.2 noted, how a government chooses to respond to a refugee situation can impact political trust. The arrival of an extreme number of refugees has consequences for the state bureaucracy with an increased demand for management as well as security challenges along the border to hinder a spill-over effect from the conflict. Evidently none of these needs were accommodated in Lebanon, which in mid-2013 the situation escalated with a series of suicide attacks against civilians and the political represented and militant Shia organization Hezbollah openly joined the Syrian conflict (Blanford, 2013). The escalation of the situation in Lebanon called for attention, and in March 2014 a governmental declaration directly addressed the matter and implied that the Syrian would need to return to Syria. The political statement was the first sign of power of action to what had been developing into a humanitarian crisis.

As Figure 6.1 illustrates, the number of refugees peaks and reached almost 1.2 million Syrian refugees in 2014. In May 2014, the Lebanese government started a bigger process of managing the situation with the establishment of an "*inter-ministerial Crisis Cell*" for the purpose of crisis management, a task that had up until now been filled by humanitarian organizations, civil service organizations and even citizens in Lebanon due to the state's political incapability. The process involved a monitoring of the activity along the border, which revealed thousands of refugees travelling back and forth between Lebanon and Syria. As a consequence of the revelations done by the border, the Minister of Interior introduced new regulations for border control, putting down restrictions as for who would get status as a displaced person (Dionigi, 2016, p. 13).

The border restrictions continued when the spill-over effect from Syria became more evident after the attacks against civilians. As a presidential election was approaching in Syria in 2014, the 1 million Syrians now living in Lebanon were given the opportunity to vote from Lebanon, and support marches for the Assad regime found place in Beirut with Syrian refugees participating. The marches contributed to more hostile attitudes towards the refugee population after these incidents, as the fear of what a Senior advisor in the Ministry of Interiors and Municipalities in Lebanon addresses as “sleeping cells” amongst the refugees, meaning supporters of the Syrian regime posing a threat to Lebanon’s stability (Dionigi, 2016, p. 15). The policy changes in what previous had been approached as an act of solidarity between two neighboring countries were now being met with resistance both amongst politicians and civilians, and new restrictive border policies were introduced by the entrance of 2015 involving a full closure of the Lebanon-Syrian border.

The failed government response to the Syrian refugees were in the beginning characterized by the idea that the Syrian conflict would not last as long, just as the other countries affected by the Arabic Spring in 2011. Tunisia, Egypt, Libya and Yemen were all countries in which the effect phased out after a short period of time (Dionigi, 2016, p. 18). But the lack of action is also a symptom of the confessional political system in Lebanon, as all members of the government have to agree on all major political decisions. The system is argued to be highly dysfunctional in such times of crisis, as there are no swift responses from officials when needed (Henley, 2016). As the theoretical arguments on the origin of institutional trust claim, government performance is one mechanism in which can impact institutional trust. Although this analysis will not be able to present any causal relationship between these two phenomena, one might be able to point to the lack of management for the refugee situation as a factor contributing to the decrease in institutional trust.

Although the poor handling of the occurring refugee situation can be a potential contributor to low institutional trust over several years, the characteristics of Lebanon was a corrupt and fragile nation with low state capacity to provide for its own citizens before the Syrian refugees arrived (Bahout, 2016). And as Figure 6.1 illustrate, the institutional trust was decreasing before the refugees arrived from Syria. The arrival of a big refugee population will impact any society in some sorts, in both positive and negative manners, but the capacity of the host state does have an impact as for how big the grievances amongst the host population is (Böhmelt et.al., 2019). Given Lebanon’s demonstrated incapability and the growing hostility towards the Syrian refugee population, it is likely to assume that it has affected the institutional trust in a negative manner.

After the spike in the number of Syrian refugees in 2014, the total number declined due to the new restrictions regarding who can have status as a displaced person¹⁸ and closed borders into Lebanon. If the institutional trust were to covary with the number of refugees in Lebanon, one would expect to find an increase in trust after the trend declines. The increase in trust does not come until 2018, however. If such an effect would occur one would expect the effect to come sooner, but other events or matters could impact institutional trust as well. Of any important political events in which can contribute to explain the lagging effect of increase in trust one can point to the first parliamentary election in five years held in 2018. The election was held on May 6th, 2018, and was the first parliamentary election in nine years, an event that should occur every four years under normal circumstances in Lebanon. The current parliament had extended its mandate on three occasions, and by doing so breaching the constitution, as they could not agree on Maronite-Christian President Suleiman's successor (Rabah, 2018). Giving the Lebanese population the possibility to vote might be a contributing factor to increased institutional trust as it can indicate improvements within the political landscape and opportunities for change for the people of Lebanon. Political events such as elections are a possibility for citizens to take in part in the democratic system, a system reliant on political participation.

7.1.2 Summary Part One

To sum up, the findings in the first analysis presented in figure 6.1 are compatible with the expectations for this part. The institutional trust in Lebanon is not only severely low, but the trust has also experienced a critical decrease since 2006 and up until 2016. For a period of ten years the trend was negative, before it increased with the last observed year of 2018. The findings on the arrival of Syrian refugees are also as expected with a drastic spike in registered refugees between 2012-2013. The results from the development of institutional trust and how it covaries with the influx of Syrian refugees is, however, to a certain degree unexpected, as the increase in trust does not come until three years after the refugee numbers are decreasing. Up until 2015 the institutional trust is declining, the arrival Syrian refugees are increasing, and the discussion has indicated that the lack of political management of the Syrian refugee crisis could be a contributing factor to the low institutional trust.

In the discussion whether other important political events can explain the increased trust I draw on the 2018 election, in which was the first proper parliamentary election in nine

¹⁸ Lebanon has not signed the 1951 UN Geneva Convention but is a part of a Memorandum of Understanding with the UNHCR, dated back to 2003. Lebanon not taking part in the Geneva Convention means that Lebanon is not an asylum country (Fakhory, 2017).

years. Elections are an important feature in democracies and can enhance the institutional trust by signaling functional democratic institutions and an opportunity for the population to take part in the political sphere. The increased effort to tackle the obstacles and challenges with such a high influx of refugees could also have an effect, as the empirical and theoretical evidence suggests that the government response to a refugee situation within the host country could impact institutional trust.

7.2 Analysis Part Two: OLS Regression Analysis

As chapter 6.1 illustrated how the dependent variable, institutional trust, covaries with the arrival of Syrian refugees, this part of the analysis will investigate the theoretical argument on whether the disturbance in sectarian balance will lead to a lower institutional trust amongst the other sectarian groups than the Sunni Muslims. H2 expects a lower trust amongst the Shia Muslims, and H3 expects to find a lower trust amongst the Maronite Christians. This chapter will first present a bivariate regression analysis including main independent variable sectarian denomination only, before the multivariate regression analysis including the control variables as well is conducted.

