

Institutional Trust in Post-socialist States

- the effects of welfare state attitudes and civic morality -

Progress Report

Balázs Telegdy

4rd LCSR International Workshop,
28. March 2014, Moscow

Identifying the field

- Former socialist countries:
 - Special and common historical background in the last decades (communist heritage, experiencing the transitional process)
 - Low level of trust and high level of corruption (Uslaner 2003)
 - High acceptance of state intervention (Voicu and Voicu 2011, Vučković Juroš 2012)

Conceptual framework

- Attitudes towards the welfare state:
 - Redistribution made by the state
- Institutional trust
 - On societal level, the trust is operationalized as trust in institutions (Freitag and Bühlmann 2009:1537, Jensen and Svendsen 2011)
 - Institutional trust is conceptualized as an integrant part of social capital

Connection between institutional trust and welfare state

- Which influences which?
 - I. Only a positive interconnection is proved, without a directional measure
 - II. Crowding-in and crowding-out debate => the welfare state influences the social capital, so implicitly the trust
 - III. Trust in institutions influences the welfare state

- Accepting the IInd group of arguments:
- (H1) *The trust towards the welfare state institutions are influenced by the attitudes towards them (=WSI).*

The moral legitimacy of the welfare state

- Two perspectives in the reviewed literature:
 - I. Morality of the officials: incorruptibility fosters the legitimacy of the welfare state
 - II. Morality of the citizens: if the welfare state redistribution is not transparent, it finds legitimacy in the uncivil or misbehaving character of a large number of citizens who are trying to avoid taxation and to claim unmerited benefits

- Concluding:
- (H2) *The trust in [welfare state] institutions depends on the moral level of the citizens.*

Data

- EVS 2008 (round 4)
- Post-communist states: AL, BY, BA, BG, HR, CZ, EE, GE, DE-E, HU, RS-KM, LV, LT, MK, MD, ME, PL, RO, RU, RS, SK, SI, UA (AR and AZ left out)
- 23 countries; N = 34.498

Dependent variable

- “Please look at this card and tell me, for each item listed, how much confidence you have in them: is it a great deal, quite a lot, not very much or none at all?” (EVS 2008, Q63A-R).
- 4 degree Likert scale: 1=a great deal, 4=not at all
- Cronbach’s Alpha = 0.909

- Factor Analysis – Principal Component Analysis
- KMO=0.923,
- $\chi^2 = 194946$,
- $df = 120$,
- $p < 0.000$,
- Varimax Rotation with Kaiser nominalization
- 75% of variance explained

Confidence in:	I.	II.	III.	IV.	V.	VI.
NATO	.881					
UN	.862					
EU	.846					
Health care system		.841				
Justice system		.676				
Social security system		.633				
Education system		.522				
Civil service		.497				
Government			.793			
Political Parties			.786			
Parliament			.702			
Press				.813		
Trade Unions				.739		
Armed forces					.756	
Police					.644	
Church						.912

Independent variables I.

- Attitudes towards welfare state:
- “Individuals should take more responsibility for providing for themselves” and “The state should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for” (EVS 2008, Q58 A)
 - a 10-point scale
 - Individual=1, state=10

Independent variables II.

- Morality of the citizens:
- “Please tell me for each of the following whether do you think it can always be justified, never be justified, or something in between, using this card” (EVS 2008, Q68)
- The responses were marked in each case on a 10-point scale, where 1 means “never” and 10 means “always”
- 6 items (Cronbach’s Alpha= 0.835)
- Moral Legitimacy Index (MLI): arithmetical average

Multilevel regression

	Model	
	1	2
Individual – state responsibility to providing	.001	.007***
Moral Legitimacy Index	.032***	.015***
Age		.000
Gender		-.063***
Educational level		.013***
Settlement size		.019***
Monthly income		-.027***
Political view		-.022***
Belief in God		-.049***
Post-Materialist		.023**
Constant	2.484***	2.573***
	R ² =0.07	R ² =0.23
	F=96.617	F=38.160
	p< 0.001	p< 0.001
	N= 27873	N= 16023

Results (H1)

- H1: *The trust towards the welfare state institutions are influenced by the attitudes towards them*
- Negated in model 1 and conformed by model 2
- In the former socialist countries, the more a person considers that the state should be responsible for providing, the less trust he/she has in the welfare state and security institutions.
- This result is in concordance with previous findings, as citizens who tend to rely more on the welfare state have probably higher expectation towards the state and more experience regarding their functionality.

Results (H2)

- H2: *The trust in [welfare state] institutions depends on the moral level of the citizens*
- When a person is more disposed to seek personal benefits by an evasive behavior towards, for example, the redistributive system, starting from his/her own behavior probably tends to trust less in the welfare and security institutions.
- What's more, when a citizen succeeds in an evasive behavior, he/she gets the confirmation that state institutions do not work in a constraining way, so there is the possibility for personal interpretation of the norms, and as such the trust in the states institutions diminishes.

- The listed individual-level control variables increased the explanatory value of my model, but did not diminish the lack of moral attitude regarding personal informal benefits on the trust towards the welfare state institutions in the former socialist countries.
- The effect of the listed individual-level control variables accentuate the affirmation that higher expectations toward the welfare state increase the distrust in these institutions.

Thank you for your attention!