



Programme GOVTRUST Annual Symposium 2021

Trust and the COVID-19 Crisis: Regulation and Compliance in Multi-level Governance

29 January 2021 | 14:00 - 17:00 CET | Online Zoom event

SCHEDULE OVERVIEW

14:00 - 14:10 Welcome

By prof. dr. [Esther van Zimmeren](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Government & Law)

14:10 - 14:30 Introduction to the GOVTRUST Centre of Excellence

By prof. dr. [Koen Verhoest](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Politics & Public Governance)

14:30 - 15:00 Keynote

By prof. dr. [Benjamin van Rooij](#) (University of Amsterdam and University of California)

15:00 - 15:45 Panel 1: Trust, regulation and compliance

Presentations by prof. dr. [Patricia Popelier](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Government & Law), prof. dr. [Thomas Friemel](#) and dr. [Sarah Geber](#) (University of Zurich, division Media Use and Effects)

Discussant: Prof. dr. [Per Lægreid](#) (University of Bergen, member of the GOVTRUST International Scientific Advisory Board)

15:45 - 16:00 Break

16:00 - 16:45 Panel 2: Trust and multi-level governance

Presentations by prof. dr. [Peter Bursens](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Politics & Public Governance) and dra. [Dominika Proszowska](#) (University of Twente, MSCA fellow PLATO ITN)

Discussant: Prof. dr. [Francesco Palermo](#) (Eurac Research, Institute for Comparative Federalism and University of Verona)

16:45 - 17:00 Closing

By prof. dr. [Wim Voermans](#) (Leiden University, member of the GOVTRUST International Scientific Advisory Board)

* All times are in Central European Time (CET).

[FIND OUT MORE AND REGISTER](#)

PRESENTATION DETAILS AND BIO

Keynote

- By prof. dr. [Benjamin van Rooij](#) (University of Amsterdam and University of California)

Pandemic Compliance: Lessons about rule adherence from the Covid-19 Pandemic

Governments across the globe took measures to mitigate the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The measures have had mixed success, as compliance varied. Human conduct and human responses to governmental rules have proven to be a vital aspect of governmental ability to successfully respond to a pandemic. Vice versa, there is much we can learn about compliance and rule adherence from the responses to the measures set up to curb this disease. Drawing on data collected between April and August in the US and The Netherlands, this presentation will assess what has shaped the behavioral responses to the COVID-19 mitigation measures. The presentation will discuss how an interplay between motivational and situational variables explains variation in compliance in these samples. It will draw out implications about how governments can best seek to change behavior during pandemic crises. Moreover, it will discuss what the findings mean for the overall study of compliance and regulation.

Bio: Benjamin van Rooij is Faculty Director of Research and Professor of Law and Society at the Faculty of Law, University of Amsterdam. He is also a Global Professor of Law at the University of California, Irvine. He studies and teaches about the interaction between law and behavior. His current research focuses on individual differences in compliance, toxic corporate culture, and assumptions about behavioral change. His past work looked at compliance, regulatory law enforcement and access to justice in China in a comparative perspective. He is also co-editor of Regulation & Governance, and founding convener of ComplianceNet a global network of compliance scholars. Recently, he made some important contributions on compliance with corona measures.

Panel 1: Trust, regulation and compliance

- Presentation by prof. dr. [Patricia Popelier](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Government & Law)

Linking GOVTRUST studies on trust and Covid-19 regulation: legitimacy, expertise, and a balance of interests

In this presentation, four GOVTRUST papers on COVID-19 regulation and trust are discussed. In the heat of the crisis, the studies ran mostly parallel and separately. In this presentation, we take a step back to link insights and approaches. Three main observations are that the studies bring to light (1) the interplay between input, output and throughput legitimacy; (2) the role of experts and (3) the balance of interests underpinning government measures and trust assessments.

Bio: Patricia Popelier is full professor at the law faculty of the University of Antwerp and director of the research group of government and law. She is also senior research fellow at the University of Kent, Centre for Federal Studies, and co-promoter of the Centre of Excellence GOVTRUST. Her main research topics are federalism and multilevel governance, constitutional review, legislative studies, and issues of legitimacy and legal certainty. She is the author of a large number of publications in the field of public law, including the monograph Federal Dynamics. A New Theory of Regional Authority and Cohesion (Routledge 2021).

- Presentation by prof. dr. [Thomas Friemel](#) and dr. [Sarah Geber](#) (University of Zurich, division Media Use and Effects)

Social norms as means for compliance with Covid-19 measures in high-trust societies

Given the economic and social downsides of enforced lockdowns of public life, alternative approaches need to be developed in order to cope with the Covid-19 pandemic. Social norms have become an intensively discussed approach in this regard as they socially regulate compliance with health preventive measures. However, little is known about the role of trust as a prerequisite for establishing new social norms to

respond to a global health crisis. We address this question based on two representative surveys on compliance with preventive measures in Switzerland. The first study investigates the role of trust in governmental bodies and mass media regarding the introduction of social distancing at the coronavirus outbreak. The second study addresses the role of trust in the process of adopting the Swiss contact tracing app. Both studies show that trust has a significant influence on social norms and further factors that ultimately explain health prevention behavior. The results are discussed with respect to their generalizability to other settings and domains.

***Bio:** Prof. Dr. Thomas N. Friemel is a professor for Media Use and Media Effects at the Department of Communication and Media Research, University of Zurich. His research and teaching focuses on media use in social contexts, health communication, and social network analysis. He is Co-PI of the project "Covid-Norms" that investigates norms of prevention behaviors during the Covid-19 pandemic in Switzerland (covid-norms.ch/en). He consults the Swiss federal office of public health and other institutions regarding the design and evaluation of health communication campaigns.*

Dr. Sarah Geber is Senior Teaching and Research Associate at the Department of Communication and Media Research, University of Zurich. She researches and teaches media use and effects, political communication, and health communication. Her current research focuses on the significance of social norms and normative communication for health behavior. She is Co-PI of the project "Covid-Norms" that investigates norms of prevention behaviors during the Covid-19 pandemic in Switzerland (covid-norms.ch/en). She is also founding and managing editor of the open access journal "European Journal of Health Communication".

