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A MULTILEVEL ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUALS' ATTITUDES
TOWARD WELFARE STATE RESPONSIBILITIES

Cem Başlevent and Hasan Kirmanoğlu

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Send correspondence to:

Cem Bařlevent

Istanbul Bilgi University

cbaslevent@bilgi.edu.tr

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Abstract

Making use of data from the European Social Survey (ESS), we investigate the determinants of individuals' attitudes towards welfare state policies in 29 European countries. Socio-demographic characteristics, income, employment and health statuses, and an indicator of egalitarian values are used to explain two welfare state attitude dimensions inquired about in the ESS. Complementing the micro data from the survey with country-level indicators of the quality of government, we aim to shed light on the contextual determinants of the attitudes being examined. Our multilevel model estimates reveal that individual-level characteristics influence attitudes in predictable ways, but the impact of the quality of government and how it interacts with egalitarianism depends on the specific attitude being examined. While the impact of egalitarian values on the attitudes towards more taxation and social spending by the government is larger in higher quality-of-government countries, the opposite is the case with regard to the provision of more specific redistributive policies that benefit certain groups. We also find that the patterns of association between personal characteristics and welfare state attitudes observed on the subsample of Turkish respondents are different than those obtained on the combined data set. We attribute the observed differences to cultural factors, the relatively low government quality, and common misconceptions about the welfare state especially among the less educated segments of the Turkish society.

JEL Classifications: C20, D63, H11, I38.

Keywords: Quality of government, egalitarianism, welfare state attitudes, European Social Survey.

ملخص

نقوم بالتحقيق في محددات مواقف الأفراد تجاه سياسات دولة نحو الرفاهية في 29 بلداً أوروبياً باستخدام بيانات من المسح الاجتماعي الأوروبي (ESS)، ونستخدم الخصائص الاجتماعية والديموغرافية والدخل وفرص العمل والأوضاع الصحية، ومؤشرات قيم المساواة لشرح أبعاد موقف الدولة من الرفاهية على بعدين في ESS. ولتكتملة البيانات الجزئية من الدراسة مع المؤشرات على المستوى القطري من نوعية الحكومة، نهدف إلى تسليط الضوء على العوامل السياقية للمواقف التي يجري بحثها. تكشف لنا تقديرات النموذج متعدد المستويات أن الخصائص على مستوى الفرد تؤثر على مواقفه بطرق يمكن التنبؤ بها، ولكن تأثير نوعية الحكم وكيفية التفاعل مع مفهوم العدالة يعتمد على موقف معين يجري بحثه. وفي حين أن تأثير قيم المساواة في الاتجاه نحو مزيد من الضرائب والإنفاق الاجتماعي من قبل الحكومات الأعلى جودة، فإن العكس هو الصحيح فيما يتعلق بتوفير سياسات إعادة التوزيع الأكثر تحديداً كى تفيد مجموعة معينة من الأفراد. نجد أيضاً أن أنماط العلاقة بين الخصائص الشخصية ومواقف الدولة تجاه الرفاهية قد لوحظت على عينة فرعية من المشاركين الأتراك والتي تختلف عن تلك التي حصلت على مجموعة البيانات مجتمعة. ونعزو الاختلافات الملحوظة إلى أن العوامل الثقافية، ونوعية الحكومة منخفضة نسبياً، وانتشار المفاهيم الخاطئة الشائعة حول دولة الرفاهية وخصوصاً بين شرائح الأقل تعليماً في المجتمع التركي.

1. Introduction

The examination of individuals' attitudes towards welfare state responsibilities and redistribution has been the main theme of a large body of research. Within this literature, many studies have discussed the role of cultural and political factors that lead to differences regarding the support for redistributive policies in different welfare states (Svallfors, 1997, 2003; Bean and Papadakis, 1998; Gelissen, 2000; Andreß and Heien, 2001; Arts and Gelissen, 2001; Blekesaune and Quadagno, 2003; Linos and West, 2003; Jæger, 2006; Dallinger, 2010). In view of the stronger support for equality and state intervention in 'social democratic' economic regimes in comparison to 'conservative' and 'liberal' environments, it has been argued that the substantial differences among countries in overall public support for the welfare state are associated with different welfare regimes (Esping-Andersen, 1990). However, Svallfors (2013) notes that the differences and similarities among countries are too complex to be summarized as 'worlds of welfare attitudes.' Svallfors (2013) also points to the lack of studies that examine the role of the quality of government on welfare state attitudes and reports the findings of an empirical analysis that aims to fill this gap in the literature. The main findings of the study are that (i) people who perceive governmental institutions as efficient and fair want higher taxes and social spending, and (ii) egalitarian values have a stronger impact on attitudes towards higher taxes and spending when individuals' perceptions of government quality are more positive. Svallfors interprets these findings as corroborating evidence of the implicit argument made in an analysis of the determinants of social spending by Rothstein *et al.* (2012) that people can only be mobilized in support of institutions that they consider as fair and efficient.¹

One purpose of the present study is to build on the empirical work in the Svallfors (2013) article to observe whether the patterns obtained therein remain unchanged when welfare state preferences are measured using the attitudes towards welfare state scope and responsibilities (rather than taxation and social spending). If it turns out that the findings are found to be dependent on the welfare state attitude being examined, we will have drawn attention to the different underlying patterns with regard to two dimensions of welfare state attitudes that might at first appear to be closely connected. The other objective of the paper is to compare and contrast the patterns in welfare state attitudes in a large group of European countries with those observed in Turkey, the only predominantly Muslim country that took part in the European Social Survey that we will be working with.

