

Acceptance of political restrictions during the Covid-19 pandemic – a comparative study of Austria and Hungary, the manifestation of political polarization

1. INTRODUCTION

Times of emergency offer a unique opportunity to study norms and political culture, because prevailing norms and attitudes in such periods of duress can reasonably be assumed to come starkly to the fore and can become the catalysts of political change (Pelling and Dill 2006). This holds particularly for citizens' attitudes and expectations of authorities. Emergency times call for exceptional measures that may raise intriguing dilemmas regarding the balance of security and civil liberties. The concessions citizens are willing to make on their liberty in exchange for a purported increase in security is a central question for understanding citizens' attitudes toward, and ideas about democracy. To scrutinize this question in this study, we focus on citizens' attitudes to restrictions by comparing: Austria and Hungary. We expect that citizens of these two countries will show considerable differences in the way they respond to emergency situations, which we believe is rooted in their different political trajectories, which made Hungarian society to be more polarized. The past ten years of illiberal rule created a radical cleavage between supporters and opponents of the ruling party, Fidesz (e.g. Patkós 2022).¹ First, in our study, we scrutinize some standard variables and their relation to supporting restrictions, and second, we differentiate between three types of restrictions, namely: restrictions on media; restrictions on protests, and the increased levels of surveillance (which is also a form of restriction on civil liberties). We hypothesize that citizens' reactions and attitudes to restrictions differ depending on the restrictions they face, with being affected playing a crucial role. The reason we focus on this question is that it is reasonable to believe that a society in which citizens uphold certain democratic values – such as the freedom of the press, or the freedom of protests – regardless of if they feel that this directly affects them shows greater resilience to democratic backsliding.

One issue that affected numerous Western democracies during the past decades was terrorism, which was subsequently studied in detail, including citizens' responses to the introduction of extensive surveillance technologies (e.g., Ziller and Helbling 2020). However, it was with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic that citizens' reactions to emergency measures more broadly became a salient topic (Alsan et. al. 2020, Brouard et.al. 2020). Most earlier studies on restrictions focused on the question of surveillance in response to terrorist attacks and did not enter a systematic study of how citizens' reaction differ to various types of restrictions. This was

¹ This polarization was partly inherited from the communist times but has been significantly reinforced recently.

natural as the problem only came to the fore globally with Covid-19, with even established democracies contemplating whether restrictions on protests (to avoid contagion) and even on the media (to avoid panic) were necessary. Also, the question of affectedness has been rarely scrutinized, except for studies focusing on the attitude of minorities to enhanced measures of control and surveillance (Hetherington and Suhay 2011, Valentino et al. 2020).

This study contributes to a better understanding of citizens' attitudes to different types of restrictions and how affectedness influences citizens in accepting or resisting limits on civil liberties. The underlying assumption of our study is that citizens have different attitudes toward different measures. This has the important corollary that one should be careful in extrapolating results concerning citizens' attitudes to surveillance to how citizens of the same society would react to other forms of restrictions. That is, whether authorities introduce general surveillance of the population or ban protests makes a difference. Whereas the former affects all citizens in the same way, banning protests disproportionately affects those citizens who wish to take part in protests, while those citizens who see the role of the media as extremely important in keeping authorities in check may be more strongly against any form of media control. Putting this latter point into context, we assert that whether someone regards media freedom as an absolute necessity or if one's attitude to media freedom depends on whether one's preferred party was in power – i.e., affectedness influences its opinion - makes an enormous difference for democratic resilience. In an ideal society, citizens should be equally concerned about restrictions on civil liberties and democratic principles regardless of whether they feel affected by these restrictions or not, i.e., they should value them even if they see no immediate personal benefit in preserving them. For example, one may insist on the right to demonstrate/protest even when demonstrating does not have direct relevance at the given moment for the person in question (perhaps one is satisfied with the government's new measures, or do not affect her).

Thereby, for acquiring a more nuanced understanding of the tension between liberty and security and how citizens deal with their tension in times of emergency, this study focuses not only on *surveillance* (e.g., Hetherington and Suhay 2011, Trüdinger and Steckermeier 2017, Ziller and Helbling 2020), but also on *restrictions on media freedom* and *limits on the organization of protests and demonstrations* (e.g., Hetherington and Suhay 2011). We chose to study restrictions on media freedoms and protest activities because they are essential for keeping authorities in check and providing critical reflections and feedback to politics. At the same time, citizens' perception of them differs considerably. Although the importance of media freedom is widely accepted in modern societies, citizens' attitudes toward protests are more complex, with many citizens having misgivings about protests even in normal times (Jenkins, Wallace and Fullerton 2008, Park and Einwohner 2019). Also, it is important to note that both issues came starkly to the fore during the

pandemic. The restriction of protests was a measure many countries introduced at the beginning of the pandemic even though in most democracies protests were allowed later on.² In France, for example, the government first banned protests of over 10 participants, but then the courts decided that if protesters wore masks and numbered less than 5000, the right to protest should be respected.³ Similarly, media freedom also became a contentious topic when fake news and conspiracy theories increasingly gained ground (Bellucci 2021, Lührmann et al 2020), raising questions about the openness of information flows during emergencies.

Our study offers a comparative analysis of Austria and Hungary. The reason for our case selection will be explained before the methods section. Below, we will first discuss the theoretical background of our study with the focus on why citizens support or resist restrictions (section 2.). Second, we discuss the differences between the three types of restrictions we focus on in our study (section 3.). Next, we introduce our hypotheses, methods, and results (section 4.). We conclude by a discussion of the implications of our results and the further directions in which this inquiry could be pursued (section 5.). We acknowledge that a two-country comparison has its limitations, nevertheless we see it as an important step toward a more nuanced understanding of how affectedness influences citizens' attitude to restrictions on civil liberties.

2. EXPLAINING THE SUPPORT FOR POLITICAL RESTRICTIONS

The Covid-19 pandemic brought about an “unparalleled stress-test” for all political regimes, often resulting in executive aggrandizement (Giusti 2020). What justifies such limitations and what are the factors that make citizens more willing to accept such restrictions?

Many of the studies conducted during the Covid crisis have drawn an analogy between the Covid pandemic and terror attacks in terms of encouraging citizens to accept restrictions on their civil liberties. These studies mostly focus on the acceptance of Covid tracking technologies (Alsan et al. 2020, Lewandowsky et al. 2021, Wnuk et al. 2020) or quarantine enforcement measures (Alsan et al. 2020). They have found that, similarly to terrorist attacks, perceived threat (Alsan et al. 2020, Cilizoglu et al. 2020, Wnuk et al. 2020), political trust (Cilizoglu et al. 2020) and authoritarianism (Cilizoglu et al. 2020, Wnuk et al. 2020) predict the acceptance of restrictive measures. However, these studies do not differentiate between the acceptance of more and less extensive political restrictions. Thus, while the first part of our study focuses on how these three factors influence (trust, fear, political values) the acceptance of restrictions on surveillance, protest and the media (all crucial for democratic life), the second part of the study focuses on differences between these three

² However, requirements were drawn up on social distancing and mask wearing.

