

The role of trust, religion and political affiliation in attitudes to anti-terror measures

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ISSN 1503-0946

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UNIFOB AS

AUGUST 2009

Working Paper 9 - 2009

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Preface

This paper is written as part of the research project «Multi-level governance in the tension between functional and territorial specialization», funded by the Norwegian Research Council. It was presented at the Fifth TransAtlantic Dialogue (5TAD): The Future of Governance in Europe and the U.S, 11-13 June 2009, Washington D.C., *Workshop 1: Can the Public Sector Reestablish its Legitimacy?* The TransAtlantic Dialogues are organized jointly by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) and the European Group of Public Administration (EGPA).

Summary

This paper analyzes citizens' attitudes towards the use of strong prevention measures in the fight against terror. The analysis is based on a survey sent to a representative sample of the Norwegian population in 2006. The respondents were asked whether they thought the authorities should have the right to hold people in custody without trial, to tap people's telephone calls, or to randomly stop and search people on the street. Norwegian citizens stand out as having relatively positive attitudes towards the measures in question. However, they are generally more critical towards keeping people in custody without trial, which is the most controversial measure. The analysis shows that trust, religion, and political orientation have significant explanatory value. High scores on social trust predict more skeptical attitudes towards strong prevention measures. However, a strong belief in personal abilities fosters attitudes that are less skeptical. Christians are likely to be more positive than Muslims, and people belonging to the political left are significantly more skeptical towards draconian prevention measures than people on the political right.

Sammendrag

Notatet analyserer befolkningens holdninger til ulike forebyggende tiltak i kampen mot terror, basert på en survey sendt til et representativt utvalg av den norske befolkningen i 2006. I undersøkelsen ble det spurt om holdninger til ulike tiltak iverksatt av myndighetene ved mistanke om at et nært forestående terrorangrep. Burde myndighetene i slike tilfeller ha rett til å holde personer i forvaring så lenge de vil uten å stille dem for retten, å avlytte folks telefonsamtaler, og/eller tilfeldig stoppe og ransake folk på gaten? Nordmenn fremstår som relativt positive til slike anti-terrortiltak. Likevel er de mer kritisk til det tiltaket som også er mest kontroversielt: Å holde noen i forvaring i et ubegrenset tidsrom uten å stille dem for retten. Analysen viser videre at tillit, religion og politisk orientering har signifikant betydning for holdningene til anti-terrortiltak. Høy skår på sosial tillit predikerer mer skeptiske holdninger til sterke anti-terrortiltak. Samtidig går høy tiltro til egne evner og muligheter for politisk påvirkning sammen med mindre skeptiske holdninger til anti-terrortiltakene. Kristne er mer positive til slike tiltak enn det muslimer er, og de som tilhører den politiske venstresiden er mer skeptiske enn de som befinner seg på høyresiden.

Introduction

This paper examines Norwegian citizens' attitudes towards the use of strong or «draconian» prevention measures as a crisis management tool in situations where the government suspects that a terrorist attack may be imminent and national security is at stake.¹ Our central research question concerns which factors influence and explain attitudes towards different prevention measures. In the following sections, we present three sets of explanatory factors, and discuss their relative explanatory value utilizing present survey data and statistical analysis.

Since the 9/11 terror attacks and the subsequent war on terror, the world has come to be perceived as increasingly insecure and dangerous (Christensen, Fimreite and Læg Reid 2007). The new threat from terrorism seems to have lowered western governments' threshold for introducing far-reaching measures in the fight against terror and also seems to have heightened people's tolerance towards such measures. This is perhaps most evident in countries like the US, the UK, and Australia, where far-reaching anti-terrorist laws like the Patriot Act have been passed. These new regulations provide the police and intelligence services with considerable new powers in the area of arbitrary arrest and detention (Rix 2006). But in other EU countries and in Norway, too, anti-terrorist laws have been passed and new measures taken in the wake of September 11.

These new laws and regulations shift the balance between individual freedom and government control, a development closely linked to the question of the legitimacy of the public sector (Kettl 2004). A general trend is that when danger increases, liberties shrink. In representative democracies we now face a struggle to find a new balance between civil rights and individual freedoms on the one hand and the need for stronger internal security and safety on the other hand. One factor influencing whether this balance will be achieved is the general level of trust among citizens, in particular their trust in government, but religious orientation as well as political attitudes and orientation may also make a difference.

Although issues like personal freedom, human rights, and abuse of the powers connected with the anti-terrorist measures are fundamental for democracy, in Norway, the public debate and general attention towards these questions seems to have been quite moderate. However, in a representative democracy, knowing what the public's attitudes are to the use of such strong governmental measures is important. In this paper we will describe and try to explain Norwegian citizens' attitudes towards a set of strong anti-terror measures. The measures under scrutiny are the right to hold people in custody without trial, the right to tap people's telephone calls, and the right to randomly stop and search people on the street. The attitudes towards these measures will be analyzed according to levels of trust, religious belief, and political orientation, as well as demographic features.