Turkey's unique status as a Muslim country in Europe is one of the several reasons why the comparison of attitudes toward government responsibilities in Turkey and the rest of Europe could prove to be an interesting exercise. The religious background of a society is a key element of 'cultural integration' models of welfare state attitudes (Andreß and Heien, 2001).² Despite the secular nature of the republic, the socio-cultural environment influenced by Islam is likely to have had a profound effect on the way Turkish people have viewed the state since the Ottoman period. Though they probably have less relevance in today's materialistic societies, Islamic beliefs discourage people from placing much importance on material wealth and entail being in solidarity with the poor in the form of financial and in-kind donations. It is, therefore, conceivable that Islamic religiosity is positively associated with stronger preferences for welfare state responsibilities. In fact, using data from national surveys conducted in seven predominantly Muslim nations, Davis and Robinson (2006) find evidence that Islamic orthodoxy, measured as the desire to implement Islamic law, disposes people to economic

¹Rothstein and Teorell (2008) conceptualize the quality of government as being founded on the impartiality in the exercise of public power. The reader is referred to this article and the *European Political Science Review* articles cited here for theoretical discussions on the quality of government and literature reviews.

² The existing empirical work dealing with religion with regard to preferences for redistribution or competition has mainly examined the impact of Protestantism (e.g., Hayward and Kimmelmeier; 2007).

communitarianism whereby the state is expected to provide for the poor, reduce inequality, and meet community needs via economic intervention.

The current structure of the Turkish economy is also a potential source of disparity between Turkey and at least some European countries with regard to attitudes toward the welfare state. The shrinking role of the state in Turkey in the economic domain dates back to the beginning of the 1980's when liberal economic policies were introduced and the privatization of state-run enterprises began. Since 2002, the governments formed by the moderate-Islamist Justice and Development Party (*Adalet ve Kalkınma Partisi*, AKP) have mainly pursued neo-liberal economic policies which have led to what has been termed a 'jobless growth' of the economy. Improvements in economic well-being have mainly been dependent on the availability of foreign financial investments which – as in some other emerging markets – bring interest rates down and inflate asset prices, but do not result in meaningful increases in employment figures. In other words, a significant portion of the population of Turkey is too young to recall the times when the public sector was perceived as the primary source of jobs.

The neo-liberal macroeconomic policies of the past decade have, perhaps unexpectedly, coincided with significant improvements in healthcare services albeit at the expense of putting strains on the national budget. Along with active workers registered in the social security system and retirees, holders of 'green cards,' (i.e., those who receive coverage without making contributions), are nowadays eligible for satisfactory health care services provided by state-run medical institutions.³ At some additional cost, they can also receive treatment at private institutions. Alongside the successful health care policies which led to a considerable expansion of health insurance coverage, the central government has been making monthly payments to families with members with disabilities as well as to parents of small and school-age children. At the same time, local administrations run by the AKP have made great efforts to ensure the provision of in-cash and in-kind aid to poor households not only through their own budgets, but also through NGOs with Islamic affiliations and businessmen with whom they have close relations.

According to Pınarcıoğlu and Işık (2009), the AKP has attempted to open a new chapter in the Turkish welfare regime with the emergence of these new networks that complement the traditional forms of welfare provision involving the support of family and friends. However, Buğra and Keyder (2006) draw attention to fact that municipal governments, whose Islamic ideological orientation has been useful in mobilizing civil initiatives toward providing social assistance, usually act only as 'brokers in charity' in channeling resources to destitute people. Furthermore, this charity brokerage might involve dubious liaisons with the individuals who contribute to municipal charity funds whereby authorities agree not to take action against some illegal activity of a business in return for the donation.

Under the AKP rule, local administrations have, for the most part, also continued their lenient stance against the unauthorized occupation of public land for housing, and in metropolitan areas, they have been generous in issuing permits to high-rise commercial and residential buildings to be constructed by private developers and the state-owned housing agency, TOKI. While such practices have been criticized by the opposition for being at odds with the concept of a modern welfare state, the continued success of the ruling party at the polls has led to their continuation as a-la-Turca forms of redistributive policies by the government.⁴

³ The Green Card Program was terminated in 2012, but similar policies are in place to ensure that members of low-income families have access to public health services.

⁴ Öniş (2000) and Kalaycıoğlu (2007) are among the studies which point to the link between political outcomes in Turkey and informal redistributive policies or perceived social mobility possibilities under the rule of certain parties. The political-economy of the real estate market has especially attracted the attention of scholars from different fields (e.g. Buğra, 1998; Özler, 2000; Erman, 2001; Yalçınan and Erbaş, 2003).

In addition to the abovementioned factors, the prevalence of undocumented employment outside the social security system (which is the case for around 40 percent of the employed), the low female labor force participation rate (less than 30 percent in urban areas), the low rate of union membership (around 7-to-8 percent), a lower average educational attainment, and a considerably younger population are among the potential reasons why different patterns may be observed in Turkey than in the rest of the sample with regard to perceptions of the welfare state. The logic behind this anticipation is that these key socio-economic patterns are expected to influence welfare state attitudes through the socialization processes they imply. The socialization theory emphasizes the role of personal experience and socio-economic background in the formation of welfare state attitudes (Andreß and Heien, 2001). For example, a person is more likely to be aware of and expect the provision of services such as unemployment insurance if he/she has ever engaged in formal sector employment and/or paid social security premiums for this service.

Finally, one might also think of the high degree of income inequality in Turkey as a ground for greater demand for redistributive policies. However, as Dallinger (2010) notes, cross-country research on the attitudes towards inequality and redistribution has shown that this is not necessarily the case. In fact, the lack of a strong preference for equality among the population could be one of the main reasons why the current level of inequality exists.

The remainder of the paper is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces the data and the econometric model specification to be used in the empirical work. Section 3 reports and discusses the empirical results with an emphasis on the findings obtained on the Turkish sample. Section 4 is devoted to a summary of empirical findings and concluding remarks.