³ Connexion (2021) France legalises protests despite ongoing health emergency, January 21, Connexion; at: <https://www.connexionfrance.com/French-news/France-legalises-protests-despite-ongoing-health-emergency-and-police-unhappiness>

types of restrictions capturing their difference in how extensive they are.

Democracy is a multidimensional concept (Diamond and Morlino 2004), with various approaches putting the emphasis on different aspects of it. The aspect we emphasize in our study is that a democracy cannot function properly without widespread control mechanisms in place over authorities and policy makers. This includes institutions, such as the parliament or the judiciary, but it also includes - citizens, civil society and the media that also performs an important function in overseeing and controlling political power (Laebens and Lührmann 2021). Media plays a watchdog role and protests function as a crucial means to express dissatisfaction in modern democracies, while they also contribute to the deliberative process.

Given the crucial role of these for a democratic life, citizens' resistance to see restrictions on these is an indicator of how deeply rooted democratic values are in a society. Still, times of emergency may call for extraordinary measures and even limitations on these may become necessary.

2.1. The role of political trust

Political trust is directly connected to (dis)satisfaction. Easton (1965) sees political trust as “diffuse support for the system” that encompasses the legitimacy of the political regime and acceptance of its constitutional foundations (Hooghe and Marien 2013, Norris 2017). Distrust in representative institutions, on the other hand, indicates dissatisfaction with the system in general and feeds political protest participation (Braun and Hutter 2016, 153; Quaranta 2015, 53). Those who evaluate political institutions as more worthy of trust tend to be more satisfied with the workings of the government, more supportive of the government and more willing to follow the government's decisions (Coleman 1990, Levi and Stokes 2000, Warren 1999, Hetherington 2018).⁴ In other words, trust means that “the legitimacy of the political regime is acknowledged and that there is a high degree of willingness to accept the decisions of politicians and government agencies” (Hooghe and Marien 2013, 3). This, from the perspective of restrictions on civil liberties may include citizens trusting the regime to be more understanding of restrictions introduced by it. While trust is necessary and important for a political system to function, trust can be a double-edged sword and excessive trust may have negative consequences⁵. For a well-functioning political system, citizens need to trust their government, because trust is the basis for citizens' acceptance of government

⁴ There are critical scholars who problematize the link between trust in institutions and trust in individuals, because in their opinion political trust is not analogous to trust in a person (Hardin 2002). According to this view, political institutions can be seen as more or less reliable or trustworthy, but it is less plausible that citizens' evaluations are based on trust in clerks and civil servants. Others, like Hooghe and Marien (2013), approach political trust as a feature of political culture.

⁵ Here excessive trust refers to the macro level. It could be described by an extremely high level of trust in political actors within a society (e.g. mean of trust is high) or by the high proportion of citizens who are willing to uncritically follow the government's decisions.

decisions and compliance with its orders, such as paying taxes. As such, a lack of political trust can lead to a malfunctioning system and potentially invite authoritative measures by the government to make up for the citizens' unwillingness to adhere to the rules. However, at the same time, too much trust can also have negative consequences, like granting government too much authority, as when citizens lose their critical attitude to power (Rivetti and Cavatorta 2017). In other words, Democracy requires vigilant citizens who oversee and monitor political authorities (Warren 2018).

In order to capture this dilemma of trust empirically we turn in this study to the notion of political polarization and assert that too much trust could become a problem in an excessively polarized society. Why? Because pernicious political polarization can turn political opponents into enemies and enhances democratic erosion (Somer, McCoy and Luke 2021), including the dismantling of solidarity and social empathy. While operationalizing this is far from trivial, we contend that how affectedness influences political attitudes and decisions is one of the key indicators of a society's polarization. In a more polarized society, non-affected citizens may more easily ignore the concerns of fellow citizens who feel that their liberties are under threat. They would ignore that while they trust the government others may regard the acts of the government with suspicion and this suspicion is not inherently bad, but quite the contrary, it is essential for preserving democracy by preserving citizens' control over authorities. Putting it differently, the more cohesive and less polarized a society, the more resilient its democracy (Merkel and Lührmann 2021).

This issue is at the core if illiberal tendencies come to the fore in a democracy. One of the main characteristics of an illiberal regime is that its understanding of democracy ignores the concerns of minorities, with the wish of the majority justifying all decisions trumping what may be essential for a minority (García-Holgado and Pérez-Liñán 2021, Landau 2021). This disregarding of minority concerns ultimately breaks down to the question of affectedness, that is, the majority's lack of concern for issues and the opinion of those not directly affecting them. It is upon these considerations that we selected Hungary, an illiberal regime as one of the cases in our study, as we will explain later.

2.2. The role of perceived threat

The other factor that could explain the acceptance of restrictions is the fear that the price the society would pay if the restriction on a particular liberty was not introduced was higher than the damage that the suspending of that liberty would lead to.

During the pandemic the context of democratic life changed dramatically. Mass gatherings could accelerate the spread of COVID-19 virus,⁶ and participation in demonstrations

⁶ Some researchers have found a positive association between protests and COVID-19 case fatality rates (Zhai, et al 2021), while others have found no association at all (Bui et al. 2021, Moreno-Montoya, Villamizar and Idrovo 2021,

became riskier.⁷ Studies have found that threat perception positively correlates with support for protective government policies, which, at the same time, restrict civil liberties (Huddy et al 2005, 2007, Davis and Silver 2004, Bozolli and Müller 2011, Carriere, Hallahan and Moghaddam 2020). For example, fear of becoming infected with the COVID-19 virus during a demonstration could lead one to stay away from the protest, but also make the individual more supportive of restrictions of protests in general, seeing them as a hotbed for the spread of the virus. Huddy et al. (2002) have distinguished between personal and collective threats. While personal threats pose danger to the individual, collective threat pose difficulties to the country, as a whole.⁸ Their analysis find that both type of threats highly correlate with cautious personal behavior after the terrorist attack on the USA, thus could lead to greater willingness to support restrictions on civil liberties.

In other words fear seems to be one of the crucial factors changing the way the trade-off is perceived between liberty and security, thus important to study in understanding support for restrictions (although whether if this is really a trade-off is contestable in a properly working democracy).

2.3. The role of political values

When threat is widely perceived political values and ideology help people to orientate their preferences and behavior. Ideological orientations express preferences for public goods and often define ways to realize such aims (Finkel and Opp 1991). As such, in high-risk situations, such as during the pandemic, more authoritarian-leaning individuals with right-wing orientations prefer the values of moral order, conformity to group norms or obedience to authority and are more likely to support restrictive measures (Heatherington and Suhay 2011, Brouard, Vasilopoulos and Foucault 2018). Recent studies also show that authoritarian leaning citizens are more likely to regard protest behavior questionable than other citizens (Barker, Nalder and Newham 2021)

These findings suggest that it is worthwhile to include political values as one of the independent variables of our study.

3. TYPES OF RESTRICTIONS - the role of affectedness

Early studies put less effort to differentiate between various types of restrictions and thereby overlook the fact that citizens' response varies across different types of restrictions. (Alsan et al. 2020, Cilizoglu et al.2020, Wnuk et al. 2020) Citizens may regard some restrictions as more

Neyman and Dalsey 2021).