The data used in this paper are taken from a broad mass survey on «Citizen's attitudes towards public authorities and public activities» sent to a representative sample

¹ The paper has been written as a part of the research project «Multi level governance in the tension between functional and territorial specialization», which focuses on the policy area of internal security and crisis management. The project is funded by the Norwegian Research Council:
[http://www.rokkansenteret.uib.no/projects/?/\\$present&id=237](http://www.rokkansenteret.uib.no/projects/?/$present&id=237)

of Norwegian citizens in 2006. The survey is part of the International Social Survey Program and was conducted by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) and funded by the Norwegian Research Council.²

We will start by introducing the Norwegian context. Second, we will present our theoretical framework and derive hypotheses on the relationship between attitudes towards draconian measures in the fight against terror and indicators of citizens' trust, religious orientation, and political attitudes. Third, we will present the data. Fourth, we will describe the scope of the different measures and analyze the variations in citizens' attitudes using bivariate and multivariate analyses. Finally, we will draw some conclusions and implications from our findings.

The Norwegian context

Norway is a small multiparty parliamentary state with a strong democratic tradition. The country scores high on per capita income and abundance of natural resources, has relatively strong collectivistic and egalitarian values, is consensus-orientated, and has a low level of internal conflict. The public sector is large, owing to a large and universal welfare state, government is generally well regarded, and support for democracy and the level of trust in public institutions are generally high (Christensen and Læg Reid 2005). Indeed, Norwegian society generally is marked by a high level of trust (Rothstein and Stolle 2003), and surveys of public support for political institutions very often accord Norway a leading position (Listhaug 1997, Kim 2007). Norway is, furthermore, a relatively homogeneous country in terms of religion. Although secularization has weakened the traditional status of the Protestant State Church, which has been increasingly under attack, more than 85 percent of the population are members. Correspondingly, members of non-Christian religions are very few, less than 2 percent are Muslims (SSB 2008).

As a peaceful corner of the world, Norway has had limited experience with terror since World War II. In 1973, the Moroccan Achmed Bouchici was murdered on the street in the small city of Lillehammer by Israeli agents who wrongly assumed he was connected to the massacre at the Munich Olympics in 1972. This incident is commonly regarded as the most serious act of terror in Norwegian history. In 1993, William Nygaard, head of the publishing company Aschehoug, which published Salman Rushdie's controversial novel *The Satanic Verses*, survived an attempt on his life.³ In December 2006, Najmuddin Faraj Ahmad (also known as Mullah Krekar), a Kurd living as a refugee in Norway and the head of the Islamic terror organization Ansar al-Islam, was put on the UN's so-called terror list of individuals and entities belonging to or associating with the Taliban, Osama Bin Laden or the Al-Qaida organization. Krekar is accused of financing and organizing terror acts from Norway, but cannot be expelled

² The survey is a part of the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), a continuous program of cross-national collaboration running annual surveys on social science topics with 44 member countries worldwide: <http://www.gesis.org/en/services/data/survey-data/issp/>

³ This alleged act of terror has never been solved, but is thought to be linked to the Islamic fatwa issued against Salman Rushdie and his publishers.

owing to the impending danger of facing torture or execution in his homeland Iraq. Finally, in April 2008, the Pakistani Arfan Bhatti was brought before the court accused of planning and threatening terrorist acts after, among other things, he fired gunshots at the Jewish synagogue in Oslo. He was later found not guilty of terrorist acts.

To sum up, there have never been any *major* acts of terror in Norway in times of peace. However, as a close ally of the US, a member of NATO, and a country integrated in the EU through the European Economic Area agreement, Norway has been affected considerably by terrorist attacks elsewhere. Terrorist attacks in the US, Spain, and the UK in the last decade, and certainly 9/11 and the ensuing «war on terror» are clearly relevant in the Norwegian context too (Nordenhaug and Engene 2008). Only a few weeks after 9/11, a temporary ordinance that prohibited financing of terror was issued by a royal decree (Kgl. res. 2/5, October 2001, 2000/12772 III), and in December 2001 the Norwegian government presented proposals for anti-terror laws. Although these were not nearly as far-reaching as the ones that were proposed and later passed in other countries, they did represent something quite new in the Norwegian context.⁴ Until then, the concept of terror was not even mentioned in the Norwegian penal code.⁵ The proposed anti-terror laws were to give the police wide-ranging powers in the area of technical tracing (like wiring and phone tapping), and included a general ban on planning or preparation of terrorist acts. The proposals were heavily criticized by the Director of Public Prosecution and by human rights organizations such as Amnesty International. They argued that the new measures would criminalize acts that up until then had been considered legal political instruments, and that the proposal would cast doubt on the status of human rights in Norwegian legislation. Consequently, the final anti-terror laws passed by the parliament were considerably modified (Innst. O. nr 113 (2004-2005), Besl. O. nr. 100 (2004-2005)). The Norwegian terror laws as they appear today can be characterized as relatively moderate and are based on traditional Norwegian and common European legal principles.

The public debate over the introduction of the post 9/11 anti-terror measures was limited in Norway. This could indicate that there is broad support for, satisfaction with, and trust in the ways security issues are handled by the government. A survey conducted by Norstat on behalf of the Norwegian Board of Technology in 2007 shows that three out of four Norwegians accept more surveillance if it makes everyday life safer.⁶ According to the Board of Technology, Norwegian citizens generally regard the use of surveillance technology positively and expect the government to use appropriate means to protect them against crime and terror. At a more general level, Christensen, Fimreite, and Læg Reid (2007) find that Norwegian citizens have a rather high level of trust in government ability to handle and prevent crisis.