- Panel discussant: Prof. dr. [Per Læg Reid](#) (University of Bergen, member of the GOVTRUST International Scientific Advisory Board)

***Bio:** Per Læg Reid is Professor Emeritus at Department of Administration and Organization Theory, University of Bergen, Norway. He has published extensively on public sector reform, public management policy, institutional change and crisis management from a comparative perspective. His latest books include "Societal Security and Crisis Management. Governance Capacity and Legitimacy" (with L. H. Rykkja, eds). London: Palgrave Macmillan and "Nordic Administrative Reforms. Lessons for Public Management" (with C. Greve, and L.H. Rykkja, eds). London: Palgrave Macmillan and "Organization Theory and the Public Sector" (with T. Christensen and K.A. Røvik) London: Routledge.*

Panel 2: Trust and multi-level governance

- Presentation by prof. dr. [Peter Bursens](#) (GOVTRUST - research group Politics & Public Governance)

Trust, multi-level governance and the Covid-19 crisis in Belgium

Governments at various levels have taken action to fight the Covid-19 crisis. Their response has affected the trust relations between government levels as well as between citizens and governments. This presentation discusses current work of GOVTRUST on both dimensions. It will first discuss the measures taken by Belgian regional and federal governments and how this has impacted the intergovernmental relations within the Belgian federation. Secondly, based on the running UAntwerp coronasurvey, it will present the diverging evolution of citizens' trust in local, regional, federal and European institutions between March and December 2020, discussing factors such as rally-round-the-flag, political events external to the pandemic, the content of the restriction and economic relief measures, the epidemiological evolution and media salience.

***Bio:** Peter Bursens is professor of Political Science at the Faculty of Political and Social Sciences, University of Antwerp. He is senior member of the Politics and Public Governance research group and co-promotor of the GOVTRUST Centre of Excellence. His research interests include Europeanization, federalism and democratic legitimacy of multilevel political systems. He holds a Jean Monnet Chair from the European Commission focusing on skills teaching in political science curricula. He teaches on European integration and multilevel governance at the University of Antwerp and at the Antwerp Management School (AMS).*

- Presentation by dra. [Dominika Proszowska](#) (University of Twente, MSCA fellow PLATO ITN)

Multilevel trust and the “intelligent lockdown” in the Netherlands

Political trust is an important resource for government’s legitimacy, especially during crisis. Initially, an external shock may provide a short-term boost in government’s support, the so-called ‘rally around the flag’. However, prolonging crisis is likely to significantly drain these trust reservoirs. In this presentation, I show preliminary results from a study of the political attitudes during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Netherlands. In our survey, we asked citizens about their trust and perceptions of crisis management regarding three levels of governance: local, national and EU, this way putting the ‘rally around the flag’ dynamics in a multilevel governance context. We collected survey data from the same group of respondents (a national representative sample of Dutch adult population) at three different points in time: right after the introduction of the lockdown restrictions (the beginning of April 2020, N=1960), during the summer relaxation of the lockdown (July 2020, N=1620) and during the hard lockdown preceding the winter holiday season (December 2020, N=1082). Such data allows us to track changes in multi-level trust and perceptions of crisis management at both aggregate and individual level.

***Bio:** Dominika Proszowska is a Marie Skłodowska-Curie Research Fellow at the University of Twente, Department of Public Administration. Her research focuses on political trust differentiation across different levels of the EU multilevel governance system. Her project is part of the EU-funded PLATO PhD network, whose aim is to build and test theory of legitimacy crises in the context of a multi-state, multi-tiered EU political system.*

- Panel discussant: Prof. dr. [Francesco Palermo](#) (Eurac Research, Institute for Comparative Federalism and University of Verona)

***Bio:** Francesco Palermo, PhD, is full professor for comparative constitutional law at the School of Law, University of Verona and Head of the Institute for Comparative Federalism at Eurac Research in Bolzano/Bozen. From 2007 to 2010, he served as Senior Legal Adviser to the OSCE High Commissioner on National Minorities. From 2007 to 2016, he was member of the Council of Europe’s Advisory Committee on the Framework Convention for the Protection of National Minorities, of which he was the President from 2014 to 2016. From 2013 to 2018 he has served as a non-party member of the Italian Senate, working in the constitutional committee and in the human rights committee. Member of the Group of independent experts of the Council of Europe’s Congress of local and regional authorities since 2011, since 2016 he has been the President of the International Association of Centres for Federal Studies (IACFS). He is member and Vice-President of the Scientific Committee of the Fundamental Rights Agency of the EU for the term 2018-2023 and Constitutional Adviser to the Council of Europe’s Congress of Local and Regional Autonomies since 2019. He authored over 300 publications, including 11 monographs and 32 edited volumes. Full CV at: <http://www.eurac.edu/fpalermo>*

Closing

- By prof. dr. [Wim Voermans](#) (Leiden University, member of the GOVTRUST International Scientific Advisory Board)

***Bio:** Wim Voermans is Professor of Constitutional and Administrative law at Leiden University. His current research and teaching focuses on the theory and practice of constitutional law (worldwide), on comparative constitutional law, legislation and regulation and European law. Voermans’ research takes a special interest in the working and (social, economic and political) effects of constitutional law - based on his thesis of constitutional law working as literature. He studies constitutional legitimacy issues, overall observance and performance of constitutional systems.*