7.2.1 Bivariate Regression Model

The first regression analysis presented is a bivariate regression model on the dependent variable *institutional trust* and main independent variable *sectarian denomination* without including any of the other independent variable. A simple linear regression model examines the relationship between X and Y with the mathematical phrase $Y = f(x)$, meaning changes in Y are a function of changes in X (Mehmetoglu & Jakobsen, 2017, p. 47).

Table 7.2 Bivariate regression model on institutional trust and sectarian denomination

	Model 1 ¹⁹	Model 2 ²⁰	Model 3 ²¹
Maronite	0.108 (2.27) *		-0.047 (0.96)
Shia	0.155 (3.24) **	0.047 (0.96)	
Sunni		-0.108 (2.27) *	-0.155 (3.24) **
Other	-0.113 (2.26) *	-0.221 (4.28) **	-0.268 (5.16) **
Constant	1.770 (54.52) **	1.877 (54.31) **	1.925 (54.86) **
R^2	0.03		
N	1,199	1,199	1,199

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

The bivariate regression model presents the relationship between sectarian denomination (x) and institutional trust (y) amongst the Lebanese population with total N=2393. Model 1 can be interpreted as follows. With Sunni Muslim as a ref. category, the category "Maronite" has a positive value of 0.108. The "Shia" category has a positive value of 0.155, and category "other" has a negative value of -0.113. All categories are significant with a p-value <0.05.

By using "Sunni" as reference category, the results can be interpreted as "if you have the categorical value of Maronite/Shia/other". In so, if the respondent is Maronite, it has a positive effect on institutional trust, meaning the institutional trust will be higher. The effect is 0.108, meaning people with sectarian identity as "Maronites" will give an increase in institutional trust by absolute value of 10.8. Meanwhile, if the respondent is "Shia", it will have a positive effect with an increase in institutional trust by 15.5.

Model 2 presents a regression analysis with category "Maronite" as a reference category. Category "Sunni" has a negative value of -0.108, and category "Shia" has a positive value of 0.047. Category "Other" has also a negative coefficient of -0.221. The model indicate that all of the categories have positive effect when compared to the Maronite category.

¹⁹ Ref.cat. = Sunni

²⁰ Ref.cat. = Maronite

²¹ Ref.cat. = Shia

The category Sunni has a negative effect on institutional trust by 10.8, and the category Shia has a positive effect with a 4.7 increase in institutional trust. If the respondent has one of the sectarian denominations included in the category "other", the effect is negative as well with a decrease by 22.1.

The last model in the bivariate analysis, Model 3, has category "Shia" (3) as reference category which finds a negative effect on the category "Maronite" with a coefficient of -0.047. The category "Sunni" is also negative with a coefficient of -0.155. When comparing to the "Shia" category, the other categories will in so have a decreasing effect on institutional trust, further on being 4.7 for Maronite, 15.5 for Sunni and 26.8 for other sectarian denominations.

Based on the three models we can withdraw information as for how the political trust varies between the three major political represented sectarian groups in Lebanon. The three different bivariate models with different ref. categories have put forward a small difference in the variation in institutional trust amongst the major sectarian groups in Lebanon. Whereas the hypothesis was expecting to find a lower institutional trust amongst Maronite Christians and Shia Muslims, the expected effect is not to be found in any of the models. When using Sunni (2) as a reference category in model 2 the effect is both positive for category Maronite (1) and Shia (3). In model 1 and model 3, where the reference category is set to Maronite (1) and Shia (3), the effect of Sunni is negative in both models. This indicates a lower institutional trust amongst the Sunni Muslims.

In order to account for further measurements that can affect the relationship between X and Y, the multivariate analysis will be conducted.

7.2.2 Multivariate Regression Model

The multivariate regression analysis includes the independent variables and the control variables left out in the bivariate analysis²². The model presents a positive effect of the category (1) Maronite and (3) Shia when compared to category (2) Sunni, with a coefficient of 0.123 for Maronite and 0.170 for Shia. The effect on institutional trust is greater amongst the Shia than the Maronite and is positive compared to the Sunni category. For category 4, other, the coefficient is negative, indicating a negative effect amongst the other sectarian groups²³. The coefficient value is -0.089, giving a decrease in institutional trust by 8.9. The coefficient for "Maronite" indicates a 12.3 increase in institutional trust and

²² See chapter 5.6 for independent variables and control variables.

²³ Other groups are orthodox, catholic, Armenian, Druze, other people who have identified as just a Muslim.

"Shia" indicates a greater increase by 17. Regarding the results for the main independent variable sectarian denomination, only category "Maronite" and "Shia" are statistically significant with a p-value <0.01 for "Shia" and <0.05 for "Maronite".

Regarding the control variables, the multivariate analysis indicates significant findings for age with a negative coefficient of -0.03. A one unit increase in age will in so have a negative effect on institutional trust in Lebanon by 0.3. a quite small effect. The relation between variable *woman* and *institutional trust* is negative but is not statistically significant. The variable *education* is a dummy set and must be interpreted as compared with those who have a Bachelor's degree. Out of the 5 categories, only basic education and Master's degree is statistically significant. Both significant categories have positive values, with .152 for basic education and .204 for Master's degree. The effect of education can be interpreted as when comparing with respondents having a Bachelor's degree, those with a Master's degree have higher levels of institutional trust. The same goes for those who have answered basic education, but with a smaller effect of 15.2 compared to those with a Master's degree.

Control variable governorate must be read as compared to the residents of Mount Lebanon as Mount Lebanon is the reference category. Out of seven governorates, only three categories are statistically significant: 3. Bekaa (p-value <0.01), 4. Baalbek (p-value <0.01) and 5. Beirut (p-value <0.05). The results for Bekaa indicate a positive effect on institutional trust compared to residents in the Mount Lebanon region, whereas the results for (4) Baalbek has a negative effect with the coefficient being -0.270. Respondents living in Baalbek has therefore a negative effect on institutional trust compared to those living in Mount Lebanon. The effect is also negative for Beirut, with a coefficient of -0.140, giving a decrease in institutional trust amongst population living in Beirut compared to Mount Lebanon. Explanatory power of the model is shown by the value of $R^2=0.08$, meaning the regression model explains 8% of the variance on the dependent variable *institutional trust*.

7.2.3 Summary Part Two

Before I move over to discuss the findings from both parts of the analysis, I will sum up the results from the regression analysis presented in table 7.3 I have conducted a limited regression analysis in order to investigate differences in institutional trust amongst the three major ethnic identity groups in Lebanon. H2 and H3 expected to find a negative effect amongst the Maronites and Shia's due to the Syrian refugees' ethnic kinship with the Sunni population. Results from the regression analysis, both bivariate and multivariate, does however reveal the opposite of the expected effect. The categories Maronite and Shia have

a positive effect, and the Sunni have a negative effect. The effect is not substantially affected by any of the control variables²⁴.