⁷ As getting infected during a mass demonstration is a new form of protest participation risk, we may assume this risk has implications for the decision to participate similar to those of well-known risks of political repression (see Opp and Roehl 1990)

⁸ In other studies Huddy and her colleagues do not differentiate between the two forms of threats and build an aggregated measure of perceived threats containing both personal and collective dimensions (Huddy et al 2005, Huddy, Feldman and Weber 2007).

dangerous to democracy and thereby be more reluctant to accept them—even in times of emergencies—than other restrictions. Also, differences in citizens’ responses may originate in the fact that not all restrictions affect citizens in an identical way. For instance, “racial profiling” or “warrantless searches on the suspicious” measures after the 9/11 terrorist attacks mainly affected Muslim citizens and immigrants. However, collecting information on citizens’ movements affects all people in a country regardless of their social background. In this paper, we aim to scrutinize the question of affectedness on citizens’ reluctance to accept restrictions.

There are various approaches to differentiating between restrictions in terms of how encompassing they are. An important distinction refers to the extent of state surveillance measures: *targeted* measures “focus on a particular suspect individual or group,” while *dragnet* measures influence all members of the given society (Ziller and Helbling 2021, 996). Carriere, Hallahan and Moghaddam (2021), however, distinguish between outgroup-based (punitive approach) and ingroup-based (preventative approach) restrictions. According to the punitive approach, measures restrict the civil rights of outgroup members, while the preventative approach includes measures restricting the rights of the ingroup or both the ingroup and outgroup. Both approaches emphasize the distinction between restrictions that are uniformly felt by all citizens and restrictions that have a harsher effect only on certain segments of society.⁹ To summarize, the degree to which a measure is encompassing is a critical feature of restrictive measures since it defines the extent of affected citizens within a society.

Researchers have found affectedness is directly linked to the acceptance of restrictions. A good example of this is minorities in the USA that are less supportive of anti-terrorist orders, such as wiretapping without a warrant (Hetherington and Suhay 2011). This is because Latinos might be more affected by wiretapping, irrespective of alleged terrorist activity. At the same time, citizens are more willing to sacrifice the civil liberties of their countrymen for their own security, and this is especially the case when the affected group invites little sympathy (Valentino et al. 2020).

Restrictions on the media may be regarded as more problematic by those dissatisfied with the government, given their likely greater distrust of ruling politicians and their higher demand for the media to be allowed to exercise its role of checking otherwise unconstrained politicians.¹⁰

⁹ This conceptualization is similar to the distinction between redistributive and distributive policies (Hetherington and Globetti 2002, Rudolph 2017). The main difference between the two forms of policies is that in the case of *redistributive policies* “costs are widely distributed across the mass public but their benefits are narrowly concentrated among certain segments of the population” (Rudolph 2017, 201), while in the case of *distributive policies* both costs and benefits are widely distributed.

¹⁰ While banning protests and state surveillance may have direct effects on the spread of Covid within a population, redressing the threats of Covid infection through restricting the media is indirect. State surveillance could. Studies on vaccine hesitancy and Covid skepticism show that conspiracy beliefs and belief in Covid misinformation have a strong negative effect on vaccine willingness (Jennings et al 2021). Moreover, false news spread faster and reach out more people than valid information (Vosoughi, Roy and Aral 2018). Thus, pundits probably rightly suggest for vaccination programs “monitoring the inappropriate dissemination of misleading information.” (Thorakkattil et al. 2022).

Similarly, even though the right to protest is by now seen as an integral part of democratic life (although some have reservations, as mentioned above), curtailing the right to protest can have a very different effect on supporters of the government compared to dissatisfied citizens. Whereas the former may easily forego their rights to protest, given that they generally agree with the policies of the regime, the latter may regard such restrictions as threatening, leaving them no room to express their discontent with governmental measures.

In order to study this difference between restrictions we have selected three types of restrictions: 1) *The introduction of extensive surveillance*; 2) *The restriction of media freedom*; 3) *The restriction of protests*. These three differ in the degree to which they are encompassing, with the first affecting all citizens, and the latter two directly affecting sub-groups.

4. THE STUDY

4.1. case selection

This paper aims to scrutinize this issue in a parallel study of Austria and Hungary. As we already explained earlier the two countries considerably differ in the level of their polarization, with Hungarian society being extremely polarized (Kopecký, Meyer-Sahling and Spirova 2022), which is reflected among others in the partisan polarization of voters (Patkós 2022), with not only citizens' political views but also the Hungarian party system being extremely polarized (Vegetti 2019).¹¹

Otherwise, in Austria political polarization has been rising in the last decade (Kopecký, Meyer-Sahling and Spirova 2022), however, in 2018 its level remains substantially lower, than in Hungary (Patkós 2022).

There were also differences between the two countries how the national governments approached to the Covid-19 situation.

In April 2020 the Hungarian Parliament adopted the *Defence Against the Coronavirus Act*, which amended the already existing crime of scaremongering. According to the act (§ 337) stating false or untrue before the public is punishable by imprisonment¹². In the following four months, the law was applied in more than 100 cases¹³, mostly against Covid deniers¹⁴, but also against politicians of the opposition parties¹⁵ and against citizens criticizing the government's

¹¹ Polarization is rooted partly in the communist times, when social atomization characterized the regime with minimal room left for an autonomous civil sphere, which although got created after the transition has again been undermined during the past 12 years of illiberal rule. The polarization of societies undermines social cohesion, solidarity and we believe it is reasonable to assume to make citizens to care less for democratic values in general and more for issues that affect them directly.

¹² https://thb.kormany.hu/download/a/46/11000/Btk_EN.pdf

¹³ <https://www.police.hu/hu/hirek-es-informaciok/legfrissebb-hireink/bunugyek/az-uj-koronavirus-helyzettel-osszefuggo>

¹⁴ <https://24.hu/belfold/2020/04/07/koronavirus-ozd-remhir/>

¹⁵ <https://hungarytoday.hu/coronavirus-fake-news-hungary-police/>;
https://hvg.hu/itthon/20200329_Kozveszellyel_fenygetes_nyomozas_csorbai_koronavirus_feljelentes_gocpont

measures¹⁶.¹⁷ In contrast, in Austria, less restrictive measures were introduced. Most importantly protests were not completely banned. In Austria the police banned public gatherings of more than five participants¹⁸, however mostly far-right demonstrations were policed. Other restrictions on civil liberties were the government's restrictive measures on unvaccinated citizens, and also in 2021 police were authorized to conduct random checks to enforce lockdown rules¹⁹.

Beyond the differences in Covid-related policies, the two countries also differ in the severity of Covid-19 situation. The number of confirmed Covid-related deaths is twice as high in Hungary than in Austria. Until 1 June 2021 – when our fieldwork started – in Hungary the death ratio was 2985 death per 1 million, while in Austria 1446 people had died due to Covid-19. All these differences in the severity of Covid-19 situation and in the national government's reactions to these situations show that the circumstances of politics are substantially different in the two countries. In the next empirical parts of the paper, we will show that acceptance of political restrictions epitomizes political polarization and social dividedness.