⁴ A process that aimed to reinforce so-called unorthodox investigation methods and methods aimed at crime-prevention had actually begun before 9/11. In January 2000, the police were allocated new powers in the area of phone-tapping, communication control, and delayed notification when searching. In July 2001 a public commission (the «Police-method Commission») was appointed to investigate and propose new crime-prevention methods for the police. The Commission delivered a report (NOU 2004: 6 «Mellom effektivitet og personvern») which resulted in a legislative proposal in 2005 that extended opportunities for police surveillance (Ot. prp. nr. 60 (2004-2005)).

⁵ <http://www.aftenposten.no/nyheter/iriks/article309963.ece>

⁶ <http://www.teknologiradet.no/FullStory.aspx?m=28&amid=3673>

Theoretical framework

Our general question is: *What factors can explain variation in citizens' attitudes towards strong or draconian measures in the fight against terror?* In general, a number of factors and conditions might influence peoples' attitudes. Our point of departure is that citizens' attitudes, both towards the government in general, and towards the specific issues under question here, reflect the fact that people have bounded rationality and operate using a simplified model of the world (March and Simon 1958; Simon 1965). Numerous studies of how citizens assess public sector problem-solving have validated a set of broad explanatory factors that we will draw upon in our analysis (Christensen and Lægveid 2003, Inglehart 1977, Pfeffer 1983, Simon 1965, Aardal 1999, 2007). We focus on three sets of such factors:

- 1) How does people's *trust* – both towards government and at a more personal level – affect attitudes towards these measures?
- 2) How does *religion* affect these attitudes?
- 3) What influence does *political orientation and affiliation* have on these questions?

Trust

In order to capture different dimensions of trust, our model includes three measures: social trust, trust in government, and a variable measuring «political efficacy». Our general expectation is that high levels of trust correlate with more positive (or accepting) attitudes towards strong measures in the fight against terror. Correspondingly, we would expect low levels of trust to explain more negative views towards such measures.

In general, trust is a multi-faceted and ambiguous concept. Trust can be general, directed towards society as such, or more specific, directed towards the political-administrative system, or even much more specific, directed towards individual institutions or people (politicians or civil servants). Pippa Norris (1999) distinguishes between *social trust*, which refers to trust directed towards family, friends or people in one's local environment, and *political trust*, which is related to political society, political regimes, and specific political actors. *Social trust* has further been encapsulated as an ongoing motivation or impetus for social relations that forms a basis for interaction, and thereby has important consequences for society. In his now world-famous (but also much criticized) work, Robert Putnam (Putnam et. al. 1993, Putnam 2002) used social trust in combination with indicators of civic community to measure levels of «social capital», using this to explain institutional performance, stability, and development. Numerous others have done the same. The assumption is that social trust will foster greater levels of teamwork, knowledge-sharing or civic engagement. However, the values that form the basis for social trust are not universal, but can vary among cultures, between contexts, and across time, and hence will be difficult to measure accurately. In our analysis, social trust is measured using an additive index (see Appendix). Our expectation is that people scoring high on social trust will have more positive attitudes to use of draconian measures in the fight against terrorism. Higher social trust will

correspond to higher trust in, or support of, government – and thus acceptance of preventive measures.

Trust in government, although more specific than social trust, is also a rather ambiguous concept. It might cover general and systemic factors, such as legitimacy accorded to the political-administrative system in general, but also more specific experiences with the government and its services and the dynamic between the two (Christensen and Læg Reid 2005, Bouckaert and Van de Walle 2003). Public opinion about governmental institutions is quite inconsistent and ambivalent and characterized more by cognitive complexity than by consistency (Forster and Snyder 1989, Hill 1992, Listhaug 1990, Rainey 1996). Here our assumptions correspond to the expected relations between social trust and attitudes towards the use of anti-terror measures. Low levels of trust are expected to foster negative attitudes towards the use of draconian measures, and high levels of trust positive attitudes towards such measures. In our analysis, trust in government is measured using an additive index covering trust in Parliament, public administration, the government, local authorities, and the courts (see Appendix)

Political efficacy describes people's general faith in government and their belief that they understand and can personally influence political affairs (see Appendix). A high degree of political efficacy can be expected to correlate with high levels of confidence in the government, which again leads to supportive attitudes in the question of using strong measures in the fight against terror. However, a strong belief in personal abilities and individual political influence might also correspond with a strong faith in government to «do the right thing», and a belief that the authorities will not pursue strong or draconian prevention measures unless it is absolutely necessary. Potential power abuse might be judged more acceptable if you believe in the ability of the individual to influence outcomes.

Religion

Religion has been ascribed a central role in the ongoing war on terror, and some have even called it a religious war (Rojecki 2005). After 9/11, the Norwegian government expressed clear views on who they thought would be responsible for future terrorist acts in Norway, should these take place. Islamic extremist and non-state actors were identified as the most likely groups, and religious fanatics were seen as the most damaging threat (St. meld. 17 (2001-2002), Nordenhaug and Engene 2008). Consequently, *religion* seems an essential explanatory variable when trying to explain variations in attitudes towards terror prevention.

It has been argued elsewhere that religion and religious activity can be used as a predictor of the degree of integration in society, and that people who are more integrated in society are likely to be more supportive of the authorities (Christensen, Fimreite and Læg Reid 2007). This line of argument indicates that *religious activity* could be a relevant predictor of attitudes towards strong measures against terror. A high level of religious activity can be expected to foster positive attitudes towards the government, and consequently towards strong prevention measures.

