

Internet Privacy and the European Union

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Research Question and Hypothesis:

- I will be investigating how European's feelings about the European Union, under which they are regulated, affect their concern about online privacy and personal information.
- I hypothesize that those who have higher levels of satisfaction for their nation's union will be less concerned with sharing and controlling personal information online.

Operationalization

Independent Variable:

Feelings / satisfaction toward European Union (Likert scale: 1 is very negative, 5 is very positive)

Controls:

Trust in government, country, internet use, age, gender, education, marital status, political affiliation, and satisfaction with life

Dependent Variables:

Concern toward providing personal information online

Concern for control over online personal information once provided

(Both Likert scales: 4 is most concern, 1 is least concern.)

Dataset

- Collected by the European Commission
- Through survey questionnaires (in-person interviews)
- Individual unit of analysis with 27,980 observations
- Missing values: 18,000 after controls and regression
- Survey answers are self-positioned
- All collected in 2015

Concepts & Internal Validity

- Concepts: Trust in EU against trust in online privacy
- I am using satisfaction with the EU as an indicator for trust because
I believe these two are correlated (High satisfaction -> high trust)
(There is a tend to trust variable but it is only binary)
- I am using concern for sharing and controlling personal information
online as indicators for (lack of) trust in one's internet privacy and
information.

Name of Variable	Sign	Reasoning
Current Feelings Toward EU	-	Better feelings toward EU will increase trust in its regulation of personal online information
Trust in the EU	-	Tending to trust the EU will decrease concern due to a decreased suspicion of their government and its use info
Feelings Toward Future of EU	-	Better feelings toward future of EU will decrease concern because of more trust in potential of the EU
Country Member of Eurozone	-	Greater connection to EU will decrease concern due to greater trust of the EU
Country Joined EU Post 2004	+	Less established connection to EU will increase concern due to less trust of the EU
Trust in the National Parliament	-	More trust in Parliament will decrease concern due to decreased suspicion of government
Trust in the National Government	-	More trust in national government will decrease concern due to decreased suspicion of government
Has Access to Internet	-	Having access to internet will decrease concern because of more exposure to the internet
Internet Use Frequency	-	Using the internet more frequently will decrease concern because of more exposure to the internet
Uses Internet to Purchase	-	Using the internet to purchase goods will decrease concern because of more exposure to the internet
Age	+	Increased age will increase concern due to less knowledge / exposure to the internet
Male / Gender	?	It is hard to predict because various gender roles and concepts associated with gender may affect one's concern for providing personal information
Married	+	Married people will be more concerned because providing personal information could affect both them and their spouse
Education Past High School	-	Having more education past high school will cause less concern due to more knowledge about the internet
Political Affiliation	+	More conservative people will have more concern and less willingness to provide personal information due to values
Satisfaction with Life	-	Higher satisfaction with life will lead to less concern due to more satisfaction and trust with lifestyle in the country

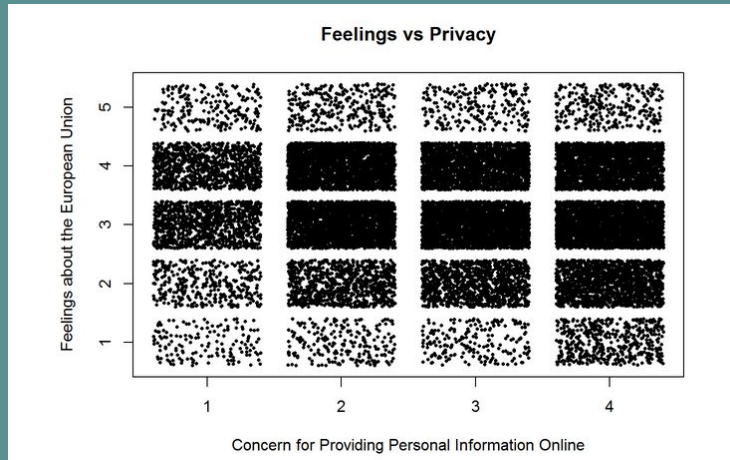
Association Tests:

Providing Personal Information Information

Correlation Coefficient:

