

GV482

Coursework

Due **Monday 6 May 2024 at 17:00**

Submission via Moodle

General introduction

The goal of this coursework/research project is to train you for your dissertation. Of course, a dissertation is more complicated than this coursework. For your dissertation, you need to come with your own research question (the hardest part!). Here, I am “gifting” you with a research problem. Your dissertation is also much longer than this coursework (10,000-word limit vs 3,000-word limit) and needs to include a longer introduction, a literature review (no need for this here), a description of the data you use (no need for this here). Yet, some important elements are common to your dissertation and this research project. In particular, this research project forces you to make choices. You need to choose your dependent variable, you need to choose the main explanatory factors, you need to choose the control, you need to choose how to interpret the results. With every choice, come justifications. With every choice, come trade-offs. With every choice, come limitations. You will be judged as much on the choices you make than on how you explain them and you discuss advantages and flaws of your approach (or approaches). With no further ado, it is time to present your research project.

Introducing the research project

“The threat of terrorism and anxiety about a massive wave of immigrants from the Muslim world, coupled with the widespread belief that the EU hinders rather than helps when it comes to such problems, have created a perfect storm for populists.” Those are the words of Cas Mudde, a world-leading expert on populism, in *Foreign Affairs* (November/December 2016, [“Europe’s Populist](#)

Surge.”). There are, after all, reasons to see a link. As we have noted in the lecture, a case can be made for the populist rise to be, in part, caused by the cultural impact of immigration and populists have been keen to link terrorism with immigrants. The threat of terrorism, for example, was one of the main rationale behind Trump’s “Muslim Ban” (Kreis, 2017). And this association seems to work, after terrorist attacks, twitter users are more prone to use the language of far-right parties (Giavazzi et al., 2020)

Some papers have documented a positive relationship between terrorist attacks and electoral outcomes within countries. Terrorism tends to favour the right in Israel (Getmansky and Zeitzoff, 2014) and in Turkey (Kibris, 2011). In Spain, the Madrid bombings significantly reduced the vote share of the incumbent PP party (Montalvo, 2011). Yet, these studies do not look at populism per se. Further, there are reasons to doubt the existence of a link between terrorism and populism. For example, using the occurrence of terrorist shocks during the fieldwork of massive survey endeavours, Giani (2020) documents a negative correlation between terrorism and expressed prejudice towards minorities.

In this coursework, your goal is to study whether terrorism, can be associated in any way with the rise of populism. To do so, you will use the dataset posted on Moodle (Populist_Terrorism.dta), constructed for this coursework, that combines terrorist attacks (obtained from Global Terrorism Database) in general, by Islamist organizations (obtained from the Fondation Pour l’Innovation Politique), as well as terrorist attacks conducted by left-wing and right-wing groups/individuals (hand-coded for this coursework) with populist vote shares in national elections (obtained from Timbro). The dataset also contains additional controls (read the READ_ME.txt file for more information).

Your tasks are the following:

1. Provide a descriptive statistics of the variables you consider relevant for the task given to you.
2. Propose a research design to investigate in as a causal way as the data permit the relationship between terrorism and populism.

Make sure to justify not only the specification you employ, but the dependent and independent variables you use. Why this Y? Why this main explanatory variable? Why those controls?

3. Perform the analysis and discuss substantively your findings.
4. Discuss the limitations of the research design you used.
5. Run possible additional tests.

You are expected to submit the following:

- A write-up (essay) of a maximum of 3,000 words (**mandatory**);
- A log file (**mandatory**, you can use the `sink()` function in R);
- Additional data if you have used some (**optional**).

Your essay can be organized along the tasks described above (each task being a section with the addition of a short introduction and conclusion. Alternatively, you can structure your essay as a mini-dissertation with the tasks above serving as a check list.

Your log file should be named `YourStudentNumber_log.txt` (or any other readable format). Your log file should not contain any identifiable information. Additional databases you use should be named as `YourStudentExamNumber_additionaldatabase1`, `YourStudentExamNumber_additionaldatabase2`, `YourStudentExamNumber_additionaldatabase3`, etc.

Marking criteria:

- (a) Expectations for a grade of **50**: provide descriptive statistics *in an appropriate and informative form*, some empirical tests, but not much justification for it, poor discussion of substantive results or of limitation.
- (b) Expectations for a grade of **60**: provide descriptive statistics *in an appropriate and informative form*, some empirical tests, good justification for the research design, discussion of the empirical results and of the limitations.
- (c) Expectations for a grade of **70**: provide descriptive statistics *in an appropriate and informative form*, some empirical tests, excellent justification for the research design, discussion of the empirical results and of the limitations. Some attempts at additional tests that improve on the original research design.

- (d) Expectations for a grade of **80**: provide descriptive statistics *in an appropriate and informative form*, some empirical tests, excellent justification for the research design, discussion of the empirical results and of the limitations. Additional tests that are substantively interesting.

Please note that the marking criteria above are *indicative*. Your grade will be a function of the quality of your writing (clarity, how well you justify your empirical choices, and the logical consistency of your conclusion based on the evidence you gathered). You will be penalised for poorly formatted submission (unclear descriptive statistics, poorly formatted regression tables will be penalised). You will also be penalised if your log file does not show that your programme is running.

For example, a nicely written piece with the appropriate descriptive statistics, well-formatted tables, a log file that shows a clearly written programme, and clear conclusions could get a grade of 68. In turn, a submission with poorly written and formatted tables, a log file that is missing, and no logically consistent conclusion emerging from the analysis could get a grade of 50 or less even if the student has used a very appropriate research design.

Good luck!