2. The Data and the Empirical Model

The European Social Survey (ESS) is a cross-country survey that aims to monitor attitudes and behaviors across countries and over time. Seven rounds of the survey have been conducted since 2002, and in addition to the core questionnaire, each round has included rotating modules that cover academic and/or policy concerns within Europe. The data used in our empirical work are drawn from the combined data set for the fourth round of the ESS the fieldwork of which took place in 2008/09. Edition 4.2 of the data set, published on 29 April 2014, contains data from 29 of the 31 countries that took part in the survey. These countries are Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, and the United Kingdom.

A module included in the fourth round of the survey is titled ‘Welfare attitudes in a changing Europe’. The module ‘concerns attitudes toward, and perceptions and evaluations of welfare policies in the broad sense’ (ESS, 2009: 1). Considering that rising unemployment and an ageing population are causes of concern for many European countries from a welfare state perspective (Boeri, Börsch-Supan & Tabellini, 2002; Carone, 2005; Blekesaune, 2007), it is not surprising that this topic was selected for coverage in the ESS. The module covers several aspects of attitudes to welfare policies. Survey items relating to attitudes towards taxation and financing aim to investigate the public’s views on the use of taxes to finance social welfare policies. One of these items – the one examined by Svallfors (2013) – is worded as follows:

‘Many social benefits and services are paid for by taxes. If the government had to choose between increasing taxes and spending more on social benefits and services, or decreasing taxes and spending less on social benefits and services, which should they do?’

This item, which we will refer to as GOV-TAX, is responded to on an 11-point scale such that larger values indicate a stronger preference for more taxing and social spending. Attitudes to

welfare state scope and responsibilities, on the other hand, refer to people's views about the responsibility of the government for various tasks. In the ESS, there are six survey questions aimed at measuring the respondents' views about the level of government responsibility with regard to tasks such as ensuring a job for everyone and health care for the sick. The questions relating to the six tasks are worded as follows:

'If "0" means "it should not be governments' responsibility at all" and "10" means "it should be entirely governments' responsibility", how much responsibility do you think governments should have to:

- i. ensure a job for everyone who wants one;
- ii. ensure adequate health care for the sick;
- iii. ensure a reasonable standard of living for the old;
- iv. ensure a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed;
- v. ensure sufficient child care services for working parents; and
- vi. provide paid leave from work for people who temporarily have to care for sick family members?'

The numerical responses to these questions can be utilized as dependent variables in six different empirical models. Working with this set of survey items, Başlevent and Kirmanoğlu (2011) find that people tend to hold the government responsible for tasks that would benefit them more directly and interpret this as evidence of self-interested behavior with regard to welfare state preferences (Feldman, 1982; Funk, 2000). In view of the high correlation between the responses to the six items (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.84$), we will also work with their average, which we will refer to as GOV-SCOPE, as a summative measure of the attitudes towards welfare state scope and responsibilities.

The comparison of patterns concerning the impact of the quality of government and egalitarian values on attitudes towards welfare state scope with those relating to taxation and social spending might provide valuable insights. An indication of this possibility is that individuals' scores for the above-listed statements on welfare state scope and responsibilities are not highly associated with that for increasing taxes and social spending. In fact, the correlation coefficient of GOV-TAX and GOV-SCOPE in the combined data set from the ESS is only 0.11.

Given the presence of both country and individual level explanatory variables in our analysis, the "multilevel linear regression model" available in the HLM software package is an appropriate estimation tool (Raudenbush *et al.*, 2004). All of the models to be estimated will have the same set of explanatory variables. Regarding the influence of individual characteristics, empirical studies have shown that people with lower levels of income and schooling and higher risks of unemployment support extensive welfare policies more than the more-privileged groups (Iversen and Soskice, 2001; Svallfors, 2004, 2006; Cusack *et al.*, 2006). Women, public sector employees, and the elderly are also found to be more in favor of extensive welfare policies (Cook and Barrett, 1992; Borre and Scarbrough, 1995; Edlund and Svallfors, 2011). As mentioned above, Başlevent and Kirmanoğlu (2011) have obtained similar findings in their examination of the attitudes towards welfare state scope and responsibilities.

In view of the abovementioned patterns, the individual characteristics controlled for in our models include the gender of the respondent as well as his/her age (along with 'age squared' to allow for the possibility of a non-linear relationship) and years of education. The models also include two dummy variables to identify employed and unemployed individuals, which means that labor force non-participants make up the base category. In order to control for the possibility of stronger welfare state attitudes among immigrants, another dummy variable indicates respondents who live in a country other than the one they were born in. Economic well-being is controlled for using the survey item pertaining to the respondents' feelings about

the income of their household. This categorical variable identifies those who are 'living comfortably,' 'coping,' 'finding it difficult,' and 'finding it very difficult' on present income. The subjective general health of the respondents is measured on a scale from 1 to 5 such that larger values indicate better health.

In addition to self-interest, people's economic decisions have been found to depend on the extent to which they conform to deeply held norms of reciprocity, fairness, and justice (Bowles & Gintis, 2000; Ullrich, 2002; Svallfors, 2007). Ideological beliefs and basic values relating to justice principles and equity are likely to have a strong impact on individuals' attitudes towards welfare policies (Inglehart, 1990; Kumlin, 2001, 2006; Kulin, 2009; Kulin & Svallfors, 2013). Thus, egalitarianism is a social value that is expected to play a key role in analyses of welfare state attitudes. Svallfors (2013) constructs an egalitarianism index by averaging the scores for the following survey items from the ESS:

"The government should take measures to reduce differences in income levels." "For a society to be fair, differences in people's standard of living should be small."

We also use the average of the responses to these items (both of which have a 5-point answer scale), and transform the variable such that it ranges between zero and 10 and larger values represent more egalitarian views. In the empirical models to be estimated, this variable is interacted with the quality of government to observe whether its impact varies across contexts with differing degrees of institutional efficiency.