4.2 Hypotheses

We formulate two groups of hypotheses focusing on the predictors of accepting political restrictions: one on *attitudes* and the other on *affectedness*. First, we expect that 1) people who have higher trust in the government/the parliament, 2) people who perceive a higher level of health threat, 3) people with more traditional-collectivist values are more likely to support the political restrictions we study.

H1.1: *Political trust is positively related to the acceptance of restrictions.*

H1.2: *Perceived health threat is positively related to the acceptance of restrictions.* H1.3: *Traditional-collectivist values are positively related to the acceptance of restrictions.*

Second, based on the theories and empirical studies summarized above, we expect that affected groups are more willing to refuse a particular restriction. Thus, we hypothesize that

¹⁶ <https://hungarytoday.hu/coronavirus-fake-news-hungary-police/>

¹⁷ The prohibition on public events and gatherings, on the other hand, was introduced on 16 March 2020, thereafter in November restrictions were tightened. According to the decree participants in public demonstrations could be fined up to 1,450 Euros (500,000 Forint), moreover, the organizers could be fined up to 2900 Euros (1 million Forint). Dissidents and opposition parties adapted to the new situation and applied new strategies. Since public gathering was prohibited in April and May 2020 car honking protests were organized against the government's politics and against freeing up hospital beds in mass numbers. However the government's respond was rather restrictive. The honking drivers (protesters) were fined for the unjustified use of their car horns.

¹⁸ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-austria-protest-idUSKCN2262VY>

¹⁹ <https://www.cnn.com/2021/11/17/austria-covid-lockdown-police-conduct-random-vaccine-status-checks.html>

H2: *Affected groups are less supportive of political restrictions than those people who are less affected or not affected by a given measure.*

More specifically

H2.1: *Potential protesters are less supportive of banning protests.*

H2.2: *Those who hold the media's role of criticizing government decisions highly important are less supportive of controlling the media.*

Beyond the key predictors of political restrictions, we also hypothesize cross-country differences. The Simonovits, McCoy and Littvay (2022) study shows citizens' acceptance of restrictive policies depends on their support for the political formation in power. Moreover, as we presented above Hungarian society is significantly more polarized than the Austrian one. Thus, we expect that political trust has a different role in explaining the restrictions' acceptance in Hungary than in Austria.

We assume thereby that:

H3: In Hungary political trust correlates significantly more strongly with restrictions' acceptance than in Austria.

4.3. Data and Methods

We conducted online surveys in June 2021 in both Austria and Hungary²⁰, thus, our data was recorded between the third and fourth waves of the Coronavirus pandemic. The quota samples (N=1000 in each country) are representative of the 18-65 years old Internet user population regarding the level of education, age, sex, and residence.²¹ All statistical analyses were performed using R (4.2.2) and R Studio (2022.07.2).

We obtained ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of the Centre for Social Sciences, Budapest.

Dependent variables

Citizen attitudes toward authority were operationalized as attitudes toward state restrictions in three dimensions of civil liberties. We focused on 1) media control, which concerns the liberty of free

²⁰ The fieldwork was administered by professional public opinion companies: marketagent in Austria and IPSOS in Hungary.

²¹ More information on the sample is provided in the Supplementary Materials. Tables 1-6. in Appendix A provide descriptive statistics for the main variables. Table 1 describes demographic characteristics of our samples.

speech; 2) protest bans, which restrain free assembly; 3) acceptance of state surveillance, which may breach rights of privacy. Each of these three dimensions restricts civil liberties in different ways, which may have implications for how citizens regard them.

We asked respondents about their support for restrictions in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic regarding the introduction of controls over the media, banning protests²² and state surveillance²³ on a 4-point scale. Due to the skewed distribution of the variables, we dichotomized the responses: 1 denotes support and 0 refusal.

Regarding state surveillance, we calculated the mean scores of three items: the support for a) surveillance of people in public places with video cameras, b) collection of information on people living in the country, without their awareness, and c) location tracking of the mobile telephones of people living in [Austria/Hungary]. Answers were given on a 4-point scale, ranging from 1 (government should definitely have this right) to 4 (government should by no means have this right). After the items were reverse-coded and the mean score of the three items calculated, we dichotomized the support of state surveillance. The dummy variable was set to 1 if the acceptance of state surveillance was higher than 2 and to 0 otherwise.

Apart from the theoretical rationale for analyzing the more and less extensive forms of political restrictions separately, there are also statistical reasons for this approach. The correlation between acceptance of media control and banning protest is negligible ($r=0.39$) and the correlations between acceptance of the state surveillance and media control or banning protest are even lower ($r=0.21$ and $r=0.25$ respectively). Thus, it is reasonable to differentiate between these types of political restrictions. Further, these low correlations suggest that the dimensions actually capture separate attitudinal foci. These results show that it is problematic to generalize how citizens would accept restrictions like media control or restricting protest activities on the basis of their attitude to surveillance. That is to say, citizens do not regard interventions of authorities in different aspects of their civil liberties in a uniform way.

Independent variables and controls

The main independent variables of the present study are political trust, perceived threat, political attitudes, values and affectedness.

²² Do you agree or disagree that in times of similar crises the government should a) control the functioning of the media? b) ban strikes and demonstrations even if they respect pandemic regulations?

²³ During the current coronavirus crisis, to what degree is it necessary for the government of [country] to have the power to introduce the following interventions?

As we described above, restrictions on civic liberty were considerably different in Austria and Hungary. In Austria public assembly was restricted but not fully banned, and the government did not introduced measures for controlling the media. Otherwise, state surveillance was an issue in both countries. Thus, we formulated our questions to fit well to these contextual differences. Namely we use the term “in times of similar crises” in the case of banning protests and controlling media, however in case of state surveillance we could directly refer to the coronavirus crisis.

Political trust. Trust in political institutions measures were adopted from the ESS²⁴ (European Social Survey). Respondents were asked, “Regarding the coronavirus crisis, how much do you trust the following institutions?” and the *government* and the *parliament* were included in a list of institutions. The items were measured on an 11-point scale, ranging from 0 (I do not trust it at all) to 10 (I trust it very much). The two items correlate strongly ($r=0.85$), so we averaged trust in parliament and trust in government to form a single political trust factor.

Threat perception. We adopted these items from the Austrian Corona Panel Project (ACPP)²⁵ to measure perceived threats and negative health consequences related to the SARS-CoV-2 virus infection, which included two items: “*In your opinion, to what degree are you/the population of [country] in general exposed to the health risks of the Coronavirus?*” We used a 5-point scale ranging from *not at all* to *a significantly high degree*. The two items correlate strongly ($r=0.69$), thus we averaged the two forms of perceived threats.

