Variables are available at three levels of analysis within each corresponding dataset: respondent, country-survey, and county-year. At the respondent level, common variables are binary and result from dichotomizing different answer scales. Neutral and midpoint answers are consistently grouped with negative answers, meaning that respondent level variables focus on measuring the presence of what it measures rather than its absence.

At the country-survey level, recoded original variables are rescaled so answer values range from 0 to 100 and then averaged within each country-survey observation. This produces a single score representing the aggregated responses of all individuals surveyed within a country for a survey round. At the country-year level, the index scores represent the average of all country-survey scores. This combines overlapping country-survey scores to create unique country-year values, which are needed when merging the dataset with other country-year data. Scores range from 0 representing the lowest possible level of trust, satisfaction, or support to 100 representing the highest possible level.

# Social Trust

At the respondent level, the common variable distinguishes between individuals who generally trust most people and those that would be more careful. Most questions do not specify the population of other people, while some specify others in the same country. Some specify the neighbourhood or community. Responses that ‘it depends’ and midpoints on scales were recoded as ‘be careful’.

# Satisfaction with Democracy

At the respondent level, the common variable indicates whether respondents are satisfied with the way their national democracy works. Neutral responses and midpoints on scales were recoded as ‘not satisfied’.

# Support for Democracy

At the respondent level, the common variable indicates when respondents find democracy preferable to other forms of government such an authoritarian or dictatorship governments. Responses indicating indifference and midpoints on scales were recoded as democracy being ‘not always preferable’.

# Perceived Electoral Integrity

At the respondent level, the common variable indicates when respondents generally approve electoral integrity in their country. Most questions refer to national or parliamentary elections, some do not specify the election type, and some specify presidential elections. Surveys use different wording when referring to elections, such as trustworthy, honest, fair, or clean. Midpoint values on answer scales were recoded as ‘disapprove’.

# Age

This respondent-level variable represents age using three categories: 1 = under 30, 2 = 30 to 50, 3 = over 50. Category groupings are not always perfect because some surveys use different age divisions, meaning that some values may represent close approximations within a few years.

# Gender

This respondent-level variable indicates whether respondents are male or female. The same or very similar question is used in all sources. 1 = male, 2 = female

# Education

This respondent-level variable categorises respondents within three educational levels. These levels were sometimes estimated based on the age respondents stopped their education or the total years of education respondents indicated they had completed. The education levels of respondents still studying were estimated using age variables if available. The variable thus may not always be completely accurate where these estimates were necessary. 1 = primary or lower, 2 = secondary or vocational, 3 = tertiary or higher.

# Income

This respondent-level variable categorises respondents into three income groups. It was created by supplementing a three-category variable with the common income quartile variable using merged middle quartiles. The aim was for values to approximate the lowest 25%, middle 50%, and highest 25% within each country-survey observation. These exact percentages are not always achieved so the variable represents an approximate income grouping. 1 = lower Income, 2 = middle income, 3 = higher income