Online appendix

How trust in EU institutions is linked to trust in national institutions: Explaining confidence in EU governance among national-level public officials

Thomas Persson, Charles F. Parker and Sten Widmalm

Table of contents

The selection of respondents	1
Control variables	2
Table A1. Number and share of respondents in central authorities responsible for civil protection and crisis management	4
Table A2. Descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analysis	5
Table A3. Ordered logistic regression of trust in EU-level institutions in 17 countries	6

The selection of respondents

Our main purpose for visiting the civil protection agencies in question was to secure their participation in the survey and to select respondents for it. For quite valid security reasons, it was not possible for us to gain free access to lists of employees or their mail addresses. The only possible solution was therefore to ask the heads of the various departments of the agencies we visited to select as many colleagues as possible with the relevant work experience from their own organization for the survey. As a guide, we supplied written descriptions detailing the aims of our project. We also explained, at each agency we visited, the nature and structure of our anonymous online survey.

We requested that the survey be distributed only to employees that would be able to make an informed judgement of civil-protection activities at the national and EU levels. The population of employees that participated in the survey included both senior staff charged with taking strategic decisions and that were directly involved in cooperation with other agencies and the EU as well as a broader category of people working with civil protection, such as, staff dealing with planning, training, education, operations, projects, etc. We did not want our study to be focused solely on the highest executive officers. Limiting our attention solely to top officials, in addition to making the sample much smaller, would have given us less analytical leverage to investigate issues of trust among the wider group of practitioners relevant for making national and EU-level civil protection work.

It was accordingly agreed that our contact persons would take responsibility for distributing the link to the survey to relevant colleagues in their own organization, again guided by our written instructions and by what we discussed at our initial meetings. In other words, the participants of the survey were not selected with a random sampling technique. They have been selected strategically, in a delegated process where the civil protection agencies themselves have participated. We thus did not have full control over exactly how many employees at each agency were asked to participate, and how many of them actually responded to the survey. Therefore, all statistical results reported must be interpreted with caution.

As a consequence of the method of selecting respondents, the sample contains imbalances between the participating agencies. However, in our view, the varying number of respondents in different agencies is not necessarily a key issue when we scrutinize the reliability of the survey responses as the different agencies vary greatly not only in shape but also in size. Consequently, we ended up with a very small sample in certain countries, like Latvia and Portugal, but this is not surprising since they had a smaller pool of employees overall. Furthermore, since the survey asked the respondents to indicate what aspect of civil protection they had worked with, we can be fairly confident that our contacts distributed the survey to the appropriate respondents with relevant expertise for the issues we were investigating. We believe, therefore, that we have good reason to be fairly confident about the strategic selection of the wider pool of employees who took part in our survey.

Control variables

The following control variables are included in the analysis:

Experience of crisis-management and/or civil-protection issues: In order to control for general experience of working with civil protection and crisis management, we include a variable that is measured by the following question: 'For how many years have you been working with crisis management and/or civil protection issues?' This is a continuous variable, with 0 years as the lowest value and 56 years as the highest observed value.

Experience of working with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism: It is also important to control for more specific experience of working with EU-level institutions within the framework of the civil-protection mechanism. This variable is measured with the following question: 'Have you had any direct experience working with the EU Civil Protection Mechanism or other EU crisis management organizations?' This is a dummy variable, with values 0 (=no) and 1 (=yes).

Gender: Another factor that may impact on trust in EU civil-protection institutions more generally is gender. We measure this variable with the following question: 'What is your gender?' This is a dummy variable, with values 0 (=man) and 1 (=woman).

Education: Knowledge and expertise are often considered important for how much trust one places in political institutions. This variable is measured with the following question: 'What is your level of education?' This is a dummy variable, with values 0 (=low) and 1 (=high). Low education means a high-school, college, or university-undergraduate education; high education means a university-graduate education or a PhD.

Procedures and performance of national institutions: To ensure that evaluations of the procedures and performance of EU institutions are not based on underlying evaluations of national institutions—i.e., to make sure there is no spillover from assessments of national institutions to the perceived performance of EU-level institutions—we include three control variables that mirror those used for evaluation of EU institutions. These variables are meant to ensure that evaluations of institutions at different levels are done independently of each other. The variables relate to three different aspects of how public officials evaluate the quality of institutions:

Input: 'To what extent would you say that public sector employees in the crisis management and/or civil protection institution where you work are allowed to use their own professional judgment in their working situation? 0 (not at all) to 6 (to a very large extent)';

Throughput: 'Would you say that the activities and decisions of the crisis management and/or civil protection institution where you work are open to scrutiny by the public? 0 (not at all) to 6 (to a very large extent)';

Output: 'Generally speaking, would you say that the crisis management and/or civil protection institution where you work is good at achieving its main objectives? 0 (not at all) to 6 (to a very large extent)'.

Country dummies: We add country dummies in order to capture any country-specific effects. Austria is used as reference country.