The three expert-based measures of government quality we will make use of are the ones referred to in Svallfors (2013), namely the International Country Risk Guide's Quality of Government indicator (QOG), the Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions index (CPI), and the World Bank's Government Efficiency estimate (GEE). Despite some overlaps, the three measures relate to different aspects of government quality. The QOG score – ranging between zero and 1 – is an average of 'corruption', 'law and order', and 'bureaucracy quality' scores. The CPI score – ranging between zero and 10 – relates to perceptions of the degree of corruption in the public sector as seen by business people, risk analysts, and the general public, and the GEE score – ranging between -2.5 and 2.5 – is a combination of several factors including the quality of public service provision and independence of the civil service from political pressures. For all three measures, higher scores correspond to better outcomes. The values of these indicators for 2008 are taken from the Quality of Government Institute's web site (Teorell *et al.*, 2013). In our 29-country sample, the correlation coefficients between these indicators are on the order of 0.95 which is a remarkable figure given the different ways in which they have been constructed (See Figure 1).

3. Estimation Results

The multilevel linear model estimates based on GOV-TAX and GOV-SCOPE as dependent variables are presented in Tables 1 and 2, respectively. Each table comprises six model specifications that differ by the quality of government indicator used and whether that indicator is interacted with the egalitarianism variable or not. Additional results from models where each one of the six items that make up GOV-SCOPE are the dependent variables are given in Table 3. Since the three quality of government indicators considered yield very similar findings, this last part of the analysis makes use of only the International Country Risk Guide's QOG measure.

Our econometric findings reveal that most explanatory variables have statistically significant effects in one or both models and, more importantly, that there are notable differences in their impact on the two attitudes. Common to all six model specifications in Table 1 is the finding that age and gender do not have a significant effect on the attitudes towards taxation and social spending. However, age is related positively with favorable views of government scope and responsibilities (see Table 2). This is a reasonable finding since 'ensuring a reasonable standard

of living for the old' and 'adequate health care for the sick' are tasks that are of more importance for the elderly. Furthermore, a significant gender effect is observed such that women have more favorable opinions of the government's provision of welfare related tasks. This finding does not come as a surprise either, considering that tasks such as providing care for children and sick family members are usually undertaken by women. With regard to education, we find that people with more schooling are more likely to support more taxation and spending, but have less favorable opinions of extensive government responsibilities that benefit certain groups.

Employed respondents— who make up 54 percent of the combined sample – are more opposed to the idea that the government should increase taxation and spending which might be because, as payroll tax payers, they do not want the government to resort to further taxation to finance the welfare state. The statistically insignificant coefficients obtained for the unemployed respondents means that their attitudes are not different than those of labor force non-participants who make up the reference group. The impact of employment status is much smaller (in fact, statistically insignificant) with respect to GOV-SCOPE, but an item-by-item examination of the attitudes for extensive government responsibilities reveals that employment status does matter in the case of tasks that involve job provision and the standard of living of the unemployed.

We do not find a statistically significant effect of immigrant status in either model. This means that once their other socio-demographic characteristics are controlled for, immigrants – whose sample share is almost nine percent – do not differ from the rest of the respondents in terms of welfare state attitudes. This result might have to do with the fact that not all immigrants are eligible for some welfare state services. It also turns out that healthier individuals have less favorable attitudes towards more taxation for social services, but the impact of health on attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state is statistically insignificant. The patterns relating to subjective evaluations of household income also differ between the two dimensions of welfare state attitudes. While respondents who face economic difficulties are against the idea of more taxation, respondents who come from households that make ends meet easily are more opposed to a wide-ranging welfare state. Considering that the operation of welfare state services relies mainly on revenues from progressive tax systems which place a disproportionately heavy burden on wealthier households, this finding is in line with expectations.

The multilevel linear regression estimates presented in Table 1 reveal interesting patterns regarding the relationships between the quality of government, egalitarianism, and the attitudes towards more taxing and social spending. Regardless of the choice of the indicator of government quality, we find that preferences for a larger welfare state are stronger among more egalitarian individuals and in higher quality-of-government settings (see specifications 1, 3, and 5). We also find, as expected, that the interaction between the two variables is positive (see specifications 2, 4, and 6). However, in the presence of the interaction variable, the main effects of the two variables become statistically insignificant. The interpretation of this finding is that these variables do not have a meaningful impact on the attitude in question when the other variable takes on the value of zero. Thus, the multilevel model attributes a crucial role to the coexistence of government quality and egalitarian values in the formation of positive welfare state attitudes.

The estimates pertaining to attitudes towards government responsibilities presented in Table 2 yield further insights regarding the impact of government quality and egalitarianism on welfare state attitudes. While the influence of egalitarianism is still positive (even in the presence of the interaction variable), we find that the attitudes towards welfare scope and responsibilities are less favorable in higher quality-of-government countries. Furthermore, the interaction of

the two variables is also negative, implying that the difference between the levels of support among egalitarian and not-so-egalitarian individuals for this particular set of welfare state services is smaller in contexts where public institutions are more efficient. Apparently, in the presence of a government that is already functioning fairly and efficiently, egalitarian individuals tend to view tasks such as ensuring a job for everyone as overly-generous services that work against egalitarianism.

Another interesting point is that the explanatory power of the multilevel model is considerably larger with respect to the attitudes towards government tasks that target certain groups. This might be interpreted to mean that the attitudes in this dimension are driven to a larger extent by self-interest, which in turn implies that socio-demographic characteristics do a better job of explaining the outcome of interest. In fact, an examination of the additional results given in Table 3 reveals patterns that support this idea. One finding that points to the impact of self-interest on attitudes is that younger people, who typically have a hard time making the transition from school to work, are more in favor of government's provision of jobs. Among other findings that can be interpreted similarly are that the unemployed are stronger supporters of "ensuring a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed" and employed respondents favor "ensuring sufficient child care services for working parents."