Furthermore, *type of religion* seems particularly relevant. The war on terror is seen by many as a war between Christianity and Islam, where the former is under attack by the

latter. This situation has led to increased xenophobia and a situation where Muslims feel they are regarded as a threat to national security. Our expectation is therefore that Muslims will be more critical towards governmental use of strong measures than other members of society.

Political orientation

The final set of explanatory variables measure political orientation. Three variables are included: How respondents rank themselves on a *left-right index*, *party affiliation*, and a measure of general *attitudes towards civil rights*, identifying people as more liberal or more conservative. Here, citizens were asked to say which they thought was worse: to judge someone innocent or to let someone guilty go free. We categorize the former as more liberal (permissive), and the latter as more conservative (strict).

Our general assumption is that political orientation can predict attitudes towards strong measures against terror.⁷ We expect people belonging to the political left to be more skeptical towards strong measures against terror, while people on the political right will be more supportive. Correspondingly, we expect people who are more liberal (permissive) to be more skeptical than people who are more conservative (strict).

Norway is a multiparty parliamentary state. There is a major cleavage in Norwegian politics over questions of (social) equality, public spending, and control (Aardal 2007). Historically, the strongest support for the state has come from the broad, popular left, while voters and parties belonging to the political right tend to favor market forces. When it comes to party affiliation, previous studies have shown that people voting for the right-wing Progress Party (FrP) are also the most skeptical towards the public sector, whilst those voting for the socialist parties (Ap, SV, Red) are the most supportive (Aardal 2007, Lægreid 1993). Hence, one could expect that people belonging to the political left would be *more* supportive of strong government measures than those on the right. General attitudes towards these measures might also be affected by the fact that Norway had a Centre-Left government when the survey was conducted; for the first time in Norwegian history, the Socialist Left party (SV) was in power.

On the other hand, Norway has a history of – sometimes illegal – surveillance of citizens belonging to the political left (The Lund Commission 1996). Furthermore, the leftist parties have traditionally been more preoccupied with questions of political repression and have taken more critical stands against violations of established civil rights (at least internationally). In the public debate concerning the use of surveillance technology and the extension of the powers of the police and intelligence services, two parties have distinguished themselves as critical: the Liberal Party (V) and the (communist) party Red. The right-wing Progress Party is overall the most supportive towards the use of such measures. Based on these arguments, one would expect that people belonging to the political left, (voting for the socialist parties) would be more skeptical towards the use of strong measures in the fight against terror than those on the right voting for the non-socialist parties.

⁷ Previous studies have shown that political orientation is related to how one views the authorities, and furthermore to general trust in government (Forster and Snyder 1989, Lægreid 1993, Christensen and Lægreid 2005).

Data base and analytical design

The data used in this paper were obtained from a survey conducted by the Norwegian Social Science Data Services (NSD) in 2006, included in the ISSP survey program. The survey was based on a representative sample of Norwegian citizens between the ages of 18 and 79, and the response rate was 50 percent, with 1,368 out of 2,700 people responding.

The outcome or dependent variables in the study demonstrate attitudes towards a set of strong measures used as terror-prevention tools. The respondents were asked to rank their opinion towards three different, but related measures. The question was:

Imagine that the government suspects that a terror attack is imminent. Do you think that the government should have the right to:

- 1) Hold people in custody as long as they wish without putting them on trial
- 2) Tap people's telephone calls
- 3) Randomly stop and search people on the street

The respondents were asked to rank their responses from 1 (should absolutely have the right to) to 4 (should absolutely not have the right to), and a category 5 (do not know).

The three measures in question are *proactive*; they are intended to be taken in anticipation of future problems or needs. We expect attitudes towards the three measures to vary, given that they differ considerably in terms of radicality. In general, people can be expected to be more tolerant towards tapping phone calls (2) and randomly stopping and searching people on the street (3) than holding people in custody without trial (1). Phone-tapping and other similar surveillance methods are already well-known and established measures, and not very controversial. Phone tapping is by and large accepted as necessary to combat more conventional crime, such as drug dealing or trafficking. To randomly stop and check people on the street is also an established crime-prevention method, and is only rarely seen as problematic.⁸ However, holding people in custody without trial can be seen as a more critical measure, because it represents a more serious violation of civil rights and constitutional principles. It implies abuse of power over innocent people, and may hence be seen as counter-productive and subverting democracy (Reinares 1998). We would therefore expect more people to be skeptical towards holding people in custody without trial, and fewer people to be worried about phone-tapping and randomly stopping and searching. The citizens' attitudes towards holding people in custody without trial will be analyzed further according to our three selected explanatory dimensions (trust, religion and political orientation).

We explain variations in attitudes towards the measures by using multiple OLS regression analysis, including three variables measuring trust, one variable measuring religion, and three variables measuring political orientation. Four demographic variables

⁸ However, Sollund (2007) discusses this particular measure in relation to the interaction between ethnic minorities and the Norwegian police.

(gender, age, education, and place of residence) are included as control variables. Previous studies have shown that these variables are particularly relevant when measuring differences in values and attitudes in the population (Christensen and Læg Reid 2003, Inglehart 1977, Pfeffer 1983, Simon 1965, Aardal 1999, 2007).

General support for strong prevention measures

In this section, we present the empirical results of our statistical analysis. Multiple OLS regression analysis was conducted to assess the relationship between the dependent variables and the independent predictors, in addition to preliminary descriptive and bivariate analysis.⁹ Table 1 reveals Norwegian citizens' general attitudes towards the three measures in question.