²⁴ In order to investigate the effect of the control variables I conducted regression analysis where I left out each control variables to see if there were any specific variable that affected the relationship between the dependent and independent. No substantial effect was found.

Table 7.3 Multivariate Regression Model

	Model 4
Sect²⁵	
Maronite	0.123 (2.08) *
Shia	0.170 (2.62) **
Other	-0.089 (1.43)
Woman	
	-0.004 (0.13)
Age	
	-0.003 (2.15) *
Education²⁶	
No education	-0.025 (0.14)
Elementary education	-0.048 (0.65)
Basic education	0.152 (2.81) **
Secondary education	0.051 (1.14)
Master's degree	0.204 (3.00) **
Governorate²⁷	
Akkar	0.083 (1.01)
North	-0.066 (1.01)
Bekaa	0.303 (3.90) **
Baalbek	-0.270 (3.04) **
Beirut	-0.140 (2.13) *
South	0.111 (1.54)
Nabatieh	-0.025 (0.27)
_cons	1.823 (23.12) **
R ²	0.08
N	1,199

* $p < 0.05$; ** $p < 0.01$

7.3 Robustness Tests

Robustness tests are included as a way to make sure the results from the OLS regression model are the same with different analytical approaches. If the robustness test presents the same result, there are more reason to believe that we can trust the results. In order to control the effect a logistic regression model will be conducted, in addition to predict values for each operationalization of institutional trust amongst each sectarian group. A logistic regression model and a linear regression model cannot be directly compared due to the fundamental logic differences. In a logistic regression, the regression method is maximum likelihood, calculating the likelihood of $Y=1$ on a dichotomous variable (Ringdal 2007). One can however look at whether the coefficient is positively or negatively signed, and the significant level. As appendix 3 presents, both categories are positive when compared to Sunni category, but only Shia category is statistically significant. The results indicates however that a Shia respondent has a higher likelihood in being in category 1=trust.

Another robustness test I have conducted is predicting values for each sectarian group on each indicator of institutional trust included in the dependent variable. The results from this robustness test indicates that Shia Muslims have higher levels of trust in 4 out of 6 indicators of institutional trust. Sunni Muslims has the highest level of trust in president/prime minister, and Maronites have higher levels of trust in local government. The results from the robustness tests are considered sufficient.

7.4 Discussion

The main argument for this thesis is that the sectarian identity of the Syrian refugee population will impact institutional trust in Lebanon because they share ethnic kinship with one of the major ethno-political groups in Lebanon. The theoretical support for the argument is complex and consistent of numerous aspects, but the core is in the cultural aspect of what creates institutional trust (Mishler & Rose, 2001, p. 31-32) and the fact that the Syrian refugees contribute to a disturbance in the sectarian balance. In context of the political system in Lebanon where the different sectarian groups are granted political power based on the size of each group²⁸ and based on the cultural theories on origins of institutional trust, the effect was expected to vary amongst the sectarian politized groups

²⁵ Ref.cat. = Sunni

²⁶ Ref.cat= Bachelor's degree

²⁷ Rec.cat. = Mt. Lebanon

²⁸ See Figure 2.1 for an overview of the political system in Lebanon

because the arrival of such a big group of Sunni Muslims threatens the ethno-political system and undermines two sectarian groups which have had political power throughout history. Refugee identity and the factor of shared ethno-religious kinship I argued would impact institutional trust in a negatively manner amongst specific sectarian groups. As the majority of the Syrian refugees were Sunni Muslims and so shared ethno-religious kinship with a central sectarian group in Lebanon, the effect was expected to be negative amongst the other major central sectarian groups in Lebanon. The Maronite Christians and Shia Muslims are two out of three central political groups in Lebanon as they hold the positions as president (held by Maronites) and speaker of parliament (held by Shia).

In chapter 7.3, the analytical results from part two was presented. This chapter will discuss the findings in light of the theoretical framework repeated above and answer whether the assumptions made can be confirmed or not. As the research question is interested in looking into to whether the arrival of refugees from Syria to Lebanon has affected the institutional trust in Lebanon, the discussion is focused on the findings are able to answer the research question and in addition present alternative explanations. Alternative explanations are presented due to the lack of causality in the analysis.

7.4.1 The Ethnic Identity of Syrian Refugees

The sectarian majority/minority argument made has its theoretical support in the literature claiming a cultural approach to what originates institutional trust. Hypotheses 2 and 3 were concerning this argument, expecting to find a difference in trust amongst the sectarian denominations, assuming that the losing ethnic groups of sectarian power have lower institutional trust than the winning group. As the results indicate in model 4, the expected effect of the sectarian denomination is not found. The effect is somewhat the opposite of what is expected when looking into differences between Sunni and Shia, as Shia has a positive effect compared to Sunni. Even though the effect was not found between the sectarian groups, Figure 6.1 indicates a correlating effect between the arrival of refugees. Based on this, we cannot discard the null hypothesis that there is not an effect of Syrian refugees on institutional trust.

As this analysis has presented that being a Shia compared to a Sunni has a positive effect on institutional trust in 2018, arguments for how this can be will now be presented. First, the Shia Muslim community benefitted a great deal from the new distribution of power in 1989. It was in the redistribution that the decision that all major political decisions needed to have a two-third majority of the votes in the Council of Ministers, indirectly meaning that the President, Prime Minister and Speaker of Parliament were granted veto power in

all tremendous political decisions of Lebanon (Bahout, 2016, p. 10). At first glance, the power seemed to benefit the Sunni community, but experiences have demonstrated that the Shia speaker of Parliament was what Bahout (2016) refers to as “the ultimate kingmaker.” The speaker was, amongst other things, granted a longer term of four years and extensive control over the legislative activity, enhancing the positions influence on the other Shia ministers and parliamentarians (Bahout 2016, p. 10). Simultaneously, the Shia Hezbollah movement, backed by the regional power Iran, labeled a terror organization and a global threat by the US, has a political role in Lebanon greater than ever (Perry & Francis, 2020).

«At the center of tensions, holding the key to both chaos and peace is Hezbollah» (Vohra, 2020). The statement emphasizes the powerful position the Shia-supporting Hezbollah movement has in the country. From 2005, the group was established in Lebanese politics, and up until now, the political power has been strengthened from 14 parliamentary seats back in 2005 to a Parliamentary majority together with allied parties in 2018 (Reuters, 2020). The political representation of Hezbollah could indicate a strengthened Shia above the other ethnic groups, although one need to be careful of comparing the Shia community directly with the Hezbollah. Strengthened representation amongst ethnic groups can arguably contribute to increased levels of institutional trust and lower trust amongst the other groups due to inequality between majority/minority groups in political representation (Flesken & Hartl, 2020). The increased political power in favor of the Shia community by a strengthen Hezbollah representative can potentially be a contributing factor for why the Shia community has increased levels of trust compared to the Sunni.