3.1 Welfare state attitudes in the sample of Turkish respondents

To observe the patterns relating to welfare state attitudes in Turkey, we repeat our analysis on the sample of Turkish respondents. Since these estimations involve only one country, the country level indicator of government quality and its interactions drop out of the model. The set of estimates corresponding to those in Tables 1 and 2 are presented in Table 4, and those corresponding to the estimates in Table 3 are given in Table 5.

Our first observation regarding the ordinary least squares regression results for the Turkish sample is that many of the explanatory variables are insignificant, and the goodness of fit of the models are low. This means that the welfare state attitudes of Turkish respondents do not exhibit clear associations with their socio-demographic characteristics and employment status. For instance, unlike in the earlier set of results where significant gender differences were obtained, male and female respondents in Turkey have similar opinions regarding welfare state responsibilities. The finding with respect to years of education is in the opposite direction of the finding for the 29-country sample. In Turkey, it is the more highly educated who demand more welfare-related services from the government (as measured by GOV-SCOPE). Given that the influence of economic well-being is controlled for, this finding is suggestive of a lack of sufficient knowledge about the welfare state among the less educated sections of the population. Furthermore, the positive association observed between education and GOV-TAX is also missing in the Turkish sample.

Another finding which is in contrast with that in the European sample has to do with employment status. In Turkey, unemployed individuals tend to be of the opinion that the scope of the welfare state should not be wide. Among the statistically significant coefficients on the 'unemployed' dummy, the one which is the most difficult to make sense of involves the task of ensuring a reasonable standard of living for the unemployed. Apparently, many unemployed individuals come from segments of the society that do not hold the government responsible for welfare related tasks and – probably – hold themselves or their families responsible for maintaining their lives. In other words, the unemployed typically have not gone through a socialization process (within the family setting or in the labor market) which would endow them with an adequate understanding of the working class notion and awareness of the responsibilities of the modern welfare state.

4. Concluding Remarks

One of the main objectives of this study was to examine individuals' attitudes towards welfare state policies by building on the work of Svallfors (2013) who concludes that government quality is an important and neglected factor in explaining attitudes to welfare policies. Data from the fourth round of the European Social Survey was used in a multilevel analysis to demonstrate that individual characteristics were associated with welfare state attitudes in predictable ways. The empirical work also yielded interesting findings regarding the interplay of government quality and egalitarian values in shaping the attitudes towards taxation and social spending and those relating to the scope of the welfare state. A key finding was that while the interaction of government quality and egalitarian values contributes positively to the attitudes towards more taxation and social spending, the opposite is the case with regard to certain welfare state related tasks.

The differences in the observed patterns in the attitudes towards the scope of the welfare state and those relating to taxation and social spending revealed that the team of researchers led by Stefan Svallfors, who developed the welfare attitudes module in the ESS, were correct in their prediction that different dimensions of welfare state preferences may not be closely connected (ESS, 2009). The present study has shown not only that the responses to survey items belonging to two different dimensions are (almost) uncorrelated, but also that the underlying patterns with regard to the effect of country- and individual-level variables show little resemblance. Overall, the findings suggest that people with stronger egalitarian values are more meticulous in drawing the line between public and private responsibilities. This might even imply that they refrain from supporting certain redistributive welfare state services when governments are already fair and efficient. Put differently, our empirical findings confirm that welfare state attitudes should be included in the growing list of contexts in which the quality of government plays a central role, but also point to some subtleties which policy makers and researchers should be aware of.

The second aim of this study was to compare and contrast the attitudes toward welfare state responsibilities in 29 European countries and Turkey. In the 29-country sample, socio-demographic characteristics and egalitarian values were associated with welfare state attitudes in predictable ways as they were mainly in line with the idea that these attitudes are shaped – at least in part – by self-interest. In the Turkish sample, however, the associations between the outcome and explanatory variables were found to be weaker, and the statistically significant findings were more difficult to make sense of. Generally speaking, it was found that the more disadvantaged groups, namely the unemployed and the less educated, had less favorable opinions for an extensive welfare state. Given the presence of the stronger influence of Islamic religiosity and the popularity of Turkey's ruling party among the lower segments of the society that are now accustomed to the government's unconventional redistributive policies, it is not very surprising that there are some common misconceptions about the responsibilities of the modern welfare state.

The age and gender variables in the econometric models did not produce statistically significant results in the Turkish sample. The finding with regard to gender could be attributed to the fact that the female employment rate – especially in the urban formal sector – is very low, and only a small portion of Turkish women are in a position to benefit directly from a more extensive welfare state. As for the lack of a significant association between age and the attitudes regarding the scope of the welfare state, it would be interesting to see if this result would have changed if the survey was conducted in the wake of the global crisis of 2008 when the unemployment rate among the 15-to-24 age group came close to 30 percent. In view of the Blekesaune (2007) finding that public support for governmental provision and economic redistribution increases in periods of economic strain and low employment, the timing of the survey may have had an effect on some other results as well. Unfortunately, since the key variables used in the analysis

were derived from survey questions included in a rotating module, we were unable to conduct the analysis at different points in time and observe any changes that may have taken over time with regard to welfare state preferences.

As part of future work on this topic, one interesting exercise would be to focus on the welfare state preferences of Muslims residing in Europe. Differences between their attitudes and those living in their nations of origin, namely Turkey, could be taken as evidence in favor of the socialization hypothesis brought up in this study. However, in order for this exercise to yield reliable results, one would need to be able to control for the fact that international migrants might not constitute a random population in terms of socio-economic attitudes and would also need to take into account the length of time they have spent in the host nation. Another useful exercise would be to explore the sensitivity of the results to the use of alternative interaction terms involving not only Egalitarianism and Quality of Government, but also variables such as age, education and gender. Results from this exercise are also likely to provide more insights as to how individuals' welfare state preferences are shaped.

