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LCSR

Laboratory for Comparative Social Research

Institutional Trust in Post-socialist States

the effects of welfare state attitudes and civic morality

Final Report

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Main characteristics of the analyzed area

▶ 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

- ▶ Both the attitudes towards the welfare state and the institutional trust are the effect of the state performance.
- ▶ Attitudes towards the welfare state:
 - ▶ Redistribution conducted 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 proven, without a determined directionality
 - 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 is 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 morality 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

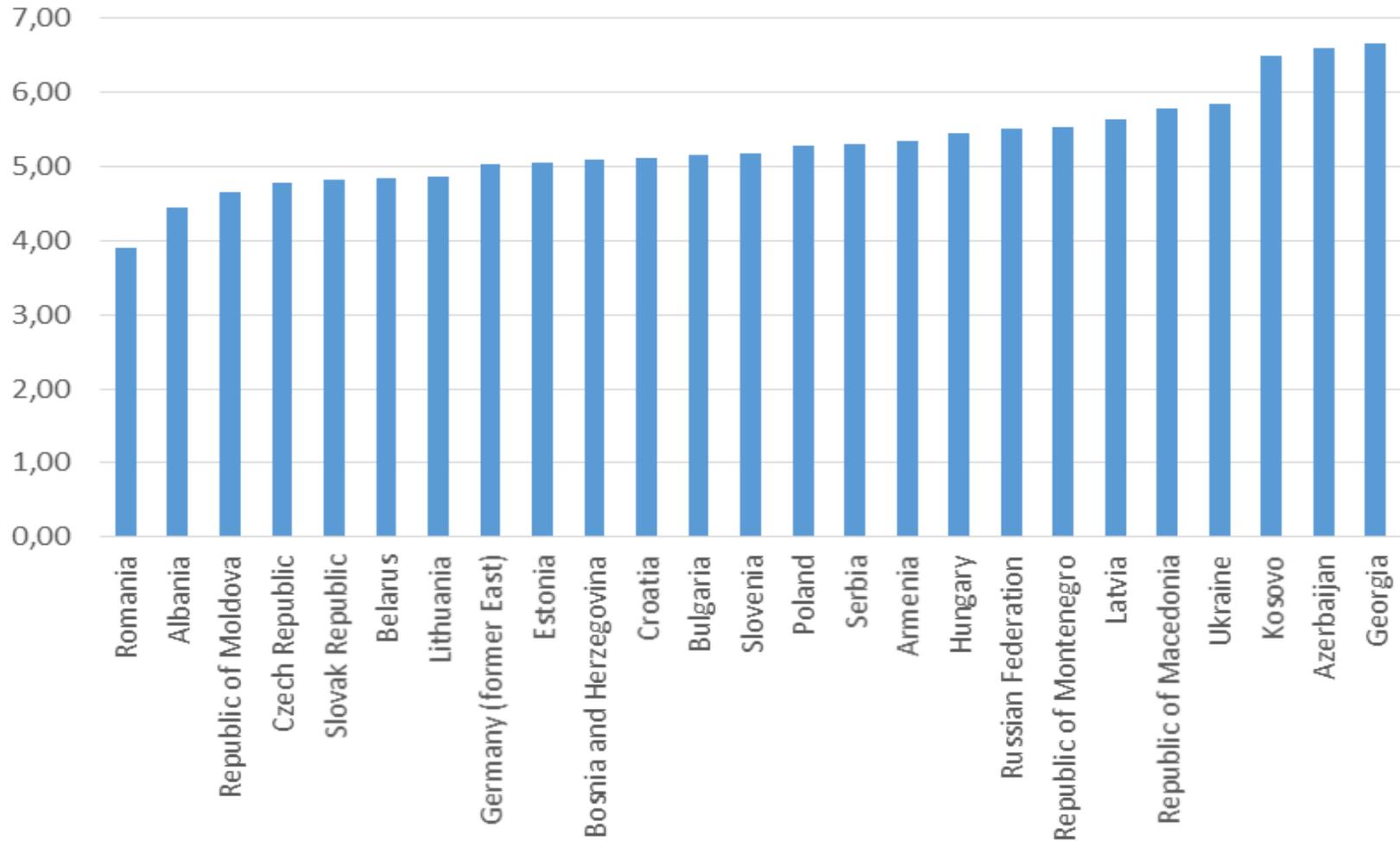
- ▶ Factor Analysis - Principal Component Analysis
- ▶ KMO=0.923,
- ▶ $\chi^2 = 194946$,
- ▶ df. = 120,
- ▶ $p < 0.000$,
- ▶ Varimax Rotation with Kaiser nominalization
- ▶ 75% of variance explained

| 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

Individuals (1) or state (10) responsibility to provide



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”

- ▶ Claiming state benefits which you are not entitled to (2.24)
- ▶ Cheating on tax if you have the chance (2.36)
- ▶ Lying in own interest (2.63)
- ▶ Accepting a bribe (1.93)
- ▶ Paying cash to avoid taxes (2.79)
- ▶ Avoiding fare on public transportation (2.44)

- ▶ Moral Legitimacy Index (MLI): arithmetical average

- ▶ 6 items (Cronbach's Alpha= 0.835)

Controlling variables

- ▶ Age
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Educational level
- ▶ Settlement size
- ▶ Household income
- ▶ Political view
- ▶ Post-materialist

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*** |
| Institutional Trust in Post-Socialis States | 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 is 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 they have 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, judging by his/her own behavior probably tends to trust the welfare and security institutions less.
- ▶ What's more, when a citizen succeeds in an evasive behavior, he/she gets the confirmation that the 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 (micro level) control variables increased the explanatory value of my model, but did not diminish the effect of the moral attitude regarding personal informal benefits
- ▶ 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.
- ▶ The former socialist state's paradox: the state is giving a too small amount to a too large number of its citizens.

Thank you for your
attention!