Table 1: Citizens' attitudes towards three different prevention measures in the fight against terror. Percentage.

	Phone tapping	Randomly stop and search	Custody without trial
Should absolutely have the right to	47	23	22
Should probably have the right to	34	31	28
Should probably not have the right to	10	22	24
Should absolutely not have the right to	4	17	20
Do not know/missing	6	8	6
Total	100	100	100
	N= 1328	N= 1303	N= 1327

Table 1 demonstrates a considerable variation in the attitudes towards the three different measures. However, a majority support the use of strong measures in the fight against terror. Phone tapping stands out, with more than 80 percent of the respondents saying they think the government absolutely or probably should have the right to use this measure. Only 14 percent take a skeptical position towards this measure. 54 percent are positive towards the right to randomly stop and search people on the street, while 50 percent say that the authorities should absolutely or probably have the right to hold people in custody without trial. The general pattern turns out as we expected: more

⁹Preliminary bivariate analysis was conducted to single out relevant variables. Further analysis of the dependent variables was conducted to ensure no violations of the assumptions of normality, linearity, multicollinearity, and homoskedasticity. The dependent variable «attitude towards phone-tapping» was not satisfactorily normally distributed. However, after an assessment of the advantages and disadvantages of using alternative analysis, linear regression was pursued. Six qualitative categorical explanatory variables (occupational status, religion, political party affiliation, and attitudes towards civil rights) were recoded into dummy variables (coded 0 and 1) in order to be included in the linear regression.

respondents are skeptical towards keeping people in custody (44 percent) than towards the other two measures (14 and 24 percent respectively). These findings support our initial assumption that people's attitude towards keeping people in custody without trial would be the most controversial or least acceptable measure. Further analysis shows significant internal and positive correlations between the three measures. This indicates that they most likely are seen as complementary rather than alternative measures.

Data from the International Social Survey Program (ISSP) from 2006 show that Norway scores relatively high on the question of permitting phone tapping, and on the question of randomly stopping and searching people, compared to the other countries included in the survey program (NSD 2008). Only Denmark has a higher score on the first question. Norway ranks fourth (after Denmark, Great Britain, and Sweden) on the second question. However, when asked about attitudes towards the most controversial measure, keeping people in custody without trial, Norway scores only barely above the average for the countries included. Five countries score above Norway on this question (Great Britain, the Czech Republic, Ireland, Israel, and the USA). The ISSP survey confirms an assumption that Scandinavians generally support strong measures in the fight against terror more than other people, although in Denmark and Sweden more people are skeptical towards holding people in custody without trial.

In conclusion, a surprisingly high proportion of the Norwegian population is willing to accept the most radical and controversial measure. One plausible explanation is that the general high level of trust in government institutions among Norwegian citizens combined with the absence of major terror attacks makes the actual use of such measures less likely. Another explanation could be that people in general trust the government to behave properly towards any prisoner, and do not associate keeping people in custody without trial with abuse of power.

Variations in attitudes to draconian measures – trust, religion, and political attitudes

Table 2 displays the bivariate relations between the attitudes towards the three measures and a range of independent (explanatory) variables.¹⁰ In addition to a number of control variables (gender, age, education, occupational status and sector, place of residence, and social status), our initial analysis includes three measures of trust (social trust, trust in government, and political efficacy), two variables measuring religious aspects (religious activity and type of religion), and three variables displaying different aspects of the respondents' political orientation (left-right orientation, political party affiliation, and general attitude towards civil rights).

¹⁰ Different statistical testing techniques have been used to assess the bivariate relations between the three dependent and the various independent variables, owing to different levels of measurement.

Table 2: Bivariate relations (T-test, ANOVA and Pearson's r). Direction of relation and reported levels of significance.

	Phone tapping	Randomly stop and search	Custody without trial
Control variables			
Gender	(+) **	(+) **	-
Age	(-) **	(-) *	(-) **
Education	-	(+) **	(+) **
Occupational status	**	**	**
Occupational sector	-	-	**
Place of residence	**	-	**
Social status	-	-	-
Trust			
Social trust	-	(+) *	(+) *
Trust in government	-	(+) *	(+) **
Political efficacy	-	(-) **	(-) **
Religion			
Religious activity	-	-	-
Religion	**	*	**
Political orientation			
Left-right orientation	(-) **	(-) **	(-) **
Political party affiliation	**	**	**
Attitude towards civil rights	-	-	**

** = sign. < .01; * = sign. < .05

Table 2 supports our argument that the variable measuring attitudes towards keeping people in custody without trial is the most interesting, given our interest in the relationship between these measures and our three selected dimensions (levels of trust, religious belief, and political orientation). Focusing on our three explanatory dimensions, only «religious activity» turns out to be *not* statistically significant for attitudes towards keeping people in custody in the bivariate analysis. Moreover, «religious activity» is not significantly related to any of the other dependent variables. In this analysis then, we cannot establish a relationship between the attitudes towards preventive measures in the fight against terror, and «religious activity», measured as

frequency of attendance at church services or other religious meetings. This variable is therefore omitted from further analysis.

Attitudes towards phone-tapping turn out to have a significant correlation with type of religion and two of the political orientation variables (left-right orientation and political party affiliation), but not significantly with any of our selected trust variables. The question of randomly stopping and searching is significantly correlated with levels of trust, but not with attitudes towards civil rights. Of the control variables, social status is the only variable that turns out not to be significant for any of the three measures and is therefore likewise omitted from further analysis.