Traditional and modern values. For measuring value orientations, adopted a question from the European Values Survey project²⁶ (EVS). We asked respondents to choose five important traits that parents try to instill in their children at home. We used the following value orientations: “good manners,” “independence,” “hard work,” “responsibility,” “creativity,” “tolerance,” “thrift,” “determination,” “religious faith,” “selflessness” and “obedience”. To identify distinctive types of values, we used Latent Class Analysis (LCA).²⁷ The LCA model fit statistics and the conditional probabilities of the latent classes are shown in Appendix B²⁸.

Following the discussion on value clusters (Beugelsdijk and Welzel 2018, Rabušicová and Rabušic 2001, Yu 2015), we described and labeled the two latent classes as *traditional or collectivist* and *modern or individualist*. In the traditional or collectivist class, which constitutes 55.2% of the full sample (with the Austrian and Hungarian responses taken together),²⁹ the dominant values were “hard work,” “thrift,” “obedience” and “religious faith”. In the modern or individualist class, which accounts for the remaining 44.8% of the sample, we had traits like “independence,” “tolerance,” “creativity,” and “determination”. The value of “good manners,” however, was chosen with the same probability both in the traditional and in the modern classes, (the probabilities are 0.58 and 0.61 respectively).

²⁴ <https://www.europeansocialsurvey.org/>

²⁵ <https://viecer.univie.ac.at/en/projects-and-cooperations/austrian-corona-panel-project/> see for more details XXX1.

²⁶ <https://europeanvaluesstudy.eu/methodology-data-documentation/survey-2017/>

²⁷ Instead of measuring value classes, other studies combine the 11 values into a single scale of authoritarianism (e.g. Stenner 2005, Tillman 2013, Kokkonen and Linde 2021).

²⁸ We used the poLCA package in R. See: Drew A. Linzer, Jeffrey B. Lewis (2011). poLCA: An R Package for Polytomous Variable Latent Class Analysis. *Journal of Statistical Software*, 42(10), 1-29. URL <http://www.jstatsoft.org/v42/i10/>.

²⁹ See detailed country specific data in Appendix B.

Affected groups. We identified two groups that could be more affected by restrictions. People who are willing to protest and who can potentially be mobilized to participate in demonstrations are more affected by restrictions on protests. We asked respondents about the degree to which they were willing to take part in a demonstration “against other government policies not related to the virus.” Responses were given on a four-point scale (“certainly not,” “I’d rather not,” “I would tend to,” and “definitely yes”). This variable was recoded to a 0–1 dummy, where 1 indicates higher protest willingness (“would tend to participate” or “definitely would participate”).

Regarding media control, we measured affectedness by the perception of the importance of the media’s critical role. Respondents were asked: “People can disagree about the job of journalists during the coronavirus crisis. To what degree do you feel it is important that journalists carry out the following tasks?” whereby the monitoring function (“publishing opinions critical of the government’s handling of the crisis”) was included, amongst other roles of the media, in the list of items³⁰.

We will compare the aforementioned two affected groups to the most encompassing restriction, state surveillance since surveillance does not affect a specific group. We assume that in the case of surveillance all citizens are equally affected, there is no social group that could avoid monitoring practices.

Continuous variables were centered and divided by 2 standard deviations in each country separately. These standardized predictors had a mean of zero and a standard deviation of 0.5 so that the regression coefficients could be interpreted on an approximately common scale (Gelman and Hill 2006).

Control variables. We also included gender, age, level of education, residence (big city, city and town or village), infection with the COVID-19 virus and left-right orientation³¹ as controls in our analysis. We asked whether respondents themselves were identified as infected with the Coronavirus. 1 denoted identified infection and 0 otherwise.

Model

To test the associations between support for the three different types of restrictions (controlling the media, banning protests, state surveillance), we estimated separate logit regression models for Austria and Hungary.³² Since direct comparison of the predicted values and coefficients stemming

³⁰ Other measured functions were: 1) reporting facts about Covid related death tolls 2) exposing fake-news 3) supporting the government 4) encouraging people to offer help to others 5) entertainment.

³¹ For measuring political attitudes, we used the left-right ideological orientation item measured on an 11-point scale. We adopted this item from the European Social Survey (ESS).

³² Independent variables were entered into the model in three steps: First, we estimated a reference model by using only demographic characteristics as predictors (Model I). In the second model we added Covid-19 related variables and

from different models was not possible with logistic regression models (Mood 2010), we inspected average marginal effects (AME).

We tested multicollinearity by Variance Inflation Factor values (VIF). All VIF values were smaller than 2, which makes multicollinearity very unlikely (see Appendix E for details on multicollinearity statistics and Appendix D for the correlation matrices).

Results

The results of the final models are presented in Tables 1 to 3, which contain the logit regressions on acceptance of state surveillance (Table 1), banning protests (Table 2) and controlling media (Table 3). The two models in each table describe *the three dependent variables* for the Austrian and the Hungarian data. The first three hypotheses focus on the effect of the three most important factors explaining acceptance of the state's restrictive measures, namely the roles of *political trust*, *perceived health threat*, and *political values*.

The models in Tables 1-3 show that in Hungary, political trust significantly and positively relates to the acceptance of all the three types of restrictions, while in Austria this variable predicts only the acceptance of state surveillance, while there seems to be no significant association with the acceptance of the two less extensive measures (controlling the media and banning protests). Political trust thus operates differently in the two countries. Whereas in Austria trust in the government does not significantly affect opinions on the more selective restrictions (controlling the media and banning protests), in Hungary those who score high on political trust also are more likely to accept the political restrictions of *controlling the media* and *banning protests*. Figure 2 also reveals that in Hungary political trust has a significantly larger effect on accepting these two types of restrictions than in Austria. At the same time, this is not the case for accepting *state surveillance*; the differences between the two countries are not significant. Thus, we see a difference between the two countries in the working of trust where affectedness also plays a significant role. We might say that regarding the most encompassing political restriction, namely in case of state surveillance political trust works such as affectedness regarding the other two forms of restrictions.

A clear pattern can be observed for the other two predictors (health threat and political values). In Austria, the coefficient estimates are in line with hypotheses H1.2 and H1.3. However, in Hungary, such associations are much weaker and some are even statistically insignificant.

Starting with the role of the perceived health threat posed by the pandemic, we find that, as anticipated in H1.2, perceived threat is positively related to the acceptance of restrictions. In

political attitudes including political trust and left-right orientation, as well as value clusters (Model II). Finally, we added to the model the variables defining affected groups (potential protester and supportive of media's critical role) (Model III). In the next sections we discuss only the final model (Model III). See Appendix F for the results of Model I and Model II.

Austria, the pattern is clear: those who perceive a larger threat are also more inclined to accept state surveillance, controlling the media and banning protests (OR³³=1.74, $p<0.01$; OR=1.49, $p<0.1$; OR=3.14, $p<0.001$ respectively). In Hungary, however, we see much weaker associations, which are not statistically significant (OR=1.46, $p<0.10$; OR=1.20, $p=0.385$; OR=1.43, $p=0.108$ respectively). The results suggest a very similar interpretation for political values. In Austria, traditional values are significantly and positively related to the acceptance of restrictions. Those who consider obedience, thrift, hard work and religious faith important values are significantly more likely to accept political restrictions (OR=1.91, $p<0.01$; OR=2.87, $p<0.001$; OR=2.39, $p<0.001$ respectively). In Hungary this is true only in the case of banning protests (OR=1.94, $p<0.01$), but the effect of this set of values is only marginally significant in the case of accepting restrictions on media (OR=1.50, $p<0.1$).

