

Differences and similarities in the explanation of ethnic minority groups' trust in the police

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Maarten Van Craen

KU Leuven, Belgium

Wesley G. Skogan

Northwestern University, USA

Abstract

Little is yet known about which factors influence the trust in the police of different ethnic minorities in European countries. This article is a step towards filling in that gap. To assess differences and similarities in the explanation of minority groups' trust, we replicated a recent study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the Belgian police (Van Craen, 2013). The study on which we report here shifted the focus from traditional minority groups in Belgium to a new immigrant group: Polish immigrants. We anticipated that our findings would depart in two ways. We hypothesized that social capital and perceptions of discrimination would not play an important role in the explanation of Polish immigrants' trust in the Belgian police. Regression analyses on data gathered in the city of Antwerp ($N = 418$) suggest that there is no correlation between Polish immigrants' social capital and their trust in law enforcement. However, perceptions of discrimination are a key explanatory factor for this minority group too. Implications for theorization and research are discussed.

Keywords

Discrimination, police, procedural justice, social capital, trust

Maarten Van Craen is a FWO-supported postdoctoral researcher.

Corresponding author:

Maarten Van Craen, Leuven Institute of Criminology (LINC), KU Leuven, Herbert Hooverplein 10, B-3000 Leuven, Belgium.

Email: maarten.vancraen@law.kuleuven.be

Introduction

In recent years, major riots in London (2011) and Paris (2005) have revealed that the relationship between ethnic minority groups and the police in big European cities is characterized by severe tension (Mucchielli, 2009; Singh et al., 2012). European research analysing minority group members' attitudes towards the police is, however, limited. It is remarkable that whereas the number of European studies on citizens' trust in the police is rapidly growing – especially in the UK – research scrutinizing the causes and consequences of minority (dis)trust remains scarce (recently a few interesting articles and book chapters have been published though: Jackson et al., 2013; Röder and Mühlau, 2012; Van Craen, 2013). This feature of European criminological and sociological research sharply contrasts with the US research tradition in these fields. In the US, research on ethnic minorities' attitudes towards the police has a rich history. The police violence to which the African Americans McDuffie (Miami, 1979) and King (Los Angeles, 1991) were subjected, and the consequent rioting, were among the factors that focused the minds of media and researchers on the attitudes of police and minorities towards one another. These social events, and particularly the research on perceptions of and attitudes towards the police they have sparked, strongly influenced US research on trust in the police (Brown and Benedict, 2002; Decker, 1981). In developing this subfield of criminology, many US scholars have paid special attention to minority trust (see, among others, Lai and Zhao, 2010; MacDonald and Stokes, 2006; Skogan, 2006; Sun and Wu, 2011; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2001, 2005).

These US studies indicate that the largest (and most studied) minority groups in the US – African Americans and Hispanics – differ considerably from each other with regard to victimization experiences, the extent to which they are affected by disorder, perceptions of police behaviour and attitudes towards the police. The title of one of Skogan's (2006) comprehensive studies of citizen–police relationships in Chicago speaks volumes in this respect: *Police and Community in Chicago: A Tale of Three Cities*. In the US there is not just a white–non-white divide; the two largest non-white groups have built up a different relationship with the police as well. The extensive research carried out on this issue has almost all indicated that African Americans have a less positive image of the police, and trust in them, than have white Americans. It also shows that Hispanics tend to take positions between those of African Americans and white Americans (Brown and Benedict, 2002; Decker, 1981; Lai and Zhao, 2010; Schafer et al., 2003; Schuck et al., 2008; Skogan, 2006; Tyler, 2005).

For most European countries there are barely any quantitative studies available on the trust of minorities in the police. Consequently, we know very little about the trust levels of different minority groups in European countries and the extent to which their trust is determined by the same factors (however, for the UK, see Bradford and Jackson, 2010; Jackson et al., 2013). To help fill in the latter gap, we replicated one of the scarce European studies in this subfield. In that study, Van Craen (2013) assessed the relevance of social capital theory, performance theory and procedural justice theory for explaining the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the Belgian police. He concluded that social capital, perceptions of police performance and perceptions of discrimination all play a part in accounting for minority group members' trust in the police.

However, the study focused on only one type of minority group members (visible ones with an Islamic background), which raised the question of whether that conclusion also holds for other types of minority group members in Belgium.

To answer this question, we replicated Van Craen's study among a totally different minority group: Polish immigrants. We anticipated that our findings would depart in two ways. As the migration history of these minority group members is still very recent and they migrated from a country where the quality of social capital is relatively poor, we hypothesized that social capital would not play an important role in the explanation of Polish immigrants' trust in the Belgian police. Further, as they do not belong to a visible minority group and their religious background is not Islamic (but Catholic, like that of the majority group), we expected that, for this community, perceptions of discrimination would not be an important explanatory factor either. Regression analyses on data gathered in the city of Antwerp ($N = 418$) suggest that there is no correlation between Polish immigrants' social capital and their trust in law enforcement. However, perceptions of discrimination are a key explanatory factor for this minority group too.

Theories about trust

Social capital theory, performance theory and procedural justice theory are theoretical frameworks that provide elements to explain the levels of citizen trust in the police. They were formulated in general terms, without making an explicit distinction between members of a majority group and members of minority groups. In this section, we summarize these theories briefly and indicate, on the basis of Van Craen's (2013) results, their relevance for explaining the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the Belgian police. In the next section, we discuss why their potential to help explain minority trust in law enforcement may differ from one type of minority group to another.

Social capital theory

A first theoretical basis from which to account for the level of citizens' trust in the police can be found in social capital theory. In *Making Democracy Work*, a study of the functioning of governmental organizations in Italy, Putnam (1993) argued that networks of civic engagement foster robust norms of reciprocity and – by facilitating communication and reducing uncertainty – reinforce trust. In recent years, many other scholars have conceptualized social capital, sometimes with other words or different emphases, but, as Kääriäinen (2007: 412) has remarked, 'the basic idea behind most definitions of social capital [is] that well-functioning social networks and communities lay the foundation for the emergence of norms of reciprocity and trust'.