Table 3 presents the results of our final OLS multiple regression analysis. Place of residence, occupational sector, and «trust in government» turned out not to be significant for any of the dependent variables in our first regression analysis, and were therefore omitted from the final model.¹¹ Furthermore, although the variable showing political party affiliation is interesting, it can be argued that the left-right orientation variable measures the same thing. To reduce complexity, we therefore chose to omit the party affiliation variable.¹² The variable measuring left-right orientation was recoded (1–3 = left, 4–7 = center, 8–10 = right) in order to emphasize the extreme values. In the following we will discuss the results reported in Table 3 in relation to our three dimensions: trust, religion, and political orientation, focussing in particular on the results concerning the strongest and most controversial measure – keeping people in custody without trial.

¹¹ This does not mean that place of residence, occupational sector, and «trust in government» are not related to attitudes towards the prevention measures in question (this is shown in the bivariate analysis), it only indicates that the effect of these variables is not significant in this particular model, when we control for the other variables included. The fact that «trust in government» has no significant effect here may be caused by (statistical) interaction with the other trust variables included.

¹² Further analysis of the relationship between attitudes towards the measures in question and political party affiliation shows that people voting for the extreme left party (Red) and people voting for the extreme right party (the Progress Party) are the groups of voters who are the farthest apart. People affiliated to the Red party are more likely to be skeptical towards draconian measures in the fight against terror (here measured as keeping people in custody without trial), while people voting for the Progress Party are more likely to be positive towards draconian measures.

Table 3: OLS regression. Beta coefficients and levels of significance.

	Phone tapping	Randomly stop and search	Custody without trial
Control variables			
Gender	.061*	.076**	-.010
Age	-.101**	-.037	-.031
Education	.023	.087**	.173**
Occ. Status:			
Pupil/student	.077*	.080*	.020
Not employed	.059	.075*	-.014
Trust			
Social trust	.025	.012	.081**
Political efficacy	.009	-.022	-.160**
Religion			
Muslim	.146**	.036	.012
Other	.068*	.024	.044
No religion	.081**	.013	.090**
Political orientation			
Left-right orientation	-.049	-.109**	-.113**
Attitude towards civil rights:			
Convict someone	-.053	-.051	-.136**
innocent	.005	-.019	-.047
Don't know			
R	.264	.219	.426
R ²	.069**	.048**	.182**
Adjusted R ²	.057	.038	.171
F-statistics	5.756	4.555	17.149
Sign. of F	.000	.000	.000

** = sign. < .01; * = sign. < .05

Reference category for occupational status: working

Reference category for religion: Christian

Reference category for attitude towards civil rights: let someone guilty go free.

Trust

When controlling for other variables, social trust and political efficacy have significant effects on attitudes towards keeping people in custody without trial – but not on the other two measures. This indicates that keeping people in custody is indeed the most controversial measure of the three. The direction of the correlation between personal trust or political efficacy and attitudes towards keeping people in custody is as expected: the higher political efficacy is, the more positive attitudes are towards the prevention measures. Political efficacy is an index which measures the respondent's personal trust, or trust in herself (see Appendix). Interpreted this way, the results of the regression analysis show that people who trust themselves and their own ability to exert influence are less skeptical about strong government measures in the fight against terror. This could be because they generally believe that democratic values and civil rights are strong, and that draconian measures do not imply a breach of established democratic values and will only be implemented if they are justified.

However, the correlation between social trust and the measures in question turns out to be the opposite sign and our initial expectation is not supported. Here, higher scores predict more negative attitudes towards draconian measures. This could mean that people with high social trust do not believe that terror attacks are likely, because they have a generally positive attitude towards society and other people. Consequently, they might not believe that preventive measures in the fight against terror are necessary. High social capital and high levels of social trust is frequently assumed to be related to internal peace and stability, and therefore to freedom, democratization and modernization (Putnam 2000, 2002). Thus our findings would support an alternative hypothesis arguing that high levels of (social) trust and corresponding high levels of social capital, support of democratic values and civil rights will foster more skeptical attitudes towards draconian measures in the fight against terror.

A further implication of these results is that a low score on political efficacy (belief in one's own influence) combined with high social trust predict skeptical attitudes. This means that although you might not trust your own abilities or influence in political processes, you might trust society and other people's tendency to «do the right thing».

Religion

The multivariate analysis shows that there is no effect of religion on attitudes towards randomly stopping and searching people, but Christians are more positive towards phone tapping than non-Christians are. This means that Christians tend to be more positive towards such measures, compared with all other groups, religious or not. Muslims are generally more skeptical towards phone tapping compared with all other groups. People who say they do not have a religious affiliation are significantly more positive towards keeping people in custody. In sum, this result indicates that «keeping people in custody» is a measure that all religious groups find hard to accept. That said,

non-Christians represent a very small minority in Norwegian society, and this makes it difficult to reveal variations in this independent variable.¹³

Political orientation

In the bivariate analysis, political left-right orientation seemed to be a strong predictor. It was significantly correlated with all three dependent variables. However, in the regression analysis presented in Table 3, left-right orientation does not contribute significantly to variations in attitudes towards phone tapping. Political left-right orientation does not make a difference. This strengthens our argument that phone tapping is not a very controversial measure.