As the empirical studies and theoretical arguments have pointed out, institutional trust can be affected by a government’s response to a refugee situation in the host country. On discussion of the findings from part one of the analysis, I drew on the factor of government response to the high influx of refugees and why the numbers were decreasing after 2015. Seeing this up against the results from the past two analyses, indicating that Shia Muslims have more institutional trust than Maronite Christians and Sunni Muslims, one can arguably draw a link between the lack of political will to tackle the refugee crisis and the higher levels of trust amongst the Shia Muslims. It has been in the Shia’ and Maronites’ interests to constrain the impact of the Syrian refugees on the Lebanese society (Fakhoury, 2017). The more they limit the Syrian Sunni Muslims’ socio-economic impact on Lebanon, the less disturbance is followed as they will not have any civil rights and little opportunity to engage more in the society (Janmyr, 2016). The government response would be within the Shia groups’ interest, and political outputs in line with sectarian interests could explain why Shia and Maronites have more institutional trust than Sunni.

Out of alternative explanations for why the effect is not found, we can, amongst other, point to a weakness regarding the theoretical argument of a shift in powers in ethnopolitical states. The presented argument is based on an experienced shift in power, but the shift has not taken place, only an assumption that this could be a consequence of the high influx of Syrian refugees. A destabilized political system is what the Lebanese officials are desperately trying to avoid by not giving the arriving refugees civil rights in Lebanon. They had the same approach with the Palestinian refugees arriving in mid 1900, and they are desperately trying to avoid a holistic integration of the Syrian refugees by working towards a solution to return them to Syria (Fakhoury, 2017). Although, the Sunni representatives have had a more positive attitude towards the refugees than the Shia and Maronite due to their common ethnic kinship (Empatika & UNDP, 2019). The missing aspect of the actual redistribution could explain the lack of the expected effect, even though the theoretical argument on perceived threat was considered robust enough to assume that the effect would be found. The evidence from the Lebanese civil war when Palestinian Sunni Muslims contributed to a sectarian disturbance and political turmoil was also empirical support of the assumption (Christophersen, 2013).

The effect on institutional trust can arguably be absent because the shift has not happened – potentially only a perceived threat of a power shift. A potential effect if the Syrian and Palestinian refugees were given civil rights to vote and participate in the Lebanese democracy would be an increased demand for a new official census. In chapter 3, I touched upon the peace agreement that laid the foundation for the sectarian distribution of power was based on an official census from 1932. A new census would potentially present new demographic development, threatening to destabilize the peace agreement. The 1989 agreement did, however, put forward a statement that future demographics developments should not affect the new elements redistributing power, but the fear of a sectarian disturbance in Lebanon has grown, especially amongst the Christians and Shia communities (European Parliament, 2017). As a potential outcome of a new census is a more significant majority amongst the Sunni Muslims, the power shift would involve a more remarkable political power in favor of them. The Lebanese civil war²⁹ was much rooted in the desire for more power in favor of the Muslim community and is also considered to be the beginning of a pre-eminent battle between Sunni and Shia Muslims (Bahout 2016). The sectarian tensions were on the rise both in Lebanon and in the Middle Eastern before the refugees arrived, but the flow of Sunni Muslims has arguably contributed to worsen the status quo.

²⁹ See chapter 3.2.2 for details on the Lebanese civil war.

Despite the findings from part two, which demonstrated a positive effect of Shia on institutional trust, the first part of the analysis presented, as expected, critically low values of institutional trust independently of a sectarian group. Therefore, the following subchapter will discuss the consequences of low institutional trust in Lebanon.

7.4.2 Trust: an Absent Key Cornerstone in Lebanon?

Robust findings in this thesis do not confirm the sectarian argument of shared ethnic kinship between a refugee population and host population. However, I have to some extent presented a correlation between the arrival of refugees and institutional trust. Within the academic literature of institutional trust, both horizontal and vertical trust have been emphasized to be in place for stable and effective democracies to flourish. Trust between the people and the political system and trust between the people of Lebanon themselves have been absent with a recent civil war and regional and internal political tension in Lebanon's luggage. Bahout (2016) argues that Lebanon's ethnopolitical system needs to fulfill some conditions to be sustainable. He highlights the regions' role and how stable and peaceful the regional environment is in economic growth and a functioning redistribution system to ensure a socioeconomic balance. The three conditions have not found a place in Lebanon, offering an explanation of the low institutional trust. When examining impacts on institutional trust in the context of Lebanon, it is clear that several aspects of the Lebanese situation can contribute to explaining the low institutional trust. Chapter 5 touched upon how the economic development of a country can be a significant factor for institutional trust and how the institutional design can be just as significant in emerging democracies. Previous research on Lebanon has demonstrated satisfaction with neither of these elements, and the economic development in Lebanon has reached a critical point where there is an increase in the number of people living in poverty (Kelley, 2017, p.94).

Even though this analysis has not been able to empirically suggest a causal relationship between the two phenomena, the effect of the Syrian refugees can arguably be a contributor to strengthen the effect of the socio-economic situation in Lebanon (Harb, 2021). As touched upon in chapter 5, Jacobsen (2002) identified the three main challenges for a refugee-hosting state, identifying how demanding managing a refugee arrival is on the state apparatus. The extreme number of refugees would be most likely to put pressure on the host state in any given context, but one can argue Lebanon had very low prerequisites to manage the situation as Jacobsen (2002) describes. Lebanon finds itself in a situation where the state needs to handle an extreme high influx of refugees as any

other host-country would need to, but the sectarian tensions the influx has led to increased demand for political action from a paralyzed state system.

7.4.3 Concluding Remarks

As the discussion is coming to an end, I would like to emphasize the limitations. Even though the analysis indicates a correlating effect between institutional trust and the arrival of Syrian refugees, it does not show the development in institutional trust amongst the different sectarian denominations due to data limitations. The regression analysis only indicates how the situation was in 2018 and not to what extent the development in trust varies amongst the sectarian groups. Limitations of the results are therefore comprehensive, as more extensive data on the sectarian groups could present trust amongst the sectarian groups before and after refugee arrival, allowing us to compare the development in trust by ethnic group. The level of ambition for this thesis was high as there are little empirical research done on this topic, and the region of interest is a challenging and comprehensive region to conduct research on. However, the analysis and discussion have presented a correlating effect.

The analysis followed by a discussion have, despite its limitations, presented two central findings. 1) There is an expected correlation between decreasing institutional trust and the arrival of Syrian refugees between 2011 and 2014. The correlating effect does not necessarily mean that the institutional trust decreases because of the Syrian refugees, and as the discussion in both part one and two debates in line with the institutional theory on origins institutional trust claim, there are indicators that the argument of government response to the humanitarian situation offers a solid explanation for how the refugee arrival can have a negative effect on institutional trust. The ethnic aspect is, however, not to be avoided, as the government response is argued to be colored by the reluctance of Shia and Christian political representatives to offer the Syrian a comprehensive solution (Hourani & van Vliet, 2014). This effect is however not tested in the analysis, but the discussion has presented potential explanations for this effect.