Putnam (2000: 338–339) states that networks increase not only trust between citizens but also the effectiveness of and trust in (democratic) authorities: 'Voluntary associations are places where social and civic skills are learned – "schools for democracy". Members learn how to run meetings, speak in public, write letters, organize projects, and debate public issues with civility.' Besides participation in associational life (formal social capital), he also points to the importance of informal social capital: 'In a world of civic networks, both formal and informal, our views are formed through interchange with friends

and neighbors' (Putnam, 2000: 343). With regard to trust in the police, recent studies have found empirical indications that neighbourhood social capital indeed shapes this attitude (Sun and Wu, 2011; Sun et al., 2012).

Social capital, in Putnam's view, increases trust in the authorities because it familiarizes citizens with the way in which institutions work and provides them with ways to influence policy, but also because, by increasing involvement and cooperation, it facilitates the implementation of policy: 'Police close more cases when citizens monitor neighborhood comings and goings' (Putnam, 2000: 346).

The three functions named (socialization, facilitating influence and easing policy implementation) seem advantageous for the building of trust in many government services, including police forces. For attitudes towards the police, a further element is probably crucial: social capital generates social control, which ensures that norms concerning acceptable behaviour are respected and maintained (Putnam, 2000). In her classic book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs (1961) argued that informal social capital – regular contact with the local grocer, the families on the front stoop, the presence of street fairs, etc. – creates a web of public respect and stimulates a sense of responsibility in local residents. Research of Sampson et al. (1997) showed that neighbourhood social capital and informal social control are strongly correlated. Further, it indicated that the combination of these two factors – labelled as 'collective efficacy' – explains low rates of violence. By increasing collective efficacy, local community ties and bonds also provide a breeding ground for trust in the police (Jackson et al., 2009). The people's involvement and presence ensure that incidences of nuisance and crime are limited and feelings of safety predominate, which is probably conducive to a positive attitude towards the police (Kääriäinen, 2007; MacDonald and Stokes, 2006).

As the latter argument implies that social capital and social control help the police to meet the performance expectations of citizens, there seems to be a link with performance theory (see below). Thus Reiner (2000) suggested that the police will appear more successful the less they are necessary. The weaker informal social controls are, the more needed and the harder the task of the police is to reconstruct the moral and social order. Research of Jackson and Bradford (2009) confirmed that citizens lose trust in the police as a result of judging their community and their streets to lack informal social control and order.

Performance theory

Performance theory relates trust and distrust respectively to good and bad performance by government (Bouckaert et al., 2002; Brown and Coulter, 1983; Lipset and Schneider, 1987). It emphasizes the importance of citizens' performance expectations and the output of institutions. In a recent review, Fleming and McLaughlin (2012: 262) concisely outlined the main ideas of the theory: 'Trust and confidence in public institutions is a function of the extent to which these institutions produce preferred outcomes. When citizens are satisfied with the output of relevant institutions, they will tend to trust and support them.' Performance theory states that differences in trust in the authorities arise from variation in (the perception of) social phenomena for which (some measure of) responsibility is attributed to the authorities (unemployment, insecurity, etc.).

Few question that it is a core duty of the state to promote the safety of its subjects, or that it is expedient to institute a specific service (namely, a police force) to pursue this end. According to Wilson (1975: 81), citizens also have a clear expectation of police work:

The average citizen thinks of the police as an organisation primarily concerned with preventing crime and catching criminals. When crime increases or criminals go uncaught, the conventional public response is to demand more or better policemen. When the crime rate goes down or a particularly heinous crime is solved, the police often get – or at least try to take – the credit.

Although this quote dates from nearly 40 years ago and the role of the police has changed drastically in the intervening decades, expectations concerning the crime-fighting duty of the police are still considered a relevant determinant in present-day theoretical reflections on trust in the police. Victimization experiences would lead people to believe that the police are failing to protect them and would erode confidence in the ability of the police to fulfil their crime control mandate (Kautt, 2011; Lai and Zhao, 2010; Ren et al., 2005).

In their influential article ‘Broken windows’, Wilson and Kelling (1982) stated that the expectations of citizens regarding safety should not be thought of too narrowly. In that article, they drew attention to concerns about disorder and argued that dealing with disorder helps prevent more serious crime, reduces fear and improves public attitudes towards the police. This call did not fall on deaf ears. Community policing has put disorder and public insecurity higher on the police agenda. As tackling disorder is now an essential aspect of police work in those countries – among them Belgium – that have introduced community policing, one could expect that the extent of unchecked disorder problems plays a considerable part in accounting for citizens’ trust in the police. Ren et al. (2005) argue that disorder sends a message that the police have lost control over the community.

Thus, performance theory suggests that trust in the police is based on the degree to which citizens are bothered by crime, disorder and feelings of insecurity. The assumption is that citizens expect a safe environment – free of crime and disorder – and that they regard the police as the central actor (or one of the central actors) responsible for bringing this about (Brown and Coulter, 1983). Or, as Skogan (2009: 301) summarized it, this theoretical framework argues ‘that people hold police accountable for local crime, disorder and fear’.

Finally, we note that Jackson et al. (2009), like Wilson and Kelling (1982), argue that trust in the police is strongly influenced by concerns about disorder, but their line of argument does not imply that people base their opinion of the police on whether they fear for their own safety. In their approach, anti-social behaviour and incivilities are assumed to undermine trust in the police because they would lead people to judge that the police are no longer symbols of moral authority (see also Jackson and Bradford, 2009).

Procedural justice theory

A third theoretical basis from which to explain citizens’ trust in the police is provided by the literature on social justice (Tyler and Smith, 1997; Tyler et al., 1997). This literature

indicates that people's reactions to authorities, whether legal, political or managerial, are shaped by their judgements about how fairly those authorities deal with the people over whom they exercise authority. Working from this premise, Tyler (2001, 2005) states that trust in the police is primarily determined by one's judgements of the fairness of the procedures used by the police. A key judgement would be the image that citizens have of the way in which the police treat citizens. Citizens would, for instance, not accept biased treatment. Tyler identified neutrality as one of the core aspects of procedural justice. Neutrality involves that the police 'consistently apply the rules to different people' (Tyler, 2005: 329). He indicated that one way in which the police can manifest procedural (and also distributive) unfairness is to act differently towards different members of the community based on their race. Whereas procedural fairness refers to, among other things, unbiased/neutral treatment and decision-making, distributive fairness relates to the provision of equal outcomes (Tyler, 2005).