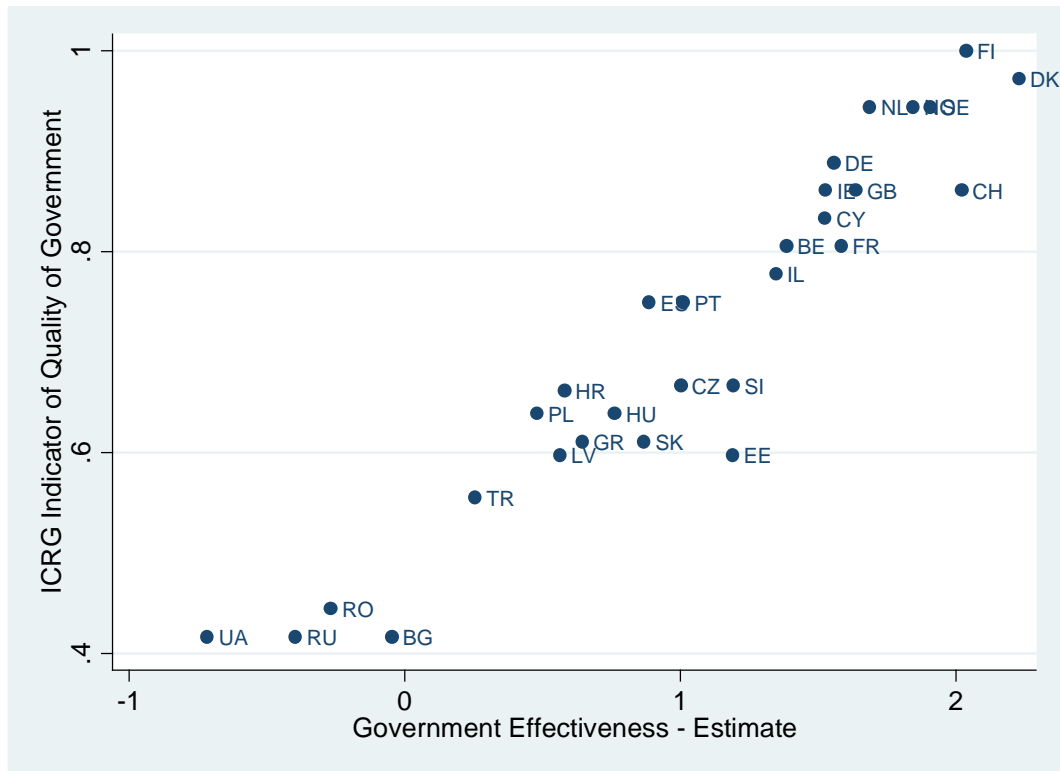
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Figure 1: The Quality of Government Index Values by the ICRG and the World Bank



Note: The stata command used is "tway (scatter icrg_qog wbi_gee, mlabel(cntry))"

Table 1: Determinants of the attitudes Towards Taxation and Social Spending

Quality of government indicator:	(1) International Country Risk Guide's QOG	(2)	(3) Transparency International's CPI	(4)	(5) World Bank's GEE	(6)
Intercept	2.838 (0.000)	4.354 (0.000)	3.233 (0.000)	4.253 (0.000)	3.699 (0.000)	4.232 (0.000)
Quality of government	1.799 (0.003)	-0.229 (0.677)	0.146 (0.006)	-0.012 (0.799)	0.420 (0.005)	-0.043 (0.701)
Egalitarianism	0.119 (0.000)	-0.098 (0.166)	0.119 (0.000)	-0.027 (0.658)	0.119 (0.000)	0.046 (0.152)
Quality of government × Egalitarianism		0.295 (0.001)		0.023 (0.009)		0.067 (0.003)
Age	0.003 (0.578)	0.003 (0.547)	0.003 (0.578)	0.003 (0.546)	0.003 (0.578)	0.003 (0.547)
Age squared / 100	0.002 (0.626)	0.002 (0.654)	0.002 (0.626)	0.002 (0.661)	0.002 (0.626)	0.002 (0.651)
Female	0.036 (0.232)	0.033 (0.263)	0.036 (0.233)	0.033 (0.261)	0.036 (0.233)	0.034 (0.257)
Years of education	0.021 (0.001)	0.021 (0.001)	0.021 (0.001)	0.021 (0.001)	0.021 (0.001)	0.021 (0.001)
Employed	-0.180 (0.000)	-0.177 (0.000)	-0.180 (0.000)	-0.178 (0.000)	-0.180 (0.000)	-0.177 (0.000)
Unemployed	0.070 (0.267)	0.065 (0.311)	0.070 (0.267)	0.064 (0.313)	0.070 (0.268)	0.065 (0.306)
Immigrant	0.041 (0.294)	0.042 (0.286)	0.041 (0.295)	0.038 (0.338)	0.041 (0.297)	0.039 (0.328)
Household income (=2, coping)	-0.084 (0.006)	-0.097 (0.002)	-0.084 (0.006)	-0.097 (0.002)	-0.084 (0.006)	-0.098 (0.002)
Household income (=3, difficult)	-0.136 (0.024)	-0.142 (0.020)	-0.136 (0.024)	-0.142 (0.020)	-0.136 (0.024)	-0.144 (0.018)
Household income (=4, very difficult)	-0.160 (0.163)	-0.144 (0.212)	-0.160 (0.162)	-0.147 (0.200)	-0.159 (0.163)	-0.146 (0.206)
Health	-0.048 (0.025)	-0.050 (0.020)	-0.048 (0.025)	-0.049 (0.021)	-0.048 (0.025)	-0.049 (0.021)
Between-country variance explained (%)	17.6	16.4	12.8	11.3	18.8	16.4
Within-country variance explained (%)	1.9	2.2	1.9	2.1	1.9	2.2

Notes: The number of observations is 46,695. The dependent variable is GOV-TAX. The figures in parentheses are the *p*-values of the two-sided tests of significance. The design weights available in the data set have been used to obtain nationally representative figures, but not the population weights, so that the results would not be dominated by the patterns in large-population countries. The reference category for household income dummies is "Living comfortably on present income (=1)".