The main goal with this thesis was to use Lebanon as an extreme case to test a general theoretical argument for how the ethnic identity of a refugee population can impact institutional trust in a power-sharing state. Building on traditional literature on origins of institutional trust and the ethnopolitical mechanism and putting in a power-sharing context, I argued a shared ethnic kinship between the Sunni Syrian refugees and Sunni host population would create a sectarian disturbance and further impact institutional trust amongst the host population. The ethnic group which did not share ethnic kinship with the

refugee population would have lower levels of trust because of a perceived threat towards their political position. As the results and discussion have expressed, the general argument of this effect could not be confirmed by testing it on Lebanon. Nevertheless, there is a correlating effect between the arrival of Syrian refugees and institutional trust in Lebanon.

8 Conclusion

Societal impacts of refugees on host communities are mainly referred to as a European and Western problem. Key findings from the research suggest an effect of refugee arrival on institutional trust. In addition, an increasing amount of literature on migration research has for the last decade emphasized the importance of using an ethnic lens when researching refugee impact on host communities (Rüegger & Bohnet, 2018). Taking the ethnic affiliation of a refugee population into account when exploring refugee impacts on host communities have for the last years gained support, and I aimed to contribute to this literature by putting the spotlight on the Syrian refugee crisis in Lebanon. I have presented an argument on how the ethnic identity of refugees can impact institutional trust in power-sharing states by drawing from origins of institutional trust and the cultural and institutional approach, in addition to include the mechanism of ethnopolitical power shifts and ingroup-outgroup literature. According to the ethnopolitical mechanism, a shift in power can lead to a decrease in institutional trust amongst the ethnic groups that lose power and increased levels of trust among the group that gains power (Karklins, 1994). Based on the theoretical assumptions and previous empirical research, I expected to find a correlation between the arrival of refugees and decreasing levels of institutional trust, and lower levels of institutional trust amongst the two ethnic groups Maronites and Shia. In order to test the argument, I chose the case of Lebanon due to the countries' ethnopolitical power system and its high influx of Syrian refugees after the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011.

This thesis has aimed to answer the following research question: *Does the ethnic identity of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon impact institutional trust in Lebanon?*

By using data from five waves of the Arab Barometer and the EPR-ER (2018) data set, I separated my analytical approach in two parts. In the first part, I presented how the two phenomena of institutional trust in Lebanon and arrival of Syrian refugees correlates over time. Results from the first part of the analysis presented a correlating effect up until 2014 when the Lebanese open-door policy changed and initiated a more restrictive policy towards the refugee population, which I discussed was due to increased tensions between the host population and refugee population, an effect especially observed between the Shia and Sunni groups. For the second part of the analysis, I executed a simple multivariate regression analysis to investigate the differences in institutional trust in Lebanon. Results from the regression analysis did not confirm the assumption of negative effect of Maronite and Shia, and further positive effect of Sunni. Even though I am not able to make a causal

claim between these phenomena, I do not have the grounds to reject a null hypothesis stating that there is no effect at all, either.

The data limitations on this topic have contributed to a limited analytical approach. An ideal operationalization would have presented more substantial findings by including variables on the individual level describing contact with refugees and looking into changes in effect on institutional trust. Despite these limitations, I have contributed with increased knowledge of how we can account for the ethnic identity of refugees in host states with a political system of power sharing. The presented theoretical argument can be used to test other refugee hosting states with power-sharing and is not just a statement that only can be adapted when researching Lebanon. In relation to the traditional literature on political trust, I have contributed to the support of the previous claim made before me that the traditional theory is not sufficient alone to explain institutional trust in states with power-sharing between ethnic groups. Future research on this topic can pursue the mechanisms presented in this thesis to a greater extent. A comparative analysis on refugee hosting states, both with and without the ethno-political aspect, could provide more extensive information. A qualitative approach in Lebanon could also be meaningful. In-depth interviews of the Lebanese population and their subjective experiences of the refugee arrival and whether it has had an impact on their political attitudes could be the subject for future research.

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Appendix

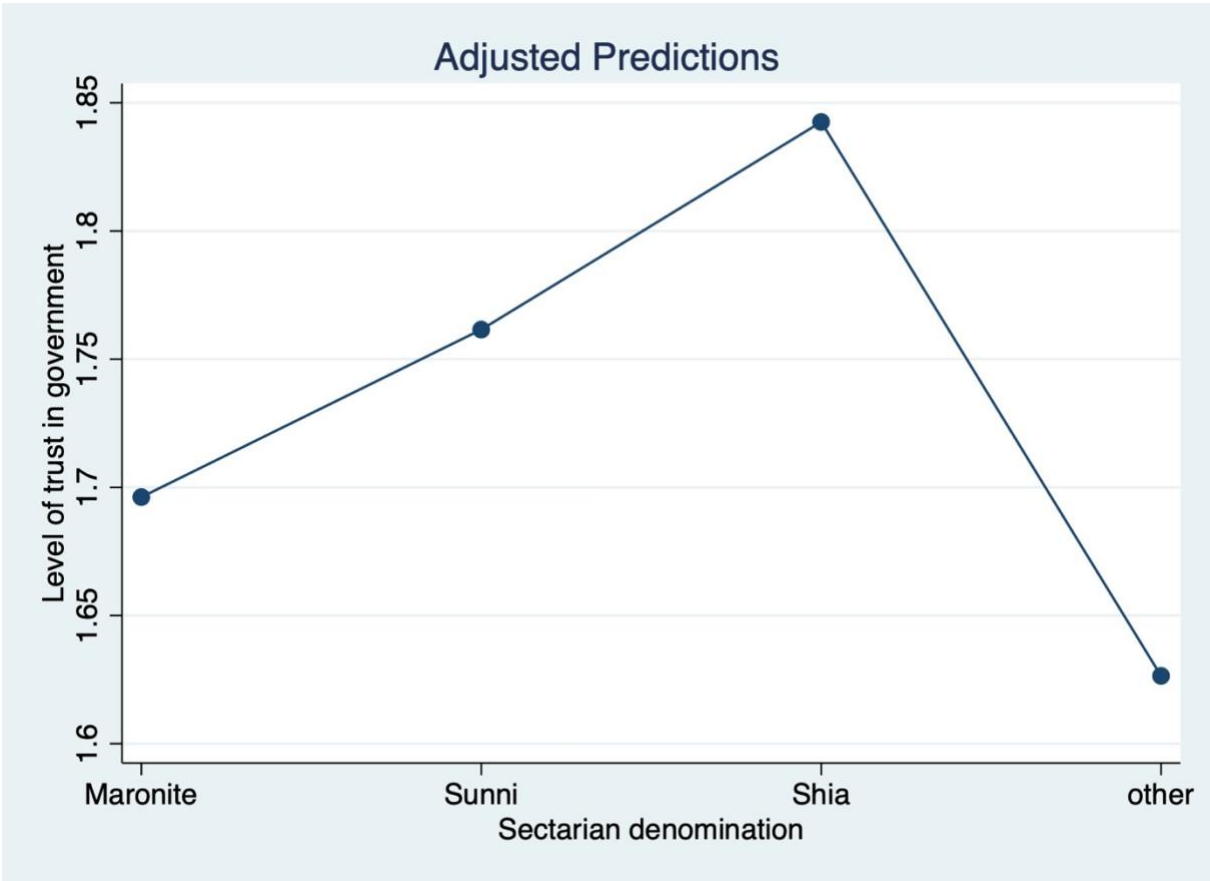
Appendix 1 Descriptive statistics used in analysis part 1