In accordance with our initial hypothesis, the regression analysis predicts that people who report a leftist political orientation will be more skeptical, while people oriented towards the right will be more positive towards the other two measures (the reported Beta coefficients are negative).

Concerning the variable we have labelled «attitudes towards civil rights», the attitudes towards keeping people in custody without trial once again turn out to be critical; this is the only variable making a significant contribution to the model. The results show that people who are liberal (permissive) are likely to be *more skeptical* towards keeping people in custody without trial than those who are conservative (strict).

Control variables

The only control variable that turns out to be significant in the regression analysis of our «strong» prevention measure is *education*. This confirms that people in Norway with higher education are also likely to be more *negative* towards keeping people in custody without trial. Education is also the single variable with the strongest impact in the analysis of attitudes towards keeping people in custody without trial, with a reported significant Beta coefficient at .173. *Gender* is a significant predictor regarding attitudes towards phone tapping and randomly stopping and searching, predicting slightly more *negative* attitudes among women than among men. Furthermore, *age* has a significant effect on attitudes towards phone tapping: older people are likely to be more *positive* towards phone tapping, while younger people will be more *negative*. *Occupational status* has no significant effect on attitudes towards keeping people in custody. However, the regression analysis predicts that pupils and students will be significantly more skeptical towards phone tapping and stopping and searching people randomly, compared with the working population. The model further predicts that if you are unemployed, you are likely to be more skeptical towards stopping and searching people on the street compared with people who are working. Consequently, the working population is generally more *positive* towards the measures in question compared with those not working.

¹³ The survey includes only 21 respondents reporting that they are Muslims. 1206 are defined as Christians, 48 as «other» and 111 as having «no religion».

Discussion

Our analysis has revealed, first, that Norwegian citizens have rather positive attitudes towards use of draconian measures in the fight against terror. In a society with a high level of trust in government and a strong democratic tradition, people are generally willing to accept use of rather controversial and radical means by the authorities to protect their safety. Only a small minority are very skeptical about the use of draconian measures to fight terror. This may reflect a general belief that major terror attacks will not strike this relatively peaceful corner of the world, and also a – perhaps naïve? – trust in «the goodness of man.» It may further reflect both the high level of legitimacy accorded to government by citizens in Norway, and a competent civil service. High levels of trust combined with tolerance for strong prevention measures thus seems to reflect a general confidence in government or the state, a corresponding trust in the «goodness of the state» – in contrast to the more fundamental skepticism towards big government in the US and other Anglo-American countries. On the one hand, terror attacks are not likely in Norway. On the other hand, if terror attacks are imminent, Norwegians trust the state to act without abusing its power even if this involves using «draconian» measures.

Second, specific features and contexts of this policy area lead to differentiated reactions. Citizens are more willing to accept that the government authorities have the right to tap people's phone calls if terror attacks are suspected to be imminent, than to randomly stop and search people on the street; and they are much more skeptical about the authorities holding people in custody as long as they wish without putting them on trial.

Third, citizens' attitudes towards draconian measures are supplementary rather than alternative. If they have positive attitudes towards one measure they also have positive attitudes towards the other measures.

Fourth, the main explanatory factors for variations in citizens' attitudes towards use of the most radical draconian measure to fight terrorism (holding people in custody without trial) is related to trust, political affiliation, and religious orientation, but also to educational level, which makes a significant difference. We can sum up the results from the regression analysis by saying that people with a high level of social trust, a low level of political efficacy, who are not Christian, belong to the political left, have strong positive attitudes towards civil rights and a higher education are generally more *skeptical* towards the most radical prevention measure. Furthermore, people with a concern for civil rights react strongly against excessive preventive measures, because they see them as being at odds with democratic values and individual rights.

Fifth, there is less variation among the citizens regarding the two other measures (phone tapping and randomly stopping and searching). This indicates that these measures are less controversial than keeping people in custody without trial for an unlimited time. It is particularly evident in the trust variables, which have no significant effect on attitudes towards the «weaker» or less radical measures. Attitudes towards phone tapping vary especially with religious orientation, while attitudes towards randomly stopping and searching people on the street vary with political orientation.

The demographic variables (gender, age, education, and occupational status) also have some effect on attitudes towards the less radical measures.

The difference in the population regarding the two weaker measures is generally rather small, which may be a reflection of a homogeneous and safe society. There is no clear division between citizens when it comes to attitudes towards phone tapping and randomly stopping and searching people on the street. This indicates that there is no significant legitimacy problem in this policy area. As argued above, this should be seen in relation to the fact that Norway has not faced any major terrorist attacks in recent decades. The implications of this could, however, point in different directions. Either the Norwegian authorities will be able to handle a terrorist attack and have the support of citizens in doing this, because diffuse support is high and there are extra resources readily available. Or else the fact that Norway has never experienced any major terrorist attack leaves us more vulnerable to possible future attacks.

A general implication of our findings is that social integration and social resources seem to foster general trust, and that levels of trust are related to attitudes towards draconian measures in the fight against terror. In general, high levels of trust in Norwegian society can be said to be related to the comparatively strong support for strong prevention measures. However, further analysis shows that people who score high on social trust tend to be more skeptical towards use of such radical measures. People displaying such characteristics obviously feel less insecure and vulnerable, supposedly because they belong to inclusive social groups and have greater social competence and more insight into the importance of collectivity when it comes to fighting terror.