According to Edwards (1999), citizens are more concerned about the way in which the police behave than about the ways in which many other occupational groups behave, because police officers have great power over individuals. Even junior officers patrolling the streets have a freedom of response that allows them to make decisions that in other organizations would be reserved to more senior employees. Citizens who have not (yet) themselves had any contact with the police can share this concern:

Media reports of police corruption and violent or racist behaviour used by individual officers and use of the term "cop culture" in an invariably negative way have led even people who have had no dealings with the police at all to become armchair critics, and to have firm ideas about the need to eliminate such behaviour from policing. (Edwards, 1999: 148)

In a theoretical reflection on the reform of the police in developing countries and new democracies, Goldsmith (2005) lists a series of qualities and actions that can undermine trust in the police. Many of these characteristics and behaviours imply a lack of procedural fairness: venality, discrimination, intimidation, excessive force, brutality, and so forth. A discussion of the negative influence of police corruption and misconduct on police trustworthiness can also be found in the work of Tankebe (2008, 2010) on transitional societies in Africa. These discussions may, however, have broad implications. Although much progress has been made in developed democracies in tackling discrimination, corruption and misbehaviour, remaining procedural improprieties may undermine public trust in these countries as well: 'Wherever policing is experienced as partisan in nature, generalized trust in the police is unlikely' (Goldsmith, 2005: 456).

According to Jackson and Sunshine (2007), the police are assessed from a concern for the norms and values that buttress social life. Citizens would expect the police to typify and defend the value structure of their community. Therefore, a police force would gain trust if it embodies the norms and values of the community. But how can the police show that they represent the moral structure? 'Authorities communicate that they represent normative group values by the manner in which they exercise their authority' (Jackson and Sunshine, 2007: 221). In Jackson and Sunshine's view, a concrete way for the police to show that they embody the moral structure is to treat citizens fairly.

In short, procedural justice theory proposes a relationship between ‘the treatment people receive at the hand of the police and justice officials’ and ‘the resultant trust that people have in institutions of justice’ (Hough et al., 2010: 205). In this study we focus on the impact of (perceptions of) discrimination by the police. Discrimination generally involves ‘denying members of a certain social category equal treatment’ (De Rycke et al., 1999: 114). Discriminatory treatment runs counter to neutral/impartial treatment – a core aspect of procedural fairness – and thus is claimed to undermine trust in the police (Tyler, 2005; Röder and Mühlau, 2012).

Relevance for explaining minority trust in Europe

In a recent study, Van Craen (2013) tested what contribution social capital theory, performance theory and procedural justice theory can make towards explaining the trust of minority group members in the Belgian police. His study focused on the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members living in three cities: Antwerp, Ghent and Genk. Turkish and Moroccan minority groups share a history of labour migration in the 1960s and 1970s (followed by a process of family reunification) and share the same religious beliefs (Islam).

The study showed that social capital theory, performance theory and procedural justice theory all contribute to explaining the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the Belgian police. Van Craen found effects of social ties with neighbours, the perception of social disorder and the perception that members of their own ethnic group are being discriminated against (are being treated more strictly) by the police. Further, he developed a link between the procedural justice-based model and the two other theoretical frameworks by extending the reasoning about treatment by the police to treatment by society as a whole: ‘people have the performance expectation that the police (together with other public bodies) should ensure that those accumulating social capital hardly become victims of discrimination’ (Van Craen, 2013: 1063). The results of the study confirmed that the experience of being frequently discriminated against by society erodes the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the police. In the remainder of this article we will call the extended fairness model – which emphasizes the impact of being discriminated against both by the police and by the broader society – the ‘multifaceted discrimination model’.

The multifaceted discrimination model starts from the procedural justice idea that minority group members expect to be treated equally by the police and broadens that perspective by considering also the implications of the idea that minority group members expect equal treatment at all times from everybody. Experiences and perceptions of discrimination by fellow citizens and social actors (companies, discos, schools, and so on) signal to minority group members that they are not considered equal members of society. This makes them sceptical, not only of those who discriminate, but also of the authorities governing and shaping society (Michelson 2003; Van Craen, 2012a). Avery (2006) argued that minority group members who perceive discrimination in society have the feeling that the government system tolerates or fails to address problems of discrimination and, as a consequence, lose trust in its institutions. His research showed that perceptions of discrimination, measured in a general way and thus including discrimination by

fellow citizens and social actors, erode African Americans' political trust. Similar findings have been reported for Latinos in the US (Michelson, 2003). In an article on (dis) trust in the American healthcare system, Armstrong et al. (2013) claimed that experiences of being discriminated against by the dominant racial group generate distrust by increasing concerns about the motives of the dominant group and of social institutions associated with it. Their empirical research yielded indications that experiences of racial discrimination outside the healthcare system undermine trust in that system. Frequent experiences of discrimination in different domains of society may thus foster distrust in the police by generating a generalized distrust in the majority group and its institutions, and by giving those who are injured the feeling that the police, together with other core institutions of the government system, make too little effort or fail to limit discrimination in society. Van Craen's (2013) study showed that the experience of being frequently discriminated against by society affects Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the Belgian police.

The goal of this article is to help find out whether social capital theory, performance theory and the multifaceted discrimination model also contribute to explaining the trust in the police of other minority groups in Belgium and Europe. The fact that Van Craen's study focused on only one type of minority group members raised questions about the generalizability of the results. To help answer these questions, we replicated his study among a very different minority group: Polish immigrants in Belgium.

Polish immigrants and the Belgian police

In this section we will discuss why we expected that some of the theoretical frameworks that helped account for Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the Belgian police would not contribute much to explaining Polish immigrants' trust. However, before formulating the hypotheses that guided this study, we provide some background information on Polish migration to Belgium and the Belgian policing model.

Polish migration to Belgium

In the previous two decades, Belgium – and many other West European countries – witnessed a considerable inflow of Polish immigrants. After the implosion of communism in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s, large numbers of Polish citizens decided to leave their country to seek a new life in Western Europe. High unemployment rates, low wages and poverty were the major push factors that urged migration. Corruption and a lack of trust in the capacity of the political elite to reshape the country led people to leave as well (Galent, 2010). Job opportunities, a higher standard of living, political freedom and the visa exemption adopted by the Belgian government in 1991 were pull factors that guided segments of the Polish migration stream towards Belgium. As a result of the visa exemption, Polish people were free to travel to Belgium and to stay there for three months as a tourist. However, many of them stayed longer than permitted and did undeclared work (Cyrus, 2006; Galent et al., 2009; Grzymała-Kazłowska, 2005).