Trust in parliament	N	Mean	Min	Max
2006	1164	2.1	1	4
2008	1371	1.84	1	4
2013	1192	1.608	1	4
2016	1194	1.48	1	4
2018	2398	1.693	1	4

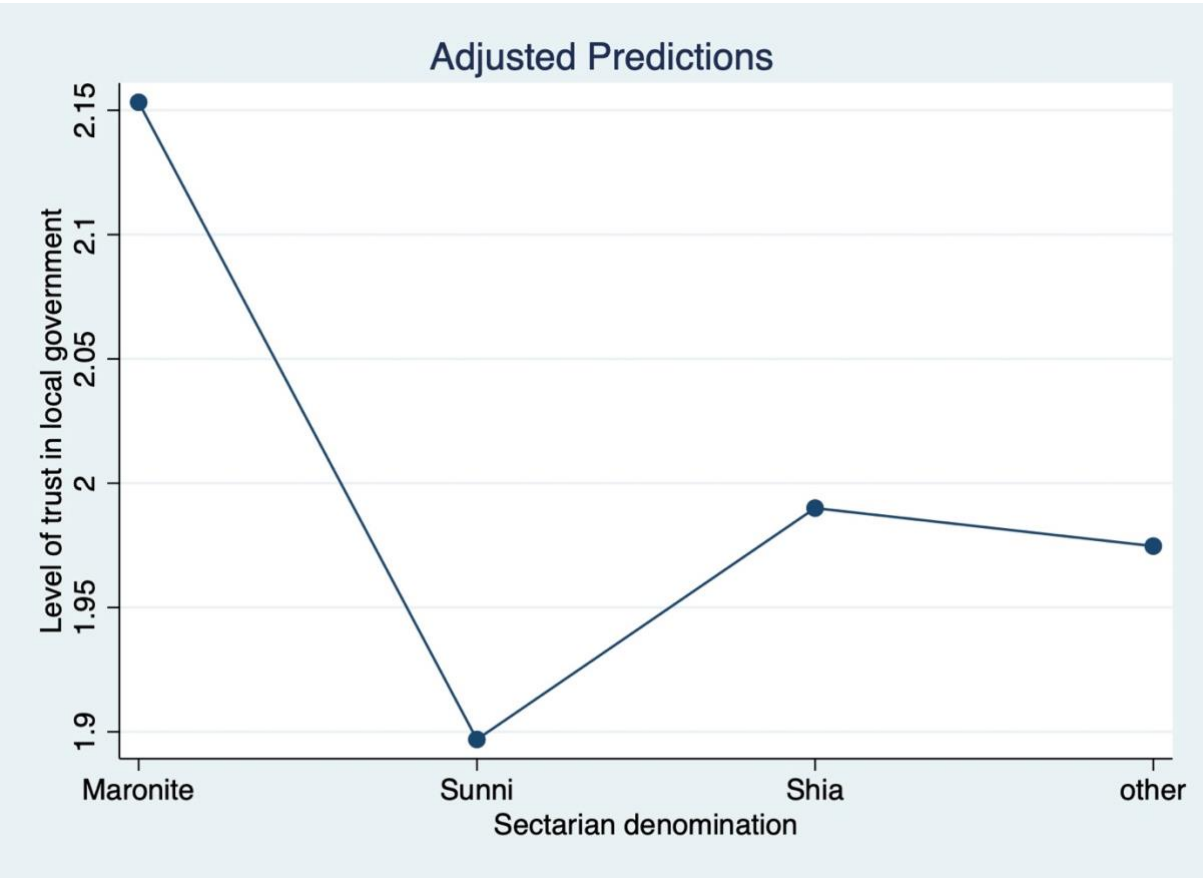
Appendix 2 Robustness test 1

This appendix presents the predicted values for each measurement of institutional trust included in the scale institutional trust.

