How to read dataset POLTRUST in MLG and CRISIS

This document contains the questions on citizens' political trust in times of crisis, evaluative questions about the Covid-19 pandemic and more general questions that are the basis of the dataset. The survey contains a hypothetical scenario similar to Covid-19 which probes into citizens' trust in different levels of government to take certain crisis measures. We opted for such scenario as it corresponds to real-world events during the 2020-2022 Covid-19 pandemic. The crisis responses sketched by the scenario can therefore also resonate with citizens.

The survey was fielded in June 2023 by the specialized survey company Bilendi in six EU member states – Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Spain – totaling 6000 respondents. Respondents were recruited through the large online panels of Bilendi. The dataset also contains a variable to weigh the data per country by age, gender and education (variable "weighing" in the dataset). Respondents that did not consent to participation before or after the survey, did not completely fill in the survey or failed an attention check in the middle of the survey (V019) were excluded to maintain data quality. When a respondent was excluded, new respondents were sought to maintain the 6000 respondents. The following pages explain the structure of the survey and the dataset.

Please refer to Frateur J., Coroado S., Bursens, P. and Popelier, P. (2024). *POLTRUST IN MLG* and *CRISIS* [dataset]. when using these data.

Block 1. Personal backgroun

1. What gender do you identify as? **(V002)**
   a. *Male – Female – Other – Prefer not to say.*
2. How old are you? (V003A)
   a. *In numbers – prefer not to say*
3. What is your highest obtained educational degree? **(V004)**
   a. *No degree – primary – secondary – bachelor or equivalent – master or equivalent – doctor – prefer not to say*
4. What is your current employment status? **(V005)**
   a. *Employed full time – employed part time – self-employed – unemployed (looking for a job) – unemployed (not looking for a job) – student – retired – prefer not to say*

Block 2. Politics and trust in government

5. How much do you trust the following governments? **(V006a-d)**
   a. The local government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   b. The regional government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   c. The national government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   d. The European Union

   Scale for each level from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

6. Do you think, in general, that most people can be trusted, or that you cannot be too careful in dealing with people? **(V007)**
   Scale from "you cannot be too careful" to "most people can be trusted" (1-7).
   Don't know

7. How much do you feel attached to the following levels? **(V008a-d)**
   a. The local level *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   b. The regional level *[adapted to country of respondent]*

c. The national level *[adapted to country of respondent]*
d. The European Union

   Scale for each level from "not feeling attached at all" to "feeling very attached" (1-7).
   Don't know

8. How much do you think the following governments' actions have an impact in your life? **(V009a-d)**
   a. The local government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   b. The regional government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   c. The national government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   d. The European Union

   Scale for each level from "no impact at all" to "lot of impact" (1-7).
   Don't know

Block 3. Scenario
[order of the measure in the scenario was randomized, some got the restrictive measure in block 3, other the economic support measure]

A highly contagious and possibly deadly virus is rapidly spreading throughout Europe. The virus has already been found in your country and multiple infections are reported in your region. Research in other countries, where infection rates are high, shows that it affects the whole population and that it spreads through the air. Reports say that there are already deaths that can be attributed to the disease.

In response to this, and to stop the spread of the virus, citizens are not allowed to leave their house unless it is absolutely necessary.

1. What is your willingness to accept this measure? **(V010)**
   Scale from "not willing at all" to "full willingness" (1-7).
   Don't know

2. How much would you trust the following governments to take this measure? **(V011a-d)**
   a. The local government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   b. The regional government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   c. The national government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   d. The European Union

   Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

[Scenario again shown after which following questions were asked]

3. Imagine that the [*least trusted government in Q2 (V011x)*] took the measure <u>after consultation of other government levels</u>. In that case, how much would you trust the [*least trusted government in Q2 (V011x)*] to take this measure? **(V012)**
   Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

4. Imagine that the [*most trusted government in Q2 (V011z)*] took the measure <u>after consultation of other government levels</u>. In that case, how much would you trust the [*most trusted government in Q2 (V011z)*] to take this measure? **(V013)**
　　　Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
　　　Don't know

1. How severe do you think that the disease would be in the scenario? **(V014)**
　　　Scale from "not severe at all" to "very severe" (1-7).
　　　Don't know