³³ Odds ratio, which is the exponentiated log odds ratio derived from the regression models.

Table 1: Support for state surveillance

	Austria			Hungary		
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>OR</i> ³⁴	<i>CI</i> ³⁵	<i>p</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	0.20	0.11–0.36	< 0.001	0.26	0.12–0.58	0.001
<i>Demography</i>						
Gender [Female]	0.92	0.62–1.37	0.695	0.62	0.40–0.96	0.033
Education [Secondary] ref.: Primary	0.99	0.61–1.58	0.977	1.03	0.57–1.91	0.922
Education [Tertiary] ref.: Primary	1.01	0.56–1.79	0.968	0.91	0.50–1.67	0.744
Age: 36-49 ref.: 18-35	0.83	0.50–1.37	0.461	0.69	0.41–1.15	0.153
Age: 50-65 ref.: 18-35	1.20	0.75–1.94	0.445	0.76	0.46–1.27	0.297
City ref: Big city	1.03	0.62–1.71	0.895	1.21	0.73–2.02	0.464
Town, village ref: Big city	0.90	0.58–1.41	0.652	1.50	0.86–2.63	0.151
<i>Covid-19</i>						
Infected with Covid-19	0.69	0.31–1.42	0.346	1.04	0.56–1.87	0.888
Health threats	1.74	1.15–2.64	0.009	1.46	0.95–2.28	0.087
<i>Political attitudes and values</i>						
Political trust	2.17	1.39–3.42	0.001	3.68	2.28–6.02	< 0.001
Left-right orientation	1.50	1.01–2.26	0.047	1.59	0.96–2.63	0.070
Value cluster [Individualist] ref.: Collectivist	1.91	1.28–2.87	0.002	1.01	0.63–1.63	0.958
<i>Affectedness</i>						
Media criticism	0.86	0.58–1.28	0.442	1.19	0.77–1.85	0.428
Protest willingness	0.71	0.47–1.06	0.094	0.61	0.37–0.98	0.043
Observations	740			772		
R ² Tjur	0.083			0.147		

³⁴ Odds ratio

³⁵ Confidence Intervals

Table 2: Support for controlling the media

	Austria			Hungary		
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	0.18	0.10–0.32	< 0.001	0.41	0.19–0.87	0.022
<i>Demography</i>						
Gender [Female]	1.31	0.87–1.96	0.192	1.11	0.74–1.67	0.625
Education [Secondary] ref.: Primary	0.70	0.43–1.12	0.139	0.58	0.33–1.00	0.049
Education [Tertiary] ref.: Primary	0.31	0.15–0.62	0.002	0.54	0.31–0.93	0.026
Age: 36-49 ref.: 18-35	0.80	0.49–1.31	0.374	0.74	0.47–1.16	0.189
Age: 50-65 ref.: 18-35	0.74	0.46–1.20	0.227	0.29	0.17–0.48	< 0.001
City ref: Big city	1.13	0.68–1.85	0.633	1.34	0.83–2.17	0.227
Town, village ref: Big city	0.71	0.45–1.13	0.148	1.58	0.94–2.68	0.087
<i>Covid-19</i>						
Infected with Covid-19	1.73	0.88–3.29	0.100	1.22	0.70–2.11	0.470
Health threats	1.49	0.98–2.28	0.064	1.20	0.80–1.80	0.385
<i>Political attitudes and values</i>						
Political trust	1.34	0.86–2.11	0.198	5.01	3.19–7.98	< 0.001
Left-right orientation	1.45	0.98–2.15	0.063	1.87	1.17–3.01	0.009
Value cluster [Individualist] ref.: Collectivist	2.87	1.92–4.34	< 0.001	1.50	0.96–2.34	0.075
<i>Affectedness</i>						
Media criticism	0.40	0.27–0.59	< 0.001	0.44	0.29–0.66	< 0.001
Protest willingness	1.29	0.86–1.93	0.222	1.12	0.72–1.74	0.607
Observations	727			756		
R ² Tjur	0.148			0.283		

Table 3: Support for banning protests

	Austria			Hungary		
<i>Predictors</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>P</i>	<i>OR</i>	<i>CI</i>	<i>p</i>
Intercept	0.37	0.22–0.64	< 0.001	0.30	0.13–0.66	0.003
<i>Demography</i>						
Gender [Female]	1.25	0.85–1.83	0.251	0.97	0.63–1.50	0.894
Education [Secondary] ref.: Primary	0.50	0.31–0.79	0.004	1.11	0.62–2.01	0.725
Education [Tertiary] ref.: Primary	0.37	0.19–0.67	0.001	0.68	0.38–1.23	0.198
Age: 36-49 ref.: 18-35	0.99	0.61–1.60	0.969	0.73	0.45–1.20	0.214
Age: 50-65 ref.: 18-35	1.04	0.66–1.65	0.864	0.48	0.28–0.81	0.007
City ref: Big city	0.92	0.56–1.49	0.723	0.72	0.43–1.19	0.199
Town, village ref: Big city	0.76	0.49–1.16	0.206	0.92	0.53–1.59	0.761
<i>Covid-19</i>						
Infected with Covid-19	1.18	0.60–2.23	0.615	1.26	0.69–2.24	0.442
Health threats	3.14	2.08–4.81	< 0.001	1.43	0.93–2.21	0.108
<i>Political attitudes and values</i>						
Political trust	0.99	0.65–1.51	0.973	6.03	3.71–10.01	< 0.001
Left-right orientation	1.49	1.01–2.20	0.043	1.09	0.66–1.79	0.741
Value cluster [Individualist] ref.: Collectivist	2.39	1.63–3.53	< 0.001	1.94	1.19–3.21	0.009
<i>Affectedness</i>						
Media criticism	0.38	0.26–0.55	< 0.001	0.43	0.28–0.67	< 0.001
Protest willingness	0.52	0.35–0.76	0.001	0.52	0.32–0.84	0.008
Observations	725			755		
R ² Tjur	0.188			0.270		

To summarize, these results are in line with our hypotheses and support the view expressed in the literature discussed above: political trust, perceived threat and traditional political values positively predict acceptance of political restrictions