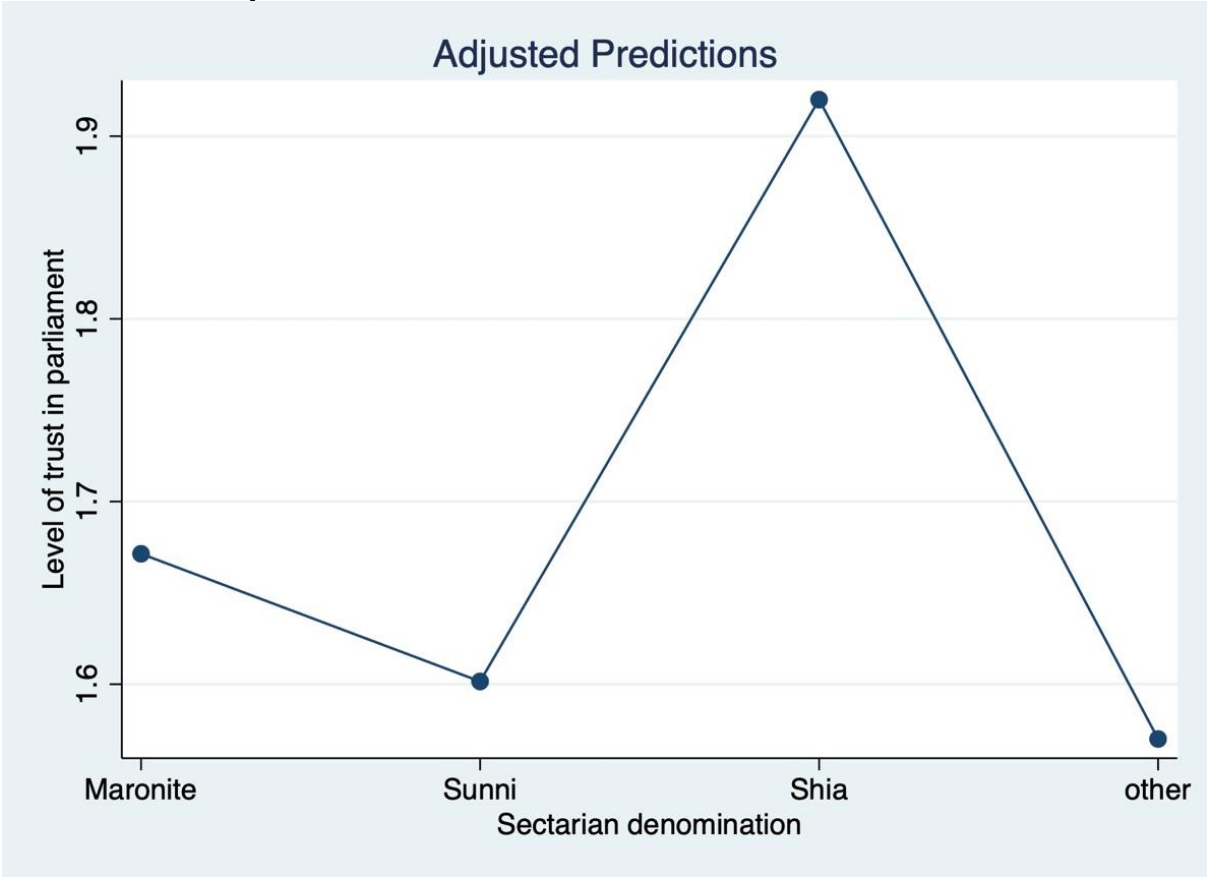
Level of trust in government



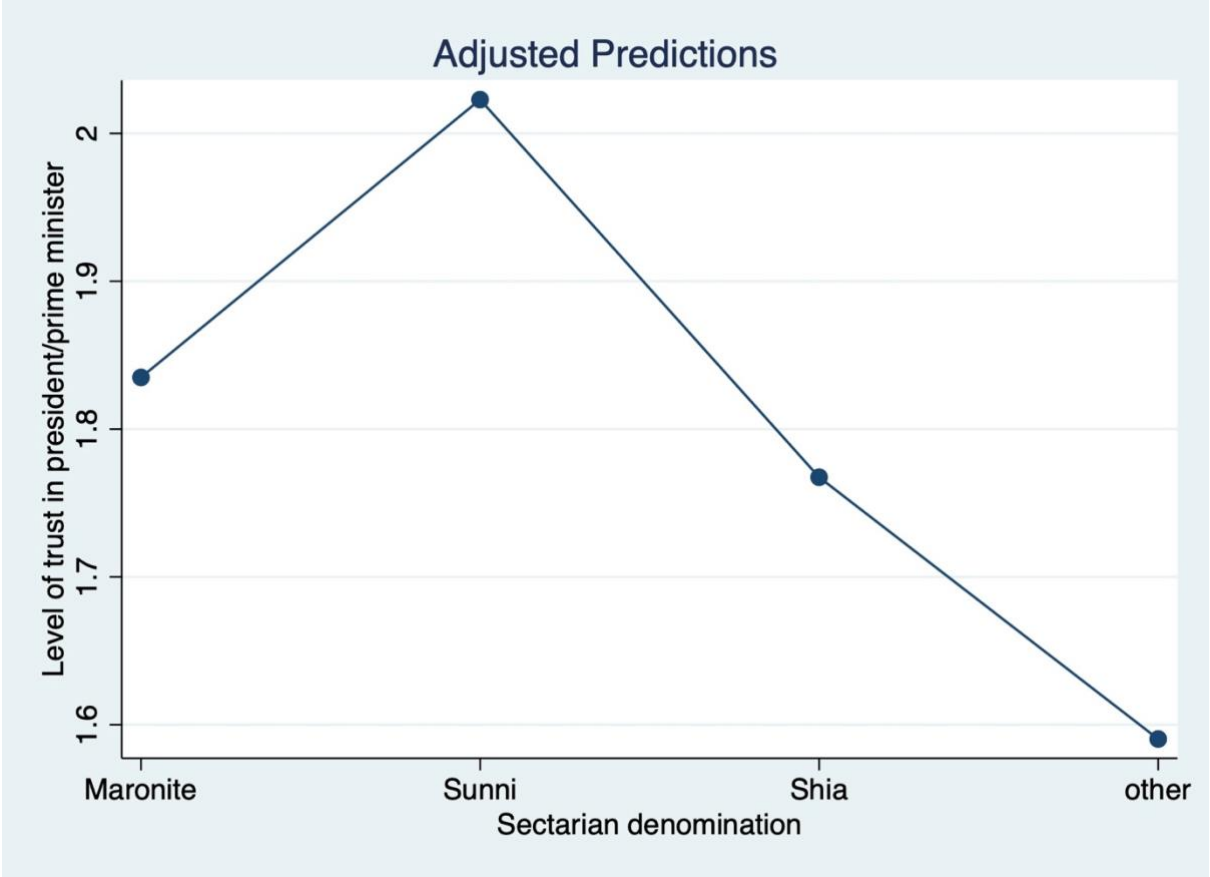
Level of trust in local government



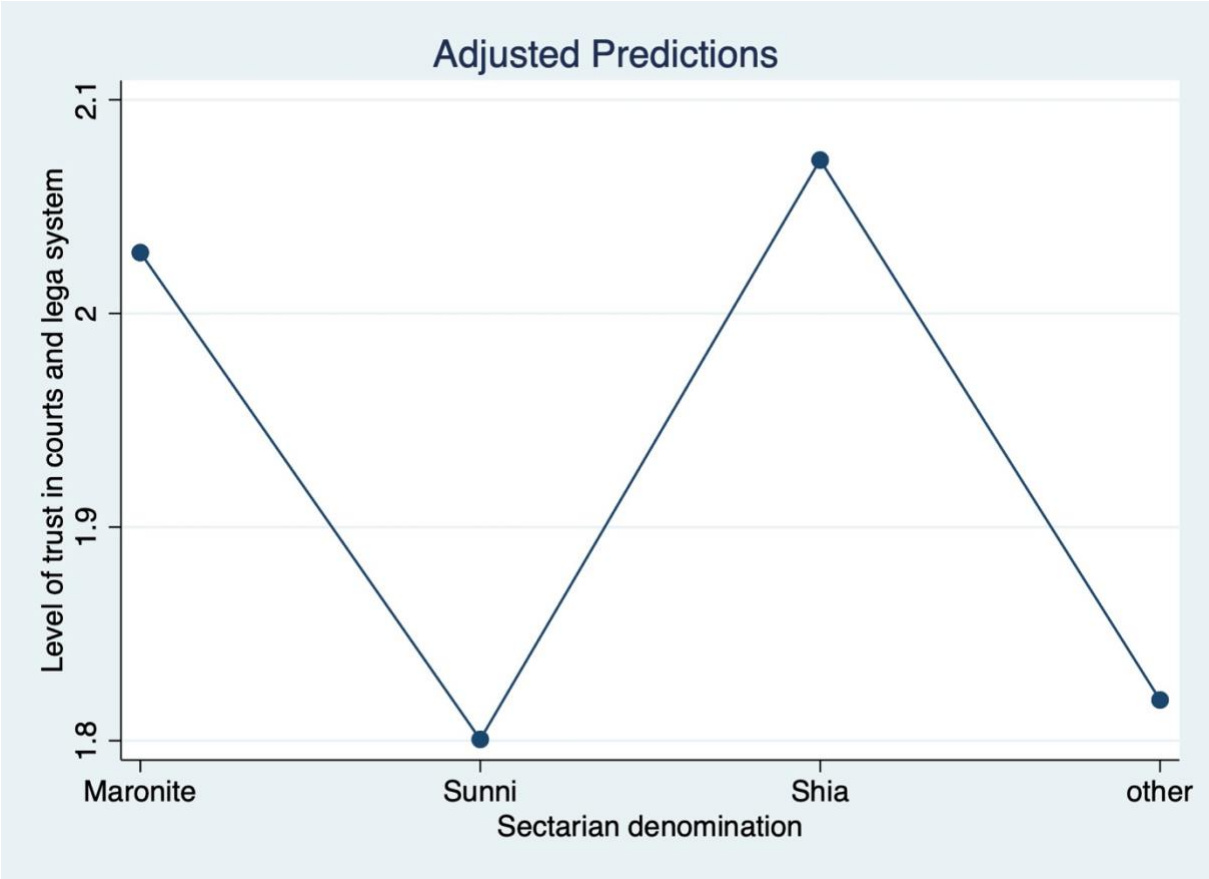
Level of trust in parliament



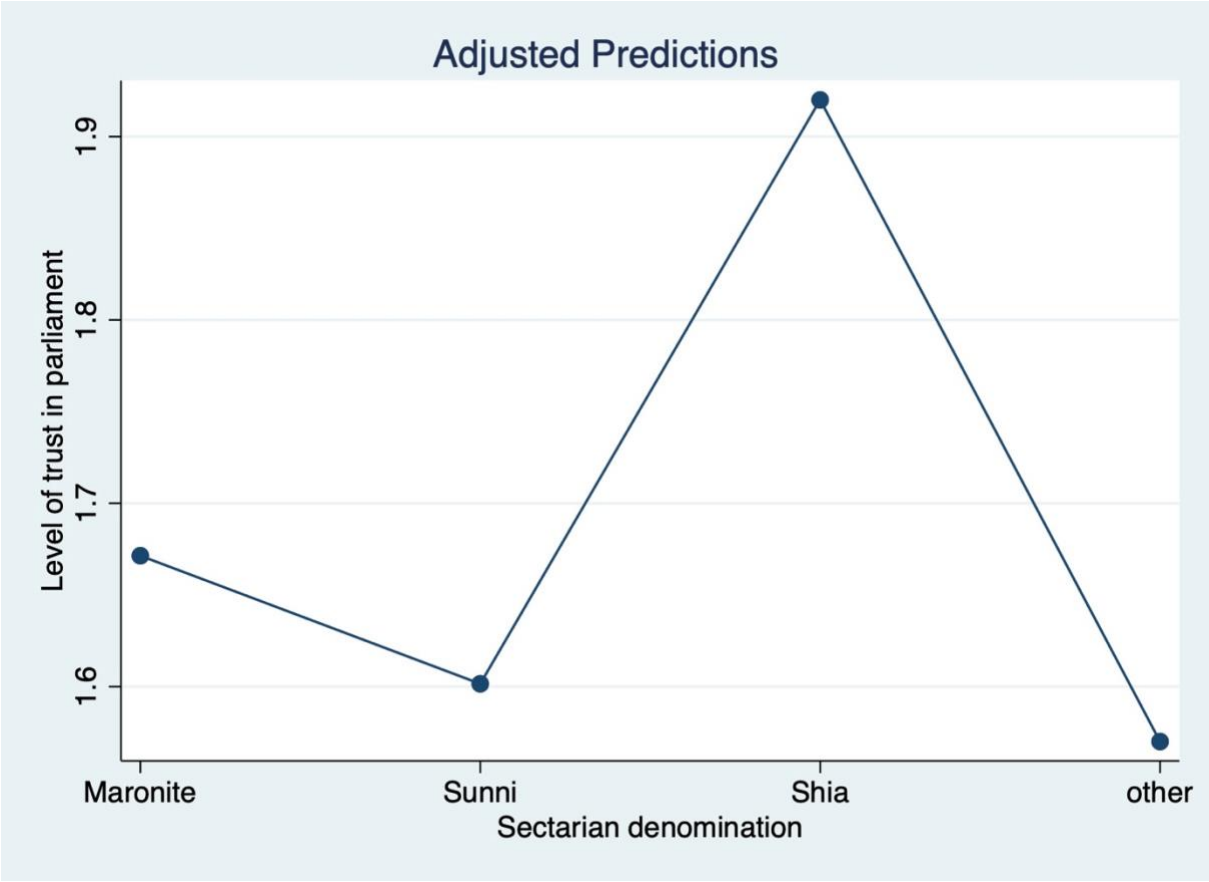
Level of trust in president/prime minister



Level of trust in courts and legal system



Level of trust in political parties



Appendix 3 Robustness test 2

Logistic regression analysis with a dichotomous operationalization of the dependent variable institutional trust.
(0= no trust, 1=trust).

Institutional trust	Coef.	St.Err.	t-value	p-value	[95% Conf	Interval]	Sig
1.sect	.271	.232	1.17	.243	-.184	.726	
2b.sect	0	.	.	.	.	.
3.sect	.562	.248	2.27	.023	.076	1.047	**
4.sect	.028	.249	0.11	.911	-.459	.515	
woman	.001	.136	0.01	.991	-.264	.267	
education	.068	.072	0.94	.347	-.074	.21	
age	-.007	.005	-1.36	.173	-.018	.003	
100001.governorate	.5	.314	1.59	.111	-.115	1.116	
100002.governorate	-.194	.274	-0.71	.48	-.73	.343	
100003.governorate	.996	.275	3.62	0	.457	1.534	***
100004.governorate	-.886	.385	-2.30	.021	-1.639	-.132	**
100005.governorate	.086	.259	0.33	.739	-.422	.595	
100006b.governorate	0	.	.	.	.	.
100007.governorate	.383	.264	1.45	.147	-.135	.9	
100008.governorate	.167	.334	0.50	.618	-.489	.822	
Constant	-1.39	.482	-2.88	.004	-2.335	-.446	***
Mean dependent var		0.257	SD dependent var		0.437		
Pseudo r-squared		0.036	Number of obs		1199.000		
Chi-square		49.165	Prob > chi2		0.000		
Akaike crit. (AIC)		1345.141	Bayesian crit. (BIC)		1416.391		

*** $p < .01$, ** $p < .05$, * $p < .1$