Block 4. Political interest and news consumption
9. How often do you follow the news? **(V015)**
　　　Scale from "never" to "very often" (1-7).
　　　Don't know

10. Are you actively interested in politics? **(V016)**
By active is meant that you at least talk about politics in closed circles. Other forms are amongst others: signing petitions, discussing politics on social media, attending demonstrations, involvement in social organizations or in political movements.
　　　Scale from "not active" to "very active" (1-7).
　　　Don't know

11. How satisfied are you with the economy in your country as a whole? **(V017)**
　　　Scale from "not satisfied at all" to "very satisfied" (1-7).
　　　Don't know

12. In politics people sometimes talk about left and right. When you think of your own political beliefs, where would you place yourself? **(V018)**
　　　Scale from "left" to "right" (1-7).
　　　"Prefer not to say"

13. Please indicate the option 'very negative'. **(V019)**
　　　Scale from "very negative" to "very positive" (1-7).
　　　"I do not know".

Block 5. Scenario
[order of the measure in the scenario was randomized, some got the restrictive measure in block 5, other the economic support measure]

A highly contagious and possibly deadly virus is rapidly spreading throughout Europe. The virus has already been found in your country and multiple infections are reported in your region. Research in other countries, where infection rates are high, shows that it affects the whole population and that it spreads through the air. Reports say that there are already deaths that can be attributed to the disease.

People have been unable to go to work because their work or business had to close. To compensate for economic losses caused by measures to fight the spread of the virus, budget for economic support was made available.

1. What is your willingness to accept this measure? **(V020)**
　　　Scale from "not willing at all" to "full willingness" (1-7).

Don't know

2. How much would you trust the following governments to take this measure? **(V021a-d)**
   a. The local government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   b. The regional government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   c. The national government *[adapted to country of respondent]*
   d. The European Union

   Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

[Scenario again shown after which following questions were asked]

3. Now imagine that the [*least trusted government in Q2 (V011x)*] took the measure after consultation of other government levels. In that case, how much would you trust the [*least trusted government in Q2 (V011x)*] to take this measure? **(V022)**
   Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

4. Now imagine that the [*most trusted government in Q2 (V011z)*] took the measure after consultation of other government levels. In that case, how much would you trust the [*most trusted government in Q2 (V011z)*] to take this measure? **(V023)**
   Scale from "do not trust at all" to "trust completely" (1-7).
   Don't know

Block 6. Covid-19 related questions
14. To what extent do you think governments followed the procedures as prescribed by law when adopting Covid-19 measures? **(V024)**
   Scale from "Followed not at all" to "followed all procedures" (1-7).
   "I do not know".

15. To what extent did you perceive the way in which Covid-19 measures were taken as transparent? **(V025)**
   Scale from "not transparent at all" to "very transparent" (1-7).
   "I do not know".

16. To what extent did the Covid-19 pandemic impact your life in general? **(V026)**
   Scale from "very negatively" to "very positively" (1-7). 4 = "no impact".
   "I do not know".

17. To what extent did the Covid-19 pandemic impact your economic situation? **(V026B)**
   Scale from "very negatively" to "very positively" (1-7). 4 = "no impact".
   "I do not know".

18. To what extent did you perceive the Covid-19 measures as responsive to your needs? **(V027)**
   Scale from "not responsive at all" to "very responsive" (1-7).
   "I do not know".

19. How satisfied were you with the government's support of the economy during the Covid-19 pandemic? **(V028)**
   Scale from "not satisfied at all" to "very satisfied" (1-7).
   "I do not know".

20. How satisfied were you with the government's support of households during the Covid-19 pandemic? **(V029)**

       Scale from "not satisfied at all" to "very satisfied" (1-7).

       "I do not know".

21. Finally, we would like to know which of the following values are the most important to you when you think about a government's management of a crisis? Pick the three values that are most important to you. [*values were randomized per respondent*] **(V030a_1-10 for indication per value & V030b_1-3 for the ranking)**

    a. *Legality – transparency – proximity to citizens – benevolence – responsiveness – ability – fairness – integrity – accountability – I do not know.*