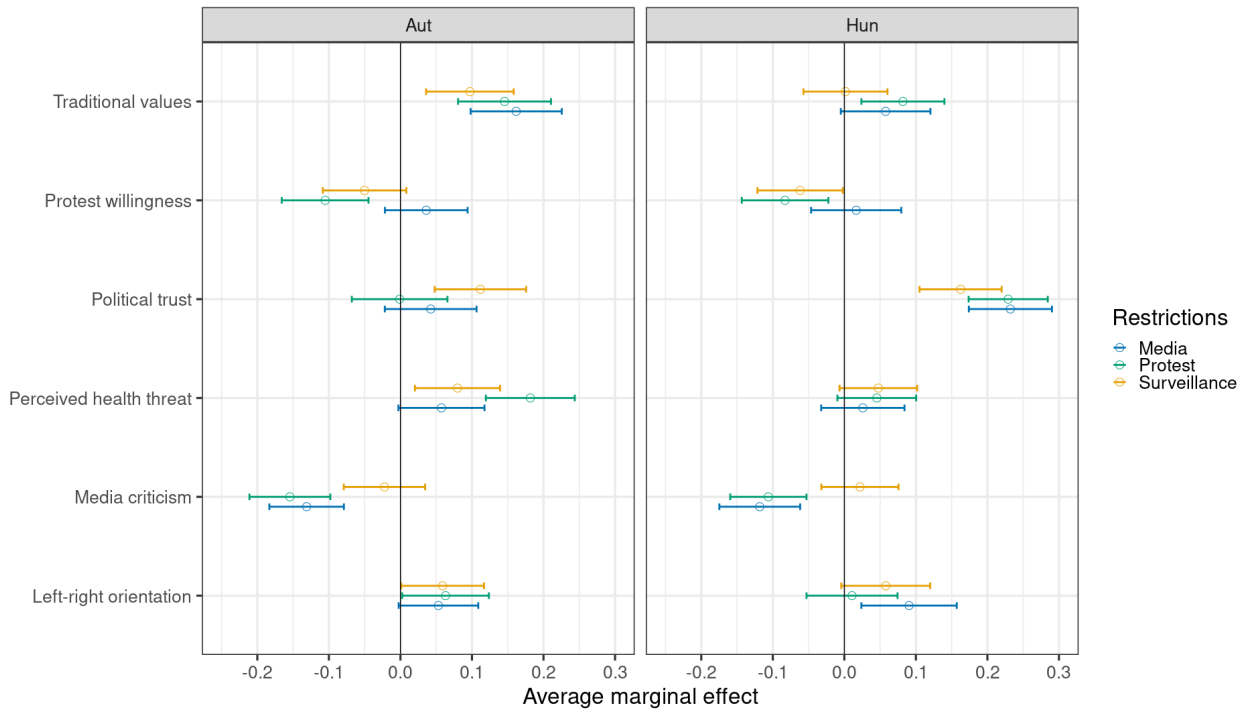
The second set of hypotheses focuses on the role of affectedness. We expected that those who potentially protest or are more willing to participate in government-critical demonstrations would be less supportive of banning protests (H2.1). Also, we expected that those who find the media's monitoring role more important would be less supportive of media restrictions during the coronavirus crisis (H2.2). According to the results presented in Tables 1, 2 and 3, affectedness has a negative effect on respondents' support of the specific restrictions in both countries. Most notably, the importance of media's critical role negatively correlates with support for controlling the media (Austria: OR=0.40, $p<0.001$; Hungary: OR=0.44, $p<0.001$) and protest willingness negatively correlates with the support for banning protests (Austria: OR=0.52, $p<0.01$; Hungary: OR=0.51, $p<0.01$). These findings are in line with our expectations (H2.1 and H2.2).

Now we compare the effect sizes and explore whether the role of affectedness significantly differs between the three types of restrictions. Figure 1 presents the average marginal effects³⁶ (AME) of the key explanatory variables for all the three types of restrictions calculated from the models in Tables 1-3. The Austrian AME values and their confidence intervals are depicted in the left panel while the right panel shows the same values in Hungary. In both Austria and Hungary, the marginal effect of media criticism is significantly different across the three models. As we see on Figure 1, those respondents who see the watchdog role of media as more important accept controlling the media with a significantly lower probability than they accept state surveillance. Thus, these results support hypotheses H2.1 and H2.2 because we find differences among more (surveillance) and less extensive restrictions (banning protests, controlling the media).

These results demonstrate that, first, affectedness has a significant role in explaining support for specific restrictions. The AMEs are negative in both countries, indicating that affectedness has a negative effect on support of restrictions. Second, we found that this role of affectedness significantly varies across the three types of political restrictions.

³⁶ AME is the average change in probability when independent variable increases by one unit.

[Figure 1: Average marginal effects of the independent variables grouped by political restrictions]



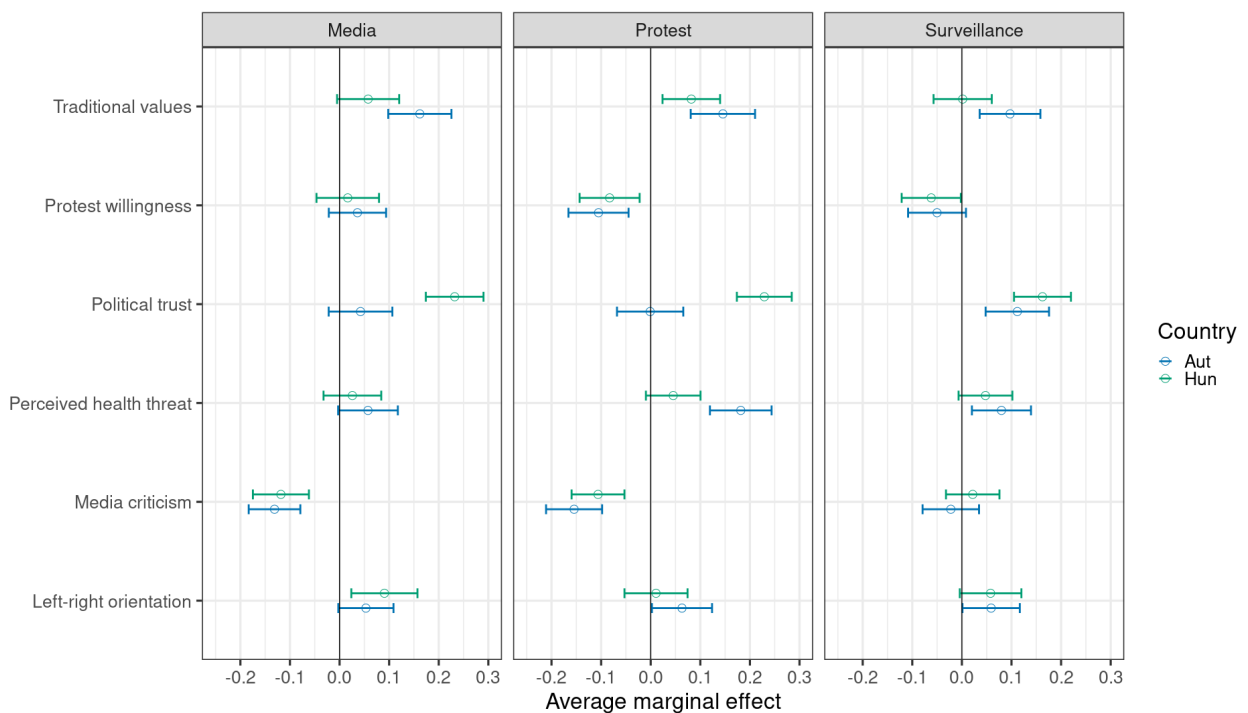
Finally, we highlight some of the differences between the two countries. Figure 2 presents the average marginal effects calculated from the same models (estimates of Tables 1-3). While in Figure 1 AMEs are grouped by the types of restrictions, in Figure 2 they are grouped by country. This figure shows that there are interesting differences between the two countries in the effects of political trust and political values on accepting restrictions. In Hungary the most important factor is political trust, while in Austria political values seems to be the most important key factor. Comparing the AME of political trust, we can furthermore see that the marginal effect is significantly higher in Hungary than in Austria in the case of accepting protest bans and media restrictions, but the difference is not significant in the case of accepting state surveillance. Thus, when comparing Hungary to Austria, political trust has a significantly larger positive effect on accepting the two less extensive political restrictions (that is the ones where affectedness plays a significant role), i.e., controlling the media and banning protest. The marginal effect of political trust on support for state surveillance is positive and significant both in Austria and Hungary, but the two AMEs are statistically not different in the two countries.³⁷ These results are in line with our third hypothesis (H3) stated significant differences between Austria and Hungary regarding the role of political trust in accepting political restrictions. However, these outcomes support our expectation only partially, since we did not find significant differences between the two countries in