On 1 May 2004, Poland – together with nine other countries – joined the European Union (EU). As the EU is built on the free movement of persons and goods, this created more legal opportunities for Polish people to move around freely within Europe. There were, though, some restrictions at the beginning. Poles who wanted to work in Belgium had to apply for a labour card. Over the years, these restrictions have been relaxed. This was done in two steps. On 1 June 2006, the labour card requirement was waived for sectors of the labour market that faced a shortage of workers. Since 1 May 2009, Polish labourers are no longer subjected to any requirement and have the same rights to work in Belgium as other citizens of the European Union.

These political decisions have shaped Polish migration considerably. There is no doubt about that. We note, however, that Polish migration history is far more complex than these changes in formal regulations suggest. Because many Poles – and Belgian employers – did not comply with the legal rules, the evolution of the number of Poles in Belgium is not fully reflected by official statistics. Between 1991 and 2011 the number of registered people with Polish nationality in Belgium increased from around 5000 to approximately 50,000 (Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie, 2013; Vancluysen and Hennau, 2011). In that period, the biggest increase was noted after Poland joined the EU. Between 2004 and 2011 the number of registered Poles rose from a little more than 10,000 to a little less than 50,000. It is, however, hard to tell whether this rise reflected predominantly new migration movements or registrations of people who were already in the country. There are estimates that suggest that, at the end of the 1990s, 30,000–50,000 unregistered Poles were already living in Belgium (Grzymała-Kazłowska, 2005). Today, many Polish immigrants continue to do undeclared work, even though they are allowed to work in Belgium legally, because this is often financially beneficial for both themselves and their employers. At the same time, in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium, Poles have become the second-largest immigrant group in terms of new registrations (Kruispunt Migratie-Integratie, 2013).

The Belgian policing model

Policing in Belgium is characterized by a community policing approach. Belgium adopted this US model after it was confronted with the Dutroux case. In 1996, Marc Dutroux was arrested for the abduction of six girls. Two of them were found alive, but help was too late for four others. In response, about 300,000 people expressed their dissatisfaction with the shortcomings of the police and the judiciary in an unusually large public demonstration known as the ‘White March’. The government took this as a cue for far-reaching reform of the police forces. The new official policing model to be introduced was community policing.

The implementation of this model required time, however. In 2003 the authorities gave the concept of community policing concrete definition in terms of the Belgian situation. The Belgian variant is based on five pillars: external orientation, problem solving, partnership, accountability and empowerment (Vande Sompel et al., 2003a, 2003b). In recent years this community-oriented approach has been complemented with ‘information led policing’. The objective of this combined approach is to work towards ‘excellent policing’ (Bruggeman et al., 2007). This implies, among other things, ‘establishing and

maintaining a trust relationship between the population and the police' (Bruggeman et al., 2007: 19).

Polish immigrants' trust in the Belgian police

The goal of building a trust relationship with the community has been formulated in general terms. Scholars have, however, noted that 'the population' or 'the community' does not exist. They have suggested that it would be more appropriate to use the concept 'multiple community policing' (Easton et al., 2009). The understanding between the police and citizens differs from one sub-group in society to another and there are reasons to assume that the same holds for the factors that influence citizens' trust in the police. In the previous section we have indicated, on the basis of Van Craen's (2013) study, that social capital theory, performance theory and the multifaceted discrimination model all contribute to explaining the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the Belgian police. For Polish immigrants, though, we expected to find other results.

With regard to social capital theory, we hypothesized that it would not have much explanatory power in the Polish community. This hypothesis is based on four elements. First, the social ties and networks in Belgium of a number of Poles are still relatively weak because they have not yet spent many years in Belgium. For others, who have been living in Belgium for a longer period of time, their illegal status and low education have hampered the development of strong social ties, especially with Belgians (Grzymała-Kazłowska, 2005). Besides time, residence status and education, informal leaders also play a role in shaping social capital. Galent (2010: 1) noted that informal leaders of the Polish community in Belgium make little effort to promote strong social ties with Belgians and Belgian institutions: 'The character of their actions is rather inward-looking and based mostly on traditional institutions which in the Polish case are usually either the family or the "Polish" Catholic Church.' Finally, it seems relevant to take into account that Polish minority group members migrated from a country where the quality of social capital is relatively poor. For many decades, the non-existence of democracy and foreign domination obstructed the emergence of a civil society. In addition to this, we note that many immigrants originate from rural Polish communities, which are characterized by low levels of out-group trust (Galent et al., 2009).

With regard to performance theory, we anticipated that it would play a role in explaining Polish immigrants' trust, as it did for Turkish and Moroccan minority group members. On the general assumption that most people dislike crime and disorder, and expect the police to keep these social phenomena within reasonable bounds, we hypothesized that performance theory would contribute to accounting for Polish immigrants' trust in the police. More specifically, we expected that victimization experiences, perceptions of disorder and feelings of insecurity would erode their trust in law enforcement.

Finally, we hypothesized that the multifaceted discrimination model – which emphasizes the negative impact of being discriminated against both by the police and by the broader society – would have relatively little power to explain Polish immigrants' trust in the police. Because Polish minority group members do not belong to a visible minority

group and are not Muslims (but Catholics, like the majority group), we expected that they would have much fewer discrimination experiences than Turkish and Moroccan minority group members. Consequently, we anticipated that perceptions of discrimination would not be major factors determining their trust in the police.

Methods

Data

The data that we used to test these hypotheses were derived from the *Polish Community Survey 2010*, a standardized face-to-face survey designed by the Policy Research Centre on Equal Opportunities to monitor Polish minority group members' integration and attitudes towards government institutions (Vancluysen and Hennau, 2011). The survey was conducted in Antwerp, the largest city in the Dutch-speaking part of Belgium and also the city in this region that has appealed most to Polish migrants. In February 2010, there were a little more than 7000 registered inhabitants of Polish descent in Antwerp, in a total population of around 485,000 (Vancluysen and Hennau, 2011).