If we compare our expectations with our findings, there are some interesting discrepancies. Even though many of the variables confirmed the expected results, trust in government did not. We expected people with a high level of trust in government to be more positive towards use of draconian measures, but this turned out not to be the case. One reason for this is that the effect of this variable disappears when we control for political efficacy and generalized social trust.

The main picture is that our expectations regarding the importance of trust, religion orientation and political affiliation are confirmed. The variables are related to and relevant explanatories for attitudes towards forceful prevention measures. This is especially the case regarding the most radical and controversial measure – holding people in custody without trial. However, there is no one-factor explanation to understand variation in attitudes towards draconian measures. It is a complex mixture of trust, religious orientation, and political orientation and demographic features also make a difference. High levels of social trust predict more skepticism towards the measures, while high levels of personal trust or political efficacy predict more positive attitudes. This illustrates the complexity of the issue. Including multiple explanatory variables creates a more complicated picture. To sum up, we find support for our assumption that attitudes towards strong prevention measures is indeed related to dimensions of trust, religion, and political orientation, but the direction of these correlations is more complicated to interpret.

Conclusion

For a small country that has not experienced major terrorist attacks, Norway has been rather preoccupied with draconian measures to fight terrorism. In a globalized world, terror attacks occurring elsewhere seem close and insecurity thus increases. People feel that these crises affect them, whether Norwegians are involved or not. The government will want to act preventively when the issue is current, in order to be seen as proactive and up to date with on-going events. However, the fight against terror obviously will not stay high on the political agenda for long in a country such as Norway, where crises are less frequent than in countries facing a greater terrorist threat.

Diffuse support for the government and the public sector is generally higher in Norway than in many other countries such as the USA. Therefore, the government may be endowed with greater legitimacy and resources to handle terrorism. It seems a paradox that Norway is so preoccupied with draconian measures to fight terrorism without having experienced any major terrorist attack. This tells us that analysis of anti-terror measures must also look towards other countries and contexts that have little experience of terrorist attacks. Different starting points or benchmarks make a difference. There could be a greater focus on the building up of governmental trust and legitimacy as a precondition for handling crises in such countries. A related factor is that it is probably easier to improve preventive measures and step up the level of preparation when legitimacy and trust are high or increasing, since making spare resources available in government organizations is easier when trust is high.

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Appendix

The independent variables have the following values:

Demographic features

Gender: 1 man, 2 women.

Age: 18–79

Education: 1 Elementary school, 2 Vocational training, 3 University/College 1-2 years, 4 University/College 3-4 years, 5 University/College 5 years or more

Occupational status: 1 Working, 2 students/pupils, 3 retired/on benefits/stay-at-home/unemployed/other. Working used as reference category for the dummy variables.

Social status: In Norway there are groups that are more or less at the top of society and groups that are more or less at the bottom. Where would you place yourself on this scale? Scale from 1 top to 10 bottom

Place of residence: 1 large city, 2 smaller city, 3 densely populated area, 4 rural area

Working in the public or private sector: 1 Private company, 2 other, 3 public sector. Public sector used as reference category for the dummy variables.

Trust

Social trust: Additive index based on responses to the following statements: *a) There are only a few people I can really trust completely, b) If you are not careful other people will take advantage of you.* The index is constructed as the average score across the items on their five-point ordinal response scale. High values correspond to high levels of trust. Cronbach's Alpha for the two-item index is .724.

Trust in government: Additive index based on responses to the following question: *How would you rate your trust in the following institutions a) Parliament b) public administration c) the Government d) local authorities e) the courts/legal system.* The index is constructed as the average score across the items on their five-point ordinal response scale. Original scores are reversed so that high values correspond to high levels of trust. Cronbach's alpha for the index is .795

Religious activity: *How often do you attend church services or other religious meetings?* 1 Several times a week, 2 Every week, 3 Two or three times a month, 4 Once a month, 5 Several times a year, 6 One or two times a year 7 Less than once a year, 8 Never.

Religion: 1 Christian/Roman-Catholic/Pentecostal Church/ Other Christian religious community, 2 Islam, 3 other non-Christian religious community/Humanist Association/Other philosophy of life, 4 No religion or philosophy of life. Christianity used as reference category for the dummy variables.

Political efficacy: Additive index based on the following questions:

- a) How interested are you in politics?
- b) People like me have no opportunity to influence what the government does
- c) Ordinary people have a lot of political influence
- d) I have a pretty good understanding of the important political issues that our country faces
- e) I think that most people are better informed about politics than I am
- f) Members of Parliament try to keep their campaign promises
- g) We can trust that civil servants in general do what is best for the country.

Five point ordinal response scale. Some of the response scales are reversed to produce a consistent pattern of scores. High values correspond to high political efficacy.

Cronbach's Alpha for the index is .688.

Political orientation

Left-Right orientation: Scale with values from 1 strongly left-oriented, to 10 strongly right-oriented.

Political party affiliation: 1 The Communist Party Red, 2 Labour Party, 3 Progress Party, 4 Conservatives, 5 Christian's Peoples Party, 6 Centre Party, 7 Socialist Left Party, 8 Liberals, 9 Others, 10 Don't know, 11 Would not vote. The Progress Party is used as a reference category for the dummy variables.

Attitudes towards civil rights: *All legal systems make mistakes, but what would you say is the worst?:* 1 to convict someone who is innocent, 2 to let someone guilty go free, 3 do not know. The category «to let someone guilty go free» is used as a reference category for the dummy variables.

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