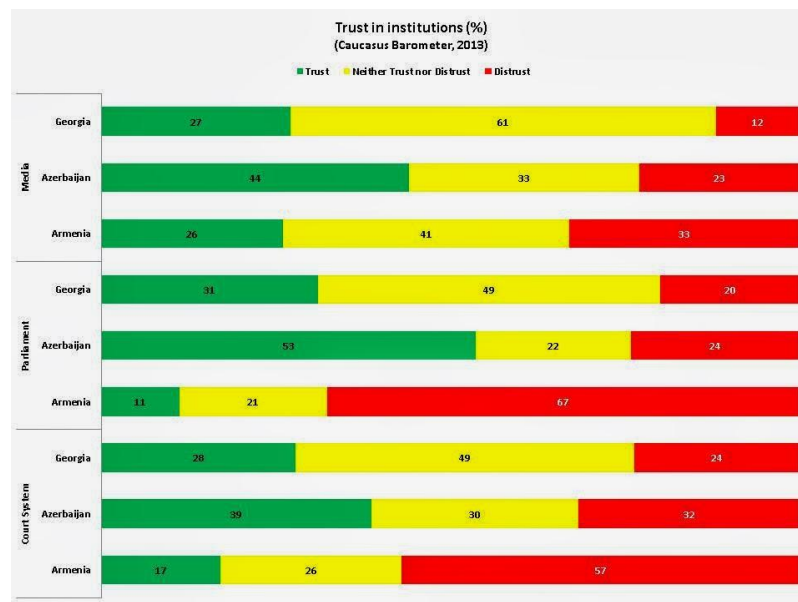


## Trust in Institutions in the South Caucasus

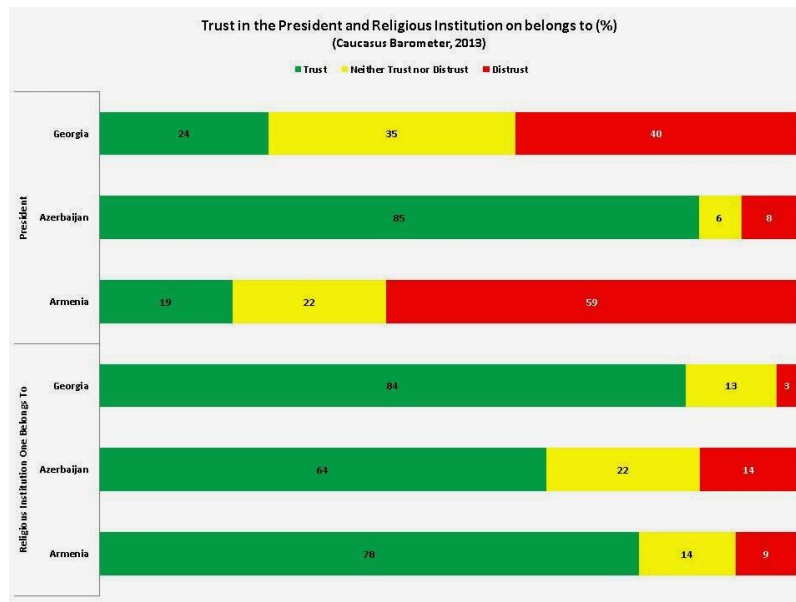
Trust in institutions has often been thought of as [negatively related](#) to perceptions of corruption in political institutions. Every year, [Transparency International](#) publishes a Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) which ranks countries from highly corrupt to very clean. Perceptions of corruption in the three South Caucasus countries have shifted over the years. The level of corruption in Georgia has been perceived as lower than the level of corruption in Armenia since 2007. Trust in institutions is lower in Armenia than in Azerbaijan which has the lowest ranking out of the three countries on the CPI. Azerbaijan shares similar levels of trust in institutions as Georgia which is the highest ranked South Caucasus country on the CPI. This blog post examines trust in institutions across the South Caucasus, as well as trust in international institutions.

According to the Caucasus Barometer (CB), in general, Azerbaijanis are more trusting of several institutions than Georgians or Armenians. Armenians are most likely to distrust institutions, and Georgians are most likely to respond with neither trust nor distrust. The following graph shows levels of trust in the media, court system, and parliament as three examples of trust in institutions that follow this pattern.



Note: In the graphs used in this blog post, trust is a combination of the responses ‘somewhat trust’ and ‘fully trust’, and distrust is a combination of responses ‘somewhat distrust’ and ‘fully distrust’.

This pattern holds for nine of seventeen institutions asked about in the 2013 CB. Yet, some notable exceptions exist. Religious institutions garner a higher level of trust in Armenia and Georgia than in Azerbaijan. In contrast, trust in the president is much higher in Azerbaijan than in the other two countries. The following graph shows these trends and it is worth noting that these trends have been relatively stable over time, especially since 2009.



A third interesting trend related to trust in institutions in the South Caucasus is that Georgia shows the highest level of trust towards international institutions, such as the UN and EU. This may be due to the consistent discourse from Georgian politicians about Georgia being a part of Europe, as well as attempts by the government to further Euro-Atlantic integration.



This blog post has looked at levels of trust in institutions in the three countries of the South Caucasus. It has examined general patterns in trust, as well as exceptions to the standard pattern observed for most institutions. Finally, the blog shows that Georgians are more likely to trust international institutions.

For more information on trust in the South Caucasus, you can explore the data using our [ODA](#) tool. To gain a better understanding of why Azerbaijanis might show higher levels of trust, and why this

does not present a contradiction with Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, take a look at [this](#) blog post.