Table 2: Determinants of the Attitudes towards Welfare State Scope and Responsibilities

Quality of government indicator:	(1) International Country Risk Guide's QOG	(2)	(3) Transparency International's CPI	(4)	(5) World Bank's GEE	(6)
Intercept	6.684 (0.000)	5.846 (0.000)	6.692 (0.000)	6.121 (0.000)	6.363 (0.000)	6.095 (0.000)
Quality of government	-0.749 (0.112)	0.371 (0.624)	-0.089 (0.043)	-0.001 (0.993)	-0.211 (0.070)	0.022 (0.916)
Egalitarianism	0.210 (0.000)	0.330 (0.000)	0.210 (0.000)	0.292 (0.000)	0.210 (0.000)	0.247 (0.000)
Quality of government × Egalitarianism		-0.163 (0.015)		-0.013 (0.024)		-0.034 (0.057)
Age	0.010 (0.003)	0.010 (0.003)	0.010 (0.003)	0.010 (0.003)	0.010 (0.003)	0.010 (0.003)
Age squared / 100	-0.011 (0.001)	-0.011 (0.001)	-0.011 (0.001)	-0.011 (0.002)	-0.011 (0.001)	-0.011 (0.001)
Female	0.103 (0.000)	0.104 (0.000)	0.103 (0.000)	0.104 (0.000)	0.103 (0.000)	0.104 (0.000)
Years of education	-0.010 (0.006)	-0.010 (0.005)	-0.010 (0.006)	-0.010 (0.005)	-0.010 (0.006)	-0.010 (0.005)
Employed	-0.032 (0.132)	-0.033 (0.119)	-0.032 (0.133)	-0.033 (0.121)	-0.032 (0.133)	-0.033 (0.119)
Unemployed	-0.002 (0.968)	0.001 (0.990)	-0.002 (0.969)	0.001 (0.982)	-0.002 (0.969)	0.000 (0.998)
Immigrant	0.033 (0.606)	0.033 (0.607)	0.033 (0.605)	0.035 (0.586)	0.033 (0.605)	0.034 (0.595)
Household income (=2, coping)	0.045 (0.237)	0.052 (0.165)	0.044 (0.239)	0.051 (0.166)	0.044 (0.237)	0.051 (0.170)
Household income (=3, difficult)	0.164 (0.003)	0.167 (0.002)	0.164 (0.003)	0.167 (0.002)	0.164 (0.003)	0.168 (0.002)
Household income (=4, very difficult)	0.342 (0.000)	0.334 (0.000)	0.342 (0.000)	0.335 (0.000)	0.342 (0.000)	0.335 (0.000)
Health	-0.013 (0.289)	-0.012 (0.316)	-0.013 (0.291)	-0.012 (0.313)	-0.013 (0.291)	-0.013 (0.306)
Between-country variance explained (%)	35.6	36.0	40.1	40.9	38.4	38.8
Within-country variance explained (%)	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5	9.4	9.5

Notes: The number of observations is 46,695. The dependent variable is GOV-SCOPE. The figures in parentheses are the p-values of the two-sided tests of significance. The design weights available in the data set have been used to obtain nationally representative figures, but not the population weights, so that the results would not be dominated by the patterns in large-population countries. The reference category for household income dummies is "Living comfortably on present income (=1)".

Table 3: Determinants of the Attitudes towards The Six Survey Items on Welfare State Scope

Dependent variable:	(1) Gvjbevn	(2) Gvhlthc	(3) Gvslvol	(4) Gvslvue	(5) Gvldcr	(6) Gvpdlwk
Task:	Ensuring a job for everyone	Health care for the sick	Standard of living for the old	Standard of living for the unemployed	Child care services	Paid leave from work
Intercept	6.685 (0.000)	6.373 (0.000)	6.984 (0.000)	4.706 (0.000)	5.536 (0.000)	5.895 (0.000)
Quality of government	-1.597 (0.133)	1.349 (0.136)	-0.058 (0.955)	0.538 (0.434)	0.783 (0.369)	0.133 (0.887)
Egalitarianism	0.410 (0.000)	0.297 (0.000)	0.245 (0.000)	0.364 (0.000)	0.317 (0.000)	0.280 (0.000)
Quality of government × Egalitarianism	-0.138 (0.156)	-0.207 (0.004)	-0.096 (0.257)	-0.157 (0.032)	-0.184 (0.015)	-0.108 (0.125)
Age	-0.016 (0.004)	0.012 (0.000)	0.013 (0.001)	0.007 (0.122)	0.017 (0.004)	0.023 (0.000)
Age squared / 100	0.012 (0.017)	-0.012 (0.001)	-0.011 (0.005)	-0.006 (0.175)	-0.020 (0.000)	-0.023 (0.000)
Female	0.158 (0.000)	0.029 (0.195)	0.060 (0.014)	0.069 (0.014)	0.157 (0.000)	0.167 (0.000)
Years of education	-0.043 (0.000)	0.007 (0.074)	-0.007 (0.099)	-0.010 (0.160)	-0.006 (0.096)	-0.018 (0.000)
Employed	-0.090 (0.002)	-0.010 (0.631)	0.005 (0.784)	-0.169 (0.000)	0.052 (0.105)	0.023 (0.499)
Unemployed	0.016 (0.766)	-0.021 (0.639)	-0.063 (0.155)	0.156 (0.019)	0.032 (0.669)	-0.021 (0.746)
Immigrant	0.171 (0.170)	-0.097 (0.160)	-0.065 (0.280)	0.053 (0.394)	0.188 (0.015)	-0.012 (0.824)
Household income (=2, coping)	0.178 (0.001)	-0.026 (0.428)	0.099 (0.018)	-0.024 (0.645)	0.045 (0.188)	0.063 (0.180)
Household income (=3, difficult)	0.404 (0.000)	0.014 (0.730)	0.152 (0.010)	0.166 (0.008)	0.162 (0.009)	0.172 (0.008)
Household income (=4, very difficult)	0.591 (0.000)	0.154 (0.003)	0.285 (0.000)	0.496 (0.000)	0.272 (0.000)	0.371 (0.000)
Health	-0.040 (0.057)	-0.023 (0.069)	-0.010 (0.394)	0.035 (0.017)	-0.002 (0.923)	-0.031 (0.071)
Between-country variance explained (%)	63.8	7.9	25.8	32.1	18.3	24.2
Within-country variance explained (%)	8.8	3.6	5.2	6.6	4.0	4.7