The initial sample totalled 480 individuals. On the basis of data provided by the local government, a representative random sample was drawn from all registered inhabitants of Polish descent aged between 18 and 70 years old. The sample included both people with Polish nationality and citizens who had become Belgians by naturalization. In this community the vast majority still have Polish nationality, though. The interviewers were bilingual (Dutch and Polish). They used a translated questionnaire when this was preferred by the respondents. The possibility of being interviewed in Polish was offered to prevent the level of proficiency in Dutch determining participation in the survey. Given that a considerable number of Poles migrated only recently, this was a major concern. The research team was, however, also aware that translating a questionnaire is a challenging job and that the quality of the study would depend to a large extent on the quality of the translation. Therefore, the translation was checked three times, by three different people, before it was used (Vancluysen and Hennau, 2011).

Fieldwork ran from 7 October 2010 to 28 February 2011, and resulted in 418 face-to-face interviews; 259 of these interviews were with respondents from the effective sample. Respondents from this sample who could not be reached or refused were, as much as possible, replaced by respondents of a similar age and gender from a reserve sample. This approach was aimed at ensuring that the survey data would be representative of the Polish community in Antwerp. The reserve sample was a second representative random sample drawn from the registered inhabitants of Polish descent aged between 18 and 70 years old. Information on age and gender was included in the dataset of the population provided by the local government. A comparison of the survey data with the population data on the basis of these characteristics indicated that the interviewers did their work well. None of the age or gender categories is significantly under- or over-represented in the survey dataset, and the survey data are representative of the Polish community in Antwerp (Vancluysen and Hennau, 2011). The fact that there are more women (62 percent) than men (38 percent) among the respondents implies no bias, but reflects the distribution in the population.

Measures

The empirical analysis we carried out was, to a large extent, a replication of Van Craen's (2013) study. Many of the operationalizations were identical and so was the method of analysis (ordinary least squares regression analysis). Some operationalizations differed slightly and, as we had access to richer data, we included a few additional independent variables to test some frameworks more comprehensively. We indicate below which measures were adapted or added.

Dependent variable. Following recent developments in this field, we expanded Van Craen's operationalization of trust in the Belgian police (see the most general item below) to a multi-item scale. First, we presented the respondents with a list of Belgian institutions and asked them whether they have very much, much, neither much nor little, little, or very little trust in them. One of these institutions was the police. Next, we asked the following additional questions: 'How much or how little do you trust the Belgian police to deal with the issues that are important to you?' and 'How much or how little do you trust the Belgian police to treat people with respect?'. The three questions on the police had the same Likert-type response set: 1 (very much) to 5 (very little). Factor analysis indicated that the three items measured the same concept (the factor loadings ranged from .65 to .75, Cronbach's alpha: .75). After reversing the coding, we combined the responses into an index. Compared with single items, scales are better able to capture the complexity of concepts. As Jackson et al. (2013: 65) have stated, 'to trust a person or an institution is to make a set of assumptions about the way they (or it) will behave in the future'. Stoutland (2001) identified two key dimensions of trust in the police: the assumption that the police will share citizens' priorities and the assumption that the police will be respectful in their interactions with citizens. Stoutland's work has strongly influenced the conceptualization of trust in the police and currently these dimensions have a prominent place in theorization and research (Jackson et al., 2011, 2013; Stanko et al., 2012).

Social capital theory. To test social capital theory, we included five variables in the analyses. The first two were adopted from the study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group members: the frequency with which respondents chat with neighbours who belong to the majority group ('How often do you chat with people of Belgian descent who live in your neighbourhood?'; on a six-point scale from 'daily' to 'never'; reversed) and the frequency with which they chat with neighbours from their own minority group ('How often do you chat with people of Polish descent who live in your neighbourhood?'; on a six-point scale from 'daily' to 'never'; reversed). Further, we used two items on respondents' friendships. More specifically, we asked them how many friends of Belgian descent they have and how many friends of Polish descent they have in Belgium. Finally, we included an item measuring the frequency of respondents' church attendance ('How often do you attend religious services?'; on a six-point scale from 'never' to 'every week'). As some may have noted, the first four items make a distinction between bridging and bonding ties; the last one does not.

Performance theory. Performance theory states that differences in trust in the authorities arise from variation in (the perception of) social phenomena for which (some measure

of) responsibility is attributed to the authorities. In the context of policing, this theoretical framework argues that people hold police accountable for local crime, disorder and fear. To test the outcome-based performance model, we used three variables: victimization experience, perception of loitering youths and feelings of insecurity. These variables were derived from Van Craen's (2013) study and from research on this framework undertaken by Sunshine and Tyler (2003), Tyler (2005), Tankebe (2008) and Skogan (2009). The inclusion of a victimization indicator expands the study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group members, which did not test this aspect of the outcome-based performance model. Victimization experience is a dummy variable; code 1 was assigned to respondents who, in the 12 months preceding the interview, in the city of Antwerp had been the victim of at least one of the following types of crime: car theft, car break-in, bicycle theft, and handbag or wallet theft. Respondents who had not been the victim of one or more of these types of crime were assigned the code 0.

With regard to disorder, Van Craen (2013) used a scale measuring respondents' perception of social disorder. This scale combined the responses to two questions: 'How often have you been bothered by loitering youths in your own neighbourhood over the course of the previous 12 months?' and 'How often have you been bothered by drug use and drug dealing in your own neighbourhood over the course of the previous 12 months?' (both on a five-point response scale from 'never' to 'very often'). However, because in the Polish sample only the first question yielded variation in responses (almost no one had been bothered by drug nuisance), we included just that item in our analyses.

Feelings of insecurity were in both this survey and the study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group members measured by asking how safe or unsafe respondents feel in the neighbourhood where they live (on a five-point scale from 'very safe' to 'very unsafe').