-0.08993971

p-value < 2.2e-16

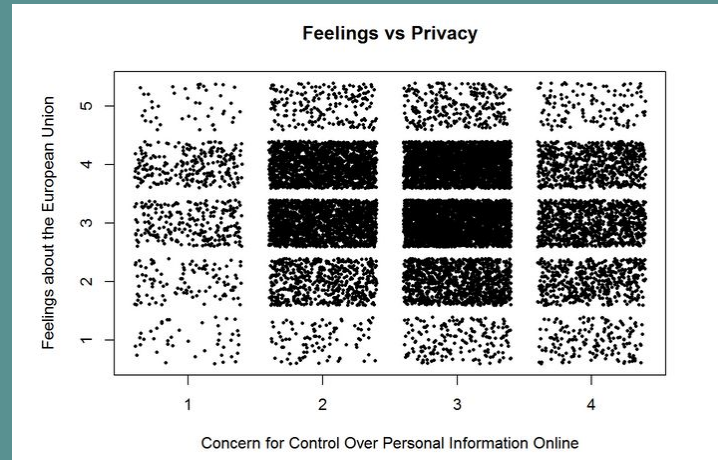


Controlling Personal

Correlation Coefficient:

-0.06921043

p-value < 2.2e-16



Feelings and Trust Toward European Union on Concern for Online Privacy

	Concern for Online Personal Information (OPI)			
	Providing OPI	Control Over OPI	Providing OPI	Control Over OPI
Current Feelings Toward EU	-0.021 (0.013)	0.007 (0.012)	-0.101*** (0.007)	-0.061*** (0.007)
Trust in the EU	-0.022 (0.023)	-0.073*** (0.021)		
Feelings Toward Future of EU	-0.081*** (0.016)	-0.021 (0.015)		
Country Member of Eurozone	0.103*** (0.020)	0.045*** (0.018)		
Country Joined EU Post 2004	0.011 (0.021)	-0.052*** (0.019)		
Trust in National Parliament	-0.044* (0.025)	-0.121*** (0.023)		
Trust in National Government	-0.110*** (0.024)	-0.017 (0.022)		
Has Access to Internet	-0.043 (0.028)	-0.216*** (0.025)		
Internet Use Frequency	-0.042*** (0.010)	0.002 (0.010)		
Uses Internet to Purchase	-0.088*** (0.022)	-0.056*** (0.021)		
Age	0.003*** (0.001)	0.002*** (0.001)		
Male	-0.088*** (0.017)	-0.062*** (0.015)		
Married	-0.002 (0.018)	0.065*** (0.016)		
Education Past High School	0.004 (0.019)	0.018 (0.017)		
Political Affiliation (Toward Right)	-0.002 (0.004)	-0.010*** (0.004)		
Satisfaction with Life	-0.027** (0.013)	-0.033*** (0.012)		
Constant	3.430*** (0.084)	3.172*** (0.079)	3.146*** (0.023)	2.971*** (0.025)
Observations	13,333	10,053	25,218	14,339
R ²	0.030	0.033	0.008	0.005
Adjusted R ²	0.029	0.031	0.008	0.005
Residual Std. Error	0.987 (df = 13316)	0.763 (df = 10036)	1.010 (df = 25216)	0.776 (df = 14337)
F Statistic	25.574*** (df = 16; 13316)	21.318*** (df = 16; 10036)	205.639*** (df = 1; 25216)	69.006*** (df = 1; 14337)

Note:

$p < 0.1$; $p < 0.05$; $p < 0.01$

Conclusions:

- Current feelings toward the European Union do not have a statistical effect on one's concern for their online privacy and personal information.
- Tending to trust the EU and having optimistic feelings toward the future of the EU decreased concern for providing and having control over online personal information in a statistically significant way.
- Members of the Eurozone had a significant increase in concern rather than decrease and countries that joined the European Union 2004 and later had a significant decrease in concern.

Problems with Causal Inference:

- Internal validity of main independent variable
- All controls are nominal or ordinal except Age variable
- Mostly used Likert scales (self-reported and subjective)
- Missing values (“Don’t know” answers)



Thank You!