Notes: The names of the six dependent variables given in the top row are the corresponding variable names used in the ESS data. The quality of government indicator is International Country Risk Guide's QOG. The number of observations is 50,780. The figures in parentheses are the p-values of the two-sided tests of significance. The design weights available in the data set have been used to obtain nationally representative figures, but not the population weights, so that the results would not be dominated by the patterns in large-population countries. The reference category for household income dummies is "Living comfortably on present income (=1)".

Table 4: Determinants of Welfare State Attitudes (Turkish subsample)

Dependent variable:	GOV-TAX	GOV-SCOPE
Egalitarianism	0.176 (0.000)	0.338 (0.000)
Age	-0.035 (0.061)	0.015 (0.232)
Age squared / 100	0.028 (0.184)	-0.002 (0.877)
Female	-0.030 (0.824)	0.033 (0.729)
Years of education	-0.007 (0.673)	0.027 (0.021)
Employed	-0.331 (0.041)	0.156 (0.166)
Unemployed	-0.257 (0.206)	-0.265 (0.054)
Immigrant	0.431 (0.406)	-0.061 (0.874)
Household income (=2, coping)	0.098 (0.687)	0.074 (0.670)
Household income (=3, difficult)	0.219 (0.388)	0.166 (0.355)
Household income (=4, very difficult)	0.101 (0.716)	0.616 (0.002)
Health	-0.012 (0.881)	0.082 (0.143)
Constant	4.886 (0.000)	3.899 (0.000)
Sample size	1818	2158
R-square	0.022	0.093

Notes: The figures in parentheses are the p-values of the two-sided tests of significance. The design weights available in the data set have been used to obtain nationally representative figures. The reference category for household income dummies is “Living comfortably on present income (=1)”.

Table 5: Determinants of the Attitudes towards the Six Survey Items on Welfare State Scope and Responsibilities (Turkish subsample)

Dependent variable:	(1) Gvjbevn	(2) Gvhlthc	(3) Gvslvol	(4) Gvslvue	(5) Gvcldc	(6) Gvpdlwk
Task:	Ensuring a job for everyone	Health care for the sick	Standard of living for the old	Standard of living for the unemployed	Child care services	Paid leave from work
Egalitarianism	0.365 (0.000)	0.340 (0.000)	0.358 (0.000)	0.365 (0.000)	0.246 (0.000)	0.357 (0.000)
Age	0.006 (0.736)	0.015 (0.283)	0.010 (0.513)	0.002 (0.894)	0.034 (0.062)	0.022 (0.149)
Age squared / 100	0.005 (0.767)	0.001 (0.960)	0.007 (0.659)	0.006 (0.746)	-0.020 (0.323)	-0.012 (0.486)
Female	-0.099 (0.431)	0.001 (0.990)	0.110 (0.326)	0.041 (0.736)	0.089 (0.527)	0.054 (0.637)
Years of education	0.031 (0.048)	0.046 (0.001)	0.046 (0.001)	-0.008 (0.616)	0.021 (0.216)	0.025 (0.076)
Employed	-0.022 (0.884)	0.106 (0.420)	0.124 (0.353)	0.157 (0.279)	0.294 (0.079)	0.278 (0.043)
Unemployed	-0.135 (0.459)	-0.087 (0.588)	-0.236 (0.146)	-0.292 (0.099)	-0.429 (0.036)	-0.413 (0.014)
Immigrant	-0.095 (0.851)	-0.140 (0.753)	-0.431 (0.339)	0.343 (0.484)	0.217 (0.701)	-0.259 (0.577)
Household income (=2, coping)	0.280 (0.221)	0.135 (0.503)	0.189 (0.355)	0.044 (0.841)	-0.218 (0.394)	0.012 (0.954)
Household income (=3, difficult)	0.601 (0.012)	0.126 (0.548)	0.153 (0.471)	0.278 (0.228)	-0.089 (0.740)	-0.071 (0.747)
Household income (=4, very difficult)	0.959 (0.000)	0.477 (0.035)	0.563 (0.014)	0.973 (0.000)	0.090 (0.755)	0.634 (0.008)
Health	0.117 (0.116)	0.068 (0.295)	0.124 (0.062)	0.042 (0.557)	0.104 (0.212)	0.038 (0.582)
Constant	3.121 (0.000)	4.081 (0.000)	3.777 (0.000)	4.298 (0.000)	3.926 (0.000)	4.192 (0.000)
Sample size	2158	2158	2158	2158	2158	2158
R-square	0.063	0.070	0.077	0.075	0.033	0.078

Notes: The names of the six dependent variables given in the top row are the corresponding variable names used in the ESS data. The figures in parentheses are the p-values of the two-sided tests of significance. The design weights available in the data set have been used to obtain nationally representative figures. The reference category for household income dummies is “Living comfortably on present income (=1).”