Multifaceted discrimination model. The discrimination variables were exactly the same as those that were used in the study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group members. First, we included in the analyses the number of times that respondents personally felt discriminated against by society. This was measured through the following question: 'How often within the last 12 months have you felt discriminated against?' Respondents could indicate their response on a six-point scale ranging from 'never' to 'very often'. Next, we asked respondents to assess how the police treat members of their own minority group in comparison with members of the majority group. Specifically, we presented the following question: 'Are the police much stricter, a little stricter, equally strict, a little less strict or much less strict when dealing with people of Polish descent as/than when dealing with people of Belgian descent?' To use the answers to this question in the analyses, we applied dummy coding, thus creating three variables: the perception that police are stricter (1 = a little stricter and much stricter), the perception that police are less strict (1 = a little less strict and much less strict), and the perception that police are equally strict (1 = equally strict). The last item measures the perception of the extent to which Polish immigrants are discriminated against by the police and is a classic operationalization in the literature on perceptions of discrimination by government institutions (De Rycke et al., 1999; Weitzer and Tuch, 1999). We note that the last item is also an operationalization of one aspect of Tyler's procedural justice-based model. In seminal research on this model, items such as 'The police treat all citizens in the neighbourhood equally' (Tyler, 2001), 'The police treat everyone in your community equally' (Sunshine and

Tyler, 2003) and ‘The police consistently apply the rules to different people’ (Tyler, 2005) have been used – in combination with other items – to measure procedural justice. Since Tyler’s high-profile studies, it is common to use such ‘neutral treatment’ items to create a measure of procedural justice (see, among others, Jonathan-Zamir and Weisburd, 2013; Murphy and Cherney, 2011, 2012; Tankebe, 2008).

Control variables. We included four background characteristics in the analyses: gender (0 = female or 1 = male), age (in years), level of education (1 = no qualifications to 10 = university degree) and the length of respondents’ residence in the city of Antwerp (in years).

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for all the variables. A review of tolerance levels and variance inflation factors indicated that multicollinearity was not a concern in the analyses. The highest variance inflation factor was 1.53.

Results

Table 2 shows the results of the analyses. We present them in five steps. This approach enables us to assess the explanatory power of the different sets of independent variables and to reveal indirect effects.

Regression Model 1 comprises only the background characteristics: gender, age, level of education and length of residence in Antwerp. Two of these variables determine Polish immigrants’ trust in the Belgian police: age and length of residence in Antwerp. The older that Polish immigrants are, the more trust they have in the police. The longer they have lived in Antwerp, however, the lower their trust.

Regression Model 2 adds the five indicators of social capital: the frequency with which respondents chat with neighbours of Belgian descent, the frequency with which they chat with neighbours of Polish descent, the number of friends they have in the majority group, the number of friends they have in their own minority group, and the frequency of their church attendance. The results show that none of these variables correlates with the dependent variable. This suggests that contacts with neighbours, friendships and church attendance do not shape Polish immigrants’ trust in the Belgian police.

By contrast, regression Models 3 and 4 suggest that concerns regarding disorder and insecurity do influence respondents’ trust. Model 3 adds the victimization variable and the frequency with which respondents have been bothered by loitering youths. It shows a statistically significant relationship between the disorder indicator and trust in the police: the more often Polish immigrants have been bothered by loitering youths, the lower their trust. Model 4 adds feelings of insecurity. From this we learn that feelings of insecurity correlate with the dependent variable as well. The more respondents feel insecure, the less they trust law enforcement. Disorder caused by loitering youths and feelings of insecurity thus seem to affect respondents’ trust in the Belgian police.

Finally, regression Model 5 comprises all the independent variables, including the discrimination variables. It shows that both the number of times that respondents personally felt discriminated against by society and the perception of how one’s own group is treated by the police correlate with the dependent variable. The more often respondents felt personally discriminated against by society, the less they trust law enforcement;

Table 1. Descriptive statistics.

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Trust in the police	3	15	10.51	2.35
Gender	0	1	0.38	0.49
Age	18	68	37.71	11.04
Level of education	1	10	5.11	2.47
Length of residence in Antwerp	0	53	9.32	6.64
Chats with neighbours of Belgian descent	1	6	4.14	1.67
Chats with neighbours of Polish descent	1	6	4.23	1.70
Friends of Belgian descent	0	100	4.99	9.18
Friends of Polish descent	0	200	10.28	15.51
Church attendance	1	6	3.34	1.58
Victimization experience	0	1	0.26	0.44
Bothered by loitering youths	1	5	2.14	1.23
Feelings of insecurity	1	5	1.96	0.80
Subjective experiences of discrimination	1	6	1.99	1.31
Perception that police are stricter	0	1	0.42	0.49
Perception that police are less strict	0	1	0.02	0.15
Perception that police are equally strict	0	1	0.56	0.50

respondents who indicate that the police are stricter for their own minority group have less trust in the police than respondents who report equal treatment. These results suggest that both the feeling that one is oneself frequently discriminated against by society and the perception that the police are stricter for one's own community undermine Polish immigrants' trust in the Belgian police.

Our findings do not fully confirm Van Craen's (2013) findings. In particular, the absence in the Polish sample of a correlation between the indicators of social capital and trust in the Belgian police is a striking difference. This finding was not completely unexpected (see above). However, there was a reason to consider the testing of this correlation incomplete. Because the respondents had migrated from places where the quality of social capital was relatively poor to a place where the quality of social capital is richer, we considered it plausible that social capital and length of residence in Antwerp/Belgium would interact with each other to influence trust in the police. We thus conducted an additional regression analysis and tested for interactions between the indicators of social capital and length of residence in Antwerp. We note that for this group the length of residence in Antwerp also indicates the length of residence in Belgium ($r = .97$). Further, we note that the variables were centred prior to undertaking this analysis to address problems of multicollinearity. The results are presented in Table 3. Regression Model 6 contains, however, no significant interactions.

Conclusion and discussion

Little is yet known about which factors influence the trust in the police of different ethnic minorities in European countries. To help fill in that gap, we have tested whether three

Table 2. Factors determining Polish immigrants' trust in the police.