³⁷ One caveat is that there is no evidence, at least not in our data, that the regime's supporters and its opponents would differ from one another in Hungary in this respect. That is to say, in the currently unlikely case that the Orbán government were toppled, the new regime's supporters may similarly show no empathy with their opposition and we could expect the very same patterns and the same relationship between political trust and acceptance of restrictions.

case of state surveillance. We will explain these differences across the types of restrictions with their affectedness.

We also find that while in Austria political trust is not a significant predictor of accepting the restrictions on protests and on the media, political values seem to be a more important factor. In Austria, the AME of traditional-collectivist values on the less extensive political restrictions is significantly higher than the AME of political trust. However, in the case of accepting extensive state surveillance the marginal effect of political values is statistically not different from the AME of political trust.

[Figure 2: Average marginal effects of the independent variables, grouped by countries]



To summarize, this study scrutinized the three key factors by which the acceptance of less extensive political restrictions can be explained and found that political trust is a stronger predictor in Hungary than in Austria. In contrast, in Austria political values are a more important determinant of acceptance of restrictions on civil liberties.

Discussion

The aim of this article is to contribute to our understanding of the acceptance of political restrictions by using data from two countries – Austria and Hungary – collected during the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021. Based on the literature on state and public policy research (Hetherington and Globetti 2002, Rudolph 2017), we distinguished between restrictions that differ in how encompassing they were. We used affectedness to capture how encompassing a restriction was.

Those who potentially protest can be seen as affected more by restrictions on protests, while those groups that find the media's watchdog role important can be viewed as more affected by restrictions on the media. Our results were in line with the expectations we derived from theoretical considerations about affectedness since we found affectedness to be significantly and negatively related to the acceptance of these less-encompassing restrictions in both countries.

The analysis revealed differences between Austria and Hungary, particularly in the way political trust influenced the acceptance of certain types of restrictions, which we promised in the result section to further elaborate upon here. That is, what we have found was that in Hungary, citizens who had a higher level of trust in the government and the parliament tended to be more willing to accept the government's restrictions on media freedom and protests, while they were also more supportive of state surveillance.³⁸ This correlation may seem obvious, since if someone places trust in representatives of the state, that person reasonably believes that these actors would not abuse their power. Furthermore, as restrictions on protest and restrictions on the media tend to affect certain parts of the population more (typically those critical of the regime), others (typically supporters of the regime) need not worry much about such measures, because these would probably not affect them anyway. Namely, restrictions would probably be aimed at the critical and not the state-sponsored media; and restrictions imposed on demonstrations would probably not affect state-sponsored demonstrations. These are worries only for critics.³⁹

This explanation fits the Hungarian case nicely. However, we run into an intriguing puzzle because this explanation does not hold for Austria. The data shows something different. Austrians, even if they trust the government and the parliament, do not support restrictions on protest and restriction on the media more than fellow Austrians with a lower level of political trust. What could explain this? We contend that this difference comes to the fore in Hungarian society being more polarized, thereby its members show less concern for issues that do not affect them directly. While already the higher role of trust in Hungary in accepting restriction was an indicator suggesting that indeed

³⁸ Although the Hungarians with a high level of trust support surveillance, they do so only to a smaller extent than they support the first two restrictions. This finding supports our argument, because even though those who trust the government probably are less affected by the two lesser restrictions, surveillance could affect them equally, thus it is no surprise that they are less supportive of it than the other two restrictions.

³⁹ This is in line with the literature on political polarization. Citizens in more polarized societies are more willing to accept state restrictions of the opposition (Arbatli and Rosenberg 2021, Graham and Svulik 2020, Simonovits, McCoy and Littvay 2021).

Hungarian society is more polarized, our findings on the role of affectedness further confirms this assertion. During the last decade, tendencies for polarization resulted in increasingly deep cleavage between the supporters of the regime and its opponents. Tentatively we would argue that in an extremely polarized and illiberal regime, loyalty to the regime outweighs other considerations, while in a less polarized society, citizens' support of the regime is conditional and depends not on loyalty but on judging the regime's policies and behavior. This, in the concrete case, means that Austrians probably are reluctant to support restrictions on media and protests irrespective of their affectedness. Maybe they see these as inherently important for a democracy. In a less polarized society, where the political competitor is not seen as the enemy, freedom of demonstrations and freedom of the media could be highly valued by all citizens regardless of their political sympathies. They have intrinsic value that is not affected by one's political sympathies, and as such, a political opponent's freedom to express his/her views should not be compromised.⁴⁰

Our study also revealed that in Austria traditional-collectivist political values are a more important determinant of acceptance of restrictions on civil liberties. This finding supports our argument holding that in a less polarized society it is not political trust, but values that are the most important drivers of accepting political restrictions.

CONCLUSION

We investigate the role of perceived health threats, political values, as well as affectedness and political trust in accepting political restrictions concerning *state surveillance*, *controlling the media* and *banning protests*. Our results support our expectation that the level of affectedness influences the extent to which a particular restriction is supported. Most notably, we found that citizens do not perceive these three types of restrictions in the same way and that they are more dismissive of those that directly affect them (cf.: Ziller and Helbling 2021, Carriere, Hallahan and Moghaddam 2021). In addition, our study also reveals significant differences between Austria and Hungary in the way political trust affects the acceptance of restrictions, what we interpret as a more severe form of political polarization.

These results we believe tell something about the democratic resilience of these societies. In a society where trust in the regime is decisive in the support of restrictions and restrictions that affect 'others' get significantly greater support reveal not only less solidarity, greater polarization, but probably also weakness in resisting authoritarian tendencies.

While these findings concerning affectedness and unaffectedness are crucial, the fact that we only studied two cases limits the generalizability of our argument and calls for further research to clarify and validate our findings and argument.

⁴⁰ This is important, because our findings reveal that citizens' attitudes on state surveillance—which has traditionally been widely scrutinized by scholars—differ from those concerning other means/restrictions that the state might introduce that limit the liberty of citizens in confronting emergencies.

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