Table A1. Number and share of respondents in central authorities responsible for civil protection and crisis management

Country	*Name of central authority*	*Number of respondents (% of total)*
Austria	National Crisis and Disaster Protection Management (SKKM), Federal Ministry of the Interior	130 (19.4)
Bulgaria	DG Fire Safety and Civil Protection, Ministry of Interior	39 (5,8)
Croatia	National Protection and Rescue Directorate (DUZS), Ministry of the Interior	14 (2,1)
Czech Republic	Fire Rescue Service of the Czech Republic (FRS CP), Ministry of the Interior	38 (5,7)
Denmark	Danish Emergency Management Agency (DEMA), Ministry of Defence	43 (6,4)
Finland	Department for Rescue Services, Ministry of the Interior	20 (3,0)
France	DG Civil Protection and Crisis Management, (DGSCGC), Ministry of the Interior	25 (3,7)
Germany	Federal Office of Civil Protection and Disaster Assistance, Federal Ministry of the Interior (BMI)	32 (4,8)
Greece	Crisis Management Unit, Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs	17 (2,5)
Hungary	National Directorate General for Disaster Management (NDGDM), Ministry of the Interior	113 (16,9)
Ireland	Office of Emergency Planning (OEP), Department of Defence	26 (3,9)
Latvia	The State Fire and Rescue Service of Latvia (SFRS), Ministry of the Interior	6 (0,9)
Lithuania	Fire and Rescue Department (FRD), Ministry of the Interior	16 (2,4)
Portugal	National Authority for Civil Protection (ANPC), Ministry of Defence	13 (1,9)
Slovenia	Administration of the Republic of Slovenia for Civil Protection and Disaster Relief (ACPDR*)*, Ministry of Defence	64 (9,6)
Spain	The General Directorate of Civil Protection and Emergencies (GDCPE), Ministry of the Interior	42 (6,3)
Sweden	The Swedish Civil Contingencies Agency (MSB), Ministry of Justice	32 (4,8)
		670 (100,0)

Table A2. Descriptive statistics of the variables used in the analysis

Variable	*N*	*Mean*	*Std. Dev.*	*Min*	*Max*
Trust EU institutions	591	4.55	1.07	0	6
Trust national institutions	644	4.82	1.07	0	6
Trust in people	643	3.86	1.03	0	6
Professionalism EU institution	470	3.70	1.27	0	6
Transparency EU institution	496	3.39	1.56	0	6
Performance EU institution	550	4.12	1.05	0	6
Professionalism national institution	553	3.97	1.30	0	6
Transparency national institution	561	4.01	1.59	0	6
Performance national institution	584	4.44	1.17	0	6
Experience of civil protection	662	12.31	8.78	0	56
Experience of DG ECHO	663	0.51	0.50	0	1
Education	535	0.64	0.48	0	1
Gender	547	0.25	0.43	0	1

Table A3. Ordered logistic regression of trust in EU-level institutions in 17 countries

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6
Trust national institution	1.188***			.950***	1.443***	1.533***
	(.088)			(.110)	(.140)	(.148)
Trust other people		.829***		.479***	.581***	.579***
		(.080)		(.099)	(.109)	(.116)
Professionalism (EU)			.248**	.176*	.266*	.263*
			(.081)	(.086)	(.110)	(.113)
Transparency (EU)			.074	.105	.124	.092
			(.067)	(.070)	(.092)	(.099)
Performance (EU)			1.064***	.876***	1.120***	1.067***
			(.115)	(.119)	(.149)	(.157)
Experience of civil protec.					.017	.011
					(.012)	(.012)
Experience of DG ECHO					.549**	.576*
					(.209)	(.227)
Education					-.228	-.155
					(.219)	(.240)
Gender					.117	.274
					(.235)	(.247)
Professionalism (national)					-.209*	-.186
					(.106)	(.112)
Transparency (national)					-.068	-.083
					(.086)	(.091)
Performance (national)					-.648***	-.639***
					(.119)	(.125)
Country dummies						Included
Cut 1	-.938	-2.884	-1.637	2.564	2.098	2.518
Cut 2	.512	-1.439	.312	4.776	4.946	5.531
Cut 3	1.858	-.151	1.733	6.460	6.627	7.303
Cut 4	3.467	1.250	3.187	8.213	8.550	9.295
Cut 5	5.217	2.763	5.119	10.546	11.144	11.959
Cut 6	7.814	5.130	7.674	13.602	14.471	15.416
χ^2	205.827***	103.907***	166.044***	292.239***	337.596***	359.061***
	(d.f. = 1)	(d.f. = 1)	(d.f. = 3)	(d.f. = 5)	(d.f. = 12)	(d.f. = 28)
Observations	590	584	441	437	412	412
Pseudo R^2 (Nagelkerke)	.313	.173	.334	.519	.595	.619

Note: Ordinal logistic regression coefficients with standard errors in parentheses. Significance levels: ***p < 0.001, **p < 0.01, *p < 0.05. Country dummies are not shown. We find significant country dummies at 0.05 level for the following countries: Croatia, Denmark, Hungary and Slovenia (with Austria as the reference category).