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	Standardized coefficients	SE								
(Constant)		0.587		0.792		0.853		0.876		0.887
Gender	0.020	0.268	0.050	0.279	0.017	0.283	0.010	0.282	0.007	0.281
Age	0.120*	0.012	0.061	0.013	0.043	0.013	0.057	0.013	0.039	0.013
Level of education	-0.013	0.053	-0.036	0.057	-0.069	0.057	-0.085	0.057	-0.066	0.057
Length of residence in Antwerp	-0.140*	0.020	-0.139*	0.022	-0.116	0.022	-0.113	0.022	-0.129*	0.022
Chats with neighbours of Belgian descent			0.098	0.086	0.079	0.086	0.066	0.086	0.080	0.085
Chats with neighbours of Polish descent			-0.016	0.083	-0.006	0.083	0.008	0.083	0.030	0.083
Friends of Belgian descent			-0.052	0.020	-0.027	0.020	-0.029	0.020	-0.085	0.020
Friends of Polish descent			-0.026	0.009	-0.043	0.009	-0.036	0.009	-0.021	0.009
Church attendance			0.082	0.084	0.083	0.084	0.089	0.084	0.096	0.083
Victimization experience					-0.009	0.297	0.015	0.301	0.056	0.298
Bothered by loitering youths					-0.155**	0.107	-0.125*	0.113	-0.087	0.114
Feelings of insecurity							-0.123*	0.181	-0.130*	0.181
Subjective experiences of discrimination									-0.124*	0.101
Perception that police are stricter (ref. equally strict)									-0.235***	0.266
Perception that police are less strict (ref. equally strict)									-0.096	0.824
R ²	.02		.04		.06		.07		.15	

* $p < .050$; ** $p < .010$; *** $p < .001$.

Table 3. Assessment of whether social capital and length of residence in Antwerp interact with each other to influence trust in the police.

	Model 6	
	Standardized coefficients	SE
(Constant)		0.796
Gender	0.002	0.282
Age	0.031	0.013
Level of education	-0.066	0.058
Length of residence in Antwerp	-0.137	0.026
Chats with neighbours of Belgian descent	0.084	0.087
Chats with neighbours of Polish descent	0.026	0.084
Friends of Belgian descent	-0.094	0.020
Friends of Polish descent	-0.021	0.009
Church attendance	0.098	0.084
Victimization experience	0.071	0.303
Bothered by loitering youths	-0.090	0.116
Feelings of insecurity	-0.125*	0.182
Subjective experiences of discrimination	-0.124*	0.102
Perception that police are stricter (ref. equally strict)	-0.234***	0.269
Perception that police are less strict (ref. equally strict)	-0.103	0.836
Chats with neighbours of Belgian descent × Length of residence in Antwerp	0.073	0.014
Chats with neighbours of Polish descent × Length of residence in Antwerp	0.057	0.012
Friends of Belgian descent × Length of residence in Antwerp	0.016	0.003
Friends of Polish descent × Length of residence in Antwerp	-0.070	0.002
Church attendance × Length of residence in Antwerp	0.056	0.013
R ²	.16	

* $p < .050$; ** $p < .010$; *** $p < .001$.

theoretical frameworks that contributed to explaining Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the Belgian police – social capital theory, performance theory and the multifaceted discrimination model – also help to explain Polish immigrants' trust in the Belgian police.

What do we learn from this study? To begin with, it further expands our knowledge about the potential of social capital to shape minority group members' trust in the police. In recent years we have made important progress on this topic. US research has demonstrated the general relevance of social capital theory for explaining the trust in the police of citizens in general (MacDonald and Stokes, 2006) and certain minority groups (Sun and Wu, 2011). More recently, Van Craen (2013) focused our attention on the possible differential effects of bonding and bridging social capital. His research in Turkish and Moroccan communities in Belgium showed that, in these groups, bridging social ties

generate trust in the police, whereas bonding social ties undermine trust. He also demonstrated that bridging and bonding social capital play a much greater role in shaping minority trust in the police in urban areas than in rural areas (Van Craen, 2012b). Our study now adds to this that the importance of social capital in explanations of trust in the police depends not only on the residential context but also on the minority group. The survey in the Polish community in Antwerp revealed no effects of social ties. Neither contacts with neighbours nor friendship relationships have any influence on Polish immigrants' trust in the police. The same goes for participation in religious activities. These results, therefore, should urge us to be careful about generalizing the role of social capital in shaping minority group members' trust in the police. Findings for one minority group do not necessarily hold for other minority groups.

An important question then is why social capital does not produce trust in the police in the Polish community. As mentioned when formulating our hypothesis on this issue, one reason we did not find effects may be that Polish immigrants have hardly accumulated social capital in Belgium. Yet the social capital questions yielded considerable variation in responses and thus invalidate this explanation. No less than 27 percent of the respondents chat every day with neighbours of Belgian descent and 29 percent chat every day with neighbours of Polish descent. Further, they have, on average, 5 Belgian friends and 10 Polish friends. And 28 percent of the respondents attend religious services every week or several times per month. So the quantity of Polish immigrants' social capital does not appear to explain why we found no effects.

When formulating our hypothesis we did, however, also mention another factor: the quality of respondents' social capital. Given the recent migration history of this minority group, it is highly likely that the quality of Polish immigrants' social capital is still determined by their pre-migration experiences. Before migrating to Belgium most Polish immigrants had never been a member of a civil society that cooperates with public institutions to realize common goals. In Poland, public institutions had for a long time been perceived as apart from society, 'not as an outcome of the collective cooperation of free citizens' (Galent, 2010: 9). Consequently, social capital failed to fulfil most of the functions that have been indicated by Putnam (2000) as crucial in the production of trust in public institutions. It did not play an important role in familiarizing citizens with public authorities, facilitating input in the policy-making process or easing policy implementation. Even its role in generating a positive form of social control and safety was limited, as many Poles were suspicious of people who did not belong to their own family or circle of close friends (Galent et al., 2009; Grzymała-Kazłowska, 2005). All these features were so characteristic of the society in which our respondents had been raised and socialized that it is highly plausible that they continue to shape the functions and power of the social capital that Polish immigrants accumulate today in Belgium and other West European countries. Changes in these patterns may take many years, even generations. Of the respondents in our sample, 80 percent have resided for fewer than 15 years in Belgium and 50 percent even fewer than 10 years. We did not find interaction effects of social capital indicators and length of residence in Antwerp/Belgium on trust in the police, but possibly more time is needed for the influence of pre-migration experiences to fade away. We note that Van Craen's (2013) study on Turkish and Moroccan minority group

members included not only the first but also the second generation, which may (partly) explain why the results differ.

Further, we derive from a study of Galent et al. (2009) that, although some Poles have developed a considerable amount of informal social capital, this does not imply that they participate in organizations and committees that link civil society to public institutions. Those who do undeclared work do not consider themselves to be 'free and independent social actors who can be active in the public sphere' (Galent et al., 2009: 152). It is, for instance, not hard to imagine that they will show little interest in participating in neighbourhood committees that cooperate with the police.

In light of all this, the test of performance theory yielded important results, because they indicate that Polish immigrants do not completely turn their back on the Belgian police. The absence of a relationship between Polish immigrants' social capital and their trust in the Belgian police – which suggests a lasting distance between 'us' (citizens) and 'them' (government institutions) – does not imply that these minority group members have no performance expectations of the Belgian police. Perceived outcomes do shape their trust, as performance theory predicted. In this respect they do not differ from African Americans and Hispanics in the US (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2001, 2005) or Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in Belgium (Van Craen, 2013).

A final contribution of this study is that it increases our knowledge about the impact of discrimination on the trust of different minority groups in the police. It does so by deepening fresh insights about this topic. In the previous decade, research in the US showed that perceptions of unfair treatment by the police strongly determine African Americans' and Hispanics' trust in law enforcement (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2001, 2005). More recently, analyses on European Social Survey datasets comprising 21 European countries and minority group members from 66 countries of origin revealed that individuals who feel that they belong to a discriminated group have less trust in the police than individuals who do not perceive group discrimination (Röder and Mühlau, 2012). This study did not focus on discrimination by the police. It measured general feelings of discrimination, reflecting experiences in different sectors of society. Next, an integrated theoretical framework has been developed. In his research on the trust of Turkish and Moroccan minority group members in the Belgian police, Van Craen (2013) combined a police-oriented approach and a society-oriented approach. His study confirmed that both the experience of being frequently discriminated against by society and the perception that the police are stricter for their own community affect Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the police. In this article we addressed the relevance of the multifaceted discrimination model in helping explain the trust of different types of minority groups. Our study adds to the existing knowledge that the multifaceted discrimination model not only has the potential to help explain the trust of minority groups with very distinctive features (compared to the majority group), but also can make a contribution towards explaining the trust of minority groups who have the same skin colour and religious background as the majority group.

This study shows that, although some minority group members have much in common with the majority population, they are still highly vulnerable to discrimination. Almost 35 percent of the Polish respondents report that, within the last 12 months, they had personally been confronted with discrimination at least a few times. From an open

follow-up question we gathered that most of these experiences occurred in dealings with civil servants and at work. The percentage that, within the last year, had personally been confronted with discriminatory behaviour by the police is relatively small (3 percent of the respondents spontaneously mentioned such an experience in their response to the open follow-up question). However, a little more than 42 percent have the perception that the police are stricter with their own minority group than for the majority. What is further important is that both the perception of discrimination by the police and experiences of being discriminated against by other social actors have an influence on Polish immigrants' trust in the police. Like the perception of discrimination by the police, the experience of being frequently discriminated against outside the context of policing fosters distrust in the police, we suppose by generating a generalized distrust in the majority group and its institutions, and by giving those who are injured the feeling that the police, together with other core institutions of the government system, make too little effort or fail to limit discrimination in society.

By confirming similar findings among Turkish and Moroccan minority group members, this study demonstrates the solidity of the multifaceted discrimination model and indicates its potential to help us understand the trust in the police of a variety of minority groups. Additional research in other countries and among other minority groups is needed, however, to further evaluate its generalizability. We expect to find further confirmation of the negative impact of being discriminated against by the broader society, yet we may find that minority groups differ from each other with regard to the types of discrimination with which they are confronted. Our study reveals major similarities between Polish immigrants and minority group members of Turkish or Moroccan descent, but their experiences are not completely identical. Each group is frequently confronted with discrimination at work and when applying for a job. Yet Poles more often experience discrimination in dealings with civil servants and they are not confronted with discrimination that results from wearing a headscarf. As a consequence, tackling discrimination will to some extent require a tailor-made approach.

We conclude with a few reflections on the scope of our research. The main aim of this study was to replicate Van Craen's (2013) study among a different minority group in order to assess differences and similarities in the explanation of minority groups' trust in the police. This approach yielded valuable insights. In the future, additional cumulative knowledge about minority trust may be gathered in Europe by expanding the theoretical perspectives and operationalizations that have been used in these studies. First, one could deal with discrimination by the police not only from a procedural fairness perspective but also from a distributive fairness perspective. The former emphasizes unbiased/neutral treatment (Jonathan-Zamir and Weisburd, 2013; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2008; Tyler, 2005), the latter a fair distribution of outcomes (Adams, 1965; Colquitt et al., 2001) or the provision of equal outcomes (Tyler, 2005). It remains to be seen, however, to what extent these approaches can provide a different perspective on discrimination in police-citizen relations. In the field of organizational justice, some authors have questioned the distinction between procedural and distributive justice (for a summary of this debate, see the review by Colquitt et al., 2001). Recently, reservations regarding this distinction have also been formulated in the field of police research. In a review of the literature on legitimacy in policing, Mazerolle et al. (2013: 20) noted that

it is 'somewhat difficult to tease out distributive justice from procedural justice'. Because biased treatment may lead to an unfair distribution of outcomes, it may turn out that in a number of cases the distinction between procedural and distributive justice is only a subtle one.

Second, one could test performance theory and procedural justice theory more comprehensively among minority groups in Europe. In this study the focus was mainly on social capital theory and the multifaceted discrimination model and on the intriguing hypothesis that these frameworks, although they helped to account for Turkish and Moroccan minority group members' trust in the Belgian police, would not contribute much to explaining Polish immigrants' trust. Taking inspiration from US and Australian research on minority trust in the police (Tyler, 2001, 2005; Murphy and Cherney, 2011), future studies could compare the explanatory power of performance and procedural justice theory. In order to carry out such an assessment, we need to complement our operationalizations. Comprehensive tests of the performance framework have included both perceptions of social phenomena for which (some measure of) responsibility may be attributed to the police and direct measures of perceived performance (Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2008; Tyler, 2001, 2005). Further, one or more multi-item scales need to be used to cover all (or at least several) aspects of procedural justice (Jonathan-Zamir and Weisburd, 2013; Murphy and Cherney, 2011; Sunshine and Tyler, 2003; Tankebe, 2008; Tyler, 2005). Using these approaches and addressing the suggestions discussed here may contribute to further develop the subfield studying minority